

Attaching Your Heart:
Community Engagement and Innovative Youth Programming with Pueblo Communities

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the notion of Pueblo community engagement at multiple levels, from the communities' role in engaging its members, the individual's responsibility in engaging with the community, both the community and individual's engagement relationship with external forces, and the movement towards new engagement as it relates to youth and community. This research recognizes both the existing and the changing nature of engagement in our Pueblo communities. Because the core value of contribution is critical to being a participant in community, both participants and communities need to think of what needs to be done to strengthen Pueblo community engagement¹, for community and for youth. On the community side, this dissertation examines past community programs impact to the social structures of Pueblo communities and highlights a couple of new strategies to incorporate community voice in programming efforts. In addition, this dissertation explores youth contribution to community. The notions of community recognizing and being receptive to new ideas for youth engagement and of instilling their sense of community in youth is critical to the '*new engagement*' paradigm. This dissertation proposes that one strategy is to incorporate youth in the governance structures of community through innovative programming with the ultimate goal of instilling in youth the feeling that they belong to their community.

¹ Pueblo community engagement is related to areas that lie outside of cultural or ceremonial engagement, like contributing your professional skills to the community, serving as a mentor to students, or sharing resources to develop programs or community infrastructure. This journal does not attempt to address the cultural or ceremonial engagement that exists in Pueblo communities as that area, in the case of the author's community, is very strong and intact.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Martha Theresa Chosa, who taught me how to turn challenges into opportunities, dreams into realities, blessings into gifts for others, and prayers into connection with your personal spirit.

It is also dedicated to the Pueblo of Jemez for the spirit with which it embraces all people and engages them through teachings, stories, food, ceremony, laughter, and strong extended family systems.

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The intellectual traditions I come from create theory out of shared lived instead of sending away for it. My thinking grew directly out of listening to my own discomforts, finding out who shared them who validated them and in exchanging stories about common experiences, finding patterns, systems, explanations of how and why things happened. This is the central process of consciousness raising, of collective *testimonio*. This is how homemade theory happens.” (Aurora Morales,2001, p. 27-28)

1) CHAPTER - ATTACHING YOUR HEART: PUEBLO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Introduction: A personal story

The foundation of who I am and of what I do is because of individuals in my life who have had an impact on who I am as a Pueblo person. Because my Pueblo identity is so central to who I am and all the work that I do, I have structured this chapter on significant stories of lived experiences that shape my understanding as a Pueblo person. The spirit of these stories and life lessons is based on the recurring theme of community engagement with our Pueblos. While there are many forms of engagement, like civic, social, cultural, and community, my work offers one perspective on *Pueblo engagement* in the changing contexts of Pueblo life-ways, specifically addressing increased opportunity to leave community for school and work in order to gather new knowledge and life skills. With this change, all stakeholders, that is, individuals, tribes, organizations and governments must develop *new engagement* models for member participation, particularly youth. In my work, *Pueblo engagement*, community engagement, and *new engagement* are used interchangeably and are anchored in the principles of relationship and responsibility. They highlight how a Pueblo individual is related to community and how a community is related to a Pueblo individual. What differentiates Pueblo community engagement from other engagement forms here is the

mutual responsibility and reciprocal relationship that individual and community have to one another. Fundamentally, this chapter will address the following question: What do Pueblo communities and its members need to do to strengthen engagement within the changing context of Pueblo life-ways, and moreover, why is it important to do so?

Theoretical framework: You belong to us/attaching your heart

During a recent dinner conversation with June Lorenzo, a close friend, colleague and fellow cohort member from the Pueblo of Laguna, I shared with her my research and professional interest in exploring the notion of being an engaged community member, and she shared with me her research. Focused on my work, we both began to think about other words that were relatives to engagement, like contribution, participation, involvement, and impact, and how I was planning to incorporate these or use them interchangeably in my text. In an attempt to make me think more deeply about what I was proposing, and most likely as a result of her seeing me struggle with trying to find a more profound way to express my thoughts, she asked me the simple question, “How would you translate these words or explain what you are sharing with me to your aunts and uncles at home in your Towa language?” This question represented a pivotal moment, and after some exchanges and sharing how these words, phrases and concepts might translate from our Native languages to English, we realized that there was still more to explore. As June dove deeper she said, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we all knew that we belong to community or if that the youth that you are referring to were told by his or her Pueblo, ‘You belong to Jemez or you belong to Zuni or *you belong to us*, and your contribution and engagement is important’” (personal communication, March 29, 2015). The concept of *belonging to a community* is powerful and, I would also argue, central to

engagement, and inextricable from the other words related, like contribution, participation, and involvement. *You belong to us* creates a dynamic of mindfulness or consciousness for the individual and the community, simultaneously developing a meaningful relationship for the individual to feed back into community.

My conversation with June reminded me that when I was young, my mother, Martha Chosa, would always say a phrase used by members of my community when talking about participating in ceremony, contributing to community or being present in family activity or service. As a child, I would ask her where and to what community traditional activity she was headed. Translated to English from Towa, one of the five Pueblo languages only spoken in my community of Jemez, she would reply, “I’m going to attach my heart.” I believe that the practice of *attaching one’s heart* is inextricably linked with the concept of *you belong to us*. *You belong to us* is the community’s decision and act of claiming the individual, and *attaching your heart* is the individual’s response—the choice to engage with community and the act of doing so. This interrelationship between the individual and the community—*you belong to us* and *I attach my heart*—is what I offer as a framework for considering Pueblo community engagement.

Methodological considerations

This chapter draws from survey data, including open-ended questions, as well as quantitative data collected from over 15 years of Leadership Institute² work through various programming initiatives, including, Community Institutes, Summer Policy

² The Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School is a community-based organization that focuses on Pueblo community development projects, ranging from Indigenous think tank sessions to educational initiatives. For more information, see www.lisfis.org.

Academy, Summer Art and Archeology Academy, New Mexico Summer Tribal Youth Employment, and the Pueblo Convocation. Participants in these programs range in age from fourteen to elders in their nineties. Data were collected from surveys filled out at the start and conclusion of programming. Additionally, personal conversations with participants are included in this chapter. A significant thread that runs through this chapter is the inclusion of storytelling, most of which occurred over my lifetime and from close family members or members of different Pueblo communities. There has been very little research done on Pueblo community engagement, so making use of Leadership Institute data and experience with Pueblo communities critical to this chapter.

The personal experiences shared here also represent the holistic mutual relationship between the individual and community and demonstrate the mechanisms through which the community becomes responsible for the individual and the individual becomes responsible for the community. Ideally, these acts of engagement create a sense of belonging that bond the individual to the community and vice versa. However, one caveat to the findings offered here is that exterior forces or new opportunities complicate this central relationship, and within my lifetime, I have noticed a growing divide between the two. In more simple terms, on the one hand, the community as a collective being sometimes feels that those who have left and operate outside of the community are no longer interested in engaging; on the other hand, the individual, most commonly youth who have temporarily left the community to pursue their education, feel that the community does not need them. A student in the Leadership Institute's NM Summer Youth Tribal Internship program demonstrates this point,

Through this internship I also feel I gained more confidence working within my community. I feel like when I was younger I didn't participate in my community as much as I would have liked. Through this internship I feel more welcomed in my community and that my help is always appreciated. In the future, I hope to become more involved in community events. (NMSYTE male student, 2014 Survey)

Another caveat to consider here, which perhaps should also compel us to consider additional research leading to intervention programming, is a contest between whose experience is more important and meaningful; with community-based knowledge on one side and formal academic training on the other. Recognizing that this is an unnecessary and even destructive binary, the arguments offered here could prepare researchers, Pueblo community members, and other community stakeholders, including youth themselves, to formulate strategies to bridge perspectives and to strengthen interrelatedness to support engagement.

Why engagement matters: Grandpa Chosa and Uncle Sando

I grew up as a young boy witnessing what I thought were two different approaches to the world and a conflict that was writ large between two people that I respected and cared about – my grandfather Guadalupe Chosa and his brother-in-law, my grand-uncle Joe Sando. Growing up without a father, I looked to these two men as fulfilling that role. Grandpa Chosa was a daily figure in my life who provided structure, discipline and life's teaching through farming practices and as a traditional healer in our Pueblo; and Uncle Joe provided a lens through which to envision life outside of Jemez Pueblo, as a writer and a scholar. Both were grounded in community and both were anchored in valuing family. Despite any differences between them, I always looked forward to connecting with these two men. Sometimes Uncle Joe's visit to my grandfather's home, where I was raised, was spontaneous, and other times, we'd all see

each other for cultural events, Pueblo feast days, or a family member's birthday, for example. In any case, our gatherings always involved food, usually fresh tortillas, something warm to drink, and consistently, these two influential male figures in my life. Inevitably, what emerged when they were together, was conversation about history, law, education, language, environment, family, health, and their memories of serving in the World War II. Theirs was always a delicious exchange, usually evolving into a debate about topics that included pressing issues that our Pueblo people face. Through their personal wisdom, respective community and professional roles, and combined experience, they covered a wide range of perspectives that included my grandfather's internal traditional education and practices and Uncle Joe's external formal education and service. It was fascinating for me, as a young boy, all the way up through young adulthood, to recognize that both grandpa and Uncle Joe, shared and exchanged ideas, beliefs and histories through the same "Pueblo" lens.

I remember one particular heated exchange that focused on the value of education and their respective contribution to community. Both shared how much their educational paths meant to them - Uncle Joe's experience as one of the first Jemez Pueblo members to receive an advanced degree and grandpa's cultural training and education that began as a young boy in the Pueblo. Although the similarities they shared of family, community, education, and of military training and service was common ground, what oftentimes started a heated conversation was their differing roles in community and their respective contributions. Their headstrong ways perhaps limited them from fully seeing and appreciating what the other was presenting as his contribution to community. Witnessing this was confusing for me because I found value in the ways they both were contributing

to not only our community, but also to the world outside of Jemez Pueblo. At the same time, I wanted for them to come to a consensus that their gifts, contributions, and engagement actually supported one another rather than being opposing. It was not until I was ready to leave for college that my grandpa made it clear to me that he understood my Uncle Joe all along. He told me that my role and interest to learn in the outside, like Uncle Joe, would help care for our community, and that his work in community would take care of me.

Despite their differences, what they both ultimately taught me was that both of their experiences were valuable to community, that they both belonged to community, through their work they attached their hearts, and that as an entire community we need to protect and keep our culture alive and recognize that others are called for challenging roles outside of the community. Uncle Joe, through his work and through his sacrifice showed foresight as a community member who insulates and protects the community from external forces. His scholarship today remains a valuable and guiding resource that we must encourage one another and future generations to value and to read. His work does and will continue to help us protect what is most valuable to us, which include our lands, our languages, and our histories. His work should inspire us to continue to exchange in conversation, both at the dinner table and in the classroom. Similarly, Grandpa Chosa's gift to retain oral histories, songs, and teachings served to maintain the vitality of Pueblo life, beauty of the Towa language, and complexity of balancing a multitude of internal traditional activities.

A closer examination of this seeming conflict between two passionate individuals with differing perspectives actually reveals that their interests align more than they

differ. Each are negotiating complex spaces where notions of modernity and progress abound, and the work of each, in their own ways, ensures that our Pueblo way of life continues regardless of whether we are farmers, traditional healers, researchers, and scholars. What these two important men in my life may not have realized, or at least articulated to me, is that they both belong to the community, working towards the same goal—a goal that unifies them with each other and the community. I am reminded of this when I recall my grandfather telling me that no matter where I go, I will be a contributor and engaged to the community.

It has become clear to me that when I was younger, I simply saw the heated exchanges of these two men as an argument between two different sides. However, I now recognize that this is not actually the case and that what they have left me with is incredibly rich and useful—a way to understand the notion of contribution and engagement. This has served me tremendously in my own work as the co-founder and co-director of The Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School. I have matured in my understanding of the complexity of contemporary Pueblo life—including our traditions and cultural practices and our priorities and needs. I have come to understand that my work necessarily involves negotiating multiple spaces and multiple experiences in order to bring them together in a way that serves both individuals and communities. My goal, here and elsewhere, has been to accomplish this through actively seeking to define and practice new forms of Pueblo community engagement that is expressed through innovative programming.

