



NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-260891-OLS-26

Ak-Chin Indian Community

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$55,000

The Ak-Chin Indian Community's project will address needs identified by the community by focusing on providing library programs that promote healthy habits and career exploration for young adults ages 16-24. Project funds will support five new programs focused on physical well-being, mental health, financial literacy, digital literacy, and career/job training for young adults. The library will also expand and update its book collections for adults and young adults, and add new shelves, tables, and seating for the teen space and adult areas of the library. The project will provide direct benefit to the Tribal citizens within its rural project service area, young adults in particular, who rely on the library as a space to complete online assignments, study, and seek assistance with earning their GED.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Tribal profile
- Proposal narrative
- Schedule of completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Tribal Profile

The Ak-Chin Indian Community consists of both Tohono O'odham and Akimel O'odham in south-central Arizona. The Ak-Chin Indian Community was established in May 1912 through an Executive Order from President Taft. The O'odham translation of Ak-Chin means "mouth of the wash" or "place where the wash loses itself in the sand or ground." Ak-Chin community is one of the largest farming communities in the United States. Ak-Chin farming relies on washes or seasonal floodplains for irrigation. In 1961 the Tribe's government was formally organized, and the Ak-Chin are currently governed by a five-member Tribal Council. The Community operates Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino and Resort, Ak-Chin Entertainment Circle, and Ak-Chin Farms as industries within the community.

The Ak-Chin Indian Community Library opened in May 2009 as the learning and activity center for residents of the Ak-Chin Indian Community. The library shares the building with the Ak-Chin Education Department and works collaboratively to provide opportunities to support students and parents with their educational goals. The library provides access to computers, printing, and public Wi-Fi, weekly story time, monthly programs and events for families and community members of all ages.

According to the 2018-2022 U.S. Census, approximately 1,450 individuals live on Ak-Chin Indian Community tribal land. Within the Ak-Chin Indian Community, 18–24-year-olds are 12.4% of the population and the median age is 26 years old (American Community Survey 2018-2022). Among adults over twenty-five years old, 23% have less than a high school diploma or GED.

Today, Ak-Chin Indian Community Library is seeing a new generation of young people coming to the library to complete online assignments, study, and get help to reach their goal of earning their GED. The opportunities for young adults to gain employment, find a trade, or explore career options are more difficult in rural areas and there are greater challenges for youth to enter the workforce. The library provides a space and resources for finding a career path.

References:

University of Arizona. Ak-Chin Indian Community Library Profile. October 2025.
<https://naair.arizona.edu/ak-chin-indian-community> Accessed 4/6/2026

IMLS Native American Enhancement Grant

Healthy, Wealthy, and Wise

Grant Amount: \$55,000 Grant Period: 2026-2027

Objective 1: Serve the learning needs and interests of the community

Objective 2: Improve community wellbeing

Program Overview: This project will fund new books, programs, and updated teen and adult spaces for the Ak-Chin Indian Community library. The funding will provide new book and eBook collections for young adults and adults, library furniture and shelving, and young adult programs. The project will focus on library spaces and programs that promote well-being and healthy habits for ages 16-24. The library is a third space for education, discovery, and intergenerational community connections.

Narrative

The Ak-Chin Indian Community Library serves 1,500 tribal members, residents, and employees with information services and programs for all ages. This grant would focus on young adults, families, and library spaces. The library needs spaces for different audiences. Currently there are no consistent programs that focus on healthy habits or career exploration for young adults ages 16-24. There is a need for more intergenerational programs that focus on health and wellness and updated spaces to accommodate patrons studying and using the library for GED and other community programs. Within the Ak-Chin Indian Community, 18–24-year-olds are 12.4% of the population and the median age of the community is 26 years old (American Community Survey 2018-2022). Among adults over twenty-five years old, 23% have less than a high school diploma or GED.

