



Opportunity Finance Network: Member Profile



Four Bands Community Fund

Eagle Butte, SD

Thanks to Four Bands Community Fund, the Lakota people of the Cheyenne River Reservation are creating opportunity in a land where others see only poverty and hardship. Employing a multi-faceted business development strategy based on a traditional Lakota model called Icahya Wocun — “the place to grow” — the organization offers services in four areas: education, financing, incubation, and advocacy. Founded in 2000, Four Bands is the most successful business development organization on the Reservation, and has emerged as one of the nation’s leading Native Community Development Financial Institutions.

Success Story: JTR Trips, Eagle Butte, SD

With a loan and business training from Four Bands Community Fund — and much encouragement and additional funding from their parents, Bernie and Verzella LaPlante — Jared, Tyson, and Rebecca LaPlante (age 26, 23, and 20, respectively) purchased and now manage JTR Trips, a sporting goods store on the Cheyenne River Reservation in downtown Eagle Butte.

“We are reminding tribal members that they are in control. We are empowering them to realize that they can make anything they dream happen.”

*Tanya Fiddler
Executive Director, Four Bands Community Fund*



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Mission

To assist entrepreneurs of the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation with training, business incubation, and access to capital, encouraging economic development, and enhancing the quality of life for all communities and residents of the Reservation.

Products and services

- A variety of small business loans, including micro-loans, larger business loans, and credit enhancement loans
- Business development classes and one-on-one technical assistance
- Financial literacy and personal financial management classes
- Special youth services, including entrepreneurship training and internships
- Individual Development Account (IDA) savings match program

Financial and social impact

- Loans made = 127, totaling \$610,000
- Businesses created or retained = 70
- Jobs created or retained = More than 105
- Graduates of business development class = 155
- People receiving technical assistance and training = More than 900
- Amount committed in IDA savings matches = \$76,000