Emerging perspectives on community engagement

The notion of Pueblo community engagement like in most small communities carries with it many different intra-and-inter-community relationship scenarios that involve a diversity of stakeholders. Another dynamic in Pueblo community engagement that extends beyond the individual and community relationship is one that involves a third stakeholder that is often an external influence. As a result, stakeholders now include the community itself, the individuals that occupy the community, the internal and external governments, the departmental programs, the policies, and the external funding or programming agencies that come in the form of federal or state government and private foundations. All of these stakeholders are involved in complex and overlapping relationships, and over time, have evolved into active influences in multiple spheres of work in Pueblo communities, ultimately influencing how the ideas and practices of engagement and contribution are manifested. This chapter explores the dimensions of these relationships and their impact on Pueblo people. Moreover, it offers suggestions towards innovative programming to serve as a mechanism for a proposed Pueblo engagement movement. In order to further understand Pueblo community engagement, it is first necessary to provide an overview of the 19 Pueblos and their community core values that have informed by analysis of a Pueblo-specific engagement.

Pueblo communities and core values

The 19 Pueblos of New Mexico are a culturally cohesive population, numbering approximately 62,000 nationally according to the 2010 US Census, and occupying ancestral lands that span the Rio Grande, from the Pueblo of Taos to the north, the Pueblo of Isleta to the south and the Pueblo of Zuni to the west. The Pueblo of Zuni has the largest Pueblo Indian population in the state at approximately 11,000 tribal members and

the Pueblo of Picuris has the smallest at approximately 370 tribal members. Like other American Indian communities in the U.S., the Pueblos live on lands designated as trust lands by the U.S., which is a reminder of the U.S. colonization and resulting federal policies regarding the treatment of its indigenous populations. Unlike other American Indian communities in the U.S., Spain, Mexico, and then the U.S. formally recognized the Pueblos as sovereign nations, which is an important part of their political history. Furthermore, Pueblo communities have maintained a level of cultural and linguistic continuity that is unfortunately not entirely common in the broader experience of American Indian populations in the U.S. Additionally, in the state of New Mexico, the Pueblos represent the largest number of tribes, 19 of 22, and historically have provided some of the most influential and innovative programs, policies, and initiatives in the nation, such as the efforts in language preservation and maintenance. However, like other indigenous communities around the U.S. and worldwide, the Pueblos also continue to deal with external disruptive influences of colonization with visible impact on generations of community members—from Native language loss to increased migration away from homelands (Sando 1998; Pecos 2007; Sumida Huaman, Chosa, and Pecos, forthcoming; Chosa forthcoming).

The combination of these historical and contemporary elements creates an ideal condition to examine ideas of indigenous, and more specifically here, *Pueblo community engagement*. For example, in the Pueblos, the idea of “participation” refers to one’s genuine contribution to the community. In Pueblo communities, participation can best be described by the Jemez Pueblo community-held philosophy of one’s practice and involvement through ‘attaching your heart.’ Within community offering food supplies or

volunteering your time to a community event, or actively taking part in community ceremonial activities can exemplify participation. Participation therefore implies a relationship between an individual and his or her community/Pueblo. Oftentimes, this form of engagement is tied to a family or community event that requires collective support and energy geared towards positive outcomes. It is what might be referred to as a core value of contribution.

Core values in Pueblo community are those principles that shape behavior, serve as guides for what is right or wrong for the community collective, and therefore strengthen the sense of community. Even though there are numerous core values embraced and practiced by community, one that is basic and universal is respect. One form of showing respect in my community of Jemez Pueblo, for example, is to offer a simple greeting to someone coming your way. Oftentimes, translated, it is simply saying, “Are you coming this way, or I see that you are here.” Another is the value of contribution and to take whatever gift you possess and offer it to the greater good of community. In some cases it is taking groceries to the family home of someone who has died or offering your time through labor. In Pueblo communities, this idea of contribution can also be extended to refer to a more holistic lifelong process—meaning, from birth to death, how Pueblo community members are trained to embrace philosophies related to community contribution as a lifelong process. For example, even the contribution of young children in Pueblo communities is celebrated and nurtured by making sure they participate in the cultural fabric of Pueblo life, oftentimes through community dance celebrations. Community members are part of this holistic development process, and each person is believed to have a particular set of gifts, which

are to be used for the good of the community. The work of Regis Pecos, co-Director of The Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School, and Mary Eunice Romero (1994) outlines these ideas of contribution based on Pueblo research that yielded empirical evidence regarding the notion of giftedness and contribution to the whole—to community. Related to this work and inspired by such studies, this chapter attempts to extend that research by exploring what this idea and practice of contribution actually means by asking the following questions—what does it mean to actually give back to the whole, what does this process look like, and what are the implications for the individual and the community?

Unlike popular or mainstream understandings of contribution, often associated with financial gifts or donations, I propose that individual contribution to the Pueblo community is aligned with individual time and talent that is a person volunteering their time for a community event or offering their talent (gift) to the cause. One example is the time and talent my mother offers when she contributes an evening and an entire day to make Piki³ bread for cultural events, a service where money is not exchanged but offered in good will. Additionally, in the Pueblos, the relationship of individual to community also brings with it the idea of coming back home, or physically contributing or being engaged in community practices. This is a result of the fact that like community members in other regions of the U.S., migration has already occurred in that higher numbers of American Indian and Alaska Natives actually live away from their reservation communities and in cities, and for various reasons—such as to find work opportunities or to attend school (higher education) in other places. This trend is one that was largely

³ Piki bread, or paper bread, is made from corn meal batter that is spread by hand on a flat stone that sits on an open fire. It is traditionally made by women in Pueblo communities for special community ceremonial events.

initiated during the 1950s in the U.S. due to the federal government's policy on relocation—encouraging and offering tribal community members incentives to leave their home reservation communities in order to pursue the “American Dream” and to assimilate into middle America. In her book, *Indigenous Albuquerque*, Dr. Vicenti Carpio states that ‘between 1945 and 1957, more than 100,000 American Indians left their reservations’ (Vicenti Carpio, 2011).

In my work, I also discuss the importance of broadening an Indigenous view of engagement with a focus on Pueblo youth engagement and the need to define engagement in locally-specific ways so that reciprocal and deliberate exchange is recognized and nurtured—that is of youth contributing to community while physically away from community and through new means facilitated by innovative programming. Related to this discussion is another engagement dynamic of how Pueblos choose to engage the individual. This relationship is one that needs to be well-addressed by Pueblo communities as the increase of young people leaving the community to attend college or join the workforce, for example, is on an upward trend with no end in sight. A critical question in this scenario is—what are communities doing currently to actively engage, maintain relationships with, or harness the skills of those who are temporarily away? This question asks Pueblo communities to think of ways they are developing programs or systems to bring back Pueblo graduates and find a place for them to participate through work experiences in community—and this is possible. As part of one New Mexico Pueblo's 15-year strategic plan involving tribal departments and community members, the Pueblo conscientiously chose to address the return of graduates and preparing the Pueblo's departments for their return home. As a result, the Pueblo's Education

Department demonstrates ways that the community is able to use youth leadership and employment programming to keep their youth actively engaged. This interrelationship between the community and its members, or the individual, in their roles as *engagement initiators* is important because if both parties are not consciously making a move towards the other, the gap of engagement becomes wider for everyone, and as time passes, the opportunity for engagement becomes less likely. An engagement initiator can be both the individual and the community – it is the engagement initiator’s attempt to create opportunity or connection to the other that makes them the initiator. For example, an individual initiator might be a student from that community involved in research to support or help the community. It is critical that in the development of engagement or relationship, there be an engagement initiator. Oftentimes the third engagement initiator is federal or state government, or foundations, through their providing of program resources. Engagement initiators are bridge builders for one another.

Another form of engagement relevant to the Pueblos is multi-dimensional and involves community government, an external funding source or agency, and an individual that is directly affected by this relationship. This particular engagement dynamic is featured here. I will explore what this association looks like by first giving an overview of how funding and their associated policies impact Pueblo communities. This description will be followed by examples of the impacts of replicated programs introduced and implemented into Pueblo communities and brief solutions showing how there might have been a more positive impact if funders or external program implementers engaged with community in developing this connection. I will end by then presenting one intervention framework produced by the Leadership Institute at the Santa

Fe Indian School that represents an engagement process whereby tribal individuals and communities are prompted to participate in a more thoughtful and conscientious way to engage.

Pueblo community programming: funding and policy

At the dining table of my grandparents' house as a young boy, I sat between my Uncle Joe and Grandpa Guadalupe when they visited. Like a spectator witnessing a tennis ball going back and forth across the net, I was fascinated by the passionate exchange of words and ideas. While I did not understand everything they were talking about, I understood the essential parts and understood it was about the welfare of not only my family but also my Pueblo community. For me, that was my first Pueblo think tank, and I was privileged to watch these great minds and hearts at work. The nucleus of this significant forum provided the framework for our collective contribution to the Leadership Institute's Community Institutes that we hold today, bringing together all walks of life in the Pueblo community. Then we can begin to bridge the various parts our community and facilitate a process by which all are working towards common ends. These are the interventions, I am proposing, based on the heartfelt values of family and home that we must bring into our programs; these are the solutions that will not only provide heart but strength to our endeavors. Moreover, these are the places that will ground us so that we modify and adapt external funding policies so that they support our values, not the other way around.

The policy and funding relationship between state, federal government, non-profit 501(c) (3) agencies, and Pueblo communities plays a critical role in program implementation because oftentimes the funding comes with guidelines on how to

implement programs. Over the course of several generations, these misaligned guidelines have impacted the quality of community engagement, particularly in areas where the recommended programming is not aligned with either community value systems or existing community structures. Despite the preference that appears to be shown to indigenous peoples in the U.S. through distinct pockets of funding for American Indian and Alaska Native populations, the funding is always attached to regulations, but most importantly to policy trends of the time. The work of Teresa McCarty (2002) in looking at a Navajo tribal school on their reservation in the U.S. comes closest to highlighting this issue—which is that tribal initiatives, no matter how culturally-based, can become dependent upon governmental funding. Due to the funding demand, attention moves away from original tribal vision and community needs to instead meet external initiatives, which can cause problems in sustainability of programming. Similarly, Pueblo communities have had to continue to rely upon external funding entities to fund and help maintain programs that impact the lives of their people. Some fields of programs that receive a significant amount of external funds for programming include health, transportation, environment, elderly care, youth services, and tribal courts, to name a few. These funding streams are often the primary source of funding for Pueblo community department programs.

As mentioned earlier, this work argues that finding ways to strengthen the different mechanisms of community engagement that support traditional core values is essential to developing both the community as a whole and as that individual tribal member's contribution to that community. Important to this discussion is a look at external policies and their impact on community engagement and a more lengthy look at

how funding for programming in Pueblo communities impacts engagement. In examining this dynamic, there is a clear divide, between the sometimes differing objectives of the funding source and the needs and interests of the Pueblo communities. As a result of this divide, programs that are conscientious of such issues provide perspectives and approaches towards closing it and not just replicating government programs. One such program shows how the Leadership Institute is working on consciousness-building through its *community engagement framework* – a process created for the purpose of Pueblo dialogue and contribution as alluded to in my story of my first Pueblo think tank.