Today, Ak-Chin Indian Community Library is seeing a new generation of young people coming to the library to complete online assignments, study, and get help to reach their goal of earning their GED. The opportunities for young adults to gain employment, find a trade, or explore career options are more difficult in rural areas and there are greater challenges for youth to enter the workforce. The library can provide a space and resources for finding a career path.

The library furniture and seating are from the original library opening in 2009 and have never been updated. The library provides opportunities, resources, and access for homeschool families and GED students to successfully complete their education, but seating capacity is limited. The library currently provides access to 8 computers, GED testing prep materials, and one study room, however, students need new books to explore careers, job training, and the creative arts. Books have been shown to improve mental and physical health as people age. The adults and young adults in the community need access to information on apprentices, careers and technical jobs, financial literacy training, health literacy, as well as seating and tables for studying. There are currently only three tables in the library and there are over 20 GED students. The library needs more tables and seating to accommodate students and families. Additionally, the library will provide spaces for families to learn and create healthy habits.

This year the library has five major activities:

- Expand and update book collections for adults and young adults
- Provide study spaces for homeschool, GED, and adult education
- Offer monthly young adult programs
- Offer intergenerational programs for families
- Promote literacy and lifelong learning

The goals of this project are:

- 1) update seating and tables in the teen space and adult area of the library
- 2) update adult fiction and non-fiction collections
- 3) update YA fiction and youth non-fiction collections
- 4) provide materials and resources for healthy habits and well-being intergenerational programs
- 5) funding for staff professional development to present at Arizona Library Association Conference

The library will partner with the Tribal education department to promote library programs for young adults. Parks and recreation will also be a partner in promoting our library services and programs. We hope to see an increase in library usage and program attendance by young adults. We will measure success by the number of patrons using library computers, services, program attendance, and surveys completed by participants of library healthy habits workshop series. Library staff will coordinate with the tribal health services director, social workers, and education director to identify topics and trainings that would be of interest to young adults and families in the community.

Healthy Habits Series Topics may include:

- Food Budgeting & Meal Planning
- The Mouth-Body Connection: Why Oral Health Matters
- The Power of Sleep
- Stress Management & Burnout Prevention
- Financial Planning Basics
- Healthy Relationships
- Road Safety
- Bike Safety
- Nature Walk: Destress & Connect in Nature
- Health Information Online
- Digital literacy
- Wellness for the Mind
- How to talk about Money
- Brave Agreements Navigating delicate conversations
- GED and beyond

Work Plan

September 2026: Library manager will order and purchase new shelves, tables, and seating for teen space and adult areas of the library. Library staff will gather surveys from community members on topics of interest for healthy habits Spring series.

October-December 2026: Library Tech will purchase and process new books and materials for library collections, library staff will survey, plan, prepare, and promote schedule of 2027 library programs for teens and adults. The workshops will be based off of community feedback surveys of what days and times are best for community members.

January-March: The library will host five new library programs focused on well-being, health, financial literacy, digital literacy, and careers/job training. Each program will have participants complete surveys after attending on what they learned and how they will apply the information presented.

April-June: The library will host additional programs focused on well-being, health, financial literacy, digital literacy, and careers/job training. Each program will have participants complete surveys after attending workshops on what they learned and how they will apply the information presented.

July- Evaluate: surveys and plan for fall library programs. Library manager will present data from workshops, lessons learned, and results at tribal directors meeting and at annual Arizona library conference.

The library will promote programs and workshops through the community newspaper, social media platforms, and email newsletters.

Project Results

The intended results of this project are to give community members information resources on topics that include financial literacy, health literacy, mental and physical health, career and adult education, and digital literacy. The library will serve as an information access point to help patrons 16-24 years old navigate online health information, financial literacy, digital literacy, and career and technical education exploration. Success will be evaluated by patron surveys and community participation. The outcomes of this project would increase book circulation for adults and young adults, increase library attendance, show an increase in the number of new and renewed library cards issued, and customer satisfaction surveys.

