

Applicant Information

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NIDRR Project Name: Disability Access

NIDRR Project Number: PR # H133S050165

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Proposed Activity Start Date: 02/01/2007

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Proposed Activity Budget Attached?

X Yes
 No

Supporting Material Addressing Research Quality Attached?

 Yes
X No

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Relation between Proposed Utilization Activity and Project's Short-Term or Intermediate Outcomes for NIDRR-funded Project (5 points)

1. Describe how the proposed activity relates to the intended short-term or intermediate outcomes intended for the existing NIDRR-funded project.

Disability Access, a NIDRR-funded project, has the following objectives.

1. Development of a unique virtual school house model to meet the identified needs of individuals with disabilities and their families living in remote, disadvantaged communities. This objective has a few key components:¹
 - o Software must allow for the choice of a variety of pathways to customize instruction for the literacy level, cultural differences and specific disabilities of the participants, which will vary with each group,
 - o Community features such as mailing lists and bulletin boards must be included in a manner accessible to the participants.
 - o Full-text retrieval of print resources must be an option.
2. Create a test bank of items to which users will be routed based on the path followed in their navigation of the website,
3. Conduct empirical assessment of the impact of training using this model for different demographic groups and under different training conditions; stand-alone, computer-integrated training with consecutive sessions, computer-integrated training with spaced sessions (two to four weeks apart).

Midway through the project, progress has been made on all three objectives. The proposed activity will disseminate research on the design and evaluation results of an effective model for bringing research-based information with highly-qualified instructors to disadvantaged communities. Further, related to objective 3, specific accommodations made for persons with intellectual and sensory impairments will be discussed. As with the original NIDRR-funded project, the RUSH activities are focused on meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities in remote, disadvantaged communities through methods

¹ NOTE: There are at least two other projects called "Virtual Schoolhouse. One is a project of CISCO systems, no longer completely maintained, with links to educational resources around the world. The other is a compendium of project-based learning, funded jointly by the Departments of Commerce and Education. Our model is distinct from both of these and is distinguished by the inclusion of lecture material, assigned readings, community features, teacher resources and tests on a single electronic resource (CD or web) combined with limited on-site instruction.

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appropriate to the cultural and geographic context.

This is the second NIDRR grant supporting this line of research, with a Phase I award demonstrating feasibility and piloting the model. Phase I results demonstrated the effectiveness of computer-integrated training with populations that are not normally considered good candidates for stand-alone web-based training, i.e., people with disabilities and family members who have no previous computer experience and individuals with cognitive disabilities. In Phase I, standardized measures were developed to assess knowledge of disability issues, resources and best practices. The reliability of the measures were adequate in Phase I, improving these measures was one focus of Phase II and results to date have demonstrated considerable success, with internal consistency reliability of the total score of .82 in Phase I improved to .85- .91 with measures used in Phase II.

As gratifying as it is to have demonstrated an effective means of increasing the knowledge of consumers regarding research-based findings on disability and to have created valid and reliable measures for Native American consumers, this knowledge is useless if it is not delivered to the target populations. One possibility is publication in refereed journals. However, both our own experience on the reservation and the vast disconnect between the educational and income level of our target population and the target audience of such journals make it abundantly clear that this would be a slow and ineffective process. The RUSH project will extend the dissemination of our model with two short-term outcomes and two intermediate outcomes.

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

- I. Significantly increase from baseline levels participants' knowledge of rights, regulations and procedures relevant to the IEP.
- II. Significantly increase from baseline levels participants' knowledge of services, reasonable accommodations and modifications that can be requested on the IEP.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- I. Significantly increase from baseline levels the percentage of tribal members who show active involvement in their own or their child's IEP as defined by attendance at the IEP meeting, suggestions prior to the meeting, changes request during and after the IEP meeting.
- II. Have a substantial impact on the participation of caregivers or individuals with disabilities in the IEP process as documented by content analysis of qualitative data collected in interviews and correspondence.

Clarity and Quality of Proposed Utilization Activity (25 points)

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2. Describe the proposed activity in terms of its relation to the selected utilization model, specific goals to be achieved, likelihood of success, and quality of design.

Our proposed utilization activity uses the technology transfer model. Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. has developed a prototype for computer-integrated training of persons with disabilities and their families. The prototype can be viewed at www.spiritlakeconsulting.com/DA/.