The engagement landscape: A Pueblo community's efforts

At a 2013 community visioning session for one New Mexico Pueblo, all community members were invited to attend and participate. The Governor of the Pueblo, who represents the leadership of the community and who ultimately advocates the interests of the community to the non-Pueblo world, took the opportunity to share the status and accomplishments of the departments and their community programs. This Pueblo, like other tribal governments, maintains and oversees departments in health, environment, transportation, tribal courts, and education. In his primary address to the community, the Governor stressed the importance of the Pueblo to create a plan towards self-sufficiency, one in which the Pueblo no longer depended only on government funding for its programs. He elaborated that currently 80% of the community's programming funds come from the State of New Mexico and United States federal government in the form of grants, with the remainder coming from other sources like foundation grants and institutional partnerships. He explained that although these funds are critical to community programming, they also come with rules and guidelines that

may not completely align with the goals of the community and that actually take the community further from its internal intended goals of *strengthening each members' engagement and contribution*. He gave several examples that included how the received funds for home-building precluded ancestral materials and age-old techniques (meaning Pueblo technologies that precede European contact). Due to this apparent lack of alignment, the Governor felt that the autonomy, history, and ways of knowing of his Pueblo was being compromised. For this reason, one of his administration's strategies was to convene this gathering to set the course for future programming to meet the goals of the community. This internal, community member-led planning process, as explained to me by one tribal department director, would set a framework of a collective community voice, create active buy-in, and increase participation. Although such an explicit agenda and process is not actually evident in all the 19 Pueblo communities, a few others are starting to have this conversation in different formats. This example of one Pueblo's engagement is led by its need to keep the value of the engagement and contribution of its members alive in the face of its relationship with funding and government agencies. It further exhibits one Pueblo's forward thinking in developing the parameters of their determining to what degree, if at all, a funder should dictate the way a Pueblo community moves forward. In order to map our own destination, we must be more self-sufficient and collaborate with funding agencies to develop policies that align with our interests.

In an informal conversation with the former Lieutenant Governor of a Southern Pueblo,⁴ he mentioned that during his term of service in the 1990s his community received about 85% of programming funds from the federal government. Another tribal administrative source from a northern Pueblo community, situated just north of Santa Fe, added that her behavioral health program was completely funded by federal grants, and that the community as a whole received 85% of their funding from either state or federal government, with about 5% of the remaining funding coming from private foundations. Information and data like this that includes percentages and reports from all communities would be incredibly valuable for future research and is a step recommended by this discussion here. Such a research initiative would begin with the buy-in of all Pueblos and would take considerable time, resources, and careful methodology. The hope is that such a project could be done by Pueblo people themselves and generated from the Pueblo communities as part of a larger initiative. It is important to also note that there is a current and significant shift in the area of funding that is specific to gaming tribes, and there are gaming tribes among the Pueblos. Although these communities will continue to be eligible for government funding sources as a result of the federal trust status relationship and simply being eligible as a government entity for funding, gaming tribes are infusing revenues into their community programming formula. As a result, the percentage of external funding is reduced. In the case of the Southern Pueblo, mentioned previously, which is now a gaming tribe, leadership also mentioned that while a few years ago 85% of funding came from government sources, their percentage estimate today is at about 60%, which is a significant drop over a decade. As a result, much of

⁴ In each of the 19 Pueblos, the Lieutenant Governor serves alongside the Governor and shares the same responsibility to govern the community.

their programming planning efforts have come from assessing community needs and using community resources like culturally appropriate methods. It is also important to share that some gaming tribes reinvest a larger percentage back into their community programming, relying less on external funding. Another example of the Pueblo/tribal institution-funding dynamic is the Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS), a former federally controlled boarding school and now under the control of the 19 Pueblo communities. Today, the school continues to receive 97% of its educational programming funds from the federal government. In a written exchange with Patricia Sandoval, Director of Planning and Evaluation for the school, she shared the following.

There is an incredible need for our communities to become financially self-sufficient so that we can, without any external rules or regulations, begin to determine our own future. In the case of education, for example, I believe that we need to practice educational sovereignty. This means that we, as a school community, and as tribal governments that run this school, need to find a way to minimize our reliance on the federal government and think of creative ways to financially support our education. This is not to say that we relieve them of their responsibilities and contribution as government partners, but that there may be a time when that source is not available. This self-sufficiency status is also something that is not going to happen overnight, so we also need to figure out a middle ground, or strategies to work with our funding agencies to infuse what is important to us, our people and our communities. We need to make sure that in all the funds we bring in for our programs, that we have our history, our core values, and our community vision for the future that is linked directly to our past and those things we hold valuable. If we don't do this anytime soon, we are continuing to move further away from what is important and from what keeps us tied to who we are. We will continue to do what was done in the past (personal communication, November 18, 2013).

Yet another example of the need for greater self-sufficiency is highlighted through additional conversations with two former Pueblo tribal administrators. They related that government agencies tend to use a 'boilerplate' approach to dispersing funds, which means oftentimes they use an older grant guidelines formula that is rarely, if ever, revised. On the tribal side, program directors acquiesce to this boilerplate without

realizing that they could organize as a coalition to have more of a say in relation to developing more creative approaches. One Tribal Administrator for a Southern Pueblo, shared that the entire picture of funding that comes into Pueblo communities is comprised of a complex variety of sources such that an organized approach to bringing in funds to support a total community vision would be valuable, like the idea of bringing different Pueblo departmental priorities together. However, in the same breath, she also shared that in her experience in her community, most program directors are afraid of change—meaning going in a different direction from the prescribed federal and funding agency guidelines for program development. Clearly several areas need to be addressed, all of which fall under the umbrella need for strengthening communication and collaboration between funders and Pueblos. This will enable parties to align goals and objectives and to have valuable program outcomes that strengthen community in the areas of language preservation, housing, health disparities, and culturally relevant curriculum in education.

With such an approach, funders could become aware of the direction that communities want to head in. Moreover, they will begin to understand their priorities, and in some cases funders may realize that their boilerplate approach is outdated. For communities, particularly program directors, learning the importance of their voice could be a critical outcome, meaning that they ought to have a voice at the onset in designing and creating new approaches to their implementation of programs. Their own creative approaches can bring together their community's values and objectives of the funder(s). Critical to this awareness process is a historical look at how federal policy and programming has contributed to the growing engagement gap of individuals and community, a clear divide. By highlighting several community/tribal institutional

programs and providing several short recommendations on how improvement could have been made the following section offers some examples of possibilities for revisiting Pueblo approaches to addressing the divide.

The divide: Cultural dissonance and disengagement

Pueblos and Native American communities in the U.S. have had a tragic history regarding the effect of external policies and programs, particularly with policies from both federal and state governments. As Leadership Institute Co-Founder and Co-Director Regis Pecos discussed,

The over 100 years of federal policies were meant to destroy us as Pueblo and indigenous peoples. They were meant to kill our languages, through language policy; to break up our families, through boarding school policies; to take our lands, through removal policies, and to kill our religion, through desecration of our lands. (Pueblo Convocation, April, 2012)

He went on to explain subsequent policies that tried to right all the wrong, but shared that the effects are deep within our community social fabric. He stated, “If we don’t do things differently now that we are more in control, are we just enforcing the policies and programs of the past” (Pueblo Convocation, April, 2012).

When one examines the history of Pueblos and indigenous communities, the policies created by external forces have been detrimental to the social workings of communities. Even policies that in past supported boarding schools, language prohibition and relocation continue to impact engagement of Pueblo citizens. For example, the Relocation policy of the 1950s mentioned earlier, and its mission to relocate people from reservations and Alaska Native villages to metropolitan United States locations had close to 35,000 American Indians working and living in cities by 1960. In the late 19th century, the American Indian boarding schools played a detrimental role in

disengaging young children from their home communities by taking them from their communities and putting them in schools that also housed them. Oftentimes a great distance from their communities and consistently a place that did not reflect their home experiences. In their edited work, *Away From Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences*, Archuleta, Child and Lomawaima share, “Boarding schools could be violent places, and abuse and neglect also devastated students’ physical and emotional health. Violence, abuse, and neglect stemmed from the boarding schools’ entrenched commitment to erasing Indian identity” (2000, p. 42).

Still today, we continue to hear stories of how individual experiences of how displacement impacted an individual’s engagement to family and community. As a tribal community member from the Pueblo of Jemez, I remember a story told to me by my grandmother, Lupe Sando Chosa, of how she felt unloved and experienced no nurturing while in boarding school at such a young age, during a time when she said she longed for her mother’s care. Coming from a loving, extended family in Jemez, this experience was a stark contrast to what she knew at home in our Pueblo. After her schooling, she recalled as a young adult that one of her first jobs serving as a nanny to an Anglo family near New Mexico’s capital of Santa Fe actually reintroduced her to what it meant to nurture and care for children. When she had her own children she shared that she was reminded of her disengagement with community and family structures so that she made sure she was particularly present for her children, even so much as to bring in two nieces, including my mother, Martha Chosa and my aunt, Patricia Chosa, and raise them as her own. Today, these two nieces in particular are well-recognized in our community for their participation in cultural and daily community events, whereby they consciously

contribute fully to the Pueblo. Their engagement through ceremony and social contribution—to other community members, immediate, and extended family, is a cumulative result of one person’s (my grandmother’s) conscientious and deliberate commitment to engage with family, with community, and in community spaces.

More recently, however, the relationship between policy and programming is a result of funding going directly to Pueblo communities. Although one may think that receiving funds is a complete win-win advantage, there continues to be disparate approaches in relation to how these funds truly support valuable community growth and engagement. A Leadership Institute participant from a recent Community Institute⁵ dialogue on “The Current Status of Pueblo Elderly Centers,” shared that the funds they receive from the government are strict and do not allow for flexibility. She said, “If you really think about it, we know our elders, we know our people, and we know our needs. Sometimes it is difficult to do the things we want to do with state government funds because there are too many restrictions” (Community Institute participant, 2013). Given the reliance of Pueblo communities for funding support from external sources like the government and private and community foundations, perhaps more aggressive efforts need to be made by communities and funders to communicate and collaborate on the direction of the goals and outcomes of grant support. Ultimately, are we certain that the goals of the funders and communities are in alignment?

Several essays in the edited book *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* (INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, 2007) describe the consequences of a lack of

⁵ Community Institutes is a program of the Leadership Institute. Community Institutes are convened think tanks that bring a diverse group of up to 40 Pueblo people together for each Community Institute to examine and address various community issues using the engagement framework and to develop a plan to improve upon the topic’s current status.

alignment between the goals and objectives of federal and state government as well as non-profit funding agencies and the communities receiving these funds. The book contributors collectively argue that funding agencies dictate the direction of their funded agencies by imposing their desired outcomes. Consequently, the autonomy of agencies that receive such funds gets minimized, at best, and completely diminished at worst. Regrettably, this scenario applies to programs funded at Pueblo communities to a large extent. That is, in order for these programs to be awarded the state and/or federal funds upon which they have become dependent, Pueblo communities must reflect the goals and priorities dictated to them by the funder(s). That is, the goals and objectives that are to be met by the funded agencies are defined in a top-down manner, in which the funder(s) define the desired outcomes with little or no input from or regard to the unique circumstances of the funded agencies. This uni-directional influence and decision-making can be detrimental to the funded entity, particularly for Pueblo communities which often have values that are unaligned with those represented by mainstream institutions, such as state and federal funding agencies. All this has been the experience of Pueblo communities and many other tribal communities.

The following are three examples of this misalignment as they relate to the history of funding and programming in Pueblo communities. In addition, the examples will elaborate on the unintended consequences that were a result of these relationships and provide for a short solution oriented reflection.

1. Head Start

Originally launched in 1965 Head Start was created to prepare low-income kids for elementary school. Through its mission, “Head Start promotes school preparation by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services (Wikipedia: Head Start).” Since its inception, Head Start has played a major role in Pueblo communities, with most housing a program/school within the community. The early development and planning, however, did not involve community input; input that, with foresight, could have included valuable areas of consideration, most notably, related to Pueblo language maintenance. In his book Pueblo Nations, Jemez Pueblo historian Dr. Joe Sando reiterates the disconnect between Pueblo children’s self-identity upon entering Head Start:

They generally have a positive concept of self when they arrive at school. But the models they read about rarely, if ever, identify with their past experiences at home and in his village. The ultimate experience of this is that the children develop a negative perception of themselves, their parents, and their culture. (Sando, 1992)

Designed to use English as the primary and oftentimes sole language, Head Start programming has sped up and contributed immensely to the decline of Pueblo languages. Until recently, through more community dialogue and realization that language loss is occurring rapidly, have Head Start programs and Pueblo education departments begun to consider addressing the issue. But is it too late?

