



Michelle Lujan Grisham • Governor
Rob Black • Cabinet Secretary
Isaac Romero • Deputy Cabinet Secretary

State Tribal Collaboration Act Report

July 31, 2025

The New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) celebrates and recognizes the wisdom, creativity, resilience, and diversity of the Indigenous People of this state.

By virtue of working statewide, EDD regularly visits, works with, and speaks on the traditional homelands of the Native People of this region.

The department stands in solidarity with the sovereign Indian Nations and Tribal Communities of New Mexico. We understand, respect, and honor the principles of sovereignty and self-determination, and we commit to supporting indigenous led solutions, businesses, organizations, and initiatives throughout New Mexico.

We honor the past, present, and future of New Mexico's Native people and thank the Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations for their ongoing collaboration.

Mission

The mission of the New Mexico Economic Development Department is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.

EDD Creates Economic Opportunities through its programs:

Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)

Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP)

New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS)

Technology and Innovation Office (formerly Office of Science & Technology)

Community, Business, & Rural Development (CBRD)

Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD)

New Mexico Film Office (NMFO)

JEDI Office (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)

Creative Industries Office

Key Programs:

The Local Economic Development Act and the Job Training Incentive Program are effective programs that support business expansion and create new jobs. These programs are used to attract economic-base companies to New Mexico. Economic-base companies bring dollars into the state from outside, and these dollars in turn benefit local service and retail businesses.

LEDA

Under the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) (5-10-1 to 5-10-13 NMSA 1978), EDD is authorized to provide grants to local governments (municipality and/or county); to assist expanding or relocating qualified entities/businesses that will stimulate economic development and produce public benefits.

All grants are funded on a strictly reimbursement basis. EDD targets economic development projects that comply with all legal facets of LEDA. Additional consideration is given to projects that demonstrate:

- Significant community impact and support
- Rural and underserved areas of New Mexico
- Increased wages and job creation
- Significant new capital investment
- Environmentally sustainable outcomes

LEDA Funding supported the Nambe Pueblo/ Spiritus Technologies development:

- Spiritus Technologies PBC, a carbon removal company, was awarded \$500,000 in LEDA funding through NMEDD to support job creation and facility expansion in New Mexico.
- The company operates two facilities in the state: a materials science facility in White Rock and an engineering site in Nambe.
- Spiritus signed a six-year lease for a 10,000-square-foot facility on Nambe Pueblo land (formerly a water bottling facility), located at 45a Tova Muusa Poe, Santa Fe, NM 87506.
- The Nambe Pueblo Development Corporation serves as the fiscal agent for the project.

JTIP

The Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) funds classroom and on-the-job training for newly created jobs in expanding or relocating businesses for up to six months. The program reimburses 50 to 90 percent of employee wages. The JTIP Step Up Program serves incumbent employees by reimbursing employers up to 75% of training costs. Indigenous-owned businesses are eligible for the program and EDD is developing targeted tribal outreach efforts to raise awareness.

Businesses can determine if they qualify for JTIP by filling out the eligibility questionnaire.

Community, Business and Rural Development Team

EDD's Community, Business and Rural Development staff (CBRD), or regional representatives, are located in the regions they serve in every corner of the state. They assist businesses and communities with a broad variety of economic development needs.

During FY 25, the CBRD Team worked with Pueblos, Tribes and Nations, across New Mexico including the following highlights:

- Met with Picuris Pueblo Lt. Governor Wayne Yazza Jr., who led negotiations with the City of Raton regarding the acquisition of a former city-owned racino property. This property, located along I-25 in the southern part of Raton, is set to become a Tribal Enterprise Truck Stop.
- Met with Frizzell Frizzell Jr. of the Inn of the Mountain Gods to discuss the Tribe's business goals. The Tribe raises beef cattle, which are processed in Nebraska and resold to the Inn. NMEDD coordinated a site meeting with USDA, NMMEP, contractors, and tribal representatives. Discussions also included a new emergency command center under construction that will feature cold storage. Relevant funding and technical assistance programs were shared
- Assisted Darrell Tsabetsaye, a Zuni tribal member and business owner of Major Market Inc., by facilitating an introduction to Sam Collins to explore a Capital Access Program (CAP) for business operations and expansion, underwritten by The Loan Fund in Albuquerque.

