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Native Business Spotlight

BLACK PIPE COMMUNITY CONVENIENCE STORE

South Dakota Indian Business Alliance Members Support Opening of Convenience Store on Rosebud Reservation

After nearly five years of hard work and dedication, the Black Pipe Community on the Rosebud Reservation celebrated the grand opening of a convenience store during the summer of 2014. The development of this tribally-owned, community-operated business was supported by the South Dakota Indian Business Alliance (SDIBA) network of members and partners throughout the state. Three SDIBA members – the Cheyenne River Chamber of Commerce, Four Bands Community Fund, and the South Dakota Small Business Development Center – provided a variety of support services to the Black Pipe Community Convenience Store in Norris, South Dakota.

In a situation that demonstrates the true power of networks, these three SDIBA members each filled a particular need that contributed to the successful launch of the Black Pipe Community Convenience Store. The South Dakota Small Business Development Center met with a group of Rosebud Sioux Tribal representatives early in the planning stages to develop a business plan based on the concept of using an existing structure. SDSBDC also connected the planning committee to various resources, including merchandise suppliers and merchant account providers. While the Tribe had identified and obtained funding from various sources, Four Bands Community Fund provided the start-up capital necessary to purchase the store's initial inventory. This loan was made possible through the Native Entrepreneur Investment Fund, a statewide lending program for Native Americans that was born out of a unique partnership between Four Bands and SDIBA. The Cheyenne River Chamber of Commerce facilitated a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the grand opening of the Black Pipe Community Convenience Store.

“One of the South Dakota Indian Business Alliance’s greatest strengths is the ability to bring together a broad spectrum of partners that are all working toward a common goal. In the case of the Black Pipe C-Store, we see how three independent organizations within one common



The Black Pipe C-Store in Norris, South Dakota, on the Rosebud Reservation celebrates their grand opening with a ribbon cutting facilitated by one of the Alliance partners that supported their start-up.



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network each played a critical role in the start-up of a new business,” says Tanya Fiddler, Chairperson of SDIBA and Executive Director of Four Bands.

The economic impacts this business will have on the Black Pipe Community are numerous. Upon its opening, the convenience store created two full-time and two seasonal part-time jobs for local residents. The income generated through these jobs will support individuals and families, contributing to self-sufficiency and alleviating dependence upon government assistance. On a community level, the store offers much-needed groceries and sundry items. Prior to the store’s opening, residents of the Black Pipe Community travelled on average 79 miles to purchase those types of basic items. The Black Pipe Community Convenience Store is the only spot on the 74-mile trip from Kadoka to Rosebud that offers facilities and a place to rest for travelers.

In the near future the business will also offer a place to fuel up. Gas tanks arrived in early November 2014 and are in the process of being installed. This will be a major development for the Black Pipe Community. Currently, local residents must make a 45-minute drive to fill up their tanks.

“We are proud of the work that SDIBA’s partners are doing to forge the path for Indian business development, and we are glad to see our tribes taking an active role in these ventures as well,” says Fiddler.