

# ★ Volunteer Guide to Fundraising • Seven Fires

[www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org)



This fundraising guide will assist you in taking an active role to help the children and foster cross-cultural understanding in your community. Thank you for volunteering!

## Welcome Flame Keepers

In this guide, you will find:

- **Why Seven Fires Foundation**

Our vision, our mission... why we care.

- **Our Current Projects**

Review our current projects in this kit — we hope this information will help to inspire you, and provide you with enough detail to choose an area that makes your heart soar to share your enthusiasm with others.

- **Fundraising Made Simple**

Six steps to plan your fundraising strategy and help make your fundraising more successful.

- **Effective Letter Writing Campaigns**

Creative ideas for quick and effective ways to start your fundraising.

- **Your Community and You**

You are your best promotional tool. Share your passion.

- **Four Fun Ideas**

Make it simple! Make it fun! Here are four easy fundraising ideas.

- **Special Events and More**

Considering a special event or a community project? Check out these other FUNdraising ideas.

- **The Donation Process**

Receiving and tracking your donations. And don't forget the follow-up!

- **Sample Fundraising Letters**

Sample letters to help give you ideas for writing your own letter campaign.

- **Sample Press Announcement**

Sample press announcements to help you reach out to local publications in your area. (Please submit all press releases to our office for prior approval.)

- **Members Form**

Don't forget to JOIN the Seven Fires Foundation team and extend that opportunity to your friends, family and everyone on your List!

Keep in mind that together we can make a difference! We will do it together - the members of Seven Fires Foundation will help by providing you with ideas, newsletters, fliers, forms, and support – we are more than willing to assist you however we can with whatever you may need.

Above all--

Remember to have fun!

Any donation... large or small is a blessing and truly appreciated.

# ★ Why Seven Fires Foundation?

## A Vision for Helping the Children

In 2002, a group of friends came together to form a non-profit organization for the common good of helping the children. Seven Fires Foundation was born out of a deep commitment and desire to help our relations, preserve our ancient traditions and heal our Earth Mother. Our mission is to help preserve the ancient traditions for this generation and generations to come. We are a vehicle for people of all faiths, colors and traditions to join together in mutual respect to address the problems that face us all. Together we foster ways of remembering and honoring the inter-connectedness of all life.

We are the seventh generation! Visit our web site at [www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org) for a deeper understanding of the Seventh Generation.



Together, we unite to heal our selves  
and to heal our Earth Mother.

We welcome you.



**seven fires** foundation

National Office: 541-347-7801

# ★ How You Can Help

[www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org)



The Seven Fires Foundation is dedicated to helping re-establish the language, traditions and values within the First Nation's children and families to preserve the culture. Below are current projects—

Choose that which  
touches your heart



## The Lakota Project

*The Lakota Project encompasses several specific projects and needs for the Lakota people on Pine Ridge Reservation.*

### Educational Immersion School Project

Seven Fires Foundation has instituted a national fund raising campaign to raise money for the development and implementation of The Lakota Project. The Lakota Project is a full immersion program to teach the children cultural wisdom through the teaching of the Lakota language. Through an outreach program of teaching the children and families members in their homes, we can effectively teach and preserve the language and traditional values, and assist them in applying this knowledge on a daily basis into their lives. While our primary objective is to educate the student in the fundamentals of the Lakota traditions through the teaching of the Lakota language, the benefits will far exceed that of learned knowledge. They will develop a deep respect for themselves, others and the environment. A program that will impact many lives for generations to come!

### Sponsor a Child Program

You can take an active role in the implementation of the Lakota Project and changing a child's life forever. Consider sponsoring a Lakota child through a full one year course in the Lakota Project! Did you know the high school drop out rate on Pine Ridge is among the highest in the Nation? The drug abuse, teen pregnancy and suicide rates are among the highest of all the ethnic groups? Frankly, there are currently not enough humanitarian programs in existence to really make a difference in the lives of these children. We believe that cultural education starting at home, WILL make the difference for these children. Having respect for self, others and the environment is the answer to changing these staggering statistics. You can help make that happen— one child at a time! Sponsor a Child today or make your fundraising commitment of \$1,500 to sponsor a child for a full year.

