



United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of International and Tribal Affairs
American Indian Environmental Office

FY 2016 Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program

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For Audio, please dial-in via telephone:

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Purpose of this Teleconference

1. Briefly share the highlights of the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Grant Program history and 2016 tentative schedule
 2. We ask for your constructive input and ideas on how to improve and clarify the new Tribal ecoAmbassadors application process.
- ***Please note that this teleconference is NOT a consultation, but Tribes on this call are welcome to request a formal consultation with us.***

Disclaimers


- ▶ Until the FY 2016 Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program Solicitation is finalized, the information and the details in it are subject to change. The information that I will share in this session is the best of my knowledge.
- ▶ I will refer to past projects as references for examples.
- ▶ Once the upcoming RFP is open, all questions must be processed via email: tapia.rosalva@epa.gov

Presentation Overview

- Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program Overview
- Administration of the Projects/Program
- 2016/2017 Tentative Schedule
- Questions?

What is the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program?

- ▶ Competitive grant program aimed to **fund research at Tribal Colleges and Universities that addresses environmental health issues affecting their local communities, and campuses while focusing on innovative and sustainable solutions.**
- ▶ Gives the EPA and its partner the opportunity to introduce **TCU students to the STEM** field while conducting research on environmental issues *that are **important to the TCU, TCU students, and Tribal Community***



What is the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program? (cont.)

- ▶ Provide monetary awards to help TCUs conduct student science research
 - ▶ Course projects
 - ▶ Course research
 - ▶ Independent student research projects
 - ▶ Larger school/department environmental campus/community projects

History: How did this program start?

- ▶ Started under Administrator Jackson; Continued to be championed by Administrator McCarthy.
- ▶ Started in 2011 as part of the a broader ecoAmbassadors program.
- ▶ Have honed and developed the administration, size of grants, criteria, etc., over the years.
- ▶ Great balance of application and reporting for TCU professors and students.

Successes

► Results:

- Some projects have shaped students' careers
- More than **190 TCU students** the opportunity to work close
- **5600 hours of STEM** training with their professors and EPA scientists, all while solving environmental problems in their communities.

► Partnerships: EPA scientists have worked directly with the Tribal ecoAmbassadors and their students **on 21 projects**.

- Model for their work with TCUs.
- Past Partners Include; NGOs, CDC, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, The Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Arizona
- Current Partner: BIA

Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program Benefits

► Benefits

- **1. EPA** – Obtains research and interest from future environmental leaders with tribal background and knowledge
- **2. Tribal ecoAmbassadors Professors** – Support for their course and/or area of teaching and research
- **3. Tribal ecoAmbassadors Students** - Gives students TCUs a capstone like research project
 - Involved in Environmental Community Research/Projects
 - Capstone Project that introduces them, hones in interest on environment, STEM, community service
 - View into the people, policy, workings of the EPA – the federal government; opportunity
- **4. Project Campus/Community** – benefits from research, knowledge, student work results, and/or focus on issue

First Year: Academic 2011-2012

TCU	State	Title of Project
Tohono O'odham Community College	AZ	Carbon-Negative Building Products from Recycled Materials
Dine College	AZ	Participatory Air Quality Monitoring
Fort Peck Community College	MT	Epigenetics/Obesity/Toxic Exposure
Turtle Mountain Community College	ND	Monitoring Drinking Water from Private Wells
Little Big Horn College	MT	Assessing Non-point Sources of Contamination on Little Big Horn River
United Tribes Technical College	ND	Green Fitting of Student Housing
Cankdeska Cikana Community College	ND	Developing a Campus Recycling Sustainability Program
Fort Berthold Community College	ND	Groundwater Monitoring in Local Wells

Second Year: Academic 2012-2013


TCU	State	Title of Project
Tohono O'odham Community College	AZ	Phase II: Expanding Research and Development of a Carbon-Negative Building Material
Fort Peck Community College	MT	Phase II: Determining Nutrition's Role in the Bioaccumulation of Environmental Mercury
Northwest Indian College	WA	Testing Marine Biotoxins in shellfish to reduce illness and improve economic opportunity
Dine College	AZ	Developing a transferable course on the collection and use of climate change data