2. HUD and Subdivisions

Similarly, in the push to provide housing for those without homes in the communities. The Pueblos worked to partner and secure funds from HUD to build homes in the communities. As great a relief as it was for families to now be in their own

homes, looking back it seems that not enough community-based planning took place. For instance, for the first time and most likely for cost-cutting measures, you started to see homes being built away from the community center, and in almost all cases, they were built in subdivisions mirroring those in city suburbs. In time, each of these subdivisions began to take a life and name of its own, like “Knots Landing,” “the Kennedy Complex,” “Pickle Heights,” overshadowing the native names of the area and space of the community. In addition, with these developments you began to see the use of materials that were not traditional to the community. Framed houses took the place of natural materials like adobe and logs from the local landscape. Further, what was once the practice of community and family coming together to build the adobe home was now replaced by contractors; and with the work of community and what would have become a home with no debt, became a home with a mortgage loan payment. With some critical thinking and planning at the onset of home building in the pueblos, how different or how much more intact would the social structures of pueblo communities be?

3. Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels concept started out as a wonderful idea for the elderly community members that are homebound and unable to go to the local senior centers for lunch meals. This program is a national program that took a cookie cutter approach to applying the program in Pueblo communities. The topic of Meals on Wheels was brought up to program directors at a recent Pueblo Elders Institute. While most agree that it is very important to make sure those elders that are homebound are fed a nutritious meal, many expressed sadness related to the process of running a meal into the home in a Styrofoam container and not being able to visit with the elder, or keep them company as

they ate. When asked why this was common practice, one director explained that it was due to staffing and efficiency purposes. Another director discussed the important value of visiting and sharing stories during mealtime and that for elders this is a major time for teaching others of life lessons and values. Why is it that when considering the experiences of our most vulnerable population, programming does not fit their basic needs?

Discussion: A word on power and shifting the imbalance

Why do these programs not “work” in Pueblo communities? Meaning, why are they so heavily critiqued as foreign and external by Pueblo people? Further, have they actually produced the results intended in their original conception? This is a tough challenge in that they were not conceived for Pueblo or indigenous people but actually represent the “cookie-cutter” and “boilerplate” approach. Generally speaking, the unresolved cultural dissonance between Pueblo communities and mainstream funding agencies results in the values of indigenous communities being overridden and disregarded in order to secure federal and/or state funds to finance community programs that address some of the most essential needs of tribal members. Several authors have also explored the consequences of cultural misalignment and how this unevenness impacts the subordinate community. For instance, in *Other People’s Children*, Delpit (2006) explains five areas of power: One being that those who feel less empowered are actually more powered and those that have more power are actually not in power. She argued,

For many who consider themselves members of liberal or radical camps, acknowledging personal power and admitting participation in the culture of power is distinctly

uncomfortable. On the other hand, those who are less powerful in any situation are most likely to recognize the power variable most acutely (p. 26).

Recognizing this dissonance is a critical step in moving forward towards what bell hooks calls 'self-actualization'.

Examples of misalignment in Pueblo communities clearly show the cultural dissonance in action. However, using radical theoretical frameworks combined with Pueblo vision and voices, community and community program directors, for example, could be taken through an organized movement to realize Delpit's notion of flipping the power relationship and hooks' movement towards self-actualization. The end result would be movement towards greater confidence in establishing collaborative and communicative relationships with funders. Furthermore, Delpit, in *The Silenced Dialogue*, states also that success in institutions "is predicated upon acquisition of the culture of those who are in power (1995, p.283)." In this case, the funder determines what success is in relation to program outcomes. Only through collaboration and communication in the planning process can, the power shift, and the outcomes more aligned with the goals of the community.

On a purely speculative basis, we can consider how these outcomes might have differed if the community had played a more central role in the decision-making process. Returning to the three examples discussed previously, we can imagine a different balance of power:

1. Head Start

If a more conscientious approach had been taken early on with a conversation on what matters to communities, it is almost certain that the preservation and strengthening of native languages would have been a major priority. With that said, native languages, at a minimum, would have been considered part of the curriculum not only for purposes of native language maintenance, but for the original intent of Head Start, that is, creating for a healthy well-rounded child. It is interesting now that there is a big emphasis on the value of multi-language speakers. One can imagine how much more complex Pueblo communities would have been as a result of pushing multi-languages.

2. HUD Housing

If the societal structure of Pueblo communities, even looking back into the Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde villages, were truly considered in the introduction of HUD housing developments, significant components of Pueblo livelihood would be strong. Because homes would have been made of natural earthen materials, they would have lasted longer and kept with the community aesthetic. Focus on keeping with building as close to the communal center, as opposed to separate areas miles away from the center, would keep with community visiting, foot traffic, and kids being raised by community. Also, proximity to the center would have continually strengthened a community member's feeling as an integral part of the community as opposed to someone on the outskirts.

3. Meals on Wheels

Although it can be an incredible service to the broader community, the Meals on Wheels program displaced natural community processes or responsibilities of taking care of and spending time with our elder population. If collaboration on the front end would have occurred, one can imagine the incredible benefits of meal time visits that include

storytelling, passing on of core values and cultural teachings, and intergenerational community engagement.

Increasingly in Pueblo communities, these considerations are being reviewed internally. Conversations are starting that examine the importance of creating for ourselves as Pueblo people. Some of this conversation has been initiated and facilitated by the Leadership Institute in hopes that a larger movement is put into motion. The solution is bringing everything in that belongs to community into community through that idea of you belonging to us and the attachment of your heart. The leadership institute involves these two things through innovative programming and conscious engagement.

Consciousness-building: The Leadership Institute

The Leadership Institute, created in 1997 as a convener think tank for New Mexico tribal communities, has created numerous programs to contribute to consciousness building in NM tribal communities. The Leadership Institute, through its programming, is an attempt to bring the two areas of the external and the internal together and privileges the cultural core values. In essence, just as the internal supports the external, the external supports the internal.

The program most relevant to this conversation relates to the first program created by the Leadership Institute called Community Institutes⁶. Community Institutes bring a diversity of up to 40 Pueblo people together to address issues critical to our communities. Through a set two-day curriculum, the Community Institutes create for an educational environment that takes participants through the following framework for engagement.

⁶ Community Institutes is a program of the Leadership Institute. Community Institutes are convener think tanks that bring a diverse group of up to 40 Pueblo people together for each Community Institute to examine and address various community issues using the engagement framework and to develop a plan to improve upon the topic's current status.

This framework and components of this framework, is now used in all of the Leadership Institute's programming to create a conscious engagement movement. The framework consists of the following programming elements:

a. Story-Telling: An introductory exercise that participants engage in to share through a non-time constraining format more about themselves, their work, and what they believe in relation to their work. Guiding questions participants answer include: What do you want your children to inherit? What do you want your community to look like in 50 years? What do you want your caretakers to be like?

b. Core Values Paradigm: An exercise that engages all participants in examining individual and collective, or communal core values. This is paired with the Institute topic and the question: Are the decisions we are making today supporting our core values or taking us further away from our core values?

c. 100 Years of Federal Policy: This is a history lesson on all the policies and programs that have had a direct impact on our communities. For most participants, the information presented in this portion is the first time they have heard and made sense of it.

d. The question: *What will be your contribution?* Participants are asked to break out into groups and share how, within their respective professional and community roles, they will they take this information and make a contribution.

This framework has proven to be very successful for Pueblo community individuals. For example, a former participant in one of the Leadership Institute's Community Institute shared that the framework and programming provided him was a healing model for him personally in many ways. Through the 100 Years of Federal Policy presentation, he learned not to feel guilty that he did not speak his language because language

eradication was one of the government's goals. He also said that as a result of the Leadership Institute's question, What will be your contribution, he was encouraged to participate more in his community by coming home from the city more often.

One of the key strategies in implementing this framework in programming for communities is to always include current or potential funders in programming. By doing this in the Community Institutes, for example, the engagement framework, or process, educates those funding decision makers, empowers community participants, and instantly creates a relationship for collaboration and effective communication. This model seems to be what needs to be extended more broadly in efforts to address the long history of non-communication and cultural dissonance in programming.

In a conversation with Dr. Bryan Brayboy (personal communication, February 6, 2015), he illustrated how different components of the stakeholders mentioned in the Chapter move together. Through this research and reflection he provided me with an incredible image of an old wooden flatbed wagon that my grandfather used to pull with his tractor. Pulled by, or moved by, this tractor that represents the mechanisms that keep Pueblo communities moving forward, like the Leadership Institute and like organizations in community, both grandfathers and members of our communities represent tires moving in the same direction carrying on their shoulders, or represented by the flatbed, the community.

Conclusion and recommendations for future research

Throughout the 19 New Mexico Pueblo communities and quite possibly throughout the over 560 tribes in the United States, tribal community programming has played an influential role in the lives of the people and the life of the community, particularly to its role in engagement. From the centuries old forced policies of the federal and state governments and the subsequent programs meant to civilize Pueblos, to the recent programs created and brought by funding of programs, the intended outcomes have not aligned with the core values of the communities. This discussion was intended to outline this history and experiences of communities related to programming to highlight this disconnect and to begin to think about potential solutions to empower the stakeholders, create communication and collaboration and to change the trajectory of engagement as a result of community programming.

This work also attempts to highlight the notion and importance of what contribution in community truly means. As previously mentioned, the Leadership Institute grounds its work on the value of contribution and throughout all fifteen programs currently under its umbrella, each participant is asked, What will be your contribution? Throughout the nearly seventeen years and over 5,000 participants in various programming efforts, this question has sparked many a person's engagement by individualizing their contribution to community, from youth realizing a playground for their community, to development of new thoughts and movement on the indigenous legal tradition, to making native language conversation a priority in their community. From the beauty of the contribution that has existed in Pueblo communities since time immemorial to realizing contribution through a time of new engagement, this

conversation needs to continue and an expansive notion of engagement through contribution needs to become a platform for continued conversation.

It is apparent that communities need active engagement in the program planning and implementation process. In these conversations with funders and in the general process of engagement, indigenous methods, processes, and values must be incorporated into the designing of programs. When done well, programming and the subsequent evaluation process can serve to meet the needs to strengthen community and culture. These are very important to communities because if they are not followed through carefully, one does not feel that they belong, and if hearts are not attached, there can be some unintended consequences, like language loss, loss of cultural practices, and community spirit.

2) WE ARE ALL VALUABLE: PUEBLO YOUTH AND THE NEW ENGAGEMENT

Introduction: Emerging perspectives on youth engagement

This article endeavors to extrapolate the meaning of *new engagement* in Pueblo communities and how the process of *engagement*, exemplified in multiple ways, has kept Pueblo communities vibrant. For example, it is because of community engagement that Pueblo languages continue to be spoken, that ceremonies are practiced throughout the Pueblo traditional calendar, that core values serve community decision-making, governance structures remain in place, knowledge is passed down and that the principles of tribal sovereignty are held at a high standard. This work argues that we are at a critical time that calls for Pueblo communities to take a close look at how we, as stakeholders in the lives of youth and in our own futures, think about engaging youth who are living both in and outside of tribal communities. This call involves examining the notion of engagement in new and emerging ways, first by recognizing what the current needs and situations are of communities and how youth are a part of this dynamic and these changing times. As Pueblo community members, I argue that we need to be more proactive than we have been historically in order to include youth voices during this time of *new engagement*.

