

Equine Specialist (ES) Training Program with SDSU Extension & SGU Tiwahe Glu Kini Pi

SGU Tiwahe Glu Kini Pi is partnering with the SDSU Extension Service in a demonstration project to develop a Lakota-based Equine Specialist Training Program that would provide trained staff who could be hired by communities to offer Sunkawakan (Horse) Programs for children on the Rosebud Reservation. The Sunkawakan would provide healing and a connection to creation, Mitakuye Oyasin, as well as healthy activities for children and families, after school, on weekends and in summer. Working with trained Equine Assistants, each community would design and administer their own program.

Background:

SGU Tiwahe Glu Kini Pi has been offering Equine Assisted Mental Health Therapy for children and Horse Handler Training Camps for teens for 8 years. After volunteering 40 hours to attend training, teens that completed Horse Handler Training are hired part time, 20 hours a week for 10 weeks, to help maintain the SGU Horse ranch, care for the horse herd and assist Therapists and children with safety during Equine Therapy sessions. Seeing the healing gifts of the horses with children, in 2017 TGKP decided to expand services and offer 7 weeks of summer horse/culture camps for any interested youth. Teen Horse Handlers again were trained at the start of the summer and then were hired to assist TGKP staff with summer Sunkawakan/Culture camps. The camps were repeated in summer 2018. A total of 120 youth attended the camps that were offered four days each week. Camps incorporate Lakota Language, history, culture and art in the curriculum while children also learn to take care of horses and to ride. In 2018, to demonstrate the effectiveness and formally evaluate these camps, TGKP worked with Sanford Research and Evaluation for a position for a Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) student intern, who designed and administered surveys for youth who attended the camps and with their caregivers. The attached survey results and ripple map report the benefit of the camps. The only negative response to the camps was that "they ended." Children also responded that that they would like to have horse programs in their communities. Therefore, TGKP is proposing the ES training below.

Lakota-based Equine Specialist (ES) Training Program:

The Lakota-based Equine Specialist training would consist of learning about: Lakota history with horses and understanding and experiencing a Spirit Connection with the Sunkawakan Oyate (Horse Nation); Lakota Values, Language, Culture; proper use and storage of tack; how to take care of the physical needs of the horses(4-H curriculum); how to trim and take care of hooves (farrier skills); daily riding and training horses; developing and maintaining a community horse facility (i.e. fencing, building corrals, watering systems, operating small equipment, providing a clean safe environment, etc.); how to communicate, work with and provide safety and activities for children and families for a healthier community utilizing horses; how to refer children who present issues or needs to local helping resources. Training will be hands on, provided by existing TGKP staff and SDSU Extension staff, Lakota Spiritual Leaders and with internships at the SGU/TGKP Sunkawakan Ranch. Students will also research and develop a template for a budget for a community horse program and an information brochure for communities on how to obtain land for horse programs. Guest speakers (e.g. TLE Director and staff, local Lakota Ranchers, TGKP Therapists, Tokala Inajinyo Mentoring & Suicide Prevention Program, Native Connections, REDCO Food Sovereignty Initiative, Econ. Development) will also share their skills. Four students will receive a stipend of \$10/hr. for 20 hrs. /week for 6 months.

Eligibility:

Must be able to pass a background check and drug test and have or able to obtain a valid driver's license. Must be physically fit to ride horses and able to lift 50#'s. Lakota speakers especially welcome.

