

FROM THE BOARD

"I first learned of Red Feather Development Group in 2015 from a friend, and immediately found just how special this small nonprofit really is. Red Feather has always been about one thing, support where support is needed. From its beginning charter of helping to build homes, to the current healthy home programs reaching many families - Red Feather is always seeking and learning new ways to assist the Hopi & Navajo Nations. I am proud of being part of the Red Feather family."

Board Secretary **Meghan Raftery**



VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT

Completing the circle

Owner and resident of a Red Feather built straw-bale home, Tawesa 'Maurice' Nutumya has been one of Red Feather's stand-out volunteers this year. Delivering air-purifiers, installing Aging in Place items for elders, and distributing handwashing stations across Hopi and Navajo communities, he has helped reach countless individuals.

Askwali (*Thank You*) Tawesa for all your help! We are so grateful.



THE BIG PICTURE

The housing disparities Red Feather addresses every day come from a complex and often brutal history of land possession and government policy. This recent article by Dustin Baird, the Native Housing Program Officer at Enterprise, outlines some of the history that explains how we got here.

Historical Policies That Shaped Housing in Native America by Dustin Baird

Originally published May 27, 2021 on the Enterprise blog as part of the Policy Actions for Racial Equity (PARE) blog series, which explores the many ways housing policies contribute and have contributed to racial disparities in our country.



"On our reservations we experience lack of housing stock, poorly constructed houses due to nonexistent building codes and enforcement of said codes, and health disparities such as increased occurrence of upper & lower respiratory illnesses in our communities. These health and safety factors are often exacerbated by overcrowding. For a short time in my life, I lived with 13 people in a 3 bed, 1 bath house in one of the worst housing clusters in the nation on the Pine Ridge reservation. I have wonderful memories of that time, but when I focus on the sanitary aspects of that situation, it creates worry in me, knowing that the life expectancy for males on the reservation that I come from is 47. This is not fiction but a stark reality for us. Eleven men that I grew up around have made their journey to the other side this year.

Much of this situation is the direct consequence of the many land and housing policies passed over the history of the United States to isolate and subjugate Native people." Read the full article and get the history behind the housing crisis at: <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/blog/historical-policies-shaped-housing-native-america> or on the Red Feather Blog at redfeather.org.

WWW.REDFEATHER.ORG

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RED FEATHER

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RED FEATHER'S PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO EXPAND AS WE HEAD INTO WINTER AND GEAR UP FOR A FOCUS ON HEATING SYSTEM UPGRADES, WEATHERIZATION, AND EMERGENCY FIREWOOD DELIVERIES. WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THANKS TO SUPPORT FROM COCONINO COUNTY, WE WILL BE HIRING TWO NEW FIELD-BASED STAFF POSITIONS TO SERVE CLIENTS IN HOPI AND NAVAJO COMMUNITIES!

AS OUR CAPACITY AND PROGRAMS GROW, SO DOES OUR NEED FOR SUPPORT! WE RELY ON DONORS AND FOUNDATIONS FOR A HUGE PART OF OUR OPERATING BUDGET, SO THANK YOU FOR MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE. YOU CAN DONATE AT WWW.REDFEATHER.ORG OR SEND DONATIONS TO PO BOX 907, BOZEMAN, MT 59771 or scan to donate now



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Red Feather Development Group



From The Ground



KAYLA MILLER
Program Coordinator



AGING IN PLACE

One of Red Feather's newest programs, our Aging in Place services are an important way the organization is furthering its mission of meeting the housing needs of people on the Hopi and Navajo nations in the ways they define as most needed. After receiving seed funding from the Kendal Charitable Trust in 2018 to jumpstart aging in place specific efforts, Red Feather's elder focused services have continually expanded. Aging in Place Program Coordinator Kayla Miller shares her vision for the program as we look to deepen our impact and support tribal elders to age safely in their own homes.

What has been the biggest success of the aging in place programs so far?

The way we've been able to make the aging in place program work with our other, wide-reaching programs, like our APS weatherization program. Case-managers go to homes for weatherization audits which allows us to see what elders actually need. Not everyone needs all the aging in place items we offer. Some elders don't have full showers so a shower chair might not work for them. Some desperately need ramps while others are more affected by temperature extremes. Our case-management style of working with people, and going on audits to weatherize homes, allows us to actually meet people where they are and hear from them directly about what they need.

Where would you like to see the program go?

I would like to see more of in-home meeting with clients. With the new field positions based in Hopi and Navajo, we are hoping we will be able to increase the amount of people getting direct in-home audits. This allows us to just really see where elders are at on an individual level. I also want to see us advertising this program more, which is a work in progress. I think there are lots of elders out there that could benefit that we haven't reached yet. I've heard from multiple people: "This is just what I needed, I didn't even know you did this! Thank you so much!" So yes, we will be amping up awareness of the program as we get more funding for aging in place kits. A lot of people are on disability or social security- so they go there first for resources, but these programs can't always meet all their aging in place needs, and definitely can't go into people's homes like we do. Red Feather is a great resource for people so we just want to get the word out.

