

News Release

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Diné Language Teachers Association Implements Pilot Test of Two Mentor-Apprentice Models for Diné Language Learning In the Home

NAVAJO NATION. The Diné Language Teachers Association (DLTA) has received a \$40,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support and bring community awareness to Diné language learning by promoting Nihizaad doo baa dáádidíikah da (We will not leave our language behind.) to educators, parents, community members and administrators and improve their services to the Navajo Nation community.

DLTA realizes that the Diné People are at a critical state of Diné language survival and maintenance especially for the young ones, the youth and their parents who are struggling to learn and grow in their ability to communicate in the Diné language.

DLTA will work with community members to test out the Mentor-Apprentice models as a viable alternative for young and older adults to learn Diné language to keep it alive and pass it on to their children. DLTA has committed to supporting the families and provide mentorship to them as they acquire the Diné language to promote Nihizaad doo baa Dáádidíikah da.

Barbara Jenni, Adar Anisman, Onowa McIvor, and Peter Jacobs in their study, Exploration of the Effects of Mentor-Apprentice Programs on Mentors' and Apprentices' Wellbeing found that the participants repeated themes that have to do with the holistic concepts of wellbeing and health, i.e., finding comfort, achieving sobriety, personal empowerment even to achieving leadership positions within their community. In other words, it had a healing effect.

DLTA's goal is to promote nihizaad doo baa dáádidíikah da. The pilot testing of the approaches will be presented as a professional development to train coaches and mentors at the annual DLTA conference in the fall. For

more information, visit dinelanguageteachers.org or the [dinelanguageteachers facebook page](#)) or call 505-728-9091 and leave a message and we will return your call as soon as we can.

About the Diné Language Teachers Association

The Diné Language Teachers Association was originally formed in the early 1970's by a small group of Diné language teachers to share their stories and lessons. The current Board of Directors formalized the organization into a nonprofit in 2011. Their primary mission was the same, to support Diné language teachers, and thus the focus became professional development. This is in the form of annual conferences. For more information, visit www.dinelanguageteachers.org.

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal innovator and entrepreneur Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special attention is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.