

Employment and trainings in Indian Country

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Hollow Rock – Grand Portage



Indian Country Before 1492



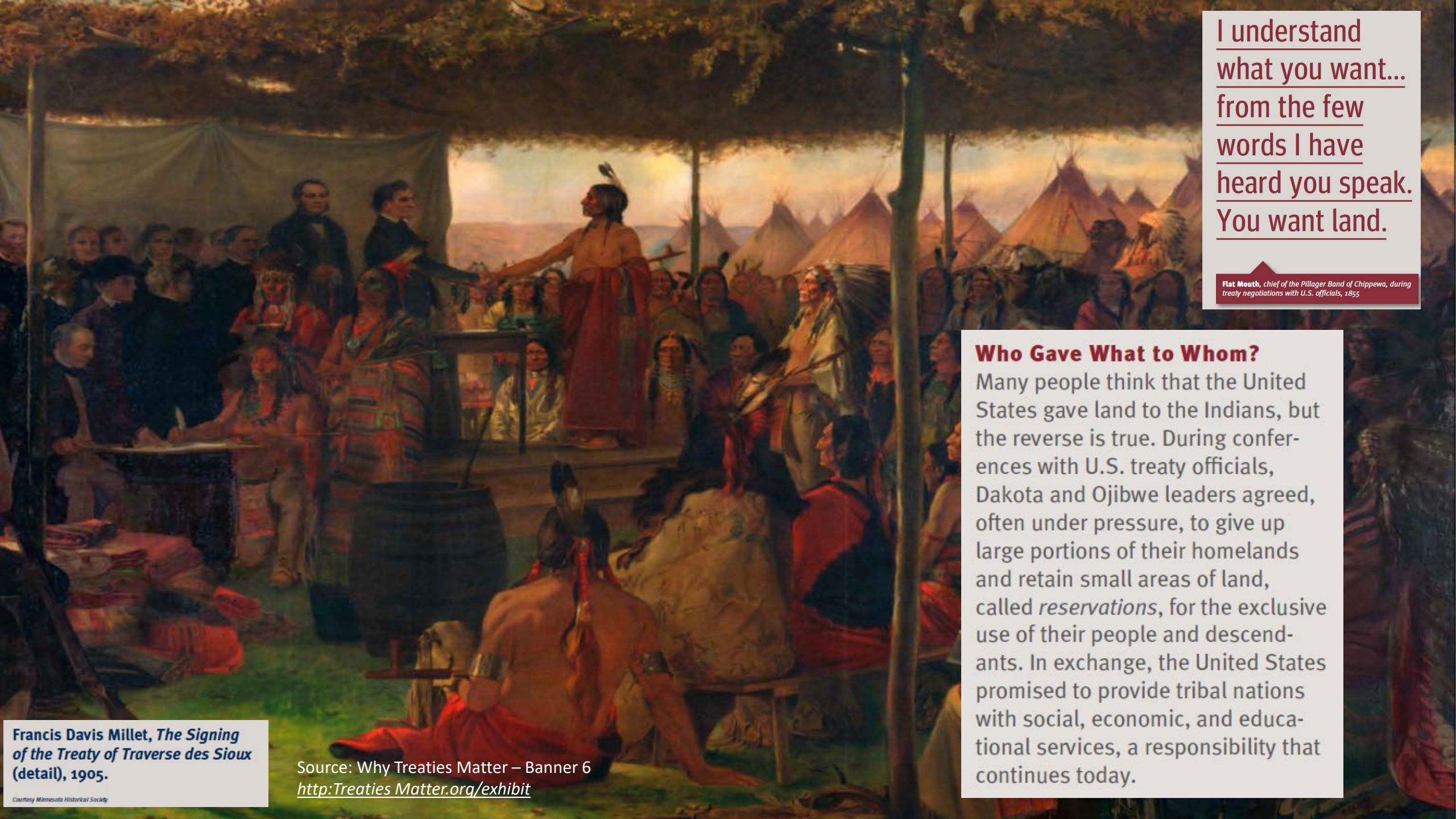
Indian Country today



Federal Indian Policy

- Establishes a **trust relationship** between the United States Government and Indian Tribes
- U.S. Constitution: **Indian Tribes are not minorities but political and legal entities (Nations)**
- **Seven time periods** of federal Indian policy
 - 1492-1787: Tribal Independence
 - 1787-1828: Agreements Between Equals
 - 1828-1887: Relocation of the Indians
 - 1887-1934: Allotment and Assimilation
 - 1934-1953: Indian Reorganization
 - 1953-1968: Termination
 - 1968- Present: Tribal Self-Determination





I understand
what you want...
from the few
words I have
heard you speak.
You want land.