Academic Year 2013-2014

TCU	State	Title of Project
Menominee College	WI	EnergyStar on Campus
Northwest Indian College	WA	Using Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Community Gardens
Tohono O'odham Community College	AZ	Carbon-negative Building Materials
Little Big Horn College	MT	Assessing pathogens in stream banks


Academic Year 2014-2015

TCU	State	Title of Project
Fond Du Lac College	MN	Assessing Dragonflies as a Sentinel Species for Mercury in the St. Louis River Watershed
Institute of American Indian Arts	NM	Mapping stories of change - Indigenous ecological knowledge and sustainable technologies for student-led campus climate adaptation and mitigation projects
Northwest Indian College	WA	Foodscaping in Tribal College
Salish Kootenai College	MT	Informing Camas Restoration on the Flathead Indian Reservation: adapting to climate change and invasive species



2015-2016 Tribal ecoAmbassadors Projects (funded at \$10K)

- ▶ **Institute of American Indian Arts – Dr. Annie McDonnell –** Creativity and Climate Resilience at the Institute of American Indian Arts
- ▶ **Northwest Indian College – Dr. Ane Berrett –** Peoples and Plants Together in Wellness



2015-2016 Tribal ecoAmbassadors Projects (funded at \$35K)

- **Salish Kootenai College – Dr. Jesse Stine** – Arsenic on Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Land
- **Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College – Professor Andrew Kozich** – Monitoring of Water Temperature Trends in Focal Coldwater Fish Habitats of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

Haskell Indian Nations University

Dr. Daniel Wildcat

- Food Waste Reduction and Landscaping and Habitat Restoration Initiatives



Haskell Indian Nations University

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- ▶ Food Waste Reduction and Landscaping and Habitat Restoration Initiatives



Turtle Mountain Community College

Dr. Deborah Hunter

- Water Quality and Abnormal Leech Present in Waterbodies Located on the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians Reservation



Projects Deliverables throughout Academic Year

- ▶ Quarterly Meetings – offer and work with any mentoring or support Tribal ecoAmbassadors may want or need.
 - ▶ Year long EPA and Mentors Involvement
- ▶ Orientation Meeting
- ▶ Presentation/Mentoring Opportunities for Professors and Students
 - ▶ Orientation Meeting
 - ▶ AIHEC Annual Meeting
 - ▶ Tribal Science Council
 - ▶ Webinar
 - ▶ International Symposium/Possible DC Presentations
- ▶ Final Report Meetings and Presentations

How are grants selected?

- ▶ Competitive process
 - ▶ Full or partial funding.
- ▶ Professors put together research proposals for our review and ranking.
- ▶ Ranked on various issues.

Who is Eligible to Apply for Tribal ecoAmbassadors Awards?

➤ Eligible Applicants

- Accredited Tribal Colleges and Universities
 - 15 have participated in TeA since 2011
- All are Undergraduate institutions (4 year and 2 year degrees)
- Non-TCUs can partner with TCUs
 - Dartmouth College
 - Johns Hopkins University
 - Arizona University

2016 (Tentative) Grant Application Timeline

1. April — Conduct Pre-Open Webinars/Presentations sharing information about the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program history and award opportunities
2. May – Post-Open Webinars
3. May/June – Open Application Period
4. June/July – Collect applications; Review and rank applications
5. July/August – Notify all applicants of status; notify selectees
6. August/September – Complete administrative agreements (terms and conditions) with Tribal ecoAmbassadors for the year; award grants

2016 Application Proposed Changes and Highlights

- All applications must be submitted via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
 - DUNS Number
 - Finite Deadline
 - There will be a 45 day open period to apply.
- Awards will be up to \$50,000.
- ~ A couple weeks after solicitation opens, EPA will host two Post-Open Webinars



Questions?

- ▶ If you have any questions, please contact me.

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