



STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2023

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Introduction

The purpose of this strategic plan is to articulate the long-range direction and priorities for Tiwahe Foundation. The objectives and strategies described in this document were guided by Kim Tilsen-Braveheart, developed by our board of directors and will guide the Foundation's efforts and investments over the coming years.

Since our last strategic plan, the Foundation has experienced two changes in leadership and many other staff changes as well. Our community experienced the COVID pandemic that is ongoing. There have been riots right in our home community in response to the murder of an African American man in Minneapolis in May 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer, nestled into the broader issue of police brutality and longstanding social justice concerns. In the face of these challenging times, the Foundation has maintained and expanded our grantmaking and collaborated with new partners to address emerging community needs that continue to evolve. We initiated special fundraising and grantmaking efforts to respond to the COVID-related needs of our community.

In the coming years, we are focused on living our values through our daily organizational practices and relationships; expanding our programs and leadership; strengthening our governance, organizational processes, and evaluation and learning; increasing the visibility of our work by honoring the powerful stories of our grantees; strengthening our fundraising and relationships with our donor base; and growing our impact in the community.

In this plan, we present compelling and concrete objectives that will be further fleshed out in early 2021 under our new Executive Director's leadership and with the support of the board of directors. Informing all of these objectives is Tiwahe Foundation's commitment to our relatives -- all Indigenous peoples in the Twin Cities and Minnesota.

This plan reflects our belief that the complex and interrelated social issues facing Indigenous people, and the big ideas and visions they bring forward to respond to their needs and goals, can only be addressed through long-range, sustained effort and commitment. At the same time, we will pursue these objectives with alertness and adaptability to new challenges, opportunities, and lessons, as they emerge.

OUR CORE VALUES

Tiwahe (ti-wah-hay) means family in Dakota. It symbolizes how we are connected to all living things and one's personal responsibility is to protect family, community, and mother nature. There is no asset more precious to Indigenous communities than the health, safety, and well-being of our children, youth, elders, leaders, and families.

Tiwahe Foundation is located on Dakota and Ojibwe homelands, and we honor Dakota and Ojibwe cultural values. These values help guide our directives and commitment to our relatives -- all Indigenous peoples who live in the Twin Cities and Minnesota:

- Wóčhekjya – Prayer
- Gwayakwaadiziwin (Honesty) To achieve honesty within yourself is to recognize who and what you are.
- Wahwala / Dabaadendiziwin (Humility)
- Wičákha / Debwewin (Truth)
- Wóksape / Nibwaakaawin (Wisdom)
- Waúnšila / Zaagi'idiwin (Love/Compassion)
- Waóhola / Manaadendamowin (Respect)
- Wóohitike / Aakwade'ewin (Bravery/Courage)
- Wacantognaka / Gizhewaadizi (Generosity)

The Tiwahe Foundation embraces a mindset of abundance. As an Indigenous-led and staffed organization, we deeply understand the shocks, stresses, and healing our community members face. Through our programming we build capacity and provide resources to uplift the talent, resilience, and strength of our people who are today's and tomorrow's leaders.

OUR MISSION

To invest in and honor Indigenous peoples in the Twin Cities region, by supporting them to reach their goals in the areas of education, economic self-sufficiency, cultural traditions and language, health, and leadership.

OUR VISION

Indigenous people in Minnesota thrive and live culturally centered, healthy lives.

Tiwahe Foundation Strategic Priorities: 2021-2023

Tiwahe Foundation's board of directors has identified the following strategic priorities and objectives to help guide the organization. The Action Plans will be finalized with our new leadership to ensure they can contribute their vision to the final plan.

As we look to the future, accelerating change, increasing complexity, and continued uncertainty define the strategic landscape. In the midst of these challenges, our intent is clear: The Tiwahe Foundation will continue to learn and adapt in order to improve life in the Twin Cities and Minnesota for Indigenous people. This plan sets us on a trajectory for deepening our impact and improving every aspect of our operation. As we carry out this plan, we anticipate seeing a number of important benefits.

Priority 1

Grow Our Resources to Give:

We will continue to maintain and grow our endowment and other resources to support and enhance the strengths and goal-oriented work happening in the Indigenous community. Through intentional and ongoing building and strengthening of partnerships in community, foundation fundraising, and our individual donor base we can ensure the sustainability and strength of Tiwahe.

Priority 2

Strengthen and Expand Tiwahe Programs:

- **American Indian Family Empowerment Program (AIFEP Grants)**
- **Oyate Leadership Network**

We will focus on professional, entrepreneurial, educational, and leadership development opportunities.

Explore expanding our grantmaking to greater Minnesota and increasing the size of individual grants we will increase access to our resources and support for more Indigenous peoples in Minnesota.

The Oyate Leadership Network was started as a way to provide culturally-based leadership training and network development to Indigenous peoples in Minnesota. Based on what we learned in the first few years of this program, we will consider options for Tiwahe Foundation's best role in this space. Current options under consideration are: new and improved leadership training curriculum and programming; a clear articulation of the connection between AIFEP and the Oyate Network; opportunities for grantees who demonstrate success; fellowship model to support rising leaders in our community. We will situate this program in the existing space of leadership programs for Indigenous peoples.

