

# *Journal #5621 from sdc 12.26.23*

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On each day of Kwanzaa, light a candle for that day's principle on your candleholder (Kinara).  
**Umoja (Unity)** To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

**Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)** To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.

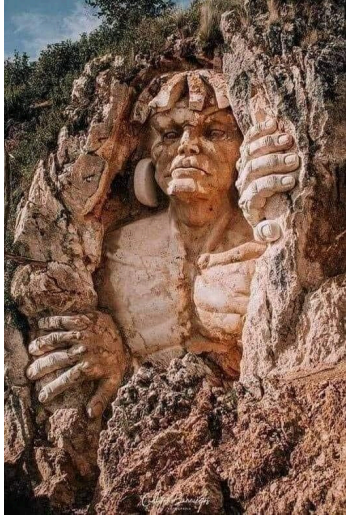
**Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)** To build and maintain our community together and make our community's problems our problems and to solve them together.

**Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)** To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

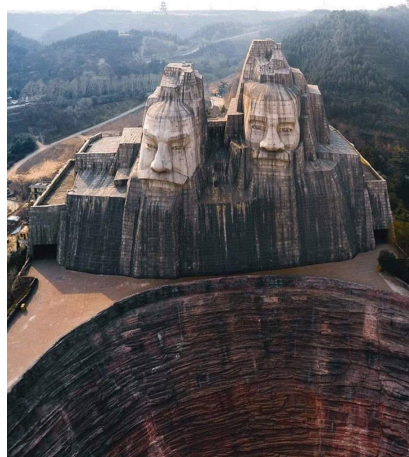
**Nia (Purpose)** To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

**Kuumba (Creativity)** To do always as much as we can to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

**Imani (Faith)** To believe with all our hearts in our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.



Near Poroy in Peru



[Historia Universal](#)

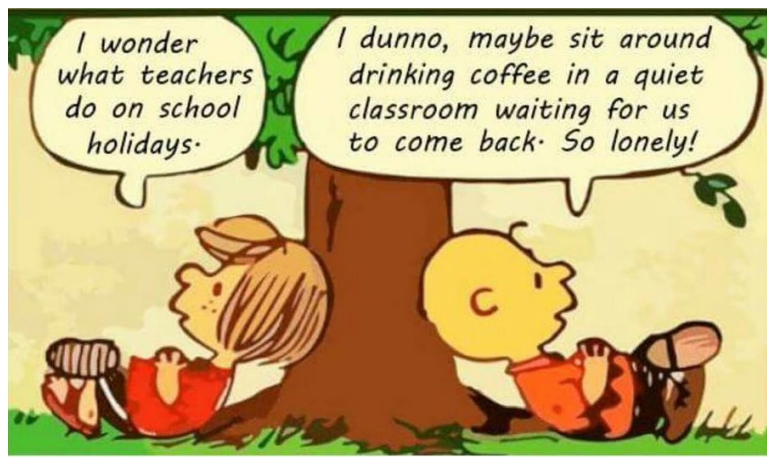
Apukuna Tiananis a Quechua word that means "The abode of the gods", is located in the Poroy district in the Cusco region in Peru.



Extraordinary Inca Stone Terraces of the 15th Century at Pumatallis Ollantaytambo in Cuzco,

Cahokia was once the largest city in North America and home to an advanced civilization around 1050-1350 AD. It is located near present-day Collinsville, Illinois. This pre-Columbian city flourished between the years 600 and 1400 AD, and is renowned for its impressive earthen mounds and intricate civilization.

Cahokia is known for its gigantic earthworks, including the impressive Monks Mound. Standing at over 100 feet tall, it is the largest pre-Columbian earthwork in the Americas.



## What it takes to save the axolotl

An ancient network of canals used to support the amphibians so embedded in Mexican culture.



*DISAPPEARING HABITAT* Wetlands engineered by pre-Columbian farmers once held thousands of axolotls per square kilometer. Little of the wild population remains. Reviving it means also promoting ancestral farming practices.

By JENNIE ERIN SMITH *New York Times*

Xochimilco is a large, semirural district in the south of Mexico City, home to a vast network of canals surrounding farming plots called chinampas. Starting around the year 900, this maze of earth and water produced food for the Xochimilcas, a Náhuatl-speaking people who were among the first to populate the region and engineer its wetlands.

Nowadays in the early mornings, farmers can be seen loading canoes with lettuces and flowers grown in the rich sediments dredged from the canals. On weekends, hundreds of brightly colored party boats crowd the waters.

The Mexican axolotl — a dusky amphibian that retains its juvenile body type all its life — once thrived in these canals. Although axolotls have been reproduced widely as lab animals and in the aquarium trade, it is now questionable whether any significant wild population remains. At last count, a decade ago, there were 35 axolotls per square kilometer in the wetlands, down from thousands in the 1990s. Pollution, urbanization and introduced fish species had made life nearly impossible.

