

# THE ZUNI YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2025

**RESILIENT TOGETHER: ROOTED IN TRADITION,  
UNITING TODAY, STRENGTHENING TOMORROW**

Dear ZYEP family,

This year has been a roller coaster for our entire world, and it has been acutely felt here at ZYEP. There were moments when we felt so uncertain about what was to come because federal support for core ZYEP services was at risk. It is through these services that we aim to instill the values of community, respect, and care for one another. The resources and approach that has impacted generations of Zuni youth suddenly felt so fragile.

However, it was also in these times that we experienced empowering events that helped us see our mission come to life. When day-to-day operations felt challenging, we observed our youth still showing up to programs, still engaging in healthy activities, and still connecting with one another. That shifted our mindset. We decided to be present, and our goal was to foster a meaningful experience for the youth in that very moment. That approach helped our team cope and keep our mission in view during the uncertainty.

We witnessed other moments like youth expanding their perspectives and becoming leaders within the very ZYEP programs they grew up in. These moments reminded us that resilience runs deep in our veins. Our ancestors passed on the strength we need to overcome these challenges, as they did in their time. They united together and became unbreakable.

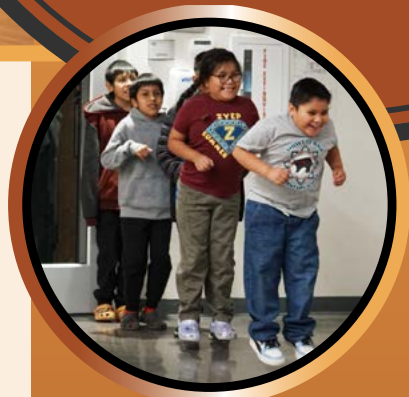
We are teaching our youth: **we are stronger together**. And we send a heartfelt “elakh-wa” (thank you) to you, as you have helped us model exactly that. Together, we can demonstrate that community, respect, and care for one another are what makes our world powerful.

Next year, one third of ZYEP’s funding is still at risk. **Will you join us today with an investment in Zuni youth, helping provide critical experiences and building a positive future for our kids, community and world?** This year we are more aware than ever—we truly could not do it without you.

*Tahlia Natachu-Eriacho*

Tahlia Natachu-Eriacho (Zuni, San Felipe, Navajo)  
ZYEP Executive Director

P.S. Your support is more important than ever. Today, you can go to [zyep.org/join-us/donate/](https://zyep.org/join-us/donate/) to make a one-time donation or set up a recurring donation.





# TOGETHER, WE CAN CONTINUE THE IMPACT OF ZYEP

"It's a fun, active program, and there are a lot of nice people. I feel like I'm in a very safe space away from bullies. I love the ZYEP family. They are all amazing."

- John Michael, Age 8



"ZYEP has become a monumental cornerstone for our youth. The amount of positive connections and engagement with our community has provided an amazing pathway for our future generations to instill self-confidence and to have a safe space to have those big dreams that without the support from ZYEP may have never reached the light of day. Our future generations have a light in their eyes now. They are becoming more and more motivated to try new things, to reach for higher, to embrace that each one of them are worthy of so much more

in this life. Had it not been for the unwavering support from ZYEP stepping up for our youth, these new hopes and dreams that are now manifesting into realities may have just remained as dreams passing away in the shadows of our future generations' minds. Thank you ZYEP for putting our youth first!

-Paula, ZYEP Parent



"We aim to foster a welcoming, safe environment for Zuni youth and their families to explore opportunities like apprenticeships, field trips, theater projects, employment, sports, and school activities. All of these are backed with a firm, culturally informed Zuni foundation. I want ZYEP to be a beacon for every Zuni youth to know they are safe and welcome to return to, no matter how old they are."

-Kandis, ZYEP Arts Leader



**How did you become the person you are today?**

My late father and my grandfather are the ones I look up to every day. From them, I got my spirit, and I learned respect, motivation and kind-heartedness. When I was young, growing up in Albuquerque, I was bullied. My late dad told me—don't listen to them, just be who you are. I took that to heart. I got friends through how nice and kind I was and how respectful I was to people.

**How did you get involved in ZYEP?**

After high school, I wanted to be a wildland firefighter. I applied to join the firefighter camp crew with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and their crew leader said I had a bright future ahead. The

following week, we got an email saying that the federal government ended funding for the program. There was no camp crew. I thought—what am I going to do? I had my heart set. I was going to put money aside so I could maybe get my own vehicle.

I saw an ad for summer internships. I applied, was accepted, and placed at ZYEP! ZYEP put me out there with kids during Summer Camp. Honestly, it really built me up—as a person and my skills around kids. ZYEP invited me to continue working with them, and it set me up to be a good mentor in the after school program.

I still want to be a wildland firefighter. But I am still young, and I still have a lot of opportunities to do before I get to where I want to be. I'm just really glad that I took that summer job with ZYEP. **I love the vibes of the team, and now I call ZYEP family.**



Honestly, it's a rough road. There can be so much hate. So many people are into drugs and alcohol, and I wish I could do something about it. **We need a lot of people just uplifting one another. At ZYEP, it's positive and motivating. That's honestly what we need.**





# YOUR SUPPORT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER!



## RESILIENT TOGETHER: ROOTED IN TRADITION, UNITING TODAY, STRENGTHENING TOMORROW

**\$25**

Ingredients for a nutrition demonstration

**\$50**

Art supplies for one child in after-school programming

**\$100**

Gear for one child in our TeeBall League

**\$500**

Gardening supplies for Ho'n A:wan Park's Community Garden

**\$1,500**

One year apprenticeship for an emerging youth artist

**\$2,500**

Paid position for one Youth Summer Camp Counselor

**EVERY GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE**



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