## Community Educational Center Land Purchase/Development

Can you purchase 160 acres for a mere \$16,000? Well, we can! And we will! The Lakota Project has made the financial commitment to purchase 160 acres outside of Manderson, South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation. This parcel of land will serve as Community Cultural Education Center and headquarters for the Lakota Project. The three Lakota Grandmothers who currently own the land have graciously supported the Lakota Project by selling this parcel at a substantial discount. They are pleased the land will be used in such an honoring way. Please help us in making the final purchase of the land by donating today or making a fundraising commitment to assist in the purchase. We challenge you to kick off a Sponsor-an-Acre campaign, where each acre may be purchased for a mere \$100! Or host a fundraiser to install a well... or gravel a drive... or purchase lumber... or... let your imagination flow!



*This photo shows a portion of the 160 acres of land outside Manderson where the Lakota Project Educational Center will be built for the children.*



## Cultural Preservation Projects

### Protectors of the Sacred Pipe Publication Series

Roger LaMere is one of the Protectors of the Holy Pipe and has retained the old Lakota language and the culture of the Lakota people for many years. His instruction began as a young child by family members dedicated to holding onto the teachings of their ancestors. The time has come where Roger has been instructed to preserve the teachings and help educate others through a series of publications, Protectors of the Holy Pipe.

This series of books which will be presented, will address many of the questions concerning the Sacred Pipe and an individual's relationship to it. Defining the very foundation of the Sacred pipe and providing each of us with a deeper understanding of its use in the present day. Many of the books that can be found on the shelves of bookstores today, have yet to cover the information that will be presented in this series of books. The information contained in these books find their origins at the

very heart of the Lakota language and culture.

Seven Fires Foundation is seeking sponsors to help fund the printing and publication of this series of books. This is an incredible opportunity for you to preserve some of the most sacred teachings given to the Lakota people.

### Digital Preservation Program/Equipment

Through the course of the teachings within the Lakota Project, Seven Fires Foundation is committed to helping in the digital preservation of the teachings. This form of preservation will allow the sharing of the teachings across the lands and throughout time. We are in need of specific digital documentary camera equipment, computer hardware and software. If you are so motivated, you might consider helping us procure such equipment or fundraise for the purchase of the equipment.



