

Abstract

Sandia's Tribal Energy Program (TEP) is authorized through the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. DOE's Tribal Energy Program aims to assist tribal nations in government-to-government partnerships through financial and technical assistance, in order to:

- Empower tribal leaders to make informed decisions about energy choices*
- Bring renewable energy and energy efficiency options to Indian Country*
- Enhance human capacity through education and training*
- Improve local tribal economies and the environment*
- Make a difference in the quality of life of Native Americans*¹

Human capacity is enhanced through TEP's 12-week summer internship, filled with hands-on field experiences, such as: visits to tribal on and off-grid energy efficient and renewable energy installations, tribal renewable energy conferences, and training sessions. This summer internship not only "enhances human capacity through education and training"¹, it addresses all the other aims TEP set out to do. This internship "empowers tribal leaders to make informed decisions about energy choices"¹, as interns have found themselves in tribal energy positions and/or working with tribal leaders. "Bring[ing] renewable energy and energy efficiency options to Indian Country"¹ is accomplished through interns working within and with tribal nations on energy efficiency and renewable energy development. Interns, at the time of the internship or after, "improve local tribal economies and the environment"¹ from being environmentally conscious of their daily carbon footprint to being part of the green collar workforce. Lastly, all aims and the future endeavors of interns contribute to "mak[ing] a difference in the quality of life of Native Americans"¹.

¹ U.S. Department of Energy. (2012). *Tribal Energy Program*. Retrieved from <http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/tribalenergy/>