

# *Indigenous Peoples Task Force*

Strengthening the Health and Education of Native People

February 27, 2023

Brenna Depies  
Indigenous Peoples Task Force  
1335 E 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
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Dear Public Safety Committee Members,

I am the youth programs manager at Indigenous Peoples Task Force. We have a long successful history of engaging Native teens and young adults in a variety of out of school programming that engages them in their Native culture and health education as well as first job experiences. Programs range from theater performance, soccer, mental health education, using traditional medicines, water advocacy, and vaping policy change.

The 1,500 Native youth that have participated in our programming since I began at IPTF 12 years ago have benefited in from having basic needs met like a meal and in their development of a positive Native Identity. Research shows that a positive Native identity helps marginalized youth navigate the challenges of life much more successfully and lead to healthy relationships, successful problem-solving, employment, and positively contributing within their community. These needs are important because unfortunately the risks are high for Minneapolis Native youth to suffer from health disparities in many categories. By supporting and engaging this group in youth programming, negative cycles within the family can be disrupted.

More money from the passage of HF 1712. Will allow us to engage more Native teens, beginning at a young age, and continuing all the way to internship programs and career development. If IPTF has funding available we can use our capacity within the community instead of grant writing, report writing, and giving a lot of time for small amounts of money. I am proud to be part of the youth work at Indigenous Peoples Task Force and I hope you will be proud of supporting funds for healthy youth development in South Minneapolis!

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Sincerely,

Brenna Depies MPH