

Grant Title: Innovators of the Future Youth Activity Books

Grant Number: RMM 2017-K12ED-06

Requester: Anna Wirta Kosobuski, EdD

Project Timeline: 5/30/2017 – 5/29/2019

Brief description of project: Where did this project take place?

This Innovators of the Future projects funds the creation of two activity books for students in K-6th grade. Development of the books is led by the project director who is located at the University of Minnesota Medical School Duluth Campus.

People impacted by project and where they are from:

The two books under development will be geared for K-2nd grade and 3rd-4th grade students. Future funding will be sought to create three additional books, one for 5th graders, one for 6th graders and one Pre-Kindergarten. The educational, career planning and social needs of each of these developmental levels are unique enough to warrant individual books.

The books are designed to appeal to and engage youth in general, however, the books are much anticipated by teachers at the Nett Lake Elementary School, Bois Forte Reservation, so they may integrate some content into their classroom curricula; other schools and organizations may choose to follow suit. Additionally, though the primary audience will be Minnesota, it is planned that the book will be promoted and circulated more widely thereby reaching large numbers of children. Activities in the books are also family friendly. Activities are designed so that youth may do them independently or with the assistance of others. An example is the inclusion of recipes for healthy snacks. Each recipe will be placed in cultural and science contexts and are easy enough for children to make by themselves or as a fun activity with friends or family members. Along with distribution in educational settings, books will be made available in such settings as clinics and community centers. Children will be allowed to take their own copies for entertainment when they might otherwise become bored or restless or to simply take home. Small packages of crayons will be made available to go along with the books.

To best ensure access to valuable learning opportunities, books will be made available to schools and public at no charge.

What was the outcome of the project? (Did the project work the way you expected it to? What were the successes? What were the failures? How did it impact regenerative medicine in Minnesota?)

At present, the 1st and 2nd grade level book is nearing its final stages of development and is anticipated to be ready to print in early fall. Some content for the second book has been developed though there is a lesser focus on this book at the current time; concentrated effort on completing this book will occur after the first is complete. The contents of each book integrate Ojibwe culture in order to make them more meaningful to Native American students and a good learning resource for all children. All team members working to create books, with the exception of the printer, are Native American individuals. These people include an academic content expert, an illustrator, a graphic artist and a community elder who provides guidance on cultural aspects of the project.

This project is currently funded by a no-cost extension. During the course of the initial year of funding, the Project Director experienced some challenging personal issues.

Additionally, she made a job transition to a faculty position which required a period of adjustment and redefinition of duties. The result of these events was a delay in development and production of the books, however, the quality of the product has not been affected and perhaps heightened.

Please list any of the following that have resulted from your Regenerative Medicine Minnesota grant funding:

To date, there has been no publication resulting from this project. There has been, however, the securing of a Native American Mentoring Program (NAMP) award to help cover some costs of this project.

Responsible Spending:

So far, funds have supported the cost of the academic content expert, the graphic artist, the community elder and supplies. In the upcoming year, project dollars will include these same costs plus the cost of printing as well as postage for book distribution.