JEDI

EDD's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Office is dedicated to delivering programs and services to minority and underserved businesses and communities throughout New Mexico. Highlights for FY25 JEDI involvement:

- **Financial Empowerment Sponsorship with SWNAC (2025):**

In 2025, the JEDI Office at the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) awarded a \$5,000 sponsorship to the Southwest Native-American Collaborative (SWNAC) in support of their Financial Empowerment Workshop Series. These workshops focused on increasing financial literacy, promoting housing stability, and

expanding access to capital among Native American families in rural and tribal communities. EDD's support directly funds curriculum delivery, facilitation, outreach, participant materials, and post-workshop engagement. In return, SWNAC provides demographic data, survey results, key outcomes, and visual documentation. EDD receives recognition through co-branded promotional materials, social media, and public acknowledgments, reinforcing its commitment to equitable access to financial resources in tribal communities.

- **FY24 Contract with SWNAC – Community-Centered Financial Literacy Training (2023–2024):**

In fiscal year 2024, the JEDI Office contracted with SWNAC to deliver a community-centered financial literacy training program tailored to Tribal communities and New Mexico residents. The \$5,000 contract required at least five trainings designed to build entrepreneurial confidence and capacity, reduce barriers to financial resources, and connect participants to critical industry knowledge. Trainings were scheduled with community availability in mind and branded in partnership with EDD. SWNAC was responsible for comprehensive reporting, including session topics, objectives, instructor qualifications, participant demographics, feedback surveys, and overall program insights. This contract furthered JEDI's goal of fostering an entrepreneur-friendly environment rooted in equity and responsiveness to Tribal community needs.

- **FY24 Contract with UNM Rainforest Innovations NM TEEP – Technical Assistance Series and Entrepreneur Pipeline Building (2023–2024):**

In FY24, the JEDI Office partnered with UNM Rainforest Innovations through the NM Tribal Entrepreneurship Enhancement Program (NM TEEP) to administer a five-part technical assistance training series in Tribal and Native American-serving communities. Funded with a \$5,000 contract, trainings covered high-need topics such as bookkeeping, branding, capital access, and legal formation, and were delivered in-person across the state, including at UNM-Gallup, Jemez Pueblo, and Dulce, NM. These sessions sparked deeper community engagement: SWNAC expanded its work with UNM-Gallup after a JEDI-sponsored session; WESST planned eight additional workshops in Dulce based on

local feedback; and conversations began with Jemez Enterprises for future programming. The collaboration also underscored the importance of NMTEEP's tribal liaisons, who helped surface the real barriers and needs faced by Native entrepreneurs. Many of which are now being addressed through JEDI's SSBCI Technical Assistance program. As Cecilia Becenti of UNM RI noted, "It was good to see our voice being heard, and our work with NMTEEP and NMEDD JEDI bearing meaningful fruit."

- The JEDI Office hosted a mandatory department wide full-day workshop focused on the challenges faced by tribes, nations, and pueblos in launching and sustaining businesses

ORD

The mission of the Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) is to increase equitable access to the outdoors for all New Mexicans, ensuring healthy outcomes, environmental stewardship and economic prosperity. In FY 25, the following key impacts were made.