## Supply Drives

Fuel to heat homes

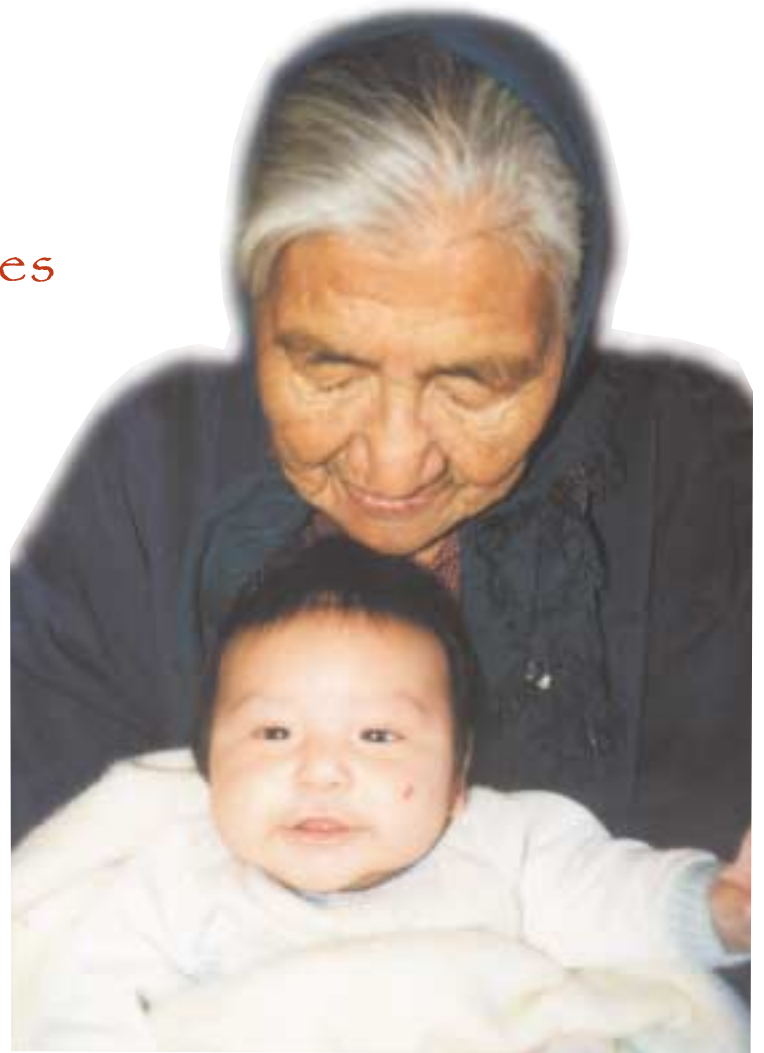
Clean drinking water

Food for children and elders

Money for necessities

### **A Helping Hand ~ for those in Need**

When poverty is among the highest of the Nation, there is always much need for basic living essentials. On an ongoing basis, we at Seven Fires Foundation in coordination with the Lakota Project, will continue to lend a hand wherever and whenever we can. There is a continual need to help the elders and the families that are impoverished in and around the reservations. There is always a need for donations of fuel, supplies, food and cash for necessities. If you would like to coordinate a Drive in your area, I am sure we can identify the need. Drop us an email or give us a call to discuss the endless possibilities.



**Call: 541-347-7801   Email: [dir@7fires.org](mailto:dir@7fires.org)   [www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org)**

# ★ Fundraising Made Simple



Prepare your fundraising activities following these six steps.

Remember, you are giving others a chance to share and help.

## 1 Create Your List

This will be the backbone of all your fundraising plans. Start by making a master list of everyone you know (emails, mailing addresses and phone numbers). Don't leave anyone off your list— your doctor, your friends, co-workers, employees of your favorite restaurant, neighbors, church members, clients, customers, vendors and suppliers, businesses you frequent— don't be shy. You never know who might be willing to help. You'll find that people will be honored you've asked them to be a part of your special project. The cardinal rule of fundraising is if you don't ask, you won't receive! Try setting a goal to get as many people as possible on your list.

## 2 Set a Fundraising Goal

Set your personal fundraising goal! What do you want to raise to help the program of your choice? Write out your goals and your reasons for volunteering. This will help you when you talk to others. Set a date that you want to achieve your goal by. You'll find that with a good solid plan in place, you'll meet your goal swiftly and have a lot of fun doing it. Get your fundraising feet wet with a letter writing or email campaign.

## 3 Create a Schedule

Create a fundraising schedule to keep you on top of your deadlines. Start early and set deadlines that will allow you to easily meet

your goals. Convey a sense of urgency, this limits donors time to forget about your ask and will help you in meeting your deadlines.

## 4 Implement Ideas That Work For You

Keep your schedule in mind and be realistic about what you can do.

- Lot's of free time? – Host a special event
- Busy, busy? – Send letter and emails to everyone you know
- Somewhere in between? – Sell SFF T-shirts, posters and art cards!

## 5 Keep Cost Down

You may have some small costs such as postage, paper, phone calls and supplies.

Tip: don't spend more money than you raise for a single fundraiser. Some of these materials can be donated. Approach your local printers and office supply stores and tell them about your goal.

## 6 Express Your Personal Style

You're taking on an extraordinary project. You're helping others. Let your passion for your goal shine in all the letters you write, the flyers you create and the message you send.