In the early 2000s, Luis Zambrano, an ecologist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, or UNAM, was studying the effects of invasive carp when he was tapped by the government to survey axolotls. After decades of steady environmental degradation in Xochimilco, Mexico wanted to know how many axolotls remained in the species' last stronghold. Axolotls were of deep cultural importance, a feature of the region's traditional diet and cosmology.

And laboratory biologists all over the world worried that their animals were becoming inbred,

without a wild population from which to draw new bloodlines.

As an ecologist, Zambrano never entertained any strategy to save the axolotl that did not involve first restoring its habitat. But “this isn’t the middle of Borneo or the great plains of the Serengeti,” he said. The habitat was Mexico City. The number of factors counting against success was staggering.

Springs that historically fed the Xochimilco wetlands were long ago diverted for urban use, replaced by treated wastewater. Introduced carp and tilapia ate axolotl eggs. New roads pushed urbanization ever farther south, threatening the last remnants of the unique pre-Columbian farming culture whose canals had sheltered axolotls for over a millennium. Party boats not only brought noise and more pollution but tempted farmers to convert their chinampas to restaurants, bars and soccer fields and to let small canals dry up.

The only way to save and study the wild axolotl, Zambrano and his colleagues determined, was to promote a renaissance of ancestral farming practices and then convert segments of the farmers’ canals into axolotl sanctuaries, with the hope that one day they could be linked. For more than a decade, Zambrano and his colleagues have published extensively on the philosophy and logistics of this approach.

A major conservation group now backs their efforts, while some of their fellow researchers find them to be borderline quixotic.

Now, Zambrano’s team has put their ideas to the test with the release of a small number of animals. Twelve, to be exact.

Axolotls must be kept cool, and Zambrano’s lab at UNAM, home to a breeding colony of about 150 animals from wild bloodlines, is maintained at 64 degrees Fahrenheit. On an October morning, with his colleague Carlos Sumano navigating, Zambrano and a cadre of students set out in a boat with six lab-reared animals in coolers. All were spry yearlings; under the right conditions, axolotls can live to age 20.

In 2017, Zambrano’s group radiotagged 10 axolotls and released them into an artificial lake on the campus.

They saw that the amphibians often got together in the afternoons for an hour or so and then dispersed. They observed a male and a female that never strayed more than a few feet apart. They also saw one end up in the stomach of a water snake. But the animals gained weight — they had no trouble finding food.

The axolotls on that day would be released in submersible cages of bamboo and shrimp netting, allowing them to move around and hunt without being preyed on. The cages would go into canals fitted with biofilters, made of volcanic rock and native plants, to keep out pollutants and invasive fish. Each canal had to be cool and oxygenated and had to contain plenty of crustaceans for the axolotls to eat. Just six animals were being released. In a week, the group would release six more. Even thinking about reproduction was too much for now: The animals were segregated

by sex. It was enough if they survived.

With the boat tied up, the students moved ashore at their first chinampa, a bustling vegetable farm. Javier del Valle, a co-owner and chinampero, watched as Zambrano and Sumano dug a ledge into the black soils of his canal's banks and began sinking one of their 6-foot-tall bamboo cages into it.

The students dipped their instruments to measure dissolved oxygen, turbidity and conductivity.

By noon, the researchers had their cage stabilized in the canal, ready for the animals. The canal's oxygen levels weren't great, but Zambrano decided it was more important to know whether axolotls could survive in suboptimal conditions.

The students removed three wriggling females from bags in the coolers and then lowered them into their new, semiwild home. They sealed the top of the cage, which poked above the surface.

Zambrano stood staring at it for a while.

Sumano and Miguel Ignacio Rivas, a biologist with Zambrano's group, have tried to make traditional practices profitable for chinamperos, through a produce certification program and engaging a culinary school to plug the virtues of chinampa-grown vegetables.

For these researchers, the effort is about more than the axolotl. It's about reconnecting axolotls with their natural habitat in the public mind, and learning to value a wetland farming system that has been maligned as backward.

"The chinampas capture an incredible amount of carbon," offering a hedge against climate change, Sumano said.

"I don't know what ramifications that their disappearance could have, both environmental and social."

As Sumano spoke, a group of his students was building more axolotl cages.

In these clean canals full of crustaceans and water plants they liked, the axolotls would gain weight fast, Sumano predicted.

Nearly two months later, one of the 12 had died, of causes yet to be determined, and a pump had to be installed to improve oxygen levels in one canal.

"But that's all part of the experiment, right?" Zambrano said. The rest of the axolotls were fat and happy.