The library management system will be used to report on materials circulation, new library card users, and library collections. The library will present results at a local Arizona library conference and to the Tribal community council. The programming handouts and book collections will become part of the library collections to help others learn and discover more about health, wellness, and healthy habits. This project will allow the library to purchase high quality furniture and shelving that will continue to support library programs and services in the future. The books and materials purchased for library collections will continue to circulate and promote health and wellness as well as adult education beyond the conclusion of the grant period. The materials and resources purchased with the grant will help empower young adults to achieve their personal and educational goals. The library is a safe supportive environment for adolescents and adults to have access to information and resources to dream big.

Goals	Objectives	Outcomes
Provide information and resources for young adults ages 16-24 for life skills and healthy habits.	Host five new library programs focused on physical well-being, mental health, financial literacy, digital literacy, and careers/job training for young adults	Young adults will learn how to plan, budget, and find opportunities for work and education by attending library workshops.
Update study spaces and resources to support GED students, adults, and teens	Purchase new furniture and shelving for students, adults, and teens	New seating and tables provide spaces for students to complete their educational programs.
Update adult collections in the library	Expand library fiction and non-fiction collections for adults	Increase in circulation of adult books and library card users
Update YA collections in the library	Expand library fiction and non-fiction collections for young adults	Increase in circulation of YA books and library card users

Project leaders

Naomi Bishop, MLIS, Ak-Chin Indian Community Library Manager since November 2024

Naomi Bishop, MLIS, is Akimel O’otham and a member of the Gila River Indian Community. Her work experience specializes in health sciences and engineering information. She worked as an Associate Librarian for the University of Arizona Health Sciences Library at the College of Medicine- Phoenix from 2018-2025. Previously, she worked as the Science and Engineering teaching and research services librarian at Northern Arizona University (2015-2018) and the Science and Engineering Reference librarian at the University of Denver (2015-2016). She began her library career at Roche Tissue Diagnostics in Tucson, AZ (2012-2015). She has served as president of the American Indian Library Association and Medical Librarians Groups of Southern California and Arizona.

Linda Brill, Ak-Chin Indian Community Children’s Librarian since August 2023

Linda Brill has years of experience as an elementary educator and manager. She specializes in Open Court Reading programs and early literacy. She taught second graders in Baltimore and was a substitute teacher for many years.

References

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Mendelson, Tamar, et al. "Opportunity Youth: Insights and Opportunities for a Public Health Approach to Reengage Disconnected Teenagers and Young Adults." *Public Health Reports*®, vol. 133, no. 1_suppl, Nov. 2018, pp. 54S-64S. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033354918799344> .

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<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-art-effect/202203/the-mental-health-benefits-reading>

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University of Arizona Native American Advancement, Initiatives, and Research. "Ak-Chin Indian Community" <https://naair.arizona.edu/ak-chin-indian-community> . Accessed 6 Apr. 2026.

NAE	HEALTHY WEALTHY WISE	This is a schedule of tasks that will be completed every 2 months from August 2027- July 2027.
AK-CHIN LIBRARY	NAOMI BISHOP	

PROJECT PHASE	STARTING	ENDING	PROJECT PHASE	STARTING	ENDING
PHASE 1	8/1/2026	10/1/2026	Survey planning and furniture and supply ordering	August 2026	October 2026
PHASE 2	10/1/2026	12/31/2026			
PHASE 3	1/1/2027	3/1/2027	Survey collection, book ordering and processing	October 2026	December 2026
PHASE 4	3/1/2027	5/1/2027	Launch new teen space and adult areas in the library	January 2027	March 2027
PHASE 5	5/1/2027	7/1/2027	Host 5 spring adult workshops	January 2027	March 2027
PHASE 6	7/1/2027	7/30/2027	Host 5 spring young adult programs	April 2027	June 2027
			Analyze data and reporting	July 2027	July 2027

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL							MAY							JUNE						
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