

COOK NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES FOUNDATION

Strategic Plan
2020 – 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cook Native American Ministries Foundation (CNAMF) is the evolution of Charles H. Cook's legacy that began in the 1870's when he came to Arizona. In the early years, Rev. Cook worked with the Akimel O'odham people to gain their trust and share Christianity with them. It took him more than 10 years to convert his first tribal member, but from there, his legacy grew.

In 1911, Cook founded Cook Bible School, marking the beginning of his work training American Indian leaders in the church. Over time, his teachings and programs grew into a sprawling campus in Tempe that operated as Cook College and Theological School, Cook School of Christian Leadership, and Cook Christian Training School.

Today, the college/school no longer exists, having closed in 2008. Proceeds from sale of the land the school once stood on were used to establish Cook Native American Ministries Foundation in 2015. As one travels through Indian Country, the name "Cook School" continues to be familiar with many as they recall stories in their neighborhoods of either family members or friends who attended the school.

Cook Native American Ministries Foundation (CNAMF) is positioned to continue this legacy and be an inspiration and support for the next generation of American Indian leaders. CNAMF continues to examine innovative avenues to assist those in need and grow our base of American Indian leaders in church, business, politics, and civic and social service.

The past five years have been a time of reflection, planning, learning and reorganization. The financial, management and organizational variables have been stabilized and this plan will allow CNAMF to map a course for the interim three years as we advance our outreach and programs and cultivate a robust donor base to sustain our operations.

OVER THE
NEXT THREE
YEARS,
CNAMF'S
PLAN IS
DIVIDED
INTO THREE
PHASES:

Year One – CNAMF's primary goal will be to **position** itself among the constituent, philanthropic and funding communities. The goal will be achieved utilizing the following key concepts:

- Examine and redesign
- Enhance Infrastructure
- Initiate and Plan
- Position and Promote
- Engage Community
- Raise Awareness

Year Two – CNAMF will focus on efforts to **promote** the organization by implementing the Strategic plan, highlighted by initiatives that will:

- Expand networks
- Engage new funders and grow our funds
- Validate findings to work toward promoting the organization
- Establish value
- Raise awareness

Year Three – CNAM will **establish** itself as a viable contributor to the philanthropic and religious community. This will allow us to:

- Review successes (revisiting the SWOT analysis method)
- Expand outreach
- Promote thoughtful leadership
- Engage new partners
- Secure new funding
- Grow funds
- Update Strategic Plan to look towards a five-year plan

CNAMF will devote the first portion plan time to evaluation and implementing new ideas gained as a result of survey, focus group sharing and consultation. At mid-year, each year, we will evaluate our progress, measure successes and challenges, and make any adjustments that may arise. Following, we will envision into a reality an updated process with which to address changes we are implementing.

Throughout the next three years, CNAMF is dedicated to the respectful and reverent presentation of our plan. Our most precious commodity is the grassroots American Indian communities who deserve to live in a healthy, sustaining, positive and productive environment.

Mission Statement

In response to the Christian Gospel, Cook Native American Ministries Foundation equips and empowers Native Americans to better serve their churches and communities.

Vision Statement

The vision of Cook Native American Ministries Foundation is to further Christ's mission by developing and implementing long lasting programs and services nationally that positively impact and advance Native communities and those we serve.

Core Values

CNAMF achieves excellence by:

Keeping God's teachings as a **guiding principle**

Serving with **respect** and **integrity**

Demonstrating **leadership** and **collaboration**

Valuing **inclusiveness** and **diversity**

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS: What are the strengths of CNAMF?

Strengths are factors or attributes of CNAMF that help to achieve its goals and objectives.

- Legacy
- History
- Based in an area with a large Native population
- Bold change in the past
- Open to focus on new initiatives
- Faith based
- Board and staff knowledge and passion
- Financial resources

WEAKNESSES: What are the weaknesses of the CNAMF?