In order to provide concrete examples of this proposal for new engagement, this article will draw from the lens of what might it look like to have Pueblo youth participate in governance. Starting with a review of the current state of Pueblo communities related to youth engagement and contribution, this work will then move into a personal narrative that describes the critical influence of family and elders and the ways in which their

teachings and contributions—coupled with experiences in institutions of higher education—have the power to shape professional innovation efforts in Pueblo community development. Embedded in this work is also the evolution of the Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School and its New Mexico Summer Youth Tribal Employment program, which provides a focal case study that exemplifies one organization’s efforts to engage youth through innovative programming methods that emphasize emerging notions of *new engagement*. Ultimately, one goal of presenting this work is to create the space for a conclusion that actually provides some recommendations on programming and policy for Pueblo coalition-based youth engagement models. Key questions addressed in this work include the following,

1. *What is new engagement and why is it so critical to youth leadership, governance and community development?*
2. *How can we create a process to address the new engagement through coalition type innovative youth programming?*
3. *What is the process that the Leadership Institute follows to create a comprehensive youth program?*

An important consideration to make here that also honors the holistic and collective contributions of generations of Pueblo, New Mexico, and other tribal and Indigenous community members, as well as current community stakeholders is that in no way is this work intended to lead the reader to assume or conclude that this work or the ideas generated were generated or belong to individuals alone. Rather, the information provided here is the cumulative work of many individuals who have also worked as staff for the Leadership Institute, consultants and evaluators who found ways to improve

programming, community members and institutions who participated and partnered in the initiatives, and most importantly, the dedication and commitment of youth that believe strongly that their engagement is important to the continued development of Pueblo communities and that their messages should be heard in the governance and other tribal community structures. Furthermore, this work also addresses inspiration to think in radically different ways (Freire, 1970; hooks 1994a, 1994b) and to do so as a participant speaking ‘from the margins,’ yet who is re-centering Pueblo thought and ideas in attempt to offer some pragmatic approaches to some of the most critical problems we face today.

Why propose *new engagement*?

New engagement is linked to the realization that an increasing number of our Pueblo community youth and tribal members choose to live outside of Pueblos. Thus, Pueblo peoples at all levels—from family members to tribal leadership and institutions, for example—must create new programming rooted in a philosophical commitment towards ways of *new engagement* so that youth contributions to community are received and incorporated into community development.

Youth engagement in particular is critical in addressing *new engagement* processes for small Indigenous and historically marginalized communities like the Pueblos of New Mexico, because as so popularly expressed, youth are the future of our communities, as well as current contributors in their own right. This phrase captures the value and urgency of youth engagement because as Corrine Sanchez, Executive Director of Tewa Women United describes it, “they are the holders of our cultural continuance and they will be sharing with future generations what it means to be Pueblo.” (Personal communication, 2015) Furthermore, each young person’s potential role in community is

significant when you think of the relatively small population size of each Pueblo community. For example, in a community like Jemez Pueblo with a population of just over 3,700, each young person's projected contribution, whether it be as a teacher, governor or culture bearer, becomes exponentially valuable. Therefore, their role, whether inside or outside of the community is critical to shaping the community's future.

The stark reality here is that, according to Census Bureau data in the U.S., in 2013 70% of the American Indian and Alaska Native population now live in an urban area, an increase from 45% in 1970 and 8% in 1940 (New York Times, April 13, 2013). As rural tribal communities see more and more of their young people leave community to enter the work force or attend college or university we need to recognize that there are out there collecting a myriad of skills and that all youth contributions back to community are valuable, despite their physical absence in community. Any existing gaps between youth and community, whether based on perception that youth are not interested in community or the reality that there are very few employment opportunities, grow wider because processes to address this has not been developed. As a result, youth feel that there are no opportunities for growth or change in community, or that they are misunderstood by older community members. The Leadership Institute, in 2012, sponsored the Laguna Pueblo Convocation, a community-wide event that drew over 800 Laguna Pueblo community members from their seven villages to discuss the "state of the state" of issues including education, governance, economic development, and Native language. The Laguna Pueblo Convocation was an opportunity for sharing of research and ideas, as well as a call to action, and it was here that University of New Mexico professor, Ted Jojola, offered his work that spoke clearly to what appears to be a growing distance between youth and

community, especially impacting on-reservation populations. He shared that, like the previously mentioned Census Bureau statistic, the percentage of Pueblo people living in community is becoming less than that of those living in urban areas like Albuquerque and Santa Fe. He explained that for Laguna Pueblo in particular, more of its tribal members currently live outside of the community than in it due to lack of housing in the Pueblo, students attending college, and for employment opportunities. Although data like these on the other Pueblo communities is not yet available, this migration away is a common thread in all communities. Addressing this phenomenon is critically important within the context of contribution to community.

Because Pueblo peoples believe strongly in the usage of individual talents and skills for the benefit of the whole community—implying heavily the notion of contribution (Romero 1994), the central value that keeps community members engaged and that perhaps even defines their membership in community, is the core value of *contribution*. Furthermore, as the intent of this work is to bring forward a conversation about youth engagement, contribution, and understanding and constructing the experiences of our young people as relevant, inclusive and valuable, particularly through their representation in governance, there are three specific reasons that relate to this intent that I would like to highlight. These reasons speak to my reflexivity as a researcher-scholar-educator and lead into the narrative portion of this work and are summarized here.

The first reason for why I believe so strongly that new ways of engaging Pueblo youth must be addressed is related to my own decision to return home to New Mexico after extensive schooling in higher education to work with my community, but is more

deeply rooted in an earlier conversation with my grandfather, a highly regarded community member, about my first internal dilemma to leave to go to college or stay close to home. The outcome of this conversation was a life lesson from him that ultimately reassured me that no matter where I am in this world, I would be able to contribute to our community. The second reason I feel so compelled to explore and address youth engagement is because of my higher education experiences that were often defined by the feeling of being unprepared to represent and defend my Pueblo worldviews and the home experiences that mattered so much to me while in college. In public talks that I have given, I have often shared that in the past, high school curricula did not typically prepare students to represent their tribal interests in college spaces—at least this was my experience. I did not learn much about tribal community issues and history in high school and was not equipped to represent my community or argue on their behalf in any way in an elite college institution, far away from home and replete with privilege unaccustomed to me. Such an experience left me feeling incompetent and even guilty for not fulfilling my grandfather's hope that I would represent our communities. These experiences led to my desire to create programming for youth specifically so that they might not have to go through the same experience, so that they could be better equipped intellectually and experientially to represent their own Pueblo communities.

The third reason for my interest in these issues stems from my early work experiences as Planner at the State of New Mexico Office of Indian Affairs where Regis Pecos, served as the Executive Director. Through our work in the state, we observed the lack of Pueblo people represented in state decision-making positions in all branches of government—judicial, legislative and executive. Our goal, at that time in the 1990s, was

to begin a long-term movement to train young people in policy and tribal community issue areas so that they could potentially fill those positions and close that representation gap. Altogether, these experiences created the need to re-think a process for youth engagement and innovative programming mechanisms.

Methodological pieces

Concepts discussed here in this work are based on data that has been collected from over 15 years of Leadership Institute work through various programming initiatives, including, Community Institutes, Summer Policy Academy, Summer Art and Archeology Academy, New Mexico Summer Tribal Youth Employment, and the Pueblo Convocation. Youth participants in these programs range in age from 15 years to 24 years. Data were collected from surveys filled out at the beginning and ending of programming. Additionally, personal conversations with participants are included in this chapter. A significant thread that runs through this chapter is the inclusion of storytelling, most of which occurred over my lifetime and from close family members or members of different Pueblo communities. There has been very little research done on Pueblo community engagement, making use of Leadership Institute data and experience with Pueblo communities critical to this chapter.

Laying the groundwork and honoring our collective experiences: A word on grandfathers

I was raised in the Pueblo of Jemez, a largely historically farming Pueblo community of roughly 3,700 tribal members. The Pueblo lies approximately 50 miles outside of Albuquerque in New Mexico. Although I was raised by a single mother, I was surrounded by other immediate and extended family members—aunts, uncles, cousins,

and especially, my grandmother and grandfather who helped raise me close to them. As a child and then growing into adulthood, I always appreciated the caring and fatherly role that my grandfather, Guadalupe Chosa, consciously played in my life. He filled the void of not having a father figure, something that most people take for granted. And at the same time, he created a special environment to hand down a set of skills and experiences that were uniquely his: He was a farmer, a community healer, and a provider for an extended family. Through his farming practices, he taught me to care for crops in the fields, to nurture the growing plants, to provide for others, and to share what we had and harvested. Through his personal community responsibilities as a community leader, he instilled in me the value of discipline, completing tasks, and a strong work ethic. As I witnessed his interactions and relationships with those people he knew and with those he just met, he instilled in me a sense of humor, loyalty, compassion and honesty. Through my relationship and experiences with my grandfather, he was the one who taught me the power of engagement, of *being engaged*—interaction and participation as a continual process—in community and drawing from my individual talents and secure in the knowledge that with those talents I could contribute to our community and the larger society, that which lay beyond the spaces we call home.

This experience is not only mine, but is part of Pueblo community life. The responsibility that adults have to raise their children through example is held in high regard. One of the areas that this is especially evident is in raising and teaching children in the cultural and ceremonial arenas, where this transference of knowledge and of mentorship is a sacred responsibility of adults (Romero 1994, 2003; Suina and Smolkin, 1995; Sumida Huaman, 2011a). This adds yet another important dimension to the notion

of engagement for Indigenous and Pueblo peoples, which is cultural practice and the opportunity to learn, teach, and exchange knowledge. In my community of Jemez Pueblo, the strength of this cultural aspect of engagement remains strong. And while some members participate at varying levels, the opportunity for engagement remains open to all members. This article acknowledges and respects the strength of cultural engagement, which may fluctuate, but does not intend to address or analyze that system in any way. Meaning, the business of this work is to examine engagement and its characteristics at a more generalized level without specific cultural or ceremonial analysis or interpretation. Instead, this article takes a look at engagement of Pueblo people, and moreover youth, when they live or operate outside of the immediate community and how a Pueblo community might understand its role in new engagement. In this sense, so far, such a notion of engagement may involve the following: interaction, participation, knowledge exchange, space/place, opportunity, contribution, and development.

In addition to my early and adult experiences with my grandfather, my interest in exploring engagement became increasingly clear through a series of personal experiences with my uncle Joe Sando, a well-known Pueblo historian and scholar, and my higher educational experiences. Throughout my high school years in New Mexico, I had done well in academics. Part of “doing well” meant that one received encouragement from teachers and counselors to consider applying for college. Never having considered college as an option, my thought was that I would return home to Jemez after boarding school at the Santa Fe Indian School, find work locally and continue farming with my grandparents. However, through the advice of teachers, counselors and eventually peers that I considered mentors, I began to consider the option to go to college. I was

encouraged by a classmate and close friend, Anthony Riley, to apply to summer programs at elite prep schools on the East Coast. He had done this in the past and said his reason was to see if he could compete at that level, but also to see if this was truly what he wanted to do. He walked me through the application process and upon acceptance I decided to participate for two consecutive summers at Phillips Academy Andover and Northfield Mount Herman School, both elite boarding schools in Massachusetts. After this experience and enjoying the excitement of learning new things, I knew that college was an option. I later told my grandfather that it reminded me of his stories of travel around the world during his service in World War II. This began the process of trying to decide what educational experience was right for me, what was meant for me to do in the larger context of connection to community, and with whatever decision I made, how will I contribute to community.

The day I received an acceptance letter from a college that was at the top of my list, I knew I needed to share the news with my grandfather and seek his advice. Coincidentally, the college I was hoping for most to gain admittance was the one furthest from my community in many ways, that is, through distance, landscape, racial diversity, culturally and economically. I remember that day clearly as I drove my mother's blue half-ton Chevy pickup truck into the front yard. I remember the image of my grandfather standing outside with his long hair down. I knew he had just taken a shower. His ritual afterwards, was to stand outside near the firewood pile in his white t-shirt and use the heat of the sun to dry his hair. Although this was a part of his routine, I felt as if he was waiting for me. In fact, one of his special gifts was to make all who came to visit him

feel welcome and to give them the time they needed. On this particular day, I especially needed both that welcome and time.

After greeting me with a smile, we walked inside and sat down at the table. With the acceptance letter in hand, I began to share the news of my acceptance to college. Because he could not read English, he asked me to read the letter to him and to translate it into Towa, the language of the Jemez people and the only language we spoke to one another. I translated to him that after I completed high school, I was thinking about moving away from home to continue my education. I explained to him that it was a very difficult decision but that I was also open to remaining at home to help him. At this point, part of my feelings were that of guilt and leaving community and not being a contributing member. After a moment of silence, he started off with a story about being away from home. He prefaced his story by saying in Towa, "Home will always be here." I recall him starting out telling me that there were three times when he had to leave home, twice by policy that did not allow him much of a choice. And although boarding school, service in World War II, and working for agricultural farms in northern California provided for unique experiences and learning, he said that he always knew that his place was home in the community. He said, "My role, and the position that I hold for all of my life is to remain here in Jemez. Your role, son, is to be brave and learn all you can to be a contributing member to our community. I'm here taking care of you from the inside. And you will be out there taking care of me here on the inside." I always remember this so clearly. And from that day, I knew that I had to be conscious about my contribution and engagement to my grandfather and to my community.