Administration of a standardized test pre- and post-training has documented significant increases for the trained group in all three modules developed to date. To control for a possible testing effect, a comparison group from the same reservations was tested on each of the three modules, increases in scores for the comparison samples were extremely small and non-significant. Consistent with the technology transfer model, the purpose of the proposed dissemination activities is to increase the utilization of the Disability Access computer-integrated training model, thereby resulting in an increase in participation in Individual Education Plans by Native Americans on reservations (intermediate term) and improving the responsiveness of the services delivered under IEPs to meet their individual needs (long-term). *Our goal is to significantly increase the knowledge and participation in the IEP process of tribal members with disabilities and their families through disseminating results on effective use of the Disability Access Virtual Schoolhouse to obtain relevant information.* Our planned activities include:

- I. Disseminating our research findings on the effectiveness of the Disability Access Virtual Schoolhouse model directly to 300 individuals with disabilities and their caregivers on six other large reservations and reservation communities in the Great Plains; Standing Rock, White Earth, Crow, Sisseton, Trenton Indian Service Area and Fort Peck. These 300 individuals will participate in an abbreviated version of our computer-integrated training that includes only those sections of the different modules which relate to the Individual Education Plan.
- II. Increasing the number reached by our monthly e-newsletter from the current 359 concentrated overwhelmingly on the Spirit Lake, Turtle Mountain and Fort Berthold reservations to over 1,200 spread among eleven reservations across four states.
- III. Reaching over 150 staff members serving persons with disabilities and their families through regional and national meetings predominantly attended by staff of Native American programs.
- IV. Disseminating our results to over 10,000 readers in the target population through publication in reservation-based agency newsletters and the Tribal College Journal.
- V. Disseminating our research findings via the web to over 10,000 users per month, an increase from the current average of 2,700 per month.

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Data and research indicating likelihood of success

To effectively disseminate results to the target population, we must be able to answer the question, "Where do tribal members with disabilities and their families receive their information?" Collection of demographic data in the Disability Access project has included asking about participants' availability of email, Internet access and other information sources. In our experience with the participants in our project to date, most common sources are through on-reservation training, through courses at the tribal colleges, via Native American focused events, agency newsletters, radio, particularly the reservation radio stations, and, increasingly, through the Internet, with much higher use of Native-focused sites such as nativeweb.com than other ethnic groups.

Standard dissemination efforts of past NIDRR-funded projects have included publications in refereed journals, presentations at national conferences focused on disability issues, disability-focused websites and distribution to centers such as PACER. Decades of working on the reservations, as well as the low initial scores on our pretests, have made it abundantly clear that these methods are ineffective for the target population of interest for the Disability Access project.

It has been hypothesized that Native Americans have the lowest computer usage of all racial and ethnic groups, based on their income and educational disadvantage. However, the signature research on this topic, by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (1998) noted that Native Americans were included in the "other, non-Hispanic" category and could not be disaggregated due to the small sample sizes of this subgroup. The common practice of combining Native Americans and Asian-Americans, two very different groups in terms of income, education and rural residence makes it difficult to gain a true picture of computer usage among Native Americans.

In 2006, Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. began including questions on email accounts, computer ownership and Internet access in the demographic information on tests for all of our projects. To date, in October 2006 we have gathered 155 unique respondents residing on three reservations in North Dakota. Representing the focus of our training, of these respondents, 75% were individuals with disabilities or their immediate family members. The remaining 25% were staff members providing services to people with disabilities. (The company offers a staff training program separate from the NIDRR-funded Disability Access Project). The median education was a high school education, representative of these communities where approximately half of the residents do not complete high school. While complete discussion of these data is not feasible within this application, a few summary results below indicate two facts. First, most of our target

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population, i.e., Native Americans with disabilities and their caregivers, do have email accounts.

Table 1
Computer Usage Among SLC Clients (Unduplicated Count) January – October, 2006

Computer in Home	Have Own Email Address			
	Yes		No	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	54	35%	22	14%
No	34	22%	44	28%
Total	88	57%	66	43%

Thus, while only 42.6% of respondents had a computer at home, nearly 57% had an email account, supporting the findings of Carnes (2000) that rural residents are much more likely to access the Internet in public facilities than urban residents. The 14% who own a computer but do not have an email account also represent a potential audience and these will be reached, along with those who are connected, via the on-site and print dissemination efforts discussed below. It is also feasible that our efforts may increase the proportion who do elect to connect to the web. Lonergan (2003) identified three barriers to Internet usage:

- Lack of interest due to a lack of local information for people who are in remote areas,
- Insufficient diversity results in a lack of culturally specific information of interest to populations such as Native Americans,
- A literacy barrier exists for many potential users who cannot read and/or fully understand some of the complicated language online.

All of these barriers are addressed in the design of the RUSH project as well as in the Disability Access design itself.

Quality of Design

Our project is two-fold, and rooted in the preliminary analysis of dissemination needs discussed above. First, we propose a multi-method study on five reservations within the Great Plains region – Spirit Lake, Trenton Indian Service Area, Turtle Mountain, Fort Berthold, White Earth and Crow – encompassing six different tribes. A survey of use of information sources will be completed over a four-month period and serve to validate or disconfirm our assumptions about sources of information for tribal members with disabilities and their families. Descriptive statistics will be generated for both aggregate results, by reservation and within specific subgroups by age and categories (e.g., person

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with disability, family member). Concurrently, Dr. Longie will conduct extensive interviews with knowledgeable informants on each reservation. Mr. Davis, his Research Associate, will collect documents from informants, reservation agencies and community sites as supplemental qualitative data to be used in the domain analysis. Both Dr. Longie and Mr. Davis are enrolled tribal members with significant visible disabilities. Both attended Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and tribal community colleges. Their personal experiences combined with their academic credentials will enable them to establish rapport with the informants and gain a detailed understanding of informational needs and resources.

