



2024 Achievements

Thanks to our wonderful supporters, Lakota Friends Circle (LFC) is growing! We are delighted to have Trish Mason join us as our new treasurer, our outgoing treasurer, Barb Reinhart will focus on ensuring that basic needs (especially food) are ordered for our programs, and our secretary, Janet Schnurlein has taken on the added responsibility of sending out the charitable donation forms.

LFC has a volunteer board with its 5 members having different skill sets to cover the board functions.

Our programs serve the Native Americans on 3 reservations in South Dakota. LFC has partner groups that work alongside us to help carry out the needs of the programs. Sew For Kids, Pine Ridge Elders , Reservation Outreach and the Ravelry group For the Children of PRR.

Before mentioning our financials for 2024, I want to mention that our ability to help the Native Americans in SD is only possible because of our wonderful donors. **YOU!** Thank you for improving the lives of those whom we help either through your monetary or in kind donations.

In the year 2024, we raised \$45,000 for our programs through your donations and spent about \$57,000. Some funds were left from the

Covid years when we were not able to help as much.

In kind donations totaled \$35,000 plus.

Breakdown of last year's programs expenses are as follows.



Baby Programs - The nurses follow and educate the moms until the children reach the age of 3. **\$6,000** was spent to help 60-70 moms and babies, mostly in diapers, toiletries, sanitary pads, seasonal clothing, educational toys and books both for the moms and the babies. The early infancy years are crucial in development and books are scarce on the Rez. Young moms are encouraged to continue their education, earn their GED, and are taught good parenting skills. Kids with issues receive the appropriate resources. Children are immunized in a timely manner per the childhood immunization schedule.

Gather Our Children Home



This shelter for abused children also serves as a foster home for children from 0-12 years old. The shelter assesses each child for their individual needs and coordinates with Child Protection services for their medical, psychological, and legal appointments. Babies come and go as they are easier to place than the older kids or kids with mental and physical disabilities. All kids attend school if age appropriate while living at the home, to give them a normal, loving, and stable environment as possible. The staff takes them to cultural events if they are at the home for pow wow and Sundance season so they learn their ways and cultural history. LFC and its partner groups send them needed items - food, seasonal clothes, school supplies, toys, books, diapers, formula, cleaning supplies, toiletries, linens and towels. Each child that leaves is given a bag of items to get them started in their new home.

While the home can pay their employee salaries, insurance and licensing fees, they need our help paying the phone and internet service, (another organization helps with utilities), and special projects. For example, LFC purchased motion detector lights and exit signs, as required to renew their license.

Gather Our Children Home, "*Wakanyeya Gluwitayan Otipi*" or WGO, has

been in service since 2017 and has served over 350 children in crisis. Food is a big expense - feeding up to the 12 kids at one time. Our donors make it possible to make sure the kids have food through their monetary donations. But with \$2000 spent in the first 2 months of this year for food alone, LFC is researching ways to cut the food expenses. We are hoping to get some help monthly with our food costs through the Feeding South Dakota food bank. While it may not cover all the needs like milk, eggs, bread, and snacks for a month, it would allow us to save money on the daily meals. School-aged kids get breakfast and lunch from the school Mondays-Fridays. We also give them a stipend to buy perishables locally once per week after the initial big shopping and replenish the snack cupboard monthly. The money saved through the food bank where we can purchase food at 18 cents a pound, will give us funds for other projects as needs arise. For example, we are considering a joint project with Reservation Outreach to add a sandbox and shade covers to the playground.

We spent **\$13,000** at WGO in 2024.



Scholarships - We are excited that more and more students are learning about our scholarship program and how we can help with costs not covered by grants. We are hoping that the major federal grants for students will remain. We are also hoping to get a few trades students to apply. Students are pursuing many areas - law, Lakota studies, tourism, art and film, nursing, trades, etc. Students who meet our requirements are awarded \$1000 per semester (Spring and Fall only).

This Spring semester we provided **6 scholarships**. Last Fall we awarded 7.



