



Program Partner Name: Winona-Dakota Unity Alliance

Classification: Multi-Service Focus

Federal ID#: 03-0560102

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Tax Status Determination: 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation incorporated in 2004

Web Site: www.dakotahomecoming.org

Mission Statement: Our mission is to continue the reconciliation process by an alliance between Winona, Minnesota, and the Dakota Nations through educational and cultural projects designed to bring both together in greater wholeness.

Brief Organization Overview: The Winona-Dakota Unity Alliance was organized in 2004 as a result of our first of four Dakota Gathering and Homecomings. That first Gathering welcomed the Dakota back to Winona and included a Truth and Reconciliation Circle along with traditional dancing, a Moccasin tournament, and feasting. We believe reconciliation to be an ongoing process, building community bonds with multiple projects. Since, we have participated in regional Dakota Outreach projects providing clothing, bedding, and appliances to the poorest of the Dakota reservations. In January, 2007, with our local veteran's groups, we held an American Indian Veterans Honoring ceremony at WSU to honor Woodrow Keeble and other Dakota/Lakota veterans. This event helped publicize the efforts of Woodrow's family to have him receive his Congressional Medal of Honor (posthumous), which was finally accomplished in February, 2007. Through our efforts, Dakota and other American Indian films have been included in the Frozen River Film Festival these last two years. A long term goal is to establish a "Sister City" relationship with the Dakota Nations. We are seeking grants for developing potable water and safe sewer systems at Crow Creek and Santee Dakota reservations. We hope the reservations will join with the City of Winona in our Environmental Management System and encourage efforts to develop sustainable housing and local energy production. Several Dakota students have recently enrolled in our institutions of higher education and we hope to strengthen the links between WSU, SMU and MSC-SE and the Dakota Tribal Colleges.

Who Benefits and How: We all benefit. Without understanding the truth of history and reconciling the past, we are ill-prepared to understand the implications of our current policies and actions. Reconciliation includes a long term commitment to building community bonds between the disparate parties. We have much to learn from each other.

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