# ★ Effective Letter Writing Campaigns

[www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org)



Limited on time? A simple, quick and effective way to start your fundraising is by making direct asks. You can start today! Easy, quick and simple! Via mail or email— 6 steps to success

## The Letter Writing Campaign

Begin with your list of family and friends. Select the fundraising letter style (from our examples) you like and tailor it to your own personality. Send it out, providing them with a self addressed, stamped envelope to make it easy for them to donate to your campaign. Your friends and family love to hear about what you're doing, it's a quick and easy way to meet your goal. You are sharing your passion with others and extending an opportunity to them to help - not just asking for money. When writing your letter, make it simple, direct and fill it with your personality and passion. You are unique. Infect others with the joy of helping others. You'll be surprised at your quick results. Most participants raise their entire amount with this simple campaign. Just follow these steps when writing your own letter.

### 1 Introduction

Tell your list what you're doing. Don't be afraid to shout, "I've gone crazy! I'm helping to save a Culture!" Get right to the point and do it with pride.

### 2 Explain Who Benefits

Many donors may not be familiar with the intricacies and importance of cultural preservation. Focus on why you want to help the children and the elders while preserving the ancient traditions, sharing statistics about the extreme poverty and the effects it has on these children each day. Explain the needs for outside assistance, their assistance. Share how their donation will teach these children honor, respect, generosity, and hope...

### 3 You're Request

Invite them to get involved by making a contribution. Explain your fundraising commitment as something you want to do – not need to do. Make your recipients feel like they can be a part of your goal and help these children too. Tell them that any small donation will help— the bigger ones will really help! Ask them for a specific amount. Tell them how much you want to raise and why.

### 4 Give Them a Deadline

Give your recipients a specific date so they know when you need their contribution. Remind them their donation qualifies as tax-deductible!

### 5 Make it Easy to Give

Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Sometimes a commitment for payment rather than payment at that time is an option – maybe they can postdate a check? You can even have them make a credit card donation online at our website—[www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org).

### 6 Always Follow Up!

Always send a thank you note. Keep your list informed! Call those on your list who you think may have forgotten, and send a follow-up letter as a gentle reminder. Tell them how much their support means to you... and to the Lakota children!

# ★ Your Community and You



**You** are Your **Best** Promotional Tool! You have just committed yourself to an incredible project, one that will change your life and the lives of children and elders! Infect others with the same passion you have to help.

## Tell people what you're doing

This is special, share it!

- Write a press release about the project and your fundraising commitment— watch the donations arrive!
- Use email, letters, phone calls. Spread the word and share the opportunity!

## Contact Local Businesses and Corporations

Local businesses like to support local efforts. Do you or someone close to you know the owner? You may want to approach your local businesses with your letter campaign and follow up with a phone call. Become familiar with Corporate programs in your area.

- Matching – Many companies have a corporate matching program set up for their employees. Check with human resources to see what their policy is, and don't forget your own workplace! If they match funds for every dollar you raise, that could make a huge difference in your fundraising plans.
- Sponsors – There are many companies that actively support charities and have special budgets set aside for donations. Look on the internet, within your community, your local supermarkets and businesses. And by all means, talk to your employers about sponsoring you. It's amazing how much your company may want to support you in your philanthropic endeavors.

- Create a sponsorship proposal that includes: A letter of request. State what you are doing and for whom it benefits. Include a newsletter and flier so they know who they are donating to.

Start this process early as sometimes it takes weeks to get approvals and... don't get discouraged. Companies receive many such requests everyday, be patient.

## Look to Your Community

What you're doing is special! You'll be surprised how much response you get from people who are proud of what you're doing and want to be a part of it—especially when helping children is involved! Service clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Elk, Moose and others are excellent sources for fundraising. Don't forget to ask your local churches and temples to get involved through donations or community events. Keep them in mind whenever you plan a new event! Share, share, share your commitment.

