

WYOMING



WIND RIVER CARES AND RED WOLF CHILDCARE CENTER

Riverton, WY (2018)

Residents of the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming understand adversity. Poverty, low wages, and high unemployment are widespread. Until recently, services that most Wyoming residents take for granted were limited or nonexistent on the reservation. For example, tribal members lacked access to many essential healthcare services, including dental surgery, behavioral health services, addiction counseling, and obstetrics. In 2018, only two small outpatient clinics serviced the 2.2 million-acre reservation. In addition to the health disparities, childcare was almost nonexistent. Riverton's one small daycare center had 32 slots, not nearly enough to accommodate the more than 10,000 people in the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes.

NEW HEALTHCARE AND CHILDCARE FACILITIES EXPAND ACCESS TO CARE ON UNDERSERVED WYOMING RESERVATION

In 2018, local organizations and decision-makers came together to address these challenges. They developed plans for a healthcare clinic expansion and the construction of a new childcare center. However, before projects could even begin, high bids, coupled with a lack of funding, forced planners to consider reducing projected healthcare services and removing a much-needed preschool wing from the proposed childcare facility. MoFi's NMTC program and First Interstate Bank partnered with the Northern Arapaho tribe to address this financing gap and ensure that families had access to comprehensive healthcare and early childhood education. With financing in place, the

tribe was able to expand the Wind River Cares health clinic and to provide previously unavailable services to treat chronic health issues like diabetes and substance abuse, and to offer optometry, dental, OB-GYN, and pediatric services. The tribe also built an affordable, high-quality, round-the-clock childcare center, allowing over 100 unemployed parents the security to seek permanent jobs. Both projects create pathways to improved health and quality of life on the reservation.

The project was made possible with a loan and tax credit equity from First Interstate Bank and New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) allocation from MoFi. The NMTC financing was the catalytic resource that enabled the Northern Arapaho tribe to complete the preschool wing of the childcare center and provide dental and vision services at the healthcare facility.

The tribe completed the two projects, totaling 34,500 sq. ft., in late 2019. The facilities not only address critical health and social service gaps, but they also create good jobs for low-income people. In total, these projects retained 10 jobs and created 80 full-time jobs. Over half of the jobs are accessible to low-income people. In addition to quality, accessible jobs, the expanded clinic will see 27,500 visits each year and the childcare center provides safe and educational space for 270+ children each week. Through grit and creative financing, members of the Wind River Reservation reinforce the purpose of the NMTC program as they build a stronger, more equitable community.

FINANCING

NMTC Financing: Montana Community Development Corp dba MoFi: \$9.3 million
Equity Investor: First Interstate Bank

IMPACT

- 30 construction jobs
- 90 permanent jobs
- 27,500 annual patients
- 270 childcare slots

COMMUNITY

- Median income: 65.16% of the AMI
- Unemployment rate: 1.57x the national average
- Native American Reservation
- Medically Underserved Area