Task 1 is a critical step. There has been almost no research on the means by which Native Americans with disabilities receive their information. Although our company has years of experience working in this field, and some preliminary data which offer a starting point, it would be ill-advised to begin a project without a more, thorough, data-based understanding of how tribal members with disabilities receive their information. The best research design supplements data with experience, it doesn't replace data with experience. We would also assert that neither can data, no matter how randomly and widely collected, substitute for decades of experience working in a community, and this is one of the factors that make Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. an ideal organization to carry out this research effectively. To date, we have only collected data on our client population, which is self-selected. It is possible that this group may have higher access to and interest in technology. The information use study will extend the population in both geographic representation and interest to be more representative of the Native American reservation population in the Great Plains region.

Based on the results of task 1, it is proposed that the staff would engage in the following activities:

1. Presentations and exhibits at conferences attended by the target population, some changes will be made based on the results obtained in task 1, but these are expected to include the following:

- North Dakota Indian Education Association
- Consortium of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation
- Regional Head Start/ AEYC conferences (held jointly in this region)
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium
- National Indian Education Association

It should be noted that the project staff have previously presented at three of the conferences above, albeit on projects other than Disability Access, therefore, the

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likelihood of acceptance as a presenter is high. All of those listed above are attended by a high proportion of staff members serving Native Americans with disabilities who will be able to effect policy changes on their home reservations. In the case of CANAR, the proportion of tribal members with disabilities among the attendees is high as well.

2. Twelve presentations on-site at six reservations in a four-state region (North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Montana) to groups as identified and coordinated by the reservations.

3. Preparation of articles for publication in sources read by the participants. Although changes to this list are expected as a result of task #1, these avenues are expected to include the following:

- Tribal College Journal
- Newsletters of agencies serving the reservations, e.g., Head Start programs, vocational rehabilitation programs, tribal health
- Native Web and similar websites

As described by Pfleeger (1998), key factors in technology transfer are the primary use of the technology (e.g., does Windows even start?), the secondary evaluation of its usefulness in solving an individual or organizational problem, including evaluation of the evidence base, and perceived maturity of the technology. The primary usefulness has been well-demonstrated in Phase I and the first year of Phase II, findings which must be broadly disseminated, along with the research evidence discussed throughout, to enhance technology transfer. Finally, the target audiences must be convinced of the products maturity. This is the rationale for beginning the project mid-way through the second year of Phase II. Technology transfer will occur at a greater rate when software is perceived as a fully-functioning mature product. Improvements and innovations have been identified as part of our NIDRR-funded proposal and are currently in progress. Initial demonstrations in the field are not planned until February 2008. This is a result of three factors. First, the need to conduct the dissemination utilization study before finalizing all the details of the dissemination plan. Second, the importance of having professionally-designed materials and fully-functioning software to support the consumers' impression of a mature technology. Third, due to the community to be served, it is ill-advised to conduct public information workshops in sub-zero weather in low-income communities without public transportation. Cancellations due to blizzards, icy roads or unsafe temperatures are highly likely in late December, January and February. The one session planned in February is at the Consortium of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

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Quality of Research Findings (20 points)

3. Describe the quality of the research findings intended for dissemination in terms of their scientific merit and likelihood of being adopted by target audiences.

The Virtual School House model designed and tested in the Disability Access project meets the requirements of empirically-based instruction as required in the No Child Left Behind Act. The research design controlled for threats to internal and external validity to the maximum extent possible. Standard assessment tests and scoring rubrics were developed as part of the funded project. A standardized measure was created for each of the modules. Internal consistency reliability for each of the three final measures ranged from .82 to .91 . Inter-rater reliability of the instruments ranged from .91 to .94 for the total scores. CD-ROMS, website and instructors manuals have been created to document a standard method of instructional delivery which, at the same time, allows participants individually or as a group to follow an individual path that selects web pages or documents that meet the individual's needs. To insure content validity of assessment, test bank items are selected to match the topics covered in training.

A comparison group was selected for each module from the same reservations as the trainees, administered the same pre-test during the same week, and the post-test was administered within the week following training. One unavoidable threat to the validity of the results is the selection effect. Although participants were paid a \$50 stipend for participants in two days of training, this was still a volunteer sample and random assignment to trained and comparison groups was not possible. (Thus, there is no strict control group). However, this does represent the likely scenario that when training is administered in the community, it will be to those individuals with disabilities, their family members and caregivers who elect to attend.

