

CHANTÉ PROJECT

Fort Peck Community College Newsletter



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TIYOSPAYE

BY: MARTY REUM + JAMIE REUM

For as long as we can remember, family engagement has been limited within our school settings excluding high school sporting events. It has been our mission and grant objective at the Chanté Project to shift this paradigm.

We thought we should try hand games as a way to bring families into the school while having fun. Educative and/or punitive talk doesn't spark much interest in general, and especially at the end of long days.

On November 25th we fed chili and fry bread made by well-known and renowned fry bread queen Ember Runsthrough. We figured we would get 10-20 people to show up for this first event. We had roughly 75 people show up to eat and engage with each other.

We also offered door prizes from Native Owned businesses. All of these things: great fry bread, hand games, and cool merchandise aren't fixes. Chanté isn't in the business of fixing. We work under the mission of bringing people together. We believe with stronger relationships, we won't need so much fixing.

This first Wolf Point Family Engagement evening brought us together with friendly competition, good food, and loud laughter. These are good medicines. Slowly we will break down the walls between communities and schools that were so forcefully and purposely put in place.



CIRCLES ARE CEREMONY
By: Rhea Smoker

How do we connect with others when we are so different, or so we think? How is a healthy relationship built?

We build these relationships by slowly opening up and listening. We create spaces that are inclusive and free of judgement. The circle is a safe space where students and/or teachers can use their voice and share what's on their minds or in their chanté. It is always surprising and reassuring how many people will slowly open up and share things about themselves while in circles. We come to find we are not so different or alone in our struggles and successes.

Here in Frazer we got to introduced to this wonderful relationship building tool at the beginning of the 2019 school year. We have hosted a few circles so far. We hosted one with all of Frazer's Staff as well the Administrators. We have also led two with students in both the 7th and the 8th grade classrooms. It is wonderful to witness honest sharing and deep connections forming.

Something I've learned hosting these circles is they will never go as planned. That is with life too, and that is okay. You just have to keep re-centering on your intended circle topics. The circle is a safe place. It is place of understanding and a place where we are all equal.

I look forward to having a circle with the Frazer School Board and more large family style circles, because in the end we are all family. We all share the common goal of our children walking good in life.

DESTINATION HAVRE, MT
By: Roxann Smith

November 12-13 began with Chanté students crawling out of their beds and meeting at each of their prospective schools to board buses. The first stop was sleeping buffalo to offer up prayers, then back on the road to Havre with a pit stop in Malta. Lunch was at Subway in Havre, then we took a look at the buffalo jump. Then everyone toured the "Beneath the Streets" in downtown Havre. Anticipating a cold tour, we found it was kept pretty warm considering the outside temperature was windy and 37 degrees.

Students were in awe of the museum where the tour began. The museum houses much of the history of the Burlington Northern train. Tour guides split the group in half and led the groups under the streets. When fire destroyed most of Havre, business owners moved underground to carry on their business until the town could be rebuilt. It was fun to watch the students gaze at the old antique storefronts, and take selfies as they moved along. The glass "windows" on the sidewalk which once provided light to the city beneath the streets. The opium den—one of three known to have existed in the early days, the bakery, and metal working business were most memorable.

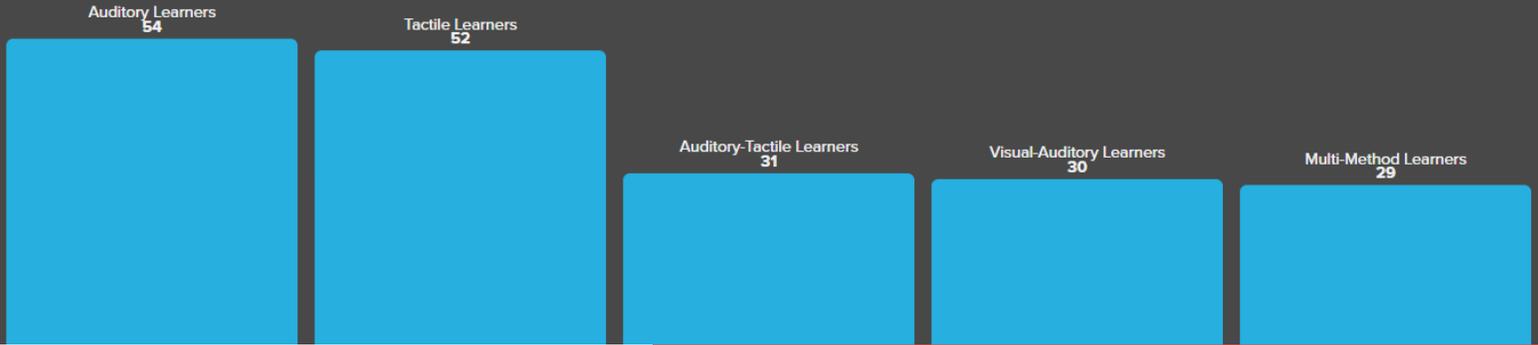
Later that evening, a talking circle took place to help students get to know each other, until their pizza was delivered. Thereafter, students swam and just hung out until bedtime.