Weaknesses are factors or attributes of the CNAMF that may be harmful or prevent CNAMF from achieving its goals.

- Confused Objectives
- Lack of leadership continuity
- Board succession planning
- Lack of relationship with Native communities and churches
- Inconsistent and/or confusing message to constituents
- Financial transparency
- Lack of awareness
- Infrastructure transition
- Lack of understanding of Native communities' needs and how to address
- Recognition of changing society and better delivery system
- Branding not adequate
- Data needs updating
- Audit results
- Development system
- Communication with donors and communities

SWOT ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES: What are the opportunities related to the CNAMF?

Opportunities are factors or conditions that would help CNAMF achieve its goals and objectives.

- Build partnerships with Tribes, Non-profits, churches from other denominations
- Additional resources including staff
- Receiving more outside gifts and grants
- Build partnerships with ASU, GCU, NAU and Arizona Community Foundation
- Grant making organization
- Develop the Cook Learning Institute (Native Ministry training)
- Increase Native American participation in churches/ministries
- Numerous partners to collaborate/work with
- Unmet needs with an increasing audience
- Great thirst – lots of seekers
- Faith-based values are strong
- Re-introduce and create awareness with denominations, alumni, donors, and Native organizations

SWOT ANALYSIS

THREATS: What are the threats related to the CNAMF?

Threats are factors or conditions that are harmful or may prevent CNAMF from achieving its goals.

- Lack interest – fighting against cultural changes
- Institutional racism and perception of Native communities
- Youth equate institution's role to colonization
- Competition for funding dollars
- Funding restricted as some corporations do not give to faith-based organizations
- Disconnect with Native communities
- Keeping donor data updated
- Timely audits
- Inconsistent leadership
- Temptation to fund projects that are not aligned with vision or do not have impact
- Temptation to not serve Native communities would jeopardize trust
- Loss of identity
- Church in decline as a center of influence
- Number of existing Native American charities – competition for dollars and resources

COOK NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES FOUNDATION'S STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

- Churches – American Indian ministries at national denominations i.e. Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Catholic
- Nondenominational/Community churches with large populations of American Indian/Alaskan Natives
- Donors – past and present
- Cook School Alumni/Former Employees
- CNAMF Grantees/Sponsorship Recipients
- Native Youth
- Native American Partners/Non-profit Organizations
- Other partners/organizations
- Non-Native Churches – Mission-based or those that want a relationship with CNAMF

SYNOPSIS OF SUMMER 2019 MEETINGS

OVER THE SUMMER OF 2019, THE COOK NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP CONDUCTED DISCUSSIONS WITH FOCUS GROUPS COMPRISED OF IDENTIFIED STAKEHOLDER GROUPS. QUESTIONS WERE ASKED AND DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ENSUED. THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THESE MEETINGS, IN ADDITION TO THE SWOT ANALYSIS HELPED SHAPE THE GOALS OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

Most of the participants were familiar with “Cook Christian Training School” and had either attended the school or knew someone who attended (Positive reflections of school experiences).

Participants were unclear as to the exact programs now offered through the recently established Cook Native American Ministries Foundation. One group shared the thought CNAMF only served churches and communities in the Southwest.

Most of the groups surveyed were unfamiliar with how grantmaking works. They all expressed a desire to learn more and were excited about the opportunity to attend a workshop on grants and how this arm of non-profit and foundation programming works.

When asked about challenges facing their community, the following were identified as most significant:

Youth engagement - Every group surveyed voiced the need for youth engagement and identified this as a critical issue to be addressed. In one community it was shared that, “the youth begin to ‘drift away’ and ‘experiment’ around the age of 12 or 13.” They felt it was important to have fun programs for this age group to provide firm spiritual grounding during these years.

Funding - Most of the participants stated their churches or community organizations have very little funding for projects to engage members and draw in new members. They are unable to have vacation bible school, bible study programs, community ministries due to lack of funding.