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## GrantStation

### Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program

U.S. Department of the Treasury, U.S. Department of Energy, and the Internal Revenue Service announced that [applications are open](#) for the [Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program](#). Eligible applicants can now [apply](#) to receive a 10 or 20-percentage point boost to the energy investment tax credit for qualified solar or wind facilities that are in low-income communities or on Tribal land, are part of affordable housing developments, or benefit low-income households. To allow the public time to prepare competitive applications, all applications received within the first 30 days (October 19<sup>th</sup>-November 18<sup>th</sup>) will be treated as having been received at the same time. After the first 30 days, applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis while capacity remains through early 2024.

**Community Connect Program Correction Notice (NOFO):** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) published a correction notice in the [Federal Register](#). The correction notice makes important changes to the *Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Community Connect Program for Fiscal Year 2023*, published on March 20, 2023, and **extends the Community Connect Program application window until February 20, 2024**. The correction notice revises the definition of an eligible Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA) under the Community Connect Program to ensure the program is administered in compliance with the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill). Under the revised definition, a PFSA must lack access to broadband service of 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) downstream plus 1 Mbps upstream to be eligible for consideration for Community Connect Program funding. Additionally, any areas that have received other federal funding to construct terrestrial broadband facilities providing at least 10/1 Mbps service in the project's PFSA will be deemed ineligible.

Any applicant that applied for the Community Connect Program under the March 20, 2023, NOFO **must resubmit their application to be considered for funding**. RUS recognizes that this requirement may result in delays and additional work for FY 2023 applicants. To minimize the amount of time required to resubmit an application from the FY 2023 funding window, applicants with previously submitted applications will have access to the submitted application data and will have the opportunity to make any edits before resubmitting the application. It is strongly encouraged that applicants review the new eligibility information to ensure that the previously submitted application is still eligible. The extended application window will also be open to new applicants that meet Community Connect Program eligibility requirements. Additional information on the Community Connect Correction Notice can be found in the [Community Connect Program Correction Notice Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions](#).

**USDA Rural Business Development Grant program:** Organizations eligible to receive funding include rural towns, communities, state agencies, authorities, nonprofits, federally recognized Tribes, public colleges and non-profit cooperatives. Funds may be used to establish business support centers or to finance job training and leadership development in rural areas. They may also be used to repair or modernize buildings; finance feasibility studies or business plans; or purchase equipment to lease to small or emerging businesses. In fiscal year 2024, USDA anticipates that part of the funding may be set aside for: • Federally recognized Tribes. • Rural Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities/Rural Economic Area Partnerships. • Projects located in persistent poverty areas. • Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) projects. Applications must be submitted to the nearest USDA Rural Development state office where the project is located by 4:30 p.m. ET on **Feb. 28, 2024**. For more information, visit [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or see page 84123 of the Dec. 4, 2023 at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2023-12-04/pdf/2023-26562.pdf>.

### [Water and Waste Disposal Grants to Alleviate Health Risks on Tribal Lands and Colonias](#)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture - USDA Rural Development funds grants for water and waste disposal**

facilities and services on federally-recognized tribal lands, colonias and rural areas that face significant health risks due to a lack of access to adequate, affordable water or waste disposal.

**Application Deadline: Ongoing**

#### **[Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#)**

**U.S. Department of Agriculture** - USDA Rural Development provides funding in the form of low-interest loans and grants to develop essential community facilities in eligible rural areas, including Federally Recognized Tribal Lands. [Guaranteed Loan Options](#) are also available.

**Application Deadline: Ongoing**

#### **[Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants](#)**

**U.S. Department of Agriculture** - USDA Rural Development funds grants for eligible communities to prepare for or recover from an emergency that threatens the availability of safe, reliable drinking water.

**Application Deadline: Ongoing**

#### ***New Deadline for Submitting FY 2024 IHBG Formula Interim Funding Requests in the GEMS***

ONAP is currently accepting IHBG Formula interim funding requests via GEMS through **January 5, 2024**.

This deadline ensures that awards will be processed prior to the January 19, 2023, expiration of the Continuing Resolution (CR) under which HUD is currently operating. Interim funding requests should be submitted in GEMS. Please refer to the [GEMS Grantee Guide](#) for specific instructions on completing and submitting the request. This guide and other GEMS resources can be found at the [GEMS webpage](#).

Interim funding is an advance on IHBG formula funds while under a CR. Grantees with a low balance of IHBG funds can request a partial award to maintain housing operations until a federal budget for FY 2024 is passed by Congress. A request for interim funding may only be granted if your FY 2024 Indian Housing Plan has been found in compliance and approved and if you have a low balance in LOCCS. Refer to [PIH Notice 2021-28](#) (Providing Interim Funding to Recipients of Indian Housing Block Grants) for more information.

