



Diamond Willow
Ministries



Winter 2024
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YOUTH SHINE LIGHT IN COMMUNITY

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Each month, during the daily class time at the Tokata Youth Center, a **biblically and culturally relevant character quality** is taught. The corresponding Dakota language word is learned along with a relevant Bible story. Then all the lessons and activities during the month incorporate learning about the character trait. Of course the true test of good character is seeing when it is actually applied and lived out.

The youth at the TYC also focus on a service project each month that provides an opportunity for them to put their character learning into action. It is so very encouraging to see their enthusiasm to serve and have a positive impact in their community. An example is the cover photo of this newsletter which shows just how excited youth are to be working on a project/card to honor the elders and elected leaders of the Tribe as **respect or “wohóda” in the Dakota language** was the trait of the month. After being presented the card, Frankee Hall, Crow Creek Sioux Tribal Councilwoman, shared, “When you have young pure hearts that show so much love and thoughtfulness. [It] meant a lot to me. [I’m] trusting in God more. Not everything is bad.” The youth are **bright shining lights** within the community!



Tribal Leader Receives Card



Dakota Word for Respect

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS & LITTLE CHRISTMAS

CELEBRATING JESUS' BIRTH

A traditional Christmas program was held in December honoring the birth of Jesus with the youth performing the Christmas play **“From the Manger to the Cross”** as part of the annual community celebration.

Christmas is a joyous day to remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ! However, do you know that many Christians around the world enjoy a second holiday celebration 12-days later on January 6th known as **Little Christmas?**

Although Little Christmas is not commonly celebrated in the United States, it is a significant holiday in much of Latin America, Europe, and elsewhere. One of those “elsewhere” places happens to be here on the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation! This holiday tradition was first brought to the reservation by German priests well over a century ago. It took root and has been a beautiful part of the culture of the community ever since.



Christmas Program “From the Manager to the Cross”

This January 6th a large Little Christmas community gathering was held in the Ikce Oyate Christian Center. It was a fun time for families to share a potluck meal, sing Dakota language Christmas hymns, and read aloud the biblical account of Jesus from Matthew 2.



Little Christmas Fellowship and Hymn Singing

TOKATA INITIATIVE UPDATE

A PATH TO COMPLETION IN 2024!

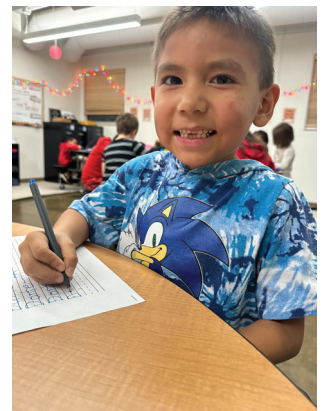
Praise God - exciting news to share! A Christian foundation awarded a matching grant that now provides a clear path forward for getting the Tokata Youth Center construction loan debt paid in 2024! What a blessing for the youth of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe!

Through December of 2024, this foundation is matching \$0.50 for every \$1.00 that is donated to pay off the construction loan debt. (If we can raise \$1.2 million, the foundation will match with \$600,000.)

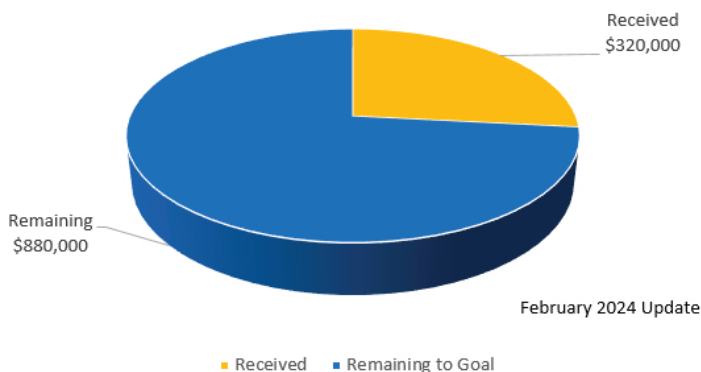
A clear path lies ahead to become debt free this year. Our 2024 goal to pay off the construction loan began at \$1.2 million and is now down to \$880,000.

What a blessing it will be to have the entire Tokata Youth Center fully paid for! Being debt-free will allow funding to then be allocated to TYC staffing and expanded and enhanced programming – even better serving the tribal youth, families, and the community.

For more information, please contact Diamond Willow Ministries' Executive Director Rod Vaughn at rod.vaughn@d-w-m.org or on his cell phone 605-730-0367.



2024 TYC Campaign \$1.2M Goal



To learn more about the Tokata Initiative Capital Campaign, use this QR code.



WHY ELECTRICITY MINISTERS TO TRIBAL YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Extreme weather conditions across the state of South Dakota are quite common. Recently the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation experienced a period of nighttime wind-chill temperatures that reached beyond **40 below zero** Fahrenheit! It is not uncommon either, to have windy summer days with temperatures near or **over 100 degrees**.

However, whether it is hot or cold, summer heat, or blustery wintery days, the action does not stop in any of the ministries' facilities, particularly at the Tokata Youth Center and the Ikce Oyate Christian Center. Youth programming, community gatherings, alternative school sessions, worship, support groups, weddings, wakes and funerals, memorials, community family gatherings, and the list goes on. The facilities here are a blessing to many and provide a tangible expression of God's love.

Of course, our facilities incur significant **electricity costs, which average \$2,700 a month!** A gift to the general fund will help ensure youth and families continue to have a comfortable safe place to meet and learn more about Jesus.



Make a
General Fund
Gift Today!



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