



# HOOPA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

KLAMATH-TRINITY JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 1308, Hoopa, CA 95546-1308 • (530) 625-5600 • FAX (530) 625-5619

Marty Wilkes, *Principal*

Matt Levesque, *Vice Principal*

RE: STARS Innovation Credit Letter of affirmation for HSU's Center for Indian Community Development

To Whom it May Concern:

The Center for Indian Community Development (CICD) is a 50 year old California State University program for services to Indian communities. It has always been housed at Humboldt State University (HSU) and supported as part of HSU's regular operations. I am writing this letter to affirm that the Center has been and still remains a highly productive and influential partner with American Indian communities. As stated in its 2002 Strategic Plan, CICD's mission is to provide assistance and resources to American Indian Nations, tribes, and communities in California, which are aimed at achieving self-determination and validation of their cultural values. CICD's main points of service are the many Tribal communities in the 20,000 square mile coastal, mountains and rivers region in uppermost northwestern California. These include the Hupa, Yurok, Tolowa, Karuk, Wiyot and other Indigenous Californians.

I am a Hoopa Tribal member. During the day I am a credentialed public school teacher of English and Hupa language. I teach at Hoopa Valley High School which serves as the only high school for three separate Tribal communities in the California Pacific Northwest. But I am also a cultural and ceremonial leader which requires a more specific use of the Hupa language in prayers, sacred songs and particular lessons. In my capacity as a Hupa language speaker and a cultural leader, I have worked extensively with CICD for decades. For example, I worked directly on the still in print *Now You're Speaking Hupa*, a small handbook meant to be carried and used easily on a daily basis. This book may be viewed on CICD's page on the Humboldt Digital Scholar under Publications from the Center for Indian Community Development. (<http://humboldt-dspace.calstate.edu/xmlui/handle/2148/37>).

The Center's respectful practice of direct service in a community and full partnership with a community has guaranteed the equity of collaboration and success. Each of the CICD staff has had long tenures with the Center, ranging from 20-38 years, assuring consistency of vision. It's allowed those of us in the Indian communities to work with CICD to establish successful multi-year initiatives within our Tribes. From day one, CICD has held firm to its practice of "non-ownership"; it constructively disengages when its essential developmental support is no longer required. One of the very most important programs within CICD has been its Native Languages program. Its work in this area is invaluable. CICD was an early advocate for the revitalization of California Indian languages. It has published dictionaries, stories, curricula, produced teachers, linguistic research and over 1000 audio tapes of language speakers, many of whom are no longer with us. Its dedicated efforts for the past 50 years is of enduring value to the local tribal communities who are working to ensure that the ability to speak our languages is transferred to future generations.



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For this letter I'd like to share a personal recent experience of how the Center's work with American Indian language revitalization continues to benefit our communities every day. Many years ago, CICD's Native Languages researcher Dr. Ruth Bennett shared with me a translation of a Hupa story. A few weeks ago, my daughter (who is a doctoral candidate in linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley) and I were helping someone make a song for an upcoming flower dance (a young girl's rite of passage ceremony). We were trying to find the right word that fit our requested theme with an eye out for certain words artistically speaking. To do so, we discussed what we knew for the most likely terms, searched the texts of Pliny Earle Goddard and William Sapir and consulted with dictionaries. This was a good approach from which we were able to make a list of words. Then I remembered the text Ruth shared which is in the CICD language materials collection. I retrieved it and put it in front of my daughter for her feedback. The document opened to the very page (I swear the truth of this) that contained the word we needed. Thank you Ruth and CICD. The perfect word.

In this process, we learned something from the elder she interviewed, long since deceased. That word had also answered a question we had about how someone else thought about a particular spiritual topic and validated something we suspicioned. Wow.

CICD's work remains lively and potent. On a daily basis my students, Indian and non-Indian alike are benefitting from it in public school class rooms. It is essential to our culture. But the work is not important just for Hupa, but also for building vocabularies and answering untold unasked future questions from who knows in other languages. Again, CICD's work with the language is invaluable.

I've been watching the history of early Christianity lately on TV and this collection if not shared becomes like the Dead Sea Scrolls. Useful to some future generation after much ignorance and needless conflict and even bloodshed. CICD's work is that important to the local tribal languages. Thank you for listening...

*Melodie K. George Moore* 4-4-13  
Sincerely,  
Melodie K. George Moore  
English Teacher, Hupa Language Teacher