The likelihood of being adopted by the target audiences is high based on the responses from those who have been made aware of the research results to date. In October, in response to consumer demand, we began offering training workshops at cost on one reservation not included in the selected experimental groups. This was a year ahead of the planned commercialization start date. Each training workshop has had an increasing number of participants, again, demonstrating acceptance within the communities. To date, dissemination efforts have been constrained by staff and funding limits.

One unique feature of the Virtual Schoolhouse model should be noted, and is discussed further in section 9. That is, the Virtual Library includes electronic resources collected on CD-ROM to serve the 57% of respondents who do not have home Internet

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access. Some of these individuals have a home computer, and others use public computer labs. The Commons Area of the Virtual Schoolhouse model includes Virtual Field Trips, which are used during training workshops and can be used by those who have Internet access at work or home. Through both of these features, NIDRR-funded resources are distributed to the target community, either through the availability of download of the original document (permission to reproduce has been sought and received for many resources) or by a more consumer-friendly version written by SLC staff members. For example, the Straight Talk series, provides consumer and parent-focused summaries of research findings. While a complete list of resources included or planned for inclusion would greatly increase the length of this proposal, a partial list of resources citing, summarizing or including NIDRR-funded research that are currently part of the Virtual Library or Commons Area is given in Table 2. As we are currently mid-way in product development, substantial addition of NIDRR-funded research products is in the work plan in progress. The Disability Access project brings awareness of these NIDRR-funded products to a disadvantaged population at a level of penetration that would likely never be reached without it.

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Table 2
Sample of NIDRR-funded Resources Included

Resource	NIDRR source or reference
ABLEDATA Fact Sheet on Computer Access	ABLEDATA, NIDRR- KT product
ABLEDATA Fact Sheet on Wheelchairs for Children:	ABLEDATA, NIDRR- KT product
How Can Parents Promote the Use of Accessible Technology in Schools?	National Center on Accessible Information Technology in Education – NIDRR-funded
It takes work to get a job.	National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center
National Council on Disability (2003). Understanding disabilities in American Indian and Alaskan Native communities. - book	Summaries of research and services of American Indian Research and Training Center, Capacity Building for American Indians Project, research on systems advocacy, e.g., Clay, 2002 and numerous additional sources.
OSERS & U.S. Chamber of Commerce (2005). Disability Employment 101 - book	Describes NIDRR-funded research by RRTCs on reducing barriers to employment for persons with disabilities

Anticipated Outcomes of Proposed Activity (20 points)

4. Describe the utilization outcomes anticipated to result from the proposed activity in terms of how the specific outcomes indicate **change in practice, a policy, or a program.**

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

- I. Significantly increase from baseline levels participants' knowledge of rights, regulations and procedures relevant to the IEP.
- II. Significantly increase from baseline levels participants' knowledge of services, reasonable accommodations and modifications that can be requested on the IEP.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- I. Significantly increase from baseline levels the percentage of tribal members who show active involvement in their own or their child's IEP as defined by attendance at the IEP meeting, suggestions prior to the meeting, changes request during and after

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the IEP meeting.

- II. Have a substantial impact on the participation of caregivers or individuals with disabilities in the IEP process as documented by content analysis of qualitative data collected in interviews and correspondence.

Changes will be measured using IEP-related items from the standardized Disability Access test piloted in Phase I and revised in Phase II. A scoring rubric for these items has been developed and validated under Disability Access funding. Quantitatively, changes will be measured by differences between pre- and post-test results. As the workshops and presentations are being offered on the reservations at no charge, pre-registered participants will be requested to submit a pre-test as “payment” for the training. On each reservation, a second training session will be held, and participants in the first session will be followed up to be administered a second post-test. Because information on previous training and receipt of the newsletter are included in the demographic information, it will be possible to assess the impact of newsletters alone and newsletters plus training in changing consumer knowledge. Further, since a second assessment will be made on four reservations, it will be possible to measure the effectiveness of long-term, monthly communications via email and web access. On each reservation, a control group of 15-20 will also receive the pre- and post-test.

Qualitative assessment will supplement the quantitative data. All presentations in computer labs and our website have multiple opportunities for contacting us via the web. Both email access and forms are used. The latter is necessary as it does not require the user to have their own email address, which, as noted above, over 40% of the target population do not. Also, during the presentations, participants are distributed cards, pens and paper to give their responses for those who prefer not to use the computer for feedback. Presentations always include an SLC staff member and community volunteers as typists to assist those participants who cannot provide written or typed feedback due to physical or cognitive disabilities.

We have already heard about changes in practice as a result of those who attended our training. These range from a parent who received a reimbursement from a school district that had illegally charged her for her son’s evaluation for needed special education services to individuals with disabilities who applied to services from vocational rehabilitation after becoming aware of their eligibility through our training.

