



Anpetu Luta Otipi
Comprehensive Alcohol and Substance Abuse
Treatment and Prevention Program
Oglala Sioux Tribe

10/3/2018

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Oglala Sioux Tribe Plans to turn the recently purchased Bennett County School into a Residential Treatment and Detoxification Center

Pine Ridge, South Dakota, October 3, 2018 – The Oglala Sioux Tribe through the Wakpamni District and Anpetu Luta Otipi purchased the former Bennett County Central School with the intention of turning the facility into a 45-65 bed Residential Treatment and Detoxification Center. The facility is located in Western Bennett County, 4 miles North of Swett, SD. Renovation on the 12,500 square foot building will begin prior to the new year with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice Assistance. Renovation plans include a complete update of the building's interior and exterior as well as the construction of an additional 2,500 square foot wing needed to increase client capacity.

This initiative represents two tribal entities coming together to in order to meet a long-standing critical need of the Tribe. Alcohol and substance abuse remains one of the most costly health problems in the United States. The National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) reports that an estimated 417 billion is spent on alcohol abuse annually in costs related to crime, lost productivity, and health care. The Tribe's clinic data demonstrates that 76% of the most recent 2,000 clients assessed for substance use are diagnosed as chemically dependent with a need for residential inpatient treatment (ASAM care level of ≥ 3.1). Among those clients who have either been admitted to inpatient treatment within the Tribe's current residential facilities or referred to an external agency, 75% are in need of detoxification services. Favian Kennedy, Director of Anpetu Luta Otipi states that, "The renovation of Bennett County Central School into a Residential Treatment and Detoxification Center will substantially increase the Oglala Sioux Tribe's ability to care for individuals with alcohol and substance abuse disorders. The implementation of an effective detoxification program means our clients do not have to weight a lengthy period of time for inpatient placement."

Anpetu Luta Otipi is a comprehensive substance abuse program that administers a wide variety of addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery support services for adolescents and adults experiencing problems with alcohol and drugs. Anpetu Luta Otipi's mission is to deliver the highest quality behavioral health services that are guided by science and anchored in traditional Lakota culture, philosophy, and worldview in order to eliminate alcohol, commercial tobacco, and other drug abuse on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Anpetu Luta Otipi has partnered with the Oglala Sioux Tribe's Wakpamni District to purchase and renovate the facility. Wakpamni District is one of nine districts of the Oglala Sioux Tribe located on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The District Board is comprised of Mary Tobacco, President; Sandy Two Lance, Vice President; Alice Perkins, Secretary; and Ann Tobacco, Treasurer. The District community leaders include Wendell Yellow Bull, Red Cloud President; Geneva Lone Hill, Wakpamni Lake President; and Denise Mesteth, Slim Buttes President.

Mary Tobacco, District President stated, "Working with Anpetu Luta Otipi to establish a treatment center on the reservation is an investment in our communities. Its tribal government at its best because it is a victory for our citizens and our district organization." Anpetu Luta Otipi currently maintains funding to operate residential treatment and detoxification services from the Department of Health and Human Services – Indian Health Service.

Anpetu Luta Otipi and Wakpamni District have scheduled a community meeting to discuss the renovation project on **Wednesday, October 17th at 1pm, at Wakpamni's Payabya Campus.**

For additional information please call Favian Kennedy by phone at 605-455-2331 or email favian@heapc.org.