What happened that day was a clear example of my grandfather practicing and offering me what Brayboy (2005) describes as transformational resistance. In his article, Transformational Resistance and Social Justice, Brayboy says, “...strategies of resistance through education are used to achieve self-determination and are particularly important for American Indians because of their unique political and economic status” (p. 195).

So, I enrolled at Dartmouth College and then later at Harvard University for graduate school. During my time at both institutions I became increasingly interested in the interrelationship between an individual and community—using my own experiences and cultural perspectives, as well as learning about these concepts from empirically-based research, human development and psychology, and scholarly perspectives. As a result of my conversations with my grandfather and his teaching that *we are all valuable*, I was interested the role community has in developing its members, and the role an individual could have in developing or contributing to community. Through my studies in Sociology and Human Development and Psychology at both institutions, I began to understand that such a relationship—individual and community—was critical to keeping the vitality of individual and community engagement alive, especially for small Indigenous communities like Jemez, but that furthermore, there was a lesser explored space in between the two that needed to be filled, and strengthened, or bridged. While I held this conviction, what I experienced in my classes, however, was intimidation and a feeling of incompetence.

I learned that as I participated in classes that were predominantly white upper class there was very little knowledge about Native North American communities. It became clear that I needed to have the appropriate information to represent or speak for

my community. Often, the professor or a well-intentioned student would turn to me and ask, “Carnell, what is the Native American perspective on this issue, or historically, how did Native people handle these issues?” Due to very little introduction to these issue areas in my high school curriculum, even at an all-Indian boarding school, I rarely had a sufficient answer to contribute. Needless to say, this span of a total of five years in undergraduate and graduate school was difficult for me to actually feel accomplished. For one, my role and my goal, based on my conversation with my grandfather was to participate from outside to make the inside stronger. I felt inadequate representing our Pueblo communities, not having been explicitly taught about larger Native American or specific community issues. As a result of this experience, I believed that I had to play another role in making sure that other generations of Pueblo students did not have to go through what I, and many of my Native American classmates went through. I knew that through my study, my experience, and what my grandfather referred to as “my calling,” I had to create opportunities for our young Pueblo people to feel involved, engaged and conscious about our community issues. Part of this experience was to move me towards transformational resistance, that is, of taking “knowledge learned in school to be used in conjunction with tribal knowledge toward community-based social justice needs” (Brayboy, 2005. p. 196). Much like Vizenor’s (1999) concept of survivance highlighted in Brayboy’s *Transformational Resistance and Social Justice* (2005), Brayboy says “The power lies in taking an active stance toward creating something new” (p. 197). I knew at the end of my graduate school experience what my role in this movement was to be.

Upon my return home to New Mexico after graduating from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education, I had the great opportunity of meeting Regis Pecos of

Cochiti Pueblo. Through our work together I found out that he also had an interest in youth development. Although his reason came from another perspective, which was that of training young people to fill federal and state government positions, we were both looking for a similar outcome, that is, to become contributors to community. During my time volunteering and then later working under his direction at the New Mexico Office of Indian Affairs where he served as the Executive Director of the Office of Indian Affairs, we recognized that our goals of training young people for state government positions and building a community consciousness for young people could be combined. As a result, we founded the Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School and further developed it as a mechanism to create programs to train Pueblo youth on community issues, with the ultimate outcome of developing engaged Pueblo citizens.

The moments I shared with my grandfather began to define and shape the engagement philosophy and framework through which I participate in youth development programming today. He believed, as I do now, that all members of our communities and our societies are valuable and have gifts to contribute. In Grandpa Chosa's teachings, he used examples related to farming and the role that different agents played in producing crop. He said that without water the seeds would not be nourished, without bees we would not have pollination, and without us, the plants would not be guided to full growth. As a result, while growing up, I made sure that my role, or my place in the larger process was one that I honored and in which I was fully engaged. In this work, it is critical to acknowledge that there are many similar stories in Pueblos, in New Mexico communities, and elsewhere, and that many peoples use the analogy of farming and of how it takes an entire community's efforts to raise a child.

Pueblo youth engagement

New Mexico is home to 22 tribal communities, 19 of which are Pueblo tribal communities that are situated north to south along the Rio Grande River. The 19 Pueblo communities speak five different languages: Tewa, Tiwa, Towa, Zuni, and Keres. Although these languages can be separated into Tanoan (Tewa, Tiwa and Towa), Keresan (Keres), and Zuni language groups, they are all maintained orally. For the most part, the Pueblos handle their internal and external affairs autonomously, but they also work together under established political organizations like the former AIPC (All Indian Pueblo Council) now known as the All Pueblo Council of Governors, Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council, and Ten Southern Pueblos. In his book, *Pueblo Nations*, Sando explains that coalition organizations like those mentioned permit mutual counsel, and allow “for the development of a degree of political power in Pueblo relations with the state and federal governments” (Sando, p. 13). This framework can be applied to youth engagement programming. However, with the exception of some youth programming in the areas of environment, to date there has not been a concerted effort to include youth in larger scale community governance, like inclusion in the organizations mentioned. This work addresses that gap and considers the inclusion of youth in decision-making roles and policy development as a potential area for strengthening within the governance structure of our Pueblo communities.⁷ In many ways, the story for youth, those of high

⁷ While my paper and supporting data focuses on youth, another area for consideration for expanded roles in tribal policy-making is that of women. For a majority of the 19 Pueblo communities, women are not included in government positions outside of employment positions where they serve as directors of programs or departments. Rarely do you see women serve as governors or on the tribal councils. Only three Pueblos have had women governors, and one has had a head councilwoman; these Pueblos include, Isleta Pueblo, Nambe Pueblo, Pojoaque Pueblo and Zuni Pueblo, respectively. The other 16 Pueblos have not had women governors lead their communities in this formal role. The current tribal government systems are not ancestral to our communities, but are forms brought by Spanish colonists over three hundred years ago. However, within our ancestral governance and

school age, has not changed in that their role or presence in governance is limited in Pueblo communities, with the exception of participation by young men who in some communities are appointed as aides to tribal leaders.

To strengthen the *new youth engagement*, tribal governments have an incredible opportunity to dialogue and build with the youth of their respective communities in areas of planning, programming and decision-making. The work of Pueblo, Indigenous, and non-Indigenous scholars also speaks to this opportunity in recognizing youth contributions of thought and action in multiple ways that influence tribal, state, federal, and international spheres (McCarty, Romero-Little, and Warhol, 2009; Sumida Huaman, 2011b): Youth insight and ability to contribute in today's society is greatly enhanced by the resources made available to them in the forms of technology, access to information, and community-based curriculum design. Moreover, they are able to have a much more sophisticated conversation on community issues with their peers and elders. To date, however, access to these conversations and opportunities to contribute to dialogue related to tribal government and all the issues that surround it are limited. This is largely due to the fact that many communities, for example, do not have a system in place for youth engagement, including youth groups, councils or boards. Moreover, when youth are mentioned within Pueblo government systems, the context is almost always related to behavioral issues that put them in tribal courts and the justice system. For this reason, when one thinks about youth engagement, it is always with the association of delinquent behavior and not as the valuable resources they can be to the community.

ceremonial societal systems, Pueblo women serve roles to govern and lead community. More communities, in various forms, are slowly including women in the colonial system of government.

Based on internal research reports from previous Pueblo Community Institutes⁸ (2010-2012) facilitated by the Leadership Institute, we have found that the general perception from adults in the community is that youth are uninformed and uninterested. I argue that this simply is not true. With their increasing interest in technology and access to information, youth today are gathering information at a faster rate than their parents and grandparents. Their ability to navigate the Internet, their increased interest in community issues, and desire to be contributing members of their communities is a combination that may not have existed before. Further, Pueblo youth interest in government is on an increase due to current local and national programs that gear them towards leadership (Fieldnotes, Summer Policy Academy, 2013), recognition of the ongoing threats to tribal sovereignty (Barker 2005), increasing community-based curricula in schools (such as at the Santa Fe Indian School), recognition of the core value of the notion of giving back, and the growing urgency of retaining and revitalizing what Pueblos have remaining in terms of language, land and cultural practices, such as farming. Currently, the tribal government arena in Pueblo communities is not considered a space for youth, perhaps because there has not been a concerted effort to make this happen. At the same time, there are three movements that are attempting to give youth an organized voice: tribal youth clubs, the charter school movement, and leadership development programming.

⁸ Community Institutes is a program of the Leadership Institute. Community Institutes are convener think tanks that bring a diverse group of up to 40 Pueblo people together for each Community Institute to examine and address various community issues using the engagement framework and to develop a plan to improve upon the topic's current status.

In an informal conversation with one tribal Education Department Director at one of the southern Pueblos (personal communication, October, 2014), he explained that out of the nineteen Pueblo communities, none had a direct and active position for youth within their administrative level of government systems. He mentioned that one early movement related to youth involvement was the creation of tribal youth groups. He believed that only three Pueblos have consistent (meaning a relatively uninterrupted existence) and active youth groups (meaning holding regular meetings and activities for both youth and community), including: *Native American Youth Empowerment* (Jemez Pueblo, a southern Pueblo), *Khapo Kids* (Santa Clara Pueblo, a northern Pueblo) and *Laguna Youth* (Laguna Pueblo, another southern Pueblo). Unfortunately, however, cross-Pueblo collaboration between these Pueblo youth groups was minimal, if at all.

Another important movement that appears more structured and community-driven is to develop youth leaders through Charter Schools. Much like the *Halau Ku Mana* charter school highlighted in *The Seeds We Planted* by Noelani Goodyear-Ka'opua, charter schools have been taking shape in Pueblo communities as a way to engage youth into community. In fact, the Pueblo of Jemez runs the first historically Pueblo charter schools—an elementary and high school on tribal lands. In an informal conversation with the Director of Education for Jemez, Kevin Shendo, (personal communication, April 27, 2014), he shared that the efforts through the Walatowa High Charter School (WHS) were directed towards empowering the community youth with opportunities that allow them to experience communities outside of their own and to come back with a more full appreciation of what Jemez Pueblo has in place in terms of history, language, and governance systems. He described this process and the school's mission as to “Think

globally and create locally” (Shendo, 2002). In more public discourse in New Mexico, former New Mexico Secretary of Indian Affairs and Santa Clara Pueblo tribal leader, Alvin Warren, also shared that well-regarded scholars like Greg Cajete at the University of New Mexico described tribally-created charter schools, like the ones at Jemez, as new advancements that assist our people to be more forward, proactive and truly self-determined, thus enabling the Pueblos to move away from “...modern educational structures that are not of their making and are separated from, and compete with their traditional forms of education” (Cajete, 2008, pp. 320-321). So if and when Pueblo communities begin to think about engaging youth in the governance of the community, one valuable strategy is to create local charter schools through which they could influence and train their students on a daily basis. This formal educational approach provides communities an opportunity to take control of their schools and create a curriculum that can serve as a mechanism to engage youth.

The third approach in the growing movement of youth inclusivity is through community and Indigenous institution-organized programming. An increasingly renowned program nationally, the Leadership Institute is directly involved in youth leadership development programming. Through interviews with parents and community adults that participate in these programs, we have noted a general tendency for community adults to think that kids today “just don’t listen.” Significantly, however, in recently collected data shared here, young people actually expressed a deep and committed interest and love for their communities. The following highlights the New Mexico Summer Youth Tribal Employment project of the Leadership Institute.