In the short-term, an increase is expected in knowledge of rights, procedures, services and accommodations, as measured by our pre- and post- tests. In the

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intermediate-term, an increase is expected in participation in the IEP process by people with disabilities and their caregivers, as determined by surveys administered pre- and post-intervention.

Three possible outcomes are expected in the long-term, although some of these may occur after the end of the RUSH proposal. These include:

- I. An increase in the services and appropriate modifications received by people with disabilities as a result of IEPs written that are more responsive to individual needs,
- II. Changes in tribal or agency policy initiated by individuals reached by our dissemination efforts, particularly administrators and other tribal decision-makers who attend our conference presentation and read our articles,
- III. Adoption by tribal colleges and other institutions on or near reservations of training programs that are a combination of on-site and distance education courses to disseminate information in areas such as special education, preschool special education, introduction to disability and culture and other topics relative to community needs.

Clarity and Appropriateness of Utilization Data Collection Plan (10 points)

5. Describe the data collection plan in terms of staff responsibilities, collection mechanisms, data sources, data types, and time frame for collection.

Our project is two-fold. First, we propose a multi-method study on six Native American communities within the Great Plains region. A survey of use of information sources will be completed over a four-month period and serve to validate or disconfirm our previous results concerning sources of information for tribal members with disabilities and their families. Although limited data have been collected as part of our original NIDRR-funded project, this project focused on empirically testing a training method, not specifically on dissemination.

Descriptive statistics will be generated for both aggregate results, by reservation and within specific subgroups by age and categories (e.g., person with disability, family member). Concurrently, Dr. Longie will conduct extensive interviews with knowledgeable informants on each reservation. Mr. Davis, his Research Associate, will collect documents from informants, reservation agencies and community sites as supplemental qualitative data to be used in the domain analysis.

In the second phase, to assess outcome of dissemination activities, again, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods will be used, including both process and outcome evaluation. Process evaluation measures include attendance rosters at conference and on-site presentations, evaluation forms of presentations, hits on the

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website and number of individuals receiving publications with RUSH Disability Access articles. Outcome data include pre- and post-test means from the Individual Education Planning Test (IEPT) and pre- and post-intervention means from the survey of involvement in the IEP. Involvement in the IEP will be measured using a modified version of the Parent Involvement in the IEP survey form developed by the UCR Families Project (Blacher, Hanneman & Rousey, 1992). Qualitative outcome data include the incidents of policy, program and individual change received through emailed, written and Internet form reports.

Table 3
Data Element, by Data Source

Data Element	Source
Number of attendees	Attendance rosters at events
Number of articles disseminated	Distribution lists of newsletters
IEP knowledge	Individual Education Planning Test
Number of website hits	Web statistics generated from server
Availability of Internet access	Reservation surveys, demographic data on tests
Email access	Reservation surveys, demographic data on tests
Newsletters received	Reservation surveys, interviews
Sources of disability information	Reservation surveys, interviews
Rating of presentation quality	Conference evaluation forms, SLC workshop evaluation forms
Individual or program change	Report forms from Internet, email and in community presentations, Survey forms
Involvement in IEP	Parental/Student IEP form

Management of the Activity (5 points)

6. Describe the staff management structure of the proposed activity, including individual staff responsibilities and time commitments.

Dr. AnnMaria Rousey DeMars, (.24 FTE) Disability Access Project Director will be responsible for overall research design, data analysis and evaluation. She will write and co-author with Dr. Longie articles for the newsletters, websites and other targeted vehicles for dissemination. Dr. De Mars will also write and present papers at national

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conferences.

Dr. Erich Longie, (.24 FTE) Project Coordinator on the Disability Access Project will oversee data collection and conduct dissemination activities on site on the reservations. He will write and co-author with Dr. DeMars articles for the newsletters, websites and other targeted vehicles for dissemination. Dr. Longie will also write and present papers at local, regional and national conferences.

Willie Davis, (.16 FTE) Research Associate, will collect data, enter data, type newsletter articles and prepare materials for conference presentations, including handouts and PowerPoint.

Dr. DeMars will devote .24 FTE to the project during the first two months, insuring that the research design and data collection plan are carried out as proposed, and during the months when the evaluation data are being analyzed and a final report written, with lesser time commitment during the data collection phase.

Dr. Longie will work .24 in the first nine months of the project conducting qualitative interviews, conducting the qualitative data analysis, writing articles for newsletters and conducting on-site presentations. He will devote fewer hours to the project during the last two months when data are being analyzed and the report written.

