**American Indian Student Interpretive Ranger Program**

**Student Mentor Position Outreach**

**June 3rd – August 11th, 2024**

**Program Contact: Dave McKee, President, Fort Phil Kearny/Bozeman Trail Association**

**TO Apply: Contact Dave at daveabtmckee@ gmail.com or phone at (307) 751.5486 by May 1, 2024**

**Introduction**

The Fort Phil Kearny/Bozeman Trail Association (FPK/BTA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, will recruit and employ two American Indian college students as Interpretive Rangers at the Medicine Wheel and Fort Phil Kearny National Historic Landmarks from June 3rd through August 11th, 2024. The program will be implemented in partnership with the Bighorn National Forest and Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources. **A special component of the program will be recruitment of two American Indian mentors to visit and council the students. To Learn More: Contact Dave**

American Indian culture and history are fundamental elements of the cultural, spiritual, and physical landscape at both sites. Mentors will council students with specific reference to the American Indian history and culture at the project site locations and larger regional landscapes. Mentors will review and critique current interpretive presentations and materials of the hosting agencies. Mentors will provide an end of season review to the program partners to identify program strengths and weaknesses, as well as a review of current interpretation at one or both sites. Grant funding would be used to reimburse mentors for travel expenses, and a daily stipend for up to 4 days of program work.

**Mentor Participation Requirements:**

Once student and mentor participants have been selected, we will jointly determine if a mentor will work with one student through the summer at both sites or focus on one site and work with both students at that site. In short, we will consult to develop a mentoring plan that provides the best educational experience for the students.

Each mentor will make a minimum of two on-site visits with the student during the ten-week program. An additional two days are also planned for the mentor meet and advise the student in their home community, at the beginning and end of the program, and to meet with the program director Dave McKee, to review the program and provide a critique of current interpretation at Fort Phil Kearny and/or the Medicine Wheel.

**Mentor Compensation:**

**Mentor Stipend:** $400/day x 4 days = $1,600

**Mentor Travel:** mileage (.655/mile for two site visits), per diem (food & lodging for one overnight stay)

Mentors will produce a voucher itemizing time works and travel expenses following each visit and submit to the FPK/BTA for reimbursement. Reimbursement can be made as an electronic deposit in the mentors checking account or as a check to be mailed.

**Program Overview**

Interested students will apply to participate in the program by submitting a letter of interest and resume with references to the FPK/BTA for review and participant selection. The project partners will recruit students by making visits to college campuses, and contacts with THPO offices, individuals, organizations, societies, as well as American Indian for-profit and non-profit organizations. Once selected, students will receive a weekly stipend, housing, and travel support. Students will receive National Association for Interpretation (NAI), interpreter training and certification, and one week of Forest Service orientation as part of their employment. The students will then work four weeks at each site under the supervision of Forest Service and State Parks staff, then trade places to experience working at both sites. The FPK/BTA also has funding to pay for independent study college credits for a student to produce a paper relevant to current interpretive programs or history at one or both sites. Project funding is provided by the Bighorn National Forest and Wyoming Council for the Humanities, with in-kind volunteer labor from FPK/BTA to implement the program.

**Shared partnership goals include: (1) providing education, training, career development, and employment for American Indian college students, (2) expand diversity of summer seasonal interpretive staffs, (3) improve interpretive programs and materials at each site to present a more inclusive perspective of history, and (4) develop and strengthen relationships between the partners and American Indian colleges and communities.**

**Fort Phil Kearny/Bozeman Trail Association (FPK/BTA):**

FPK/BTA was founded and received non-profit status in 1985. FPK/BTA is dedicated to the preservation, development, education, and promotion of the Bozeman Trail and associated historic sites including Fort Phil Kearny, Fetterman Battlefield, and Wagon Box Battlefield. We currently have over 400 dues paying members. To learn more about our organization and sponsored programs visit our website at [www.fortphilkearny.com](http://www.fortphilkearny.com)

**Dave McKee: Program Leader**

Dave is president of the FPK/BTA. He completed a 34-year career with the U.S. Forest Service as an archaeologist, tribal liaison, and recreation program manager. While with the Black Hills National Forest, Dave established a Tribal Youth Conservation Corps program under a cost share agreement with the Cheyenne River, Rosebud, Standing Rock, and Yankton Sioux Tribes. Dave served as liaison between tribal representatives, the U.S. Forest Service, and National Park Service to complete the Medicine Wheel/Medicine Mountain National Historic Landmark nomination. Dave continues to attend and participate in the annual Medicine Wheel consultation meetings at the invitation of the consulting parties.