Flat Mouth, chief of the Pillager Band of Chippewa, during treaty negotiations with U.S. officials, 1855

Who Gave What to Whom?

Many people think that the United States gave land to the Indians, but the reverse is true. During conferences with U.S. treaty officials, Dakota and Ojibwe leaders agreed, often under pressure, to give up large portions of their homelands and retain small areas of land, called *reservations*, for the exclusive use of their people and descendants. In exchange, the United States promised to provide tribal nations with social, economic, and educational services, a responsibility that continues today.

Francis Davis Millet, *The Signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux* (detail), 1905.
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Source: Why Treaties Matter – Banner 6
<http://TreatiesMatter.org/exhibit>

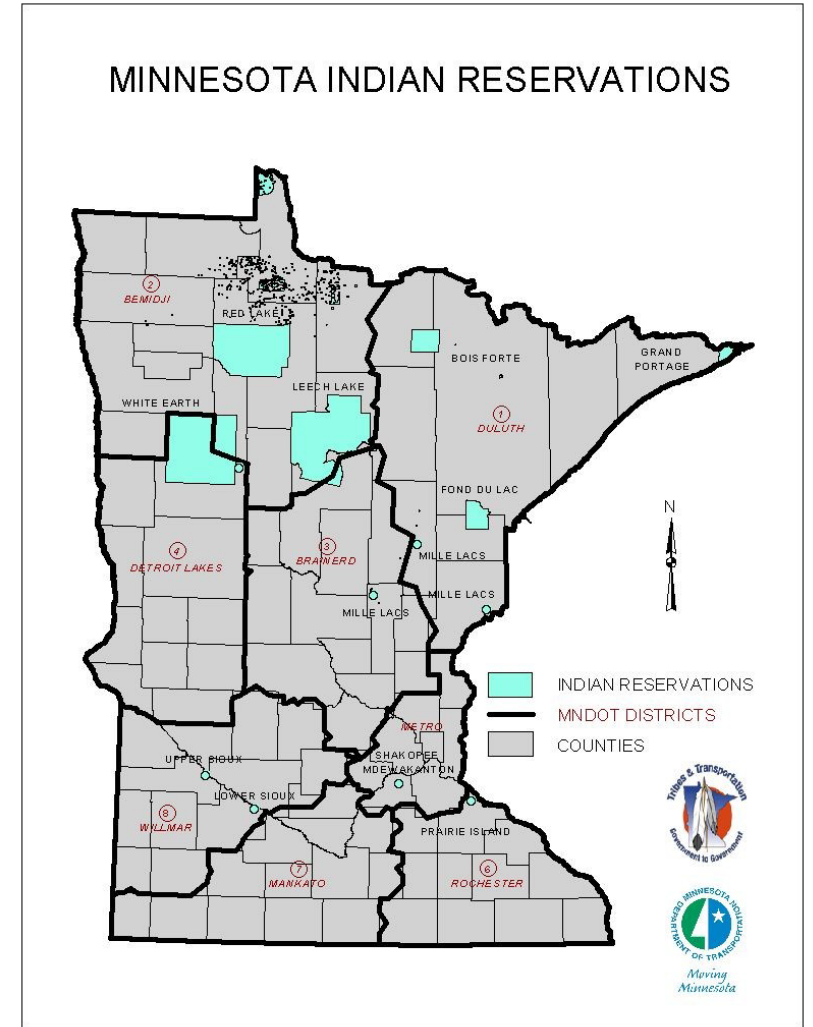
Tribal Governments in Minnesota



Bois Forte
Fond du Lac
Grand Portage
Leech Lake
Mille Lacs
White Earth
Red Lake

Upper Sioux
Lower Sioux
Prairie Island
Shakopee Mdewakanton

Ho-Chunk, WI



Government to Government

- **Different views of history and cultures**
 - Connection to the Land: land tenure meaning, Humans equal other beings
 - Bias: What treaties/reservations mean
 - Tribes were not granted anything. *U.S. Supreme Court.*
- **Find common understanding** around Sovereignty:
Minn. Stat. 10.65
 - Government to government relationship: meaningful and timely on **tribal interests**
 - Access to programs and to decision-making