Outreach & Engagement

- Hired Nate Unek Francis (Tewa) to design the Adventure Pitch Fest logo
- Featured Picuris Pueblo Bike Park on social media and in newsletters leading up to the Grand Opening
- Invited Santo Domingo Pueblo and K'é Community Trails to table at Outdoor Recreation Day (Santo Domingo attended)
- New Mexico Outdoor Ventures Campaign spotlighted 15 NM-based businesses, including:
 - Joe Saenz – *Wolfhorse Outfitters* (Apache)
 - Kialo Winters – *Navajo Tours USA* (Navajo)

- Email & direct outreach to tribal contacts from ORD database each grant cycle, including follow-up calls/meetings
- Event participation at Navajo Mountain Bike Festival and various Feast Days
- ORD Director attended the NMEDD sponsored Governor's Conference on Economic Development at Isleta Resort & Casino
- ORD Director represented EDD at an all-day listening session at Ohkay Owingeh with the Secretary and staff of IAD
- In working with the Forestry Division, ORD Director reached out to the Taos Pueblo to coordinate a meeting with their leadership and forestry unit and EMNRD's Forestry Division representative

Outdoor Equity Fund

Current Funded Programs in FY25:

- Dream Diné Charter School – \$40,000
- Dził Ditt'ooí School of Empowerment Action & Perseverance – \$40,000
- NACA Inspired Schools Network – \$20,000
- National Indian Youth Leadership Development Project – \$40,000
- Pueblo of Jemez – \$40,000
- Santo Domingo Pueblo – \$40,000
- Trout Unlimited – \$38,834 (Native youth-focused)

Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant

Past Projects Completed:

- Santa Clara Pueblo (FY21 Special Projects): ADA picnic sites in Santa Clara Canyon
- Ramah Navajo Chapter (FY22 Trails+): Cultural Fitness Trail with signage and shelters

Ongoing Projects:

- Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (FY22–FY24): Multi-phase trail system improvements, youth apprenticeships, sacred site preservation
- Taos Pueblo (FY23 R3): Trail restoration and multi-use trail planning
- Pueblo of Jemez (FY24 R1): Hemish Path to Wellness pedestrian trail
- K'é Community Trails Coalition – Crownpoint (FY24 R2): Trail formalization and youth STEM engagement
- Pueblo of Isleta (FY24 R2): Trail repaving, exercise stations, and accessibility features
- Nambe Pueblo (FY24 R3): Safety improvements to Nambe Falls trail
- Pueblo of Picuris (FY25 R1): Final phase of All-Wheel Park with adaptive bike features
- Santa Ana Pueblo (Tamaya Wellness Center) (FY25 R3): Trail connectivity to Bosque and Rio Grande ecosystem

NM MainStreet

The mission of the New Mexico Mainstreet (NMMS) is to develop local capacity to engage people, rebuild places and grow entrepreneurial, creative and business environment resulting in economically thriving downtowns greater business and employment opportunities and a higher quality of life. Highlights of how NMMS accomplished this in FY 25 are below

- Zuni Pueblo MainStreet – NMMS is providing ongoing technical assistance to the ZPMS organization and \$675,000 in EDD/NMMS Capital Outlay funding and additional landscape architecture services for Zuni Pueblo Visitor Center Improvements.

- Two communities participating in NMMS's Native American Communities Initiative
 - Tortugas Pueblo – NMMS providing technical assistance in accessing aging buildings and their ceremonial grounds. The project focus is developing a plan to address the needs and identify public infrastructure improvement opportunities.
 - Pojoaque – Providing ongoing creative economy technical assistance to Poeh Cultural Center.

Food, Hunger, & Agriculture Program

The mission of the Food, Hunger and Agricultural Program is to support the intersection of economic development in New Mexico's Agricultural sector with Increased food security for New Mexicans. Highlights of how this program succeeded in FY 25 are below:

- Major Market Inc. (MMI) is a tribal family owned and operated grocer and cafe located in the Pueblo of Zuni in rural western New Mexico. This project's overarching aim is to strengthen Major Market Inc.'s (MMI) food storage capacity, enabling the Zuni-family owned and operated grocer to increase access to healthy foods for the Pueblo of Zuni and surrounding areas.
- Founded in 2018, BeeSezi. is a Navajo-owned and operated company, represented by an independent producer. The business focuses on processing Navajo white, yellow, and blue corn into traditional Navajo food products, embodying its name "BeeSezi.," which signifies "I stand" in Navajo, symbolizing a commitment to cultural values and indigenous agriculture. The initiative to modernize an outdated corn mill, crucial for Navajo cornmeal production, involves relocating the mill to a new portable building, upgrading its power supply, and enhancing the mill's efficiency and increasing its output. This upgrade will significantly bolster the business's capacity to supply traditional Navajo food products to the community.
- EDD helped plan and host the 2025 Inaugural NM Local Food Summit, held May 28-29 at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. The summit highlighted New Mexico's local food