Priority 3

Strengthen Staff, Infrastructure, and Governance:

We support learning opportunities and practices that ensure the organizational culture embraces Tiwahe Foundations' values and models these practices in our daily work, ensuring successful programming and community impact.

Priority 4

Evaluate Our Work and Impact:

We will continually assess in a culturally responsive way how we do our work and the impact we are having in our community, to learn from and strengthen our approach over time as well as to demonstrate to the community and funders the value of investing in Tiwahe Foundation.

Priority 5

Tell Our Story:

We will communicate with our stakeholders and honor our grantees by sharing their stories, and expand opportunities for them to tell their own stories. We will explore outreach and marketing approaches that showcase and broaden the impact story of Tiwahe Foundation in the lives of our donors, grantees, their families, and the Indigenous community.

Priority 6

Demonstrate Leadership in Community:

We will continue to work with our partners - American Leadership Forum (AALF), Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL), and LatinoLEAD - to advance collective agendas and work of the LinkingLeaders Partnership, listen to our community, and address social justice issues and public policy matters that directly impact the Indigenous community.

OBJECTIVES AND KEY ACTION STEPS

The Tiwahe Foundation has named our vision – ***Indigenous people in Minnesota thrive and live culturally centered, healthy lives.***

The following Priorities and Objectives outline how Tiwahe will fulfill its mission - **To invest in and honor Indigenous peoples in the Twin Cities region, by supporting them to reach their goals in the areas of education, economic self-sufficiency, cultural traditions and language, health, and leadership.** - over the next two years, advance this vision, and address our current context and critical issues, internally and externally.

Priority 1: Grow Our Resources to Give

Objectives

- ❖ Increase the number and total amount received from individual donors.
- ❖ Grow our Circle of Giving: Increase the number of funders who commit to one-time or multiyear investments in Tiwahe Foundation in alignment with our values and strategic priorities.

- ❖ Grow our current endowment through ongoing reinvestment, and strengthening relationships with our individual donor base.
- ❖ Explore expansion through key philanthropic partnerships and donor relationships to plan and implement expansion of AIFEP to greater Minnesota.
- ❖ Develop partnership and resources to support and enhance the strengths and goal-oriented work happening in Indigenous communities.

Priority 2: Strengthen and Expand Tiwahe Programs

Objectives

American Indian Family Empowerment Program (AIFEP Grants):

- ❖ Grow Tiwahe's ability to be a generous resource for the Indigenous community.
- ❖ Enhance outreach and communication.
- ❖ Act as a networking and leadership development resource.

Oyate Leadership Network

- ❖ Build on learnings and stakeholder feedback to redesign the program.
- ❖ Identify unique niches and pathways into the Oyate Leadership Network.
- ❖ Assess and develop partnerships.
- ❖ Engage with current Oyate Network members.

Priority 3: Strengthen Staff, Infrastructure, and Governance

Objectives

- ❖ Board hires and on-boards new Executive Director.
- ❖ Hire other staff and consultants as needed.
- ❖ Revise and implement Tiwahe Foundation employment and financial policies to be aligned with our values and current laws.
- ❖ Update governance policies and develop and implement board training.
- ❖ Maintain and update computer systems, technologies.

Priority 4: Evaluate Our Work

Objectives

- ❖ Strengthen AIFEP and Oyate grantee reporting and seek other mechanisms to learn more about the impact as well as challenges and opportunities it creates for grantees.
- ❖ Develop a mechanism to evaluate Oyate Leadership Network.
- ❖ Develop donor survey and/or conduct a community circle annually to report learnings, success, and seek feedback.
- ❖ Incorporate learning from evaluation results and continuous quality improvement practices into board-level and staff-level decision-making.
- ❖ Using the strategic framework regularly, lead the organization in learning and midcourse corrections when needed.

Priority 5: *Tell Our Story*

Objectives

- ❖ Work with grantees and program participants, through the grant reporting process, event evaluations, grantee honorings, Circle of Giving events, newsletter, website, and social media to share their stories and highlight the great work they are doing and how Tiwahe Foundation contributed to their success.
- ❖ Communicate the story of Tiwahe Foundation's vision, history, and impact.
- ❖ Invite donors and philanthropy to tell their stories in partnership with Tiwahe to leverage resources for and in the community.

Priority 6: *Demonstrate Leadership in Community*

Objectives

- ❖ Develop and implement strategies to fulfill our commitments to the Linking Leaders Network with Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL), African American Leadership Forum (AALF), and LatinoLead to address leadership race equity issues in the East Metro and across Minnesota.
- ❖ Provide and promote leadership around issues of race equity, public policy, and working across difference toward healing, transformation, and systems change.
- ❖ Demonstrate leadership in philanthropy, showcasing the impact of investing in Indigenous-led grantmaking and leadership programming in community.