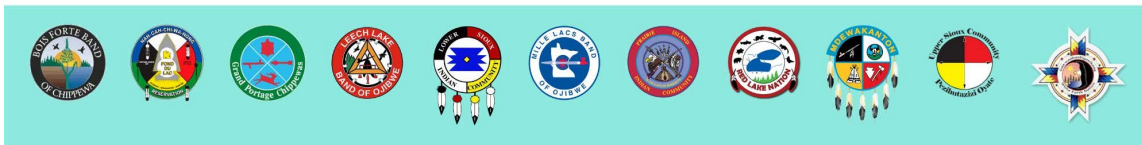
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Strong Policies Ensure Meaningful Consultation with Tribal Governments

- **Consultation:** Government to government
 - Governor/Commissioner and Tribal Nation Leaders
 - Must be “meaningful” and “timely”



- **Coordination:** Implementation at technical level
 - Planning, Partnerships, Projects
 - Transportation infrastructure is within Indian Country



MINNESOTA TRIBAL NATIONS
GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP WITH MNDOT
POLICY AD005, EFFECTIVE 2014-02-25

POLICY STATEMENT

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) seeks to foster and facilitate positive government-to-government relations between MnDOT and all federally recognized Minnesota Tribal Nations.

“Indian Nations have always been considered as distinct, independent political communities, retaining their original rights, as the undisputed possessors of the soil ... The very term “nation” so generally applied to them, means “a people distinct from others.”

*Chief Justice John Marshall
United States Supreme Court
Worcester v. Georgia
31 US (6 Pet.) 1515, 561 (1832)*

MnDOT requires that the principles of the **Minnesota Tribal Nations** policy are to be considered at all phases of planning and project development in the establishment, development, operation, and maintenance of a comprehensive, integrated, and connected multimodal transportation system.

MnDOT will follow these guiding principles in order to promote successful consultation and collaboration between tribal governments and the state:

- We commit to meet annually with Minnesota Tribal Nations to identify priority issues for consultation.
- When tribal officials request consultation, the Department will honor the tribal government’s request with consideration of the nature of the activity, past consultation efforts, available resources, timing considerations, and all other relevant factors.
- We will consult in face-to-face meetings between the appropriate level staff to increase understandings of any proposed actions and enhance the development of effective outcomes and solutions.
- We will build upon already established and on-going relationships between tribal and state officials.
- We will consult with honesty, integrity and transparency in the consultation process. Mutual respect and trust are fundamental elements in establishing a good consultative relationship.
- We will be open with information that may be beneficial or critical to making a decision or developing a position.
- We will, together with tribal nations remain flexible to attain practical and progressive solutions.

SENIOR OFFICER

Susan M. Mulvihill, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner/Chief Engineer

POLICY OWNER

Scott R. Peterson
Director, Office of Government Affairs

POLICY CONTACT

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POLICY HISTORY

2014-02-25, Established
[MnDOT Policy Website](#)

Document Number: 1311696, Page 1 of 7
Minnesota Tribal Nations – AD005



Economic Rights: Diversifying employment and contracting opportunities

Education, unemployment and opportunities

- Issue: **Tribal Citizens suffer from the largest disparities in education, employment and contracting** on construction projects.
- Solution: Using government to government coordination, tailor workforce trainings to tribe and target recruiting to tribal citizens living on or near a reservation.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

American Indian students also have the lowest high school graduation rates of any racial or ethnic group in the state, at 53 percent graduating in four years, compared to the statewide average of 82 percent.

	Minnesota			United States	
	In Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Total Labor Force	2,973,902	69.2%	3.4%	63.3%	4.9%
White alone	2,597,350	68.7%	2.9%	62.7%	4.2%
Black or African American	181,265	71.5%	7.6%	62.6%	8.7%
American Indian/Alaska Native	24,800	57.0%	13.9%	58.0%	8.8%
Asian or Other Pac. Islanders	150,166	72.1%	3.8%	65.6%	3.9%
Some Other Race	55,825	78.1%	5.7%	69.2%	5.7%
Two or More Races	68,990	74.4%	6.2%	67.6%	7.1%
Hispanic or Latino	154,696	76.0%	5.7%	67.7%	5.7%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

Disparity analysis for MnDOT state-funded construction and professional services procurements, July 2011-June 2016

	Utilization	Availability	Disparity index
African American-owned	0.05 %	1.97 %	3
Asian American-owned	1.10	0.83	133
Hispanic American-owned	0.43	0.54	80
Native American-owned	0.05	5.13	1
Unknown MBE	0.01		
Total MBE	1.63 %	8.46 %	19
WBE (white women-owned)	5.36	12.03	45
Total MBE/WBE	6.98 %	20.50 %	34

Note: Disparity index = 100 x Utilization/Availability.