What have you seen as far as the extent of the need for elder support and aging in place? How needed do you think these sorts of supports are?

The need is definitely there. I hear things from clients like "I fell down the other day because I didn't have anything to grip onto in my tub" or that they fell down their stairs because there wasn't a railing. Elder falls is a high cause of admittance into a hospital, so we know that this is a huge need in the community.

One client mentioned how something as simple as a toilet riser has made her life so much easier because her knees are really bad. These little things here and there make a big difference to people. She was so grateful for that and the other aging in place items we gave her. People are really, really grateful.

What's your favorite thing about working with people in this capacity?

People on the reservation are really vocal about what they want and need. Which is great! Right now funding is limited so we can't always give everyone who needs one a fully remodeled walk-in shower, but still, that meeting people one-on-one and getting to know them, that is what allows us to help make a home that works for them. One recipient had recently gone through hip surgery, and she had a really high bathtub - and the second I walked in the door she was right on it- showing me everything she needed and telling me what was going on with her. Her son helped her set up all the aging in place items we gave her. She was actually shocked that we provided her with all the items she needed. When I went back to see her she was just effusive and so grateful- and showed us everything set up in her home. I mean, that's amazing to be able to see that change firsthand in someone's life.

Why does this work matter?

With elders, especially Native American elders, they're very home-based. For the most part the homes they are living in now are the homes they've always known. So if they aren't able to move around or do things in their homes, they obviously get really down. Its demoralizing. With these kits for elders, we are able to help them age in place comfortably. They are in their own homes, they can do things for themselves. They are still a part of their communities. All our recipients so far have been so grateful. We can't always honor all their requests, but we do the best we can. A lot of elders live alone. The peace of mind for the family knowing they are safer in their homes also matters a lot. The positive feedback shows how great this program is. These little things truly matter.

What are your hopes and dreams for these initiatives? What would you love to provide for elders?

Money for ADA accessible walk-in showers! These are expensive, but people need them. I have noticed a bigger interest in this along with wheelchairs and walkers too. These items are expensive. I would love to have funding for these bigger cost/bigger impact items. This would definitely provide a positive impact in the lives of our clients. Being able to create a healthy and safe home is our vision and we are hoping to expand our outreach. I can't wait to see the program grow!

EVERYONE DESERVES A HEALTHY HOME

Eleanor is always smiling and has many stories to tell. She is quiet, reserved and prefers to speak in Navajo. While on home visits, she is very kind and doesn't hesitate to teach Navajo words and phrases to our Red Feather Staff. Her home needed weatherization work and Aging in Place adaptations. Red Feather programs were able to install weather strips, seal gaps, caulk priority air leaks, install a heat pump, a smoke detector, a water saving faucet and 10 LED light bulbs as well as a mini-split for heat and AC. Prior to the mini split, she utilized a wood stove and had no AC. Thanks to the mini split, she can now turn on the AC or heat with the touch of a button.

Eleanor also has mobility issues that make it hard for her to get around easily. Thanks to the Aging in Place program, she got a toilet riser, shower tub handrail, and a kit that includes an ice pack, night lights, non-slip rugs and a handheld shower head. These products aid elderly clients to comfortably get around their home.

"I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE" ELEANOR SAYS. "THE MINISPLIT UNIT THAT WAS INSTALLED KEEPS MY HOME NICE AND COOL... I NO LONGER GET HEADACHES FROM THE HEAT, I FEEL A LOT BETTER."



Thank you to Red Feather Partner CozyHome for their work on this project.



PROGRAM METRICS

HANDWASHING STATIONS DELIVERED TO DATE: OVER 700 AND WE ARE STILL GOING!

ALMOST 200 HEPA FILTERS / AIR PURIFIERS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO FAMILIES TO HELP MITIGATE THE IMPACT ON AIR QUALITY OF BURING SOLID FUEL

WE HAVE ALMOST 20 CORDS OF WOOD ON RESERVE FOR WINTER EMERGENCIES. AFTER RECEIVING REPORTS LAST YEAR OF PEOPLE BURNING FURNITURE TO STAY WARM, RED FEATHER HAS COLLABORATED WITH VILLAGES AND CHAPTER HOUSES TO STOCK WOOD FOR EMERGENCY DELIVERIES THIS WINTER

SEVEN RECENT SOLAR FURNACE INSTALLS, REACHING INTO A NEW GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, PROVIDING INDOOR WARMTH FROM THE SUN



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