New Mexico Summer Youth Tribal Employment (NMSYTE)

In 2014, the Leadership Institute developed a new project to engage youth in internships with their community. This engagement model was particularly important because one of the major ways young people can not only contribute, but open their pathways to home, or the community, is through employment. The results of this project and participation were encouraging in that it proved that our youth wanted to be engaged citizens. In April of 2014, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's New Mexico team contacted the Leadership Institute with an unsolicited opportunity to submit an application for a new initiative developed by the Foundation's new president La June Montgomery Tabron. As a result, the NMSYTE was created to provide 150 youth internships in New Mexico and a much larger number nationally, intended to offer summer jobs for youth from underserved communities. After several rounds of the grant application process, the Leadership Institute and the Albuquerque-based South West Organizing Project were selected to each place 75 youth in internships throughout New Mexico. The Leadership Institute drew upon current organizational partners and created new partnerships to place students, all while recruiting 75 students to participate in the program.

While it may have been easier to recruit from the existing pool of the Leadership Institute's 165 Summer Policy Academy graduates—another youth-inspired program to train New Mexico tribal youth on governance and other critical Indigenous issues—our new strategy was to extend our reach into new communities and work with students who had no prior connection to the LI's programming so that we would extend our program reach. Due to the short lead time for implementation, we needed an efficient strategy to acquire the best possible youth candidates for the internship program that allowed us to

still meet our deadlines. The program decided to take a closer look at governance engagement and reached out to our Pueblo tribal department structures in order to identify where the greatest needs for youth input were and to ascertain which of these departments would provide a meaningful experience. In the end, we chose to contact the community libraries, senior citizen centers and education departments for each of the 19 Pueblos. Each of the tribal communities and their respective departments assisted in recruiting their interns, and by August of 2014, all 75 of our Pueblo youth completed their internships, resulting in 100% program retention.

Keeping in mind my grandfather's engagement teaching, the first goal of this engagement project was to employ 75 youth in meaningful summer jobs that: 1) provided them an opportunity to contribute to the growth of the community or organization; and 2) linked their internship experience to their educational path. For a majority of the college student interns in particular, their internship placements were linked to their college degrees. For high school students, their internship placements matched their current interest areas. The second goal was to bring new youth and community partners into our network of community participants. Over the course of fourteen years, the Leadership Institute has created a network of over 5,000 Pueblo members that include professionals, youth, community leaders, and elders. The third goal, in addition to a meaningful job experience, was to provide training for interns in financial management, digital storytelling, and community organizing in order to cultivate a critical set of life tools for their continued professional and personal development. Significantly, these important training areas were previously identified by our high school Summer Policy Academy students – a group of Pueblo students from various high schools that participate in a

summer intensive on tribal, state, national and international indigenous issues. The strategy of the internship program was to create a dynamic space where youth and tribal administrators and professionals were able to interact on a daily basis on issues pertaining to the well-being of the tribal body. Creating an avenue for substantive communication allowed us to accomplish our fourth goal, which was to begin to identify for tribal community leaders the most critical issues concerning tribal youth as told through their perspective.

So through a survey with the youth we found several key areas necessary for understanding how tribal youth could contribute to community well-being. The survey data collection was cognizant of ideas of Indigenous research methods, which are emerging as critical and central ways to conduct research ethically and in a participatory manner with communities and for the explicit purpose of serving community interests (Brayboy et al. 2011, Wilson 2008, Smith 1999). The survey, constructed with these considerations in mind reflected the desire to explore youth responses in these realms:

- 1) Level of commitment is to community;*
- 2) How much they learned in the sessions;*
- 3) If they had a general knowledge about policy issues;*
- 4) What core values guide their lives; and*
- 5) The question of why they love their community*

Although the sample size was 40, the survey was open-ended and sufficient for the purposes of a pilot study in order to learn about youth commitment and their perceptions of engagement. To assist in gathering this data, the Leadership Institute implemented the final programmatic component to the NMSYTE project, which was to convene 40 of the

75 students to participate in a personal development training session in financial management, resume writing, personal safety and community organizing. Although the training was open to all youth, 40 of them accepted the invite to participate. We conducted a survey that included a pre and post-test of each of these students. The pre and post-test surveys were conducted on the day of the training. The survey was designed to be anonymous, and the survey instruments included two pages each with 16 questions per instrument. The participants filled the pre and post surveys in the same meeting room at the beginning and end of the training respectively.

Findings: Voices of youth participants

This section presents highlights from the survey starting with feedback on the internship experience. The survey was conducted on August 10, 2014 at the Santa Fe Indian School at the end of their internship program. All 74 students were invited to participate in a full day training session on leadership, financial management, community organizing and career readiness training. A total of 43 students participated. In the survey, students were asked qualitative questions that centered on where they worked, what they learned, what relationships they built, and what did the summer job mean to them. I have selected several questions that I believe are most representative of the relationship between youth and perceptions of their Pueblo communities that are most useful to the discussion on the notion of youth engagement. The following (Table 1) are responses of the 2014 interns who addressed the pre-test question: Regarding the internships, I think our tribal leaders need to know that... Included with these responses are analyses of the major themes that youth would like to convey to their tribal leaders.

Table 1. What tribal leaders need to know.

Youth Response	Major Theme/s Represented
<i>Giving internships provides young people opportunities to succeed later in life.</i>	- Provide opportunities
<i>Young students need to be introduced to resources such as programs within the community, as well as participating in them.</i>	- Provide opportunities - Share resources - Youth want to participate
<i>There are youth who want to work for our people and there should be more job openings.</i>	- Provide opportunities - Interested youth
<i>Youth want to make an impact. We need to really work together.</i>	- Interested youth - Collaboration
<i>We as youth know and observe a lot more than they think.</i>	- Youth are prepared
<i>There are young people who are smart and revolutionary. That there are even a few masters of a myriad skills. They need to know we're going to change things.</i>	- Youth are prepared
<i>There are youth that care about their community and that's where most of their efforts should go to. Resources should become more available.</i>	- Youth are prepared - Share resources - Provide opportunities
<i>Young leaders are more than willing/able to participate in tribal issues and tribal organizations.</i>	- Youth are prepared

This sample of responses captures themes that were recurring and all focused on youth being available to engage. Themes that emerged from this sample include their genuine interest by youth to be engaged in community, their search for opportunity to contribute in community, feeling a sense of being prepared for their role in community.

It seems then that what youth want their tribal leadership to know, and what seems to be the process of youth engagement, is that youth show interest, need opportunity, and are prepared with their individual skills, talents or gifts.

These same youth surveyed were also thoughtful in their replies and in expressing commitment to their communities. As a result of their participation in this program, a few of the major outcomes of their internships could be summarized, with quotes, as the following:

- 1) A strong interest in contributing to the community:

“With this internship I have been able to give back to my community, which is one of the main reasons for becoming a nurse. I learned so much about my community and now I have even more reason to come back again in the future. I hope to one day be a nurse at the clinic in Santa Clara Pueblo” (NMSYTE female student, 2014 Survey).

- 2) A desire for tribal leaders to offer more summer job opportunities:

“I hope this opportunity is given next year not only to myself but to others around my community so they can gain experience like I have this summer. So we could all help out our community a bit more” (NMSYTE male student, 2014 Survey).

- 3) An understanding of the importance of education:

“This summer job meant a lot to me because it gave me motivation to go back to school and reminded me of that I want to keep striving for so I can come back to my community and help my people, it gave me a purpose of why I am going to school” (NMSYTE male student, 2014 Survey).

- 4) A need for recognition from adults and leaders that they are capable and have value:

“Not only did I learn and listen to what my community members had to say but what life situations that they have or are now going through, whether it is drug abuse, child abuse, incarceration for god knows what and so much more. I did look at it at a different perspective and put myself in their life situations” (NMSYTE female student, 2014 Survey).

None of the youth responded in a way that showed they were not interested in sharing a productive response to tribal leaders.

In addition, there were also critical responses to the survey questions, why I love my community, and the core values that guide my life. The responses appeared to position the majority of these students in direct relationship to their community, and furthermore to do so based on important values such as ancestry, tie to land, and community as family, and home. All of these areas can be viewed as central to an understanding of the individual’s responsibility to community. The following are some examples of the student responses to the question on why I love my community. In addition to documenting the responses by youth, I have pulled out key values that I will call relational values between the community and the youth. Their responses show clearly the support they feel they receive from their community, their desire to contribute to community and the deeper sense of belonging. This values combination of support, contribution and belonging all work together to strengthen engagement and reinforce the need for youth engagement programming.

Table 2. Why I love my community

Youth Response	Relational Values
<i>This is where I grew up. I wouldn't be where I'm at without the strength of my community.</i>	Community support
<i>It is my home. It is my strength. It is where my children will grow up.</i>	Community support
<i>It's an environment where younger generations will grow. A place we will return after</i>	Youth contribution

<i>career/educational endeavors and I feel it's everyone's personal responsibility to make it a better place.</i>	
<i>This is where my family is from and the community is my family.</i>	Belonging
<i>It's my people and I serve them.</i>	Belonging Youth contribution
<i>Because it has taught me who I am today and who I'm willing to be tomorrow.</i>	Community support Youth contribution
<i>I have lived there all my life and have practiced traditions.</i>	Belonging
<i>It is my home and the values that are taught to me, defines my identity as a community member.</i>	Belonging

An important observation to note is that although the youth interns came from almost all 19 different communities, their notions of why community is important to them shared some important similarities. Having discovered this, it becomes even more crucial that tribal governments take extra steps to harness the talents and time of their committed youth. When youth feel a sense of belonging to community and are supported by that community, their inherent need to engage and contribute is even more valuable for communities to harness. This is reflective of an analogy Regis Pecos often makes about how financial investments are tracked and cashed in on, but how tribal communities do not keep track of their investment in youth as they pursue higher education.

Consequently, by not offering youth employment within the communities, community

governments are not able to “cash in” on their successes. The inclusion of youth in governance and community programming can only contribute to the “cashing in on” youth investment and engagement. An even more compelling reference is one made by a colleague, June Lorenzo, who shared that in the strengthening of the new engagement concept our tribal communities need to be the engagement initiators and let our young people know, “you belong to us.”

Discussion: Programming recommendations

The NMSYTE project was an incredible opportunity to engage youth to contribute to the growth of their respective communities. The youth that were placed in their tribal community departments were especially appreciative of being included in the daily operations of their governments. As captured by their quotes, they felt respected and needed by their community, like they had something to contribute, and that in the future they want to return to their communities to apply what they learned during their educational pursuits. There are more approaches, or engagement models that can support youth to contribute to community building and community organizing. The Leadership Institute has developed several programs that support youth knowledge building through the Summer Policy Academy⁹, Brave Girls¹⁰, Senior Honors Project¹¹, and the Summer

⁹ The Summer Policy Academy is a project that takes 25 students from various Pueblo communities and introduces them to tribal, state, national and international issues that impact community

¹⁰ Brave Girls is a leadership project aimed to provide high school aged girls the opportunity to develop themselves in multiple areas of leadership.

¹¹ The Senior Honors Project is a project at the Santa Fe Indian School where all senior class members conduct research projects of interest to them and important to their respective communities.

Art and Archeology Academy¹². For me, the next logical step in this movement of youth leadership development is to create programming that builds upon existing knowledge and consciousness and marry it with their desire to be involved in community.

The following are program recommendations for youth engagement that can assist in incorporation of youth in Pueblo tribal governance. As previously mentioned, there are different structures and institutions that bring the nineteen communities together on various issues. Some of these include the All Pueblo Governors Council, Santa Fe Indian School, State of New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, the Leadership Institute, Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, and Ten Southern Pueblos. For the purposes of this paper and implementation of the following recommendations, potential host organizations will be mentioned as agencies for implementation.