Contact clubs in your area and ask if you can give a presentation. Many clubs have breakfast, lunch or dinner meetings where you can speak to present your request and explain the importance of the project. Don't forget this is a good opportunity to sell our volunteer program too!

## ★ Four Fun Ideas

Many of our volunteers start sharing just by telling 10 friends about why they are excited about helping the children through Seven Fires Foundation. It is easy to ask 10 friends for \$10!



Try one of these!



### How to Raise \$100 in Just Ten Days!

**(10 Days = \$100)**

- Donate your own \$10
- Ask your significant other for \$10
- Ask your boss for \$10
- Ask a co-worker for \$10
- Ask a friend for \$10
- Ask your neighbor for \$10
- Ask a relative for \$10
- Ask your doctor for \$10
- Ask another co-worker for \$10
- Ask another relative for \$10

It's Easy! Ask 10 people for \$10!!! Then ask another 10 or 20!



### Parties • Dinners • Dessert Night

These can range from black tie affairs to simple pizza parties. Again, use the "Who Do You Know" principle. Do you have a friend in a band? Do you know the owner of a bar or a restaurant? Some simple events include having a band play at a club where you get the cover charge or a percentage of the drink sales. Or perhaps a restaurant will allow you an evening offering an all-you-can eat buffet for \$15 where you get \$7.50 and the restaurant gets \$7.50. You can even throw your own party and ask that your guests pay a cover charge, provided the cover is well over the cost of the party.

These types of events can be very labor intensive. Be careful how you structure them and be clear about your expectations. They will take lots of volunteer time recruiting others to help you pull them off successfully. But they can be very fun, informative and lucrative if done correctly.



## **A Community Garage Sale, Bake Sale or Arts/Crafts Sales**

One of the traditional ways to raise money is through bake sales, arts and crafts sales, candy sales, garage sales, etc. Do you know someone who is a great baker, an artist, or a published writer? Ask them if they might donate their creations to you so that you may allocate the sale towards the program. Ask friends and neighbors to donate used items for a community garage sale, or some unwanted collectibles for an ebay sale.

- Gather your neighbors
- Collect that stuff on the shelf that you say you'll use and never do
- Dig through your closets your kids closets
- Find a popular spot in town and set up a little bake sale table, or sell them at work. Ask friends and family to contribute a baked good
- Get yourself a booth at a local craft bazaar, call your friends and family and get them all to join you in creating unique crafts
- Make and sell jewelry, holiday ornaments, picture frames – use your creativity!
- In your promotions, make sure you mention where all donations will go to
- Have Posters/Fliers on hand to promote the cause/project.

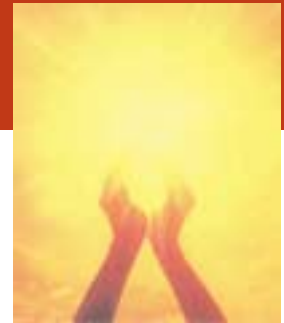


## **Silent Auction/Raffle**

Raffles work better for groups raising funds. Often groups can get items donated to them from local stores, companies, and restaurants, which they can raffle off, usually at a larger event such as a dance. Use the “Who Do You Know” principle. If there are no large items to raffle off, sometimes groups buy something like a television. That is fine as long as the proceeds are well over the purchase price. Sometime you may be allowed to stand in a local mall or in front of a store to sell tickets – it can't hurt to ask permission!

- Look around for events that are taking place in your area and see if they'll allow you to hold a silent auction at their event site – maybe a big convention is in town!
- Visit local merchants and request donations of popular items – remember that all items donated will be tax deductible
- Be creative – talk to travel agents, resorts, restaurants, sports memorabilia
- Make a flyer that describes each item, provide a minimum bid and bid increments
- Hold a raffle during one of your sales – combining two events in one will keep your guests coming back for more!

# ★ Special Events and More



Special Events and Community Projects can be both successful fundraisers and effective vehicles for providing public awareness.