Marty Indian School

LFC has been helping the elementary school for 6 plus years . We even have a room parent program from afar with mainly 2 room parents per class for grade K-5. Room parents are currently putting together their gifts for the kids' graduation, mostly items that are fun but encourage learning at the same time.

For many years, LFC and Sew For Kids partner group have stocked the Buffalo Shoppe with needed items for the kids who come to school ready to participate in day to day activities but this year we had to close the doors to the Shoppe as the school needs the room.

We are asking our donors to now send the items to the Kateri Center that serves 3 community schools and their families in the area with food, toiletries, clothing, household items. Read more details about the Kateri Center [here](#). Parents will have to make the effort to go to the center if their child needs items.

There have been a lot of staffing changes at the school with 3 teachers leaving, 2 hired in addition to a science teacher and a school nurse. Three of our SFK volunteers have gone to work at the school one as an assistant to the teachers, another as a teacher, and another as a librarian as the current one is retiring. The assistant is using her garage to store basic needed items like coats, hats, mittens, toiletries, school supplies, shoes, and toys for the Christmas store or treasure boxes. The school wants to make sure the kids can play outside in the colder weather - that might not be possible if 3 schools are competing for the same items. LFC provides healthy snacks to the kids twice per week with funding provided by our volunteer doll program clothing sales. Dolls are given to the kids in our various programs at Christmas. The school provides the other days but our snacks are higher in protein and fat to help bodies and minds grow. Some kids may not get a dinner at home so that helps carry them till the next school morning when they receive a free breakfast and lunch. We are hoping that the free school meals will continue.

We spent **\$5000** at the school in 2024 in addition to in-kind donations.



White Buffalo Calf Woman's Society

This organization, situated in Rosebud Reservation in SD serves men and women who have been abused as well as assists the community members of Mission, SD when a need arises. They do a lot of education in-house as well as in the community.

LFC sends them toiletries, diapers, etc. and volunteers send them toys, clothes, crafts , and school supplies. We spend about **\$1000** a year helping them in addition to the in kind donations.



Wanblee Child, Youth and Elder Program

LFC pays the monthly electric bill for the Kennedy Community Center. This averages \$350 per month in the Winter. The Kennedy Center is used to provide a place to receive NAHA donations 8-9 times per month that are distributed to community members and occasionally for parties . We also provide some diapers, toiletries, etc. if they need them. Many of our partner groups send in kind donations to the area to support the various age groups. .

For 2024, we spent over **\$4,000** to support Wanblee.

Reservation Outreach is a non-profit and needs funding to fulfill some of their programs. Each year they take 2-3 groups to the Rez for work

sessions as well as serve food and hold parties at Christmas time in 4 communities. Gloria and her husband Steve head out in April to assess what needs doing. They helped us with Maggie's House repairs last year and this year they may help with some outside work at the foster home. LFC and their partner groups in turn help them stock a pantry in a remote area away from stores, send gifts for their parties, and help purchase beds in a box for family members living in small houses. It's teamwork and it gets the job done.

Rosebud Elementary School

Our partner group For the Children of PRR on Ravelry helps the 300 plus kids in this school with special bags of goodies throughout the school year. Occasionally, LFC has been directly involved with handling funds for the school projects



Bombas Socks

Every year thanks to Bomba socks, LFC receives 5000 pairs of socks and this year we expect to get 6000. We distribute these to all the areas we help. Socks, underwear, and T-shirts are a continual need, especially in poor populations. We are so grateful for their gift .



Food scarcity has been a huge problem in the food desert that are the Reservations. This year has been particularly difficult. We have been getting more and earlier requests for food, and the concern is rising as food costs are accelerating. LFC is making plans to increase its impact and help alleviate hunger. Stay tuned for more information once we have a plan in place.

[See more details on the organizations we serve here](#)

[Have a question? Contact us!](#)

Lakota Friends Circle

LAKOTA FRIENDS CIRCLE MISSION

“Providing resources to Native American led organizations on Sioux Reservations, including support for education, food security, women and children’s issues, housing, and native culture.”

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