Source: Keen Independent utilization and availability analyses for MnDOT procurements.

Native American-owned	0.05	5.13	1
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Legislative update from MN

- **MN State TERO law** passed – allows application on new federally funded projects on or “near” reservation – minimum of 60 Miles radius around boundaries – Thank you John Navarro for visits and guidance
- **MN Tribal OJT law** – applies to state funded projects – TH 65 in Bois Forte
- Established **Workforce Training program in Indian Country**
 - \$2 million per biennium





Access to trainings in Indian Country

- Access to trainings develops workforce capacity on MnDOT construction projects
- Steering Committee – 11 Tribes set priorities, location, select trainers, recruit (CDL, Carpentry, 49er, concrete)
- Overcome barriers – Hotel, meals, gas, achievement stipend, boots, day care, resume building workshops...





6 Month report to elected Tribal Leaders

- May thru October: **5 free trainings to 55 trainees** in Indian Country.
- Projection until June 30th, 2025: **9 free trainings, up to 116 participants.**
- Established Steering Committee

Priorities	Description	Est. Cost 24	Est. Cost 25	Notes
Commercial Driver's License	Partnered with Southwest MN Private Industry Council and MN West to provide CDL training to the Lower Sioux Indian Community and Upper Sioux Community – 7 participants	\$70K Lower Sioux Host	\$90K Upper Sioux Host	2024: Six working graduates
Commercial Driver's License	Partnered with Cook County Higher Education and MN North to provide CDL training in Grand Portage – 14 participants	\$100K	///	Will end June 2025
Heavy Equipment Operators	Inter-tribal training with Local 49 – 11 participants	\$185K	\$210K	2024: 11 grads; 80% employed
Commercial Driver's License	Partnered with MN State Detroit Lakes to provide CDL to Red Lake Nation and Leech Lake Band – 10 participants, looking into adding 1	\$110K	///	Started September 2024
American Disability Act Concrete	Hands-on ADA concrete training with Mille Lacs Band – 10 participants	\$120K	///	October 2024; 10 graduates
Commercial Driver's License	Partner with MN North to provide CDL training to Bois Forte Band – 10 participants	///	\$120K	Planning in progress
Commercial Driver's License	Partner to provide CDL training to Mille Lacs Band – 10 participants	///	\$120K	Planning in progress
American Disability Act Concrete	Hands-on ADA concrete training to Grand Portage Band – up to 12 participants	///	\$120K	Planning in progress
American Disability Act Concrete	Hands-on ADA concrete training to Fond du Lac Band – up to 12 participants	///	\$100K	Planning in progress
American Disability Act Concrete	Hands-on ADA concrete training to TBD – up to 12 participants	///	\$60K +Add'l funds	Planning in progress
Tech Certification – MnDOT Lab testing	Certified laboratory technician – up to 15 participants	///	\$30K	Planning in progress
Carpenters Training Institute Program	Inter-Tribal training program on highway heavy carpentry/pile driver skills (5 weeks in Bemidji) – up to 16 participants	///	\$125K	Planning in progress
Total per year		\$585K	\$975K	
Total Cost			\$1,560K	



6 month report

- 55 families served
- 33 graduates
- \$33/hour average
- 61% employed



Highway Heavy Operators Graduation – June 2024



CDL Trainings

- Class A, Class B Training partnership with Leech Lake Band and Red Lake Nation
- Similar training took place with the Lower Sioux Indian Community and Upper Sioux Community





Coordination and Overview - ADA concrete training

- Government to Government Coordination – TERO chose location, participants and contractor to carry out training.
- MnDOT covered cost of contractor and consultant and brought tools
- Three days hands-on training and online inspector test
 - design, blueprints, use tools, Pouring and testing concrete
- Career opportunity visit at Minnesota DOT headquarters
- Graduation ceremony with Tribal leaders





- **Urban Trainings and more**

- AIM and AIOIC
 - [CDL – AIOIC](#)
 - [CDL – West Metro](#)
- [Flagger Train the Trainer - Work Zone Safety - MnDOT \(state.mn.us\)](#)
- [Certified Landscape Specialist Training - Roadside Vegetation Management - MnDOT \(state.mn.us\)](#) – opens November 2025

- **Employment connections**

- Carpentry training, 5 weeks
- Include weekly networking opportunities for participants with contractors
- Add on-site project tour
- Align trade projections for next 10 years: Blatnik projections trades- 1,100 workers on 5 year project (cement masons, 49ers, concrete...)



Miigwech (Ojibwe) - Pidamaya (Dakota) Thank you!

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