## Special Events and Community Projects

These events generally require substantial planning, a longer element of time and a team of volunteers to pull them off. There is much coordination that goes into hosting a prosperous event. Should you desire to pursue hosting an event in your area, we recommend you call our staff to discuss your ideas and the feasibility of your event. We also recommend you check out some of the many library books on How to Host a Successful Fundraising Event.

If hosting a community event is one of your fundraising goals, below is a short list of some creative ideas we have found that you may want to consider. Some events will require much preparation and some are very simple. Some you can host alone and some require a small team of friends to help you out.

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Concert          | Gift Basket Auction |
| Dessert Night    | Penny Drive         |
| Spaghetti Dinner | Quarter Drive       |
| Carnival         | Workshops           |
| Bake Sale        | Craft Sales         |
| Cow Plop         | Parent Night Out    |
| Window Washing   | Casino Night        |
| Car Wash         | Bingo               |

Send us your successful ideas! We are always updating this guide to share new, unique and fun ideas!

Below is a list of potential donors. Add them to your list and invite them to your special event or community project.

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Aunt         | Teacher        |
| Neighbors    | Postman        |
| Doctor       | Dry Cleaners   |
| Decorator    | Priest         |
| Coach        | Church Members |
| Painter      | Uncle          |
| Waitress     | Spouse         |
| Banker       | Best Friend    |
| Librarian    | Cousin         |
| Rabbi        | Yard Man       |
| Friends      | Vendors        |
| Co-workers   | Grandma        |
| Veterinarian | Grandpa        |
| Hair Stylist | Roommate       |
| Florist      | Dentist        |

Inspire your friends and neighbors to get involved, have a great time and raise money in the process! Use your imagination and let your creativity flow. The Universe will support that which you open your heart to!

# ★ The Donation Process



It is essential that you understand how the donation process works before you start your fundraising efforts. Please take a moment to consider the following:

## Different Payment Options

1. Checks – all donations should be made out to–“Seven Fires Foundation.” Be sure you send us the complete mailing address and contact information of the donor along with their check.

2. Credit Card – currently donors can only make credit card donations via PayPal through our Donate Now link provided on our web site located at [www.7fires.org](http://www.7fires.org). We hope in the future to be able to accept credit cards over the phone.

3. Cash – it is not advisable to accept cash as a donation, unless it is at an event, for a raffle, sales items etc. as there is way to track their donation for applicable tax donation credit. It is also not advisable to mail cash.

## Keeping Track

As you begin to receive donations, it is advisable to you to keep a running total of all the money raised. This will help you in reaching and exceeding your personal goals and will help in making sure thank you's have been sent out accordingly..

Please send in donations to Seven Fires Foundation as they arrive for prompt and accurate accounting and processing of checks.

## Tax Receipts

All donations qualify for IRS tax-deduction. Donations of more than \$50 will receive a tax receipt directly from Seven Fires Foundation if they made payment by check or credit card. We will send the tax receipt directly to the donor's mailing address upon receipt of their donation.

If you or a donor have any questions, please contact us at 541-347-7801 or email at [dir@7fires.org](mailto:dir@7fires.org).

The following information is for your donors; be sure to include this with any fundraising letter:

### Donations made by check:

Please ensure —

- Checks are made payable to Seven Fires Foundation and may be given to volunteer or mailed directly to: 89001 Hwy. 42 South, Bandon, OR 97411
- Donors mailing address is provided (either on check or separately) for tax receipts

### Donations by Credit Card:

Please visit: <http://www.7fires.org> and click on the Donate Now link from our home page.

## PRESS RELEASES AND PSA's

Perhaps one of the best ways to promote awareness and to raise funds is through the local media. You can circulate an approved press announcement to publications with which you may be affiliated, such as your hometown newspaper, the paper from the town where you presently reside, church bulletins, even appropriate websites, etc. Having a short piece published anywhere can go a long way in your quest for gathering funds.