They acknowledged that low numbers in the congregations and low attendance at services and related events contribute to the funding challenges as well.

Tribal language retention –Participants felt it was important to attend church services together and to be able to sing hymns and pray in Native languages. It was acknowledged and celebrated that some Native pastors preach in their Native language and some Native congregations sing in their Native languages. All felt it is important to keep Native languages alive through Christian education modules and music.

Belonging to a congregation - Many expressed that the church served as an added family to their own and they felt a sense of comfort and well-being, by belonging to a church. Low numbers in the congregations and low attendance at services and related events all contribute to the challenges identified above and participants expressed desires to grow their congregation numbers.

When speaking of the future, many respondents expressed a desire to see renovations in the churches in their communities, as well as increased youth involvement and larger congregations. They indicated they would like to see the churches with high American Indian numbers in their congregations become an important part of the overall community by engaging in projects to help educate others about American Indians.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1.0 - To realize exemplary leadership, updated books and records

Strategic Approach

To fulfill CNAMF's primary mission, the organization must have exemplary leadership on its board and staff where transparency is practiced, with accurate bookkeeping and timely, regular financial audits. This allows CNAMF to maximize gift and grant potential and build relationships with its stakeholders and partners.

Excellent governance requires proper board structure, board member skills, diversity, and succession planning. Similarly, management must have proper organizational structure, leadership skills and diversity.

Books and records are required to demonstrate to stakeholders that CNAMF is a good steward of resources, transparent with information, and can be trusted.

Section 2.0 - Strengthen relationships with Native communities and churches

Strategic Approach

CNAMF's mission is to serve American Indian communities and churches. With a desire to serve effectively, CNAMF must cultivate trusted relationships with these communities. Once established, CNAMF must seek to understand the opportunities and challenges faced by these communities, as well as their needs and resources. Once understood, CNAMF can identify grant-giving opportunities to leverage opportunities and address challenges within these communities.

Process / Projects to achieve goal

2.1 Board and staff commitment to face-to-face meetings with Native American communities and churches.

Project Champion: Executive Director/Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

GOALS and STRATEGIES

2.2 Documented understanding of community and church challenges and opportunities

Project Champion: Executive Director/Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

2.3 Develop and implement a formal grant request proposal system

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

2.4 Implement process to monitor grants given and the impact of the grants as compared to the grant proposals.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

Section 3.0 - Develop educational resources and delivery system

Strategic Approach

CNAMF's mission statement states it is committed to equip and empower American Indians/Alaska Natives to transform and serve their churches and communities. The development of educational resources and a delivery system that advances this mission is an important part of equipping and empowering tribal people. This allows CNAMF to highlight its original foundation by providing educational resources for Native churches and ministries. CNAMF must continue a regular dialogue with American Indian/Alaska Native communities to understand their priorities and needs. A clear objective from the 2019 summer focus groups is to dedicate resources to youth engagement in church ministries and communities. CNAMF will actively identify additional resources to help facilitate the creation and delivery of educational resources to Native communities including organizational development, nonprofit development training, and location of outside grant resources.

GOALS and STRATEGIES

Process/Projects to achieve goal

3.1 Continue regular dialogue with Native American communities to determine proper resources to connect them with.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

3.2 Identify a user friendly core curriculum model based on stakeholder input, including educational resources focused on church visioning and planning, nonprofit resources, financial planning, increasing youth participation, and maintaining cultural heritage.