The second day was spent at Montana State University – Northern where students had an opportunity to tour the college, and meet good people like Marge Campbell and Erica McKeon-Hanson. Erica is the program director of the Little River Institute. The Institute was created to serve as a center of tutoring, mentoring and support for American Indian students. Their location is still under construction in some areas, however they have a beautiful tutoring center, along with a quiet location to study.

Some of the initial reactions were that students liked the size of the college, and the welcoming they received from the staff and students. We had a few students very interested in the diesel mechanics program. A winter storm alert occurred with the promise of rain and ice. Everyone was thankful for the bus driver Doug Garfield safely returning everyone home.



TOP 5 LEARNING STYLES



XELLO tells ALL

Results are coming in! Fort Peck Middle and High School Students are interested in:

SUGGESTED CAREERS



PERSONALITY STYLES



CREATOR / Artistic
139 Students



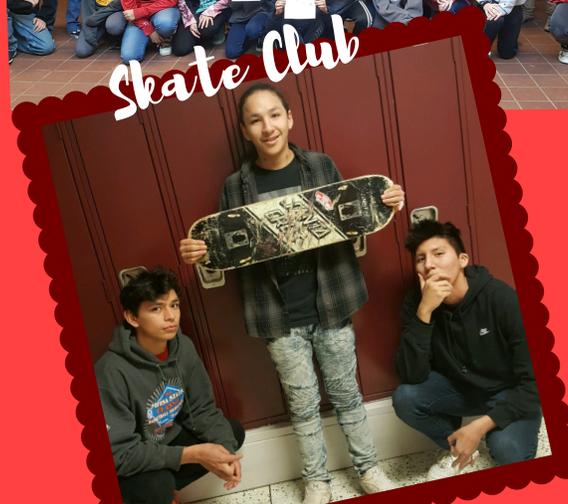
BUILDER / Realistic
117 Students



HELPER / Social
105 Students

Camera Roll - After School Sessions

By: Molly Redpath





Director's Corner

Carly Hosford-Israel

Notes from AK

Three weeks back I had the opportunity to go to Anchorage, AK for the first time. It was also my first time at a Native Wellness Institute (NWI) training. I have always heard such positive feedback about them and was excited to get to go. Neither AK or NWI disappointed.

Native Wellness Institute runs back to back trainings in one location. We were one of three trainings they were hosting that week in Alaska. Luckily for us, we were the first participants in their new Creative Program Development track, so we were a small group compared to the other two.

I note the size because I think it helped us connect into each other. By the end of the third day, in our closing circle the words trust and belonging kept coming up. In less than 72 hours a group of 12 professionals from New Mexico, Arizona, Michigan, Alaska, Minnesota, and Montana had shared intimately with each other about their traumas and their triumphs. We created community.

The biggest takeaway from the week was a resounding reassurance that we as a Chanté team are on the right track. Stronger work always rests on stronger relationships. LoVina Louie (Coeur d'Alene, Colville, Nez Perce), our NWI Facilitator, led us through so many layers of circles. These were all deep conversations about who we are, our 'why's' behind what we do, and our visions and dreams directing where we are headed.

I will be reflecting on our shared selves, challenges, and aspirations for weeks to come. It is good medicine to be with open hearts. I am so grateful that you are reading our newsletter and joining our Chanté community in various ways. Together we get to make the circle bigger until everyone knows their purpose and feels they deeply belong.



Happy Holidays from Chanté!