Both Dr. DeMars and Dr. Longie are budgeted on other projects funded through the USDA, contracts with the University of California and University of North Dakota. The FTE budgeted on these projects will be available as given in the person loading chart. Due to the number of grants and contracts awarded to the company, as well as the inadvisability of holding field tests under icy and sub-zero conditions, the Disability Access project will complete in December, 2007, not September. While less field testing will occur in the middle of winter, development of the software will continue, as well as, for the RUSH project, the community survey, with Dr. Longie and Mr. Davis visiting participants at their homes and schools.

Mr. Davis is an individual with a significant disability who chooses to work part-time due to physical and health reasons. Mr. Davis has worked part-time for Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. for two years. He is also employed part-time by the tribal vocational rehabilitation program and, in 2004 was recognized by CANAR as vocational rehabilitation counselor of the year.

Appropriate Time frame for Activity (5 points)

7. Describe the schedule around which the proposed activity will be conducted. Include discussion of benchmark achievements within specific time parameters.

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The project timeline is shown in the Gantt chart below. Benchmark achievements include, the first conference presentation at the Consortium of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation meeting in February, 2007, completion of the Information Use Report in the fourth month of the project, the publication of the first articles in community agency newsletters and on partner websites in June 2007 and publication of the last article under the RUSH project in December, 2007. Other benchmarks, as shown in Table 3 below, are the beginning and end of on-reservation presentations, acceptance in a tribally-focused journal and completion of the final report, the last benchmark, to occur in January, 2008.

Target Audience Participation in Activity Development (5 points)

8. Describe how the intended members of the target systems have been incorporated or have offered support in the design of the proposed activity.

In our NIDRR-funded Phase I award, Phase II award and in an earlier grant received from the North Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities, Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. has spent a total of three years working with the disability community on reservations in the Great Plains states. During each of these grants, evaluations have been obtained from workshop participants, focus groups have been held with tribal members with disabilities on three reservations, and demographic data have been collected from over three hundred tribal members with disabilities and their families who comprised the target and comparison groups. From these activities, we have gained valuable insight into the availability and types of use of electronic information and participants' preferred methods of receiving instructions. Some of these data, regarding community members' computer and Internet access, have been briefly discussed above. We have also collected pre-test data that documented an alarmingly low level of knowledge of legal rights, resources and results of research on people with disabilities. There is a wealth of information on effective practices, prognosis, development and other research findings, but few individuals on the reservations are aware this research was ever conducted, much less the content of the published findings. This is what we know about our target audience, but it is not enough, hence the need for the first task to survey reservation residents.



Two of the three professionals who have written the design are Native Americans with disabilities. It is important to note, however, that our design is not based solely on their personal experiences but rather, is informed by funded research over the past three years collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the target population.

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Table 3
Disability Access RUSH Project Tasks

Activity	Project Month #											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Survey Design	█	█										
Survey Data Collection		█	█									
IEPT pre-test data collection		█	█	█	█							
IEP Involvement form data collection		█	█	█	█							
Survey Data analysis				█								
Qualitative interviews	█	█	█									
Document collection	█	█	█									
Qualitative analysis			█	█								
Information Use report			█	📄								
Write community agency newsletter articles				█	█	█	█	█	█	█		
Publish articles in community newsletters & on web					📄	█	█	█	█	█	📄	
Prepare presentations	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
Present at tribal-focused conferences	📄								📄			
Reservation on-site presentations					█	█	█	█	█			
IEPT post-test data collection						█	█	█	█	█		
IEP Involvement form data collection						█	█	█	█	█		
Write articles for tribal journals				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

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Articles accepted for tribal-focused journal														
Write evaluation report														

LEGEND

	Activity in Progress		Project Benchmark
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Contribution to Other NIDRR Utilization Activity (5 points)

9. Describe how the proposed activity could be applied in other NIDRR grant settings and is related to similar successful activities conducted by the applicant or others as described in *The NIDRR Grantees' Guide to RUSH Research Utilization Awards* or in relation to other projects with which you are familiar.

The Disability Access Dissemination project offers the unique opportunity to deliver training, dissemination and a virtual library of NIDRR-funded resources to a population that has historically been under-served and out of reach of more typical dissemination methods. Other NIDRR projects can use these results in several ways. First, they could use the specific newsletters, periodicals and websites identified to disseminate research results to the Native American population, particularly those residing on or near reservations. Second, they can use these as general examples to identify effective dissemination vehicles on other reservations. Third, NIDRR—funded research can be added to the Disability Access Virtual Library at no cost. As noted above, a significant amount of NIDRR-funded research is included as either direct links, downloads, summaries in project newsletters emailed to participants, or cited in other publications reproduced on the CD-ROM. The Virtual Library is updated regularly as part of the Disability Access Project. It is available free on-line and through CD-ROM distribution to those without Internet access (66% in our preliminary surveys). Fourth, other NIDRR-funded projects can use the Disability Access newsletter (Miniwakan Tiyospaye) as a vehicle for dissemination of consumer-focused research reports. This newsletter currently is sent to over 350 tribal members. This number is expected to increase substantially as a result of the Disability Access dissemination activities funded under this RUSH award. Fifth, other NIDRR-funded projects may use Disability Access as a model for creating a database and disseminating research results directly to reservations. The latter is unlikely to be successful as an *exact* replication. Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. has some unique advantages as a reservation-based, Indian-owned company. It may be difficult for an off-reservation entity such as a research university to obtain the same access and attendance at on-site outreach and dissemination activities. Much more promising is the use by other entities that have similar ties with the Latino community, African-American, Korean-American and other communities to leverage their specific ties and expertise in that area to disseminate NIDRR-funded research results to traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations.