Pueblo Youth Governance (PYG) - The first recommendation would be a partnership between the All Pueblo Council of Governors and the Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School's Summer Policy Academy (SPA). The SPA program has graduated over 165 students from all nineteen Pueblo communities. Because graduates from the SPA program have been trained to be informed contributing members of their communities, they would be ideal to make up the Pueblo Youth Governance team. PYG will develop as a youth council and serve to collect voices of youth within the Pueblo communities they represent. PYG members will convene twice a year to combine youth statements on issues that should be presented to Governors. PYG members will ask to be put on the All Pueblo Council of Governors agenda twice a year. PYG members,

¹² The Summer Art and Archeology Academy partners a small group of youth with mentors to train the students in Pueblo art forms and trains them to articulate the importance of preserving Pueblo art and design.

representative of each Pueblo, will also be encouraged to participate in various national youth conferences to present Pueblo perspectives. They will also bring back pertinent information to disseminate and implement in tribal communities. In essence, they will become the unified, political voice that Dr. Joe Sando speaks of in relation to what was the All Indian Pueblo Council. Annual reports by the PYG will be made available to the Pueblo communities and may include youth policy recommendations.

Pueblo Youth Convocation (PYC) - Much like the Pueblo Convocation, a gathering of 600 Pueblo people that provided a forum to discuss pressing community issues, it is important to have a similar gathering for youth. The Pueblo Youth Convocation (PYC) will be organized every two years in an open invitation format for youth to hear from adults and from each other what the important issue areas are for Pueblo people. The PYC could be held at the Santa Fe Indian School or it could rotate to different Pueblo communities. The organizing committee for the PYC could be the Pueblo Youth Governance council. This annual convocation is a large-scale mechanism for generating youth interest in community policy and programming development, and simply learning about community issues.

Pueblo Youth Editors - A representative group of up to eight students from the Summer Policy Academy graduates will be recruited to fill the position of a Pueblo Youth Editor. PYE members will be brought together quarterly by the Leadership Institute to develop a newsletter for their communities about current youth trends, perspectives and issues. PYEs can work collaboratively or independently to produce the seasonally based (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall) newsletter. Newsletters will be distributed in creative ways in community spaces and events, like the post office, tribal

offices, and sporting events. Social media like Facebook E-newsletters and Twitter will also facilitate distribution of messages. PYEs will also be encouraged to develop a blog on either the Leadership Institute website or in the tribal government website. PYEs will be mentored by a team of Pueblo journalists and other professionals.

Governance Research Assistants (GRA) - The idea of incorporating a GRA within tribal departments or within the Governor's office is based on the recent success of the NMSYTE project. The GRA program will elevate the level of youth participation in governance. With their increased skills in technology and accessing information, GRAs can work with Pueblo Governors or Pueblo Tribal Administrators to do research on current initiatives. GRAs can also be a direct link to the PYEs in developing and distributing newsletters. GRAs can be direct employees of tribal governments through a one-year appointment. This would be a great position for recent college graduates. This also provides an opportunity for young women to work directly with governance. These four initiatives are programs that can serve Pueblo communities to incorporate in an effective and efficient manner the voices and expertise of youth in governance.

Conclusion

Youth participation in Pueblo governance can be an incredible opportunity to take the Pueblo core philosophy of honoring everyone's spirit of contribution in an area that has long been a space void of young people. It is not uncommon to find that a young person holds an incredibly high position in Pueblo cultural/ceremonial societies, where he or she makes decisions and plans for the good of the entire community. In these instances and practices, youth are required to rise to the occasion for the good of the community and take on responsibility one might think is reserved only for adults. This

responsibility, trust, and recognition should be transferred to other arenas, including that of their participation in tribal governance. Granted, their role will not be as decision maker or Governor, but through creative policy, program design and implementation, the influence youth have in the betterment of their community could be substantial. In a recent conversation with Regis Pecos he stated “If we’re not looking at new ways of engagement, we’re really passively contributing to the widening gap of the maintenance of young people’s contribution” (Personal Communication, 2015). Today, incorporating advanced skills in technology, networking and community organizing into youth programming, Pueblo youth could have a lasting impact on bringing communities together as one, gathering information for their governments, and sharing positive youth views to their community.

3) POLICY BRIEF AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Executive summary

“If we’re not looking at new ways of engagement, we’re really passively contributing to the widening gap of the maintenance of young people’s contribution” (Personal Communication, 2015).

This policy and program recommendations brief is anchored in the Pueblo belief that the children are the future of our communities, and in order to have healthy communities we need to have healthy young people. With that in mind, this policy brief is developed to support the need to develop and support strong youth and strong communities. In order to do so, the changing nature of youth engagement in our Pueblo communities needs to be addressed. As more of our youth leave to attend school or work in cities, what are Pueblo communities doing to keep them actively engaged. Because the core value of contribution is critical to being a participant in community, Pueblo communities need to think of what needs to be done to strengthen the social engagement¹³ of youth. The notions of community recognizing and being receptive to new ideas for youth engagement and of instilling their sense of community in youth is critical to the ‘*new engagement*’¹⁴ paradigm. This document is presented to offer the Santa Fe Indian School and/or the All Pueblo Council of Governors a strategy to incorporate youth in the governance structures of community through a coalition based approach, involving youth from different Pueblos to work together through innovative

¹³ ¹³ Social engagement is related to areas that lie outside of cultural or ceremonial engagement, like contributing professional skills to community, serving as mentor to students, or sharing resources to develop programs or community infrastructure. This document does not attempt to address the cultural that exists in Pueblo communities as it continues to remain strong.

¹⁴ New engagement relates to alternative ways individuals can contribute to community, particularly those that live outside of the Pueblo community but have a desire to engage as active participants.

programming models. The ultimate goal is to instill in youth the feeling that they belong to their community and the community belongs to them.

II. Introduction

“I always remember hearing when I was growing up that kids don’t pay attention. Grandpa would always say that everything they taught us probably went in one ear and out the other. It’s funny when I tell my friends this. They all laugh and agree that their parents and grandparents tell them the same thing. I have to this, but I now think grandma and grandpa were wrong.” Jessica (Jemez Pueblo) Summer Policy Academy student

It is not uncommon to find that a young person holds an incredibly high position in Pueblo cultural/ceremonial societies, where he or she makes decisions and plans for the good of the entire community. In these instances and practices, youth are required to rise to the occasion for the good of the community and take on responsibility one might think is reserved only for adults. This responsibility, trust, and recognition should be transferred to other arenas, including that of participation in Pueblo community governance. Governance, different from government, is more inclusive for it involves other stakeholders of a community, in this case young people. The role of youth is not that they become decision makers or Governors, but youth have more opportunities for sharing their voice and perspectives. Without youth representation there is a valuable resource missing in moving Pueblo communities forward. Of even more concern is the potential for youth to lose interest in the affairs of their communities or to feel that there is no way for them to engage and contribute using their newly acquired skills.

III. Why new youth engagement?

“I learned about our Pueblo history and about the federal policies that hurt us. I wish I could find a way to help our people get out of the bad effects on us. Sometimes adults think we can’t help with these difficult issues.” Kelvin (Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo) Senior Honors Project Student

New engagement is linked to the realization that an increasing number of Pueblo community youth and tribal members choose to live outside of Pueblos. Thus, Pueblo

peoples at all levels—from family members to tribal leadership and institutions —must create new programming rooted in a philosophical commitment towards ways of *new engagement* so that youth contributions to community are received and incorporated into community development.

Youth engagement is critical in addressing *new engagement* processes for small Indigenous and historically marginalized communities like the Pueblos of New Mexico, because as so popularly expressed, youth are the future of our communities, as well as current contributors in their own right. This phrase captures the value and urgency of youth engagement because as Corrine Sanchez, Executive Director of Tewa Women United describes it, “they are the holders of our cultural continuance and they will be sharing with future generations what it means to be Pueblo.” (Personal communication, 2015). Furthermore, each young person’s potential role in community is significant when you think of the relatively small population size of each Pueblo community. For example, in a community like Jemez Pueblo with a population of just over 3,700, each young person’s projected contribution, whether as a teacher, governor or culture bearer, becomes exponentially valuable. Therefore, their role, whether inside or outside of the community is critical to shaping the community’s future.

In 2012, The Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School hosted the Pueblo Convocation and the Laguna Pueblo Convocation. These events each drew over 600 community members to discuss current pressing community issues, including that of youth engagement. At the Laguna Pueblo Convocation, University of New Mexico professor, Ted Jojola, offered his work that spoke clearly to what appears to be a growing distance between youth and community, especially impacting on-reservation populations.

Ted shared that the percentage of Pueblo people living in the urban areas like Albuquerque and Santa Fe is more than those living in Laguna Pueblo. He explained that this is due to lack of housing in the Pueblo, students attending college, and for employment opportunities. Although data like these on the other Pueblo communities is not yet available, this migration away is a common thread in all communities. Addressing this phenomenon is critically important within the context of contribution to community.

At the national level, the stark reality, according to Census Bureau data in the U.S., is in 2013 70% of the American Indian and Alaska Native population now live in an urban area, an increase from 45% in 1970 and 8% in 1940 (New York Times, April 13, 2013).

As rural tribal communities see more and more of their young people leave community to enter the work force or attend college/ university we need to recognize that they are out there collecting a myriad of skills and that despite their physical absence, youth contributions back to community are valuable. Any existing gaps between youth and community, whether based on perception youth are not interested in community or the reality there are very few employment opportunities, grow wider because processes to address this has not been developed. As a result, youth feel that there are no opportunities for growth or change in community or youth are misunderstood by older members of their communities.

Because Pueblo peoples believe strongly in the usage of individual talents and skills for the benefit of the whole community—implying heavily the notion of contribution (Romero 1994), the central value that keeps community members engaged and perhaps even defines their membership in community, is the core value of

contribution. Furthermore, as the intent of this work is to recommend a process for youth engagement, contribution, and understanding and constructing the experiences of our young people as relevant, inclusive and valuable, particularly through their representation in governance, there are three specific program recommendations to offer the Santa Fe Indian School and/or the All Pueblo Council of Governor.

IV. Approaches, implications, and recommendations

“Wow, the opportunity to present to our congressional delegation was an incredible experience. It was nice to be listened to by high level people. My recommendation would be for us to present our SPA policy papers to the All Indian Pueblo Council. I think it is important that they know we did all this work for our communities.” Monique (Jicarilla/Laguna Pueblo) Summer Policy Academy student

The following policy/program recommendations for new engagement can assist to incorporate youth in Pueblo tribal governance through a coalition-based format includes youth from various tribal communities. Both the Santa Fe Indian School and the newly name All Pueblo Council of Governors are ideal institutions within which these recommendations can be turned to policy, housed and implemented. The following are the recommendations:

- *Pueblo Youth Governance (PYG)* - The first recommendation would be a partnership between the All Pueblo Council of Governors and the Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School’s Summer Policy Academy (SPA). The SPA program has graduated over 165 students from all nineteen Pueblo communities. Because graduates from the SPA program have been trained to be informed contributing members of their communities, they would be ideal to make up the Pueblo Youth Governance team. PYG will develop as a youth council and serve to collect voices of youth within the Pueblo communities they represent. PYG members will convene twice a year to combine youth statements on

issues that should be presented to Governors. PYG members will ask to be put on the All Pueblo Council of Governors agenda twice a year. PYG members, representative of each Pueblo, will also be encouraged to participate in various national youth conferences to present Pueblo perspectives. They will also bring back pertinent information to disseminate and implement in tribal communities. In essence, they will become the unified, political voice that Dr. Joe Sando speaks of in relation to what was the All Indian Pueblo Council. Annual reports by the PYG will be made available to the Pueblo communities and may include youth policy recommendations.

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V. Conclusion

“There are youth that care about their community and that’s where most of their efforts should go to. Resources should become more available.” 2014 NMSYTE Internship student

“Young leaders are more than willing/able to participate in tribal issues and tribal organizations.” 2014 NMSYTE Internship student

Youth participation in Pueblo governance are an incredible opportunity to take the Pueblo core philosophy of honoring everyone’s spirit of contribution in the area of community governance - a space currently void of young people. Through a Pueblo youth coalition structure and innovative community programming development, increased youth engagement provide for new strategies to address community issues, bringing them closer to home if they have been gone for school, and value all of their unique gifts of contribution to their communities. This policy brief and program recommendations document outlines what that might look like and requests that the Santa Fe Indian School adopt it as a program of the school and the All Pueblo Council of Governors support it by partnering with the goals of the proposal.

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Various Leadership Institute data will be included.