Project Champion: Executive Director/Program Manager

Timeline: Year two

3.3 Based on educational concepts identified, develop and/or edit content for core curriculum courses.

Project Champion: Program Manager/Executive Director

Timeline: Year two

3.4 Determine and implement a culturally based delivery system for courses. Some courses might be delivered via e-learning platforms and some might be in-person. Identify external organizations/partnerships that might have resources to assist.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Year two and Year three

3.5 Pilot the courses to determine effectiveness. Modify as necessary.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: End of year two and year three

3.6 Once courses are finalized, determine implementation plan.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Year two

GOALS and STRATEGIES

Section 4.0 - Create a development plan and communications plan

Strategic Approach

CNAMF has undergone a transformation in the last ten years. New board and management leadership has led to a new mission, vision and operating model. While these changes are critical to the ongoing sustainability of CNAMF, they have led to a lack of awareness or uncertainty among donors and constituents of CNAMF's programs. CNAMF must create and implement a communications plan to provide clarity about its mission, vision and programs. For donors, CNAMF must develop a strong and effective case for support that informs donors of why their gifts are critical to CNAMF and the great impact this has on Native churches and communities.

Process/Projects to achieve goal

4.1 Confirm brand identity. Engage necessary resources, consultants, etc. to develop better branding/messaging.

Project Champion: Executive Director/Program Manager

Timeline: Year two

4.2 Meet with stakeholders to determine appropriate messaging to effectively communicate CNAMF's mission, vision and programs.

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Year two and Year three

4.3 Identify proper channels to reach intended constituents

Project Champion: Program Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

4.5 Create a communications plan that includes a calendar, messaging and channels. Develop a case for support to be presented to donors.

Project Champion: Program Manager/Independent Consultant

Timeline: Year one and Year two

GOALS and STRATEGIES

4.7 Implement an annual donor fund program. Identify major gift prospects and an approach to engaging them. Distribute newsletters, solicitations, etc. to donors and prospective donors informing them of the case for support, stories, testimonials, and the ask for a gift.

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Ongoing

4.9 Develop and implement a planned giving program and society.

Project Champion: Executive Director/Board Committee

Timeline: Year three

Section 5.0 - Systems and processes

Strategic Approach

CNAMF must examine processes, systems, workflow and workload with the objective of streamlining and simplifying to accomplish its strategic goals. With current workloads and the goals of this strategic plan, time must be efficiently utilized to focus on CNAMF's strategic goals and on building relationships with stakeholders. This strategic goal must be a priority to allow the board and staff to effectively focus on their objectives and other strategic goals.

Systems and processes should be reviewed with a focus on:

- Furthering the organization's mission
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Improving the quality and accuracy of information
- Simplifying, and
- Operating in a financially viable manner.

Process/Projects to achieve goal

5.1 Define and clarify roles for board and staff

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Year one and Year Two

GOALS and STRATEGIES

5.2 Develop a disciplined approach to understand critical business processes.

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Ongoing

5.3 Analyze processes to determine if efficiencies can be gained. For each, determine if external parties might provide resources for improvement as needed.

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Year two

5.4 Maintain a continuous process improvement program and a collaborative work environment.

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Ongoing

5.5 Review systems to determine if they meet the business objectives. Ensure systems properly maintain security of information.

Project Champion: Executive Director

Timeline: Ongoing

STRATEGIC PLAN FLOW AND IMPLEMENTATION

The directives for each year will be evaluated at mid-year to measure successes, identify challenges, adjust as needed, update process and implement agreed upon modifications. The annual organizational operating is expected to remain conservative for the duration of the plan years.

CNAMF is dedicated to the respectful and reverent implementation of our plan. This will ensure our grassroots American Indian churches and communities will achieve living in healthy, sustaining, positive and productive environments.

Year One – **Position** CNAMF among the constituent, philanthropic and funding communities.

- Examine and redesign
- Enhance Infrastructure
- Initiate and Plan
- Position and Promote
- Engage Community
- Raise Awareness

Year Two – **Promote** CNAMF by implementing the Strategic plan.

- Expand networks
- Engage new funders and grow our funds
- Validate findings to work toward promoting the organization
- Establish value
- Raise awareness

Year Three – **Establish** CNAMF as a viable contributor to the philanthropic and religious community.

- Review successes (revisiting the SWOT analysis method)
- Expand outreach
- Promote Thought Leadership
- Engage New partners
- Secure new funding
- Grow funds
- Update Strategic Plan to look towards a five-year plan