DISABILITY ACCESS DISSEMINATION PROJECT

BUDGET & BUDGET NARRATIVE

[BUDGET SECTION DELETED]

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DISABILITY ACCESS DISSEMINATION PROJECT

APPENDIX A

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANNING TEST (IEPT)

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Please tell us about yourself

Name _____ Age _____

____ Male ____ Female

Are you an enrolled tribal member? ____ No ____ Yes If so, which
Tribe? _____

How many years of schooling have you completed? _____

Do you or a close family member of yours have a disability? ____ No ____ Yes

Have you taken any classes from Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc. in the past?

____ No ____ Yes

Have you worked in a job providing services to people with disabilities? ____ No

____ Yes (for how many years? _____)

Do you receive the electronic newsletter from Spirit Lake Consulting, Inc.?

____ No ____ Yes

Do you have an email address? ____ No ____ Yes

Do you have a computer in your home? ____ No ____ Yes

Can you access the Internet from your house? ____ No ____ Yes

Do you read newsletters from any of the following agencies?

(Please check all that apply).

____ Head Start ____ Vocational Rehabilitation

____ Elementary School ____ Middle School ____ High School

____ Other (Please give us the name _____)

True or False

1. ____ An IEP can be either verbal or in writing.
2. ____ An IEP states what the child should be taught, who will teach it, where it will be taught, and how much time this child will spend with children who do not have disabilities.

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3. ___ If it is in the best interest of the child, school personnel can make special education decisions without parental involvement.
4. ___ Under the Indian Education Act, all Native American children have the right to an Individual Education Plan.
5. ___ Parents have a legal right to have their opinions heard on decisions such as whether or not their child receives special education services.
6. ___ By law, each special education student is provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
7. ___ Students are allowed to attend their own IEP meetings.
8. ___ The majority of learning disabilities are first identified in school.
9. ___ Developmental delay is a label applied when a child is almost certain to be behind his classmates in development throughout his life.
10. ___ A client may receive services from both state vocational rehabilitation and tribal vocational rehabilitation.
11. ___ Schools are required to provide transition services to students receiving services under a 504 plan.
12. ___ Research shows that advanced math and science classes are not advisable for students with disabilities due to a high failure rate.
13. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) consists of **(circle ALL that apply)**
 - a. The student's educational goals.
 - b. The student's family background.
 - c. Whether the student will have the same graduation requirements as others.
 - d. Whether the student will be placed in a regular or special education classes.

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14. The annual IEP process should be completed by
 - a. The end of the first semester.
 - b. The beginning of the school year.
 - c. The end of the school year.
 - d. Whenever it is convenient for the parties involved.

15. Federal law defines a learning disability as
 - a. Due to social disadvantage.
 - b. An impairment in neurological functioning.
 - c. A sensory impairment.
 - d. A deficiency in social skills.

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16. Which of the following is true?

- a. An IEP may be no more than the child's class schedule and teachers' names.
- b. An IEP states how much time this child will spend with children who do not have disabilities.
- c. If parents are disruptive, the teacher has the right to hold an IEP meeting without them.
- d. Because it may impact their self-confidence to hear themselves being discussed, students cannot attend IEP meetings.

17. Communication disorders

- a. Only occur in children, they are called articulation disorders in adults.
- b. Are almost always the result of the child's inability to hear spoken language.
- c. May be greatly improved through a program of speech therapy involving home and school.
- d. Have no effective treatment if the disorder is a result of brain injury.

18. When working with families who have a member with a developmental disability, which of the following are true **(Circle all that apply.)**

- a. What is meant by help may vary from one culture to another.
- b. People always appreciate the desire for others to help them, it is a universal cultural attitude.
- c. In some cultures, asking about problems within the family are understood as necessary.
- d. Questions about family, in some cultures, may seem intrusive by a stranger in areas that are meant to be private.

19. A child who is deaf will most likely learn best if the school staff

- a. Focuses as much of the day as possible on teaching him to speak.
- b. Learn American Sign Language and use ASL and English to teach.
- c. Teach the regular subjects of math, science, etc. and only work on speech during English class.
- d. Provide him with an interpreter one hour each day.

