

White Earth programs awarded \$707,000 to help curb domestic violence, sexual assault

WASHINGTON – Attorney General Eric Holder announced Aug. 24 that more than \$1 million in Recovery Act funds was awarded to two Minnesota Tribal coalitions and one Minnesota Tribal government by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

“American Indian and Alaska Native women are more likely to experience sexual assault and domestic violence than women from other racial or ethnic groups, which is why these funds are so vital,” said Holder.

The Department of Justice is awarding \$707,404 to the White Earth Reservation Tribal Council in northwest Minnesota to hire one full-time domestic violence/sexual assault investigator within the White Earth Police Department who will also work in cooperation with county law enforcement agencies, hire one full-time Administrative Assistant to support the White Earth DOVE Program and hire one full time Elder Advocate.

The Department of Justice is awarding \$154,000 to the Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition (MIWSAC) to hire new staff, develop culturally specific sexual assault training, public awareness and education materials, including videos and the Barrette Project. MIWSAC will hire a new full-time education and training coordinator, form an advisory committee to develop culturally specific sexual assault training curriculum and a facilitators guide, develop, with input from the membership, culturally specific sexual assault public awareness and education materials, conduct two train-the-trainer workshops utilizing culturally specific training materials, create an educational video to shift paradigms and perceptions about the traditional as well as modern roles of Native women and girls in our society as it pertains to ending sexual assault and create the Barrette Project resource with personal accounts from Native sexual assault victims/survivors to raise awareness and educate the community. MIWSAC serves the eleven tribes as well as a large urban Indian population in Minnesota.

The Department of Justice is awarding \$154,000 to Sacred Spirits to hire staff and develop outreach services in Moorhead, Minnesota and other urban areas where a high percentage of tribal members reside. They will hire a part-time fiscal specialist that will integrate financial and management systems and monitor its resources as well as develop long-term stability, hire a full-time development officer to enhance current program capacity, assist in meeting project goals and objectives and develop a strategic plan and create more efficient outreach services in the tribal communities for tribal members living on the White Earth Reservation.

The landmark American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, signed into law by President Obama, provides the Justice Department’s Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) with \$20.8 million for the Indian Tribal Governments Program to decrease the number of violent crimes committed against Indian women, help Indian tribes use their independent authority to respond to crimes of violence against Indian women and make sure that people who commit violent crimes against Indian women are held responsible for their actions.

The Recovery Act provides OVW with \$2.8 million for the Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions Program to provide much needed resources for organizing and supporting efforts to end violence against Indian women and provide technical assistance to member programs.