system businesses, partners, nonprofits, and the Governor's Food Initiative to drive food security, sustainability, and strengthen New Mexico's Food System.

Other Notable Actions

2025 EDD All Staff JEDI Workshop – Centering Tribal Economies:

In May 2025, the JEDI Office organized a full-day, mandatory, department-wide workshop focused on *Supporting Tribal Economies* through relationship-building and responsibility. The event brought together three Indigenous entrepreneurs from the Navajo Nation, Zuni Pueblo, and Jicarilla Apache Nation, as well as five Tribal leaders representing Santa Clara Pueblo, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Laguna Pueblo, and the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. EDD staff engaged in honest conversations about economic self-determination, Tribal sovereignty, and government-to-government partnership. Sessions explored both systemic barriers and opportunities, with leadership from Cabinet Secretary Josett Monette of the Indian Affairs Department and Governor James Mountain from the Office of the Governor. The workshop grounded staff in the responsibilities outlined in the State-Tribal Collaboration Act and emphasized the importance of culturally competent engagement in economic development. It marked a pivotal moment for internal capacity-building and advancing departmental alignment with Tribal priorities

Hosting of the Governors Conference on Economic Development at Isleta Pueblo

In September 2024, NMEDD sponsored the Governor's Conference on Economic Development at Isleta Resort & Casino for the second consecutive year. This is the largest economic development conference in the state. The event will return in September 2025.

FY 2026 Top 3 Goals/Objectives related to Pueblos, Tribes and Nations:

- 1. Enhancing Access to Capital:** Create more funding programs specifically designed to support Indigenous entrepreneurs, including grants and low-interest loans.
- 2. Strengthen Relationships with Tribal Leadership:** Actively engage with tribal leaders to understand their perspectives and gain their support for economic initiatives. This can include regular meetings and collaborative planning sessions.
- 3. Intentional Marketing:** Develop targeted marketing strategies that communicate the EDD's resources and initiatives to Indigenous populations, ensuring that messaging is culturally relevant and accessible.

Key Contacts:

Rob Black, Cabinet Secretary

Rob.Black@edd.nm.gov

505-469-5946

Executive Assistant to Sec. Black

Krystal Speedy, Krystal.Speedy@edd.nm.gov 505-500-9589

Isaac Romero, Deputy Cabinet Secretary

Isaac.Romero@edd.nm.gov

505-412-7225

Executive Assistant to Dep. Romero

Kim Sewell, Kim.Sewell@edd.nm.gov 505-623-1192

Mark Roper, Economic Development Division Director

Mark.Roper@edd.nm.gov 575-562-0327

Jennifer Myers, Community Business and Rural Development Team

Jennifer.Myers@edd.nm.gov 505-660-5371

Karina Armijo, Director, Outdoor Recreation Division

Karina.Armijo@edd.nm.gov 505-690-7897

Erin Ortigoza, Food, Hunger & Agricultural Program Manager

Erin.Ortigoza@edd.nm.gov 505-819-8914

Patrick Gannon, Job Training Incentive Program Manager

Patrick.Gannon@edd.nm.gov 505-470-3572

Rita Veleta, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Office Coordinator

Rita.Veleta@edd.nm.gov 505-795-3186

Steve Graham, Division Director, New Mexico Film Office

Steve.graham@nmfilm.com 505-623-1238

Nora Meyers Sackett, Director, Technology and Innovation Office

Nora.Sackett@edd.nm.gov 505-795-3966

General Contact

www.edd.newmexico.gov 505-827-0300