20. Who should determine the goals for a person with a disability?

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- a. The individual, with input from those who know him or her best.
- b. Immediate and extended family, whenever possible.
- c. An agency with the most resources and knowledge to help that person.
- d. The closest relative, e.g., wife, mother, father.

21. IDEA stands for

- a. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- b. Independent Department of Education Assistance
- c. Inclusion, desire, enter, and assist
- d. Indians with Disabilities Education Association

22. IEP stands for

- a. Individual Education Plan
- b. Indian Education Program
- c. Inclusion, exit, placement
- d. Independent Existence Planning

23. Donna Belgarde is 16 years old. She uses a wheelchair as a result of an accident last year and also has a traumatic brain injury. She lives with her mother, who is unemployed. Donna's mother asks you where she could get help for her daughter. When you ask, "What does she need?" The mother replies, "Everything. She needs everything. She needs a new wheelchair, new clothes that I don't have money to buy, money for school supplies. She doesn't talk very well. Her friends don't come over any more. I don't know how I am going to pay the rent, either."

List at least three services you think the Belgardes should request on her IEP, for example, "Request speech therapy at least twice a week".

1.

2

3.

24. Schools are required by law to provide a free appropriate public education

- a. To all children, regardless of disability.

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- b. To all children able to benefit from a public education.
- c. Within the limits of the school district budget.
- d. In the child's native language.

25. Chad is a 14-year-old high school student with a severe learning disability. Please give three classroom modifications that can help him succeed in school.

26. Which of the following statements are true?

- a. Although most school districts provide a free, public education for children with disabilities, they are not legally required to do so.
- b. The law requires a free, public education for all children regardless of handicap.
- c. Laws relating to public education do not apply on the reservation due to tribal sovereignty.
- d. Schools are only required to provide special services for children with mild disabilities if they have money available in the budget.

27. Attention Deficit Disorder is characterized by

- a. Extreme distractibility and impulsive behavior.
- b. Attitude problems and below average intelligence.
- c. Not being able to sit still and constant lying about bad behavior.
- d. Impulsive behavior and aggression against other students.

28. An IFSP is

- a. A program serving Indian children in foster care.
- b. Like an IEP, but designed to meet the needs of younger children.
- c. A BIA plan for how school impact aid should be spent.
- d. A plan for integrating special education services for children living in foster homes.

29. Full inclusion means that

- a. All children, no matter how severely disabled, should attend the same early childhood school and community programs as children without disabilities.

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- b. Children with disabilities should attend school for a full day.
 - c. The curriculum for children with disabilities should include a full range of activities, both social and academic.
 - d. Children with disabilities should have the full range of services available from special schools to the regular classrooms.
30. Which of the following statements is TRUE?
- a. Head Start policy is that sometimes it is in the best interest of children with disabilities to leave them out of certain activities.
 - b. If any of your students without disabilities feel uncomfortable or disturbed by a disabled student it is best to have the disabled student placed into a class where he fits in.
 - c. Early childhood education programs have the option of turning away a child with disabilities.
 - d. Head Start sets aside 10% of slots for children with special needs, regardless of income.
31. Transition services must be included in the IEP
- a. By age 16.
 - b. Whenever the student needs them.
 - c. By age 22.
 - d. Before the student leaves school.

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32. Needs of people with disabilities
- Should be addressed when the disability is identified and then left alone so the person can become independent
 - Are best met by the individual working it out himself
 - Change at different points in life as people need to adjust to a disability in childhood, adulthood and old age
 - Can be determined in early childhood by trained professionals.
33. List two services for which people with mental retardation qualify.
34. Students with learning disabilities usually benefit from
- being educated in a separate classroom for children with LD.
 - Being treated the same as other children, with no need for special education.
 - Modifications such as longer time to take a test.
 - Having lower expectations for them so they don't get frustrated.
35. A person with a learning disability who has trouble keeping a job should
- Seek help from vocational rehabilitation
 - Ask for accommodations on the job
 - Apply for Social Security Disability Income
 - Both A and B
36. Your child has been diagnosed with a disability what are some of your legal rights under the Federal law?
37. Name three services that a person with a disability may be eligible to receive under an IEP.

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Tanya is 17 years old. She has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and is the mother of a three-year-old son, Dusty. Tanya quit attending school after the ninth grade when she became pregnant. Tanya lives at home with her mother, her mother's boyfriend and a younger brother. She has never had a job. In fact, when asked, she says that she is not sure she would know how to get one. From the forms she completed, it seems that Tanya reads and writes at about a third-grade level. When asked her goals for the future, she said she would like to be a baby doctor. Dusty is frequently absent from Head Start and has had three ear infections in the last year. His mother often forgets to give him medicine prescribed for these infections.

38. If you were Tanya's mother, what services would you recommend for her?

39. What services would you recommend for your grandchild, Dusty?

40. What type of information is written in an Individual Education Plan? Give three examples, such as, "how many hours of speech therapy a student will receive".