

[www.nativeyouthriseabove.org](http://www.nativeyouthriseabove.org)

Rise Above  
10531 Densmore Ave. N  
Seattle, WA 98133  
EIN: 47-4992433

September 19, 2019

Dear Councilmember Juarez,

**RISE ABOVE** empowers native youth to live healthy lives; by providing awareness, prevention and character enrichment using sport as a modality. As a native led and operated not for profit, Rise Above is applying for funding through the City of Seattle to increase mentorship opportunities through the delivery of culturally relevant, pro-social interactions with tribal (girls) youth in the greater Seattle area.

#### **COMMUNITY NEED**

American Indian & Alaskan Native (AI/AN) youth encounter significant risk factors to healthy development within the greater Seattle area. These challenges may include prenatal exposure to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, low educational attainment, out of home placement and detachment from ancestral communities.

In terms of educational attainment, 22.11% of the Seattle AI/AN population self-report lacking a High School diploma. The National Indian Child Welfare Association reported in 2017 that while 1.5% of the children living in Washington State were AI/AN, the foster care system disproportionately represented 6.3% of the population.

These issues are compounded by historical trauma that when left unabated increase the risk factors related to future encounters with the juvenile justice system, particularly for those AI/AN youth living beyond reservation boundaries with little to no access to health care, much less mental health and addiction treatment services.

This is realized in Greater Seattle where according to the most recent US Census American Community Survey, American Indian & Alaskan Natives represent 1.57% of the population, yet account for 2.8% of the incarcerated juvenile population in King County as of 2017.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

In this project, RISE ABOVE will target marginalized youth (girls) of the AI/AN community living within the greater Seattle area ages 8-17 and work upstream of the juvenile justice system by introducing pro-social, multi-generational and culturally based prevention activities in an urban setting. The project is modeled on the evidence-based approach called Behavior-Image Model (BIM) that integrates the promotion of healthy habits in brief, culturally designed interventions. Using sports as a modality, RISE ABOVE will foster the development of healthier

coping skills, support access to make positive choices, and link at risk AI/AN (girls) youth with local mentors.

The project will begin implementation through a needs assessment in January 2020. The cost of the project is \$150,000 per year for three years (through FY 2022).

### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

Three supporting objectives are:

1. Increasing awareness of the emotional and physiological development problems facing urban native youth (girls)
2. Increase interpersonal skill development and emotional resilience of native youth
3. Increase peer support for native youth in local child serving systems

### **PROJECT OUTCOMES**

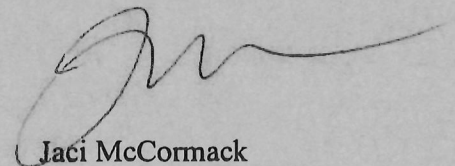
The outcomes of these objectives will include the development of community advisory councils, increased capacity to design and implement tailored programs with local feedback with marginalized AI/AN at risk youth in Seattle, increased awareness and use of local support services, increased resilience in tribal youth, local/regional youth conferences and increased local peer leaders.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH CURRENT INITIATIVES**

This project is in direct alignment with the City of Seattle 2019 Adopted Comprehensive Plan and its stated Goal AC-G3 (Policy Strategies AC3.3 & 3.5), Goal AC-G4 (Policy Strategies 4.12), Goal CW-G1 (Policy Strategies CW 1.1-1.5 & 1.7), and policy strategies CA-P52& 53, NR-P23, and O-P46.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to present RISE ABOVE to the Seattle City Council for consideration of funding.

Sincerely,



Jaci McCormack  
Co-Founder/President



## **Rise Above partners since inception:**

### **Tribal Partnerships: (10 Tribal Governments)**

- Tulalip Tribes (WA)
- Nez Perce Tribe (ID)
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (WA)
- Coeur d'Alene Tribe (ID)
- Yakama Nation (WA)
- Nisqually Indian Tribe (WA)
- Squaxin Island Tribe (WA)
- Hoh Indian Tribe (WA)
- Kalipel Tribe of Indians (WA)
- Hoopa Valley Indian Tribe (CA)

### **Professional Athlete Partners:**

- Lenny Wilkens (Hall of Fame Coach and Player - Seattle Supersonics)
- Gary Payton (Hall of Fame Player - Seattle SuperSonics)
- Micheal Bennett (Former Seattle Seahawk)
- Slick Watts (Former Seattle SuperSonic)
- Don Watts (Former UW Standout)
- Nate Robinson (NBA standout)
- Chris Herren (NBA/Motivational Speaker on Opioid Addiction)
- Ruthie Bolton (Olympic Gold Medal Winner/WNBA/Domestic Violence Survivor)
- Ryan Webb (SU Standout/WNBA Player Development Coach Seattle Storm)

### **Organizational Partners:**

- Washington Indian Gaming Association (W.I.G.A.) - passed a resolution supporting Rise Above
- Lenny Wilkens Foundation
- The Bennett Foundation
- Na'Ah Illahee Fund
- Herren Wellness Foundation
- Nike N7 (Sam McCracken)
- Ballard High School
- Tulalip Tribes Boys and Girls Club
- Seattle F.A.M. (Fashion, Art and Music)

### **Educational/Curriculum:**

- Harvard School of Medicine, Division of Addiction (Dr. Debi LaPlante)
- Cambridge Health Alliance (Dr. Sarah Nelson)
- Dr. Martina Whelshula (PHD) (Colville Tribe)
- Na'Ah Illhee Fund (Susan Balbas, Executive Director)

# Rise Above – The Purpose

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"Rise Above represents an opportunity for all individuals to rise above their current circumstances. Helping youth discover the tools to live their best lives and be their best selves everyday, through sports and personal development is key to building tomorrow's leaders"

– Lenny Wilkens, Executive Producer