Here is an example:

### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (Your name)

(Your phone #)

Bake Sale Will Benefit The Children

Rapid City, SD– April 4, 2004 – This weekend local Rapid City resident, Sue Smith, will host a baking contest at the Veteran's Hall at 5<sup>th</sup> and Oak. With over 30 entries of Rapid City's finest baker's, the event promises to be the yummiest ticket in town.

Entrants paid \$25 each for their secret recipes to be tested against veteran bakers makers such as the popular B&B's restaurant. "I thought this might be a fun way to get the community together, share a laugh and enjoy some wonderful baked goods all while doing something even more important—raising funds for the Seven Fires Foundation," said Smith. Several months ago, Smith made one of the most important commitments in her life... a commitment to help in the preservation of the Lakota Language.

"I never even dreamed that I could help in this capacity," said Smith. "But after hearing the stories and seeing first hand the importance of the preservation of sacred traditions for these children, I realized the challenges they had overcome in their lives and knew that I too could help," added Smith. The Seven Fires Foundation raises funds for at risk Lakota youth to teach and preserve the Lakota language and culture for their generation and generations to come.

Once there were over \_\_\_\_\_ Native languages spoken in the United States, today there are only \_\_\_\_\_. Many of the traditional speakers today are elders. It is projected if something is not done now, many of these languages will disappear in this generation along with the culture of the Native peoples." "I feel so privileged to be able to be a part of preserving a heritage," Smith added.

Entries are still being accepted for those who want to test their baking skills against Rapid Cities's best. Entry into the event is \$5 for all you can eat goodies plus \$2 for a drink ticket. There will also be door prizes, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place for baked goods. For more information, please contact Sue Smith at 555-666-3333.

# # #

## SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE #2

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date [Month, Year]

(XXX) XXX-XXXX

National Contact:

Tammy Van

(541)347-7801

Local Contact:

Volunteer Name

[Title \_\_\_\_\_]

Local Man/Woman Seeks Your Help to Make a Difference

RAPID CITY, SD— [Basic introduction of project and any other information you deem pertinent.]

[Your name] is a volunteer with Seven Fires Foundation,

To contribute to [Your name]'s program costs, please contact [your name] at [your phone number]. Seven Fires Foundation is a non-profit 501c3 organization as recognized by the IRS, all donations are tax deductible.

For more information contact:

Seven Fires Foundation

89001 Hwy. 42 South

Bandon, OR 97411

(541) 347-7801 [phone/fax]

dir@7fires.org [email]

Visit us on the Internet: <http://www.7fires.org>

## **SAMPLE LETTER A**

Hello -

I am asking you to partner with me today and send a donation in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. You can be a part of this special experience and make a dream come true.

Thank you for your support,

## **Sample Letter B**

January 30, 2001

To all my big-hearted friends and acquaintances –

You won't believe what I have discovered –

Why am I doing this? Because there are –

My challenge is to raise \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_. My challenge to you is to join me by contributing whatever you can to help me reach this milestone. Enclosed is a sponsor form. Take a minute to fill out and send this form back to me with whatever amount you can. Together, we can change the life of these children and save a culture too!

Thank you for your support. I'll keep you updated on to project and let you know how your contributions directly affect the children.

Sincerely yours,

Jane Doe

## SAMPLE LETTER C

Dear Friend of Mine:

I want to share something with you that is very important to me. For the last few years my heart has\_\_\_\_\_. Why you ask? Because I can. Because each day of my life I \_\_\_\_\_, these children have not have that chance. But today is the beginning of a new era and together we can make a difference, we can save a Native language and the sacred culture and tradition of the people.

Add here about the importance of saving a language.....

That's why I'm writing to you. I would like to ask you to join me this year in raising funds for these children. It won't take much, \$25, \$50 or \$150, whatever you can afford – it will go a long way in making sure these things are preserved for the future generations! Together we can make a difference.

The Lakota Project is a project of the Seven Fires Foundation which is a non profit 501c3 organization (Tax ID# \_\_\_\_\_). They help

I know I can count on your support!

Sincerely,

Mike Doe