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#### ***ConnectHomeUSA seeks to support additional HUD assisted communities in getting affordable internet access.***

The U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announces a new round of applications for the expansion of the **ConnectHomeUSA (CHUSA)** initiative so that more HUD-assisted families have access to affordable internet. CHUSA is HUD's signature digital inclusion program that assists Public Housing Authorities, Tribes, and Multifamily housing providers build programs that help their residents connect to affordable internet service and computer devices, while also providing them with digital skills training. CHUSA was launched in 2015 to close the homework gap in twenty-eight pilot communities. Since that time, 100 communities have participated in the initiative, which is widely recognized by practitioners as an effective strategy for closing the digital divide. Under the CHUSA expansion, HUD seeks to serve new communities from urban, rural, and Tribal locations while continuing to support existing CHUSA communities. **HUD is accepting applications until February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

**Application Information:** Communities interested in applying should send a Letter of Intent that responds to the requirements outlined in the [Federal Register Notice](#) to [CHUSA\\_applications@hud.gov](mailto:CHUSA_applications@hud.gov).

**Additional Information for Applicants:** On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. CHUSA staff will host a webinar on the expansion and application process. Register for the webinar [here](#). For more information, please visit [www.hud.gov/connecthomeusa](http://www.hud.gov/connecthomeusa). Questions about the ConnectHomeUSA expansion can be directed to: [ConnectHome@hud.gov](mailto:ConnectHome@hud.gov).



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### ***EPA Opens Competition for Community Change Grant Program***

The EPA has recently opened the competition for the **Community Change Grant Program**, that has \$2 billion dollars in funding for disadvantaged communities. The program aims to fund community-based grants for projects that reduce pollution and carbon emissions, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to respond to environmental and climate justice challenges such as extreme heat and flooding. Resilience improvements to housing infrastructure are eligible. The awards will range from \$10-\$20 million. The application for this grant program is rolling through November 1, 2024, with the opportunity resubmit your application if it is not initially accepted. Technical assistance is available for this application and can be accessed by [filling out this request form](#) or calling 1 (800) 540-8123.

### **Inflation Reduction Act Community Challenge Grants Program**

EPA's new [Environmental and Climate Justice](#) Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) has announced a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for approximately \$2 billion dollars in [Inflation Reduction Act](#) funds in environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges.

The entities eligible to apply are:

- A partnership between two community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs).
- A partnership between a CBO and one of the following:
  - a Federally-Recognized Tribe
  - a local government
  - an institution of higher education.

To apply for this opportunity, [view the RFA on Grants.gov](#). Application packages must be submitted on or before November 21, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time).

**For more information, please contact [CCGP@epa.gov](mailto:CCGP@epa.gov).**

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**[HUD Imminent Threat Grants](#)**— Set aside of the Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) allocation for non-competitive, first come-first serve grants to eliminate or lessen problems which pose an imminent threat to public health or safety of Tribal residents. Application Deadline: Ongoing and may be submitted at any time.

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### **USDA Expands Local Partnerships to Increase Homeownership Opportunities for Native Americans - Eight Native Community Development Financial Institutions Will Relend USDA Funding on Tribal Lands to Finance 68 New Homes**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the Department is partnering with eight Native Community Development Financial Institutions (NCDIFs) to expand homeownership opportunities for Native Americans living on Tribal lands in eight states. “Well-built, energy-efficient, affordable housing is essential to the vitality of communities in rural and Tribal America,” Glendenning said. “Since 1949, USDA has helped provide homes for people living in rural and Tribal communities, and our partnership with Native Community Development Financial Institutions strengthens that legacy. That’s why we are proud to partner with these expert organizations to help us continue driving economic security and prosperity

for people in Tribal communities across the nation. To learn more, read full [News Release](#).

The Peralta Community College District (PCCD) is excited to announce that “Spring is Free in 2024” at all four Peralta Colleges: [Berkeley City College \(BCC\)](#), [College of Alameda \(COA\)](#), [Laney College](#), and [Merritt College](#). This means that California residents who enroll in a minimum of 6-course credits and who submit a financial aid application (either the Federal [FAFSA](#) or the [California Dream Act](#) application) will have their tuition and fees waived for the spring 2024 semester.

For more information on enrolling at a Peralta Campus this spring, click [here](#).

**2023 White House Tribal Nations Summit** - In early December, President Biden signed an Executive Order that demonstrates the Biden-Harris Administration’s respect for Tribal sovereignty and commitment to ushering in the next era of Tribal self-determination by ensuring that Tribal Nations have greater autonomy over how they invest federal funding.

To fulfill this promise, the Executive Order:

- Requires federal agencies to take action to ensure federal funding for Tribes is accessible, flexible, and equitable.
- Creates a one-stop shop for federal funding available to Tribes: The [Tribal Access to Capital Clearinghouse](#).
- Better embraces trust responsibilities by assessing unmet federal obligations to support Tribal Nations.

View the [White House fact sheet](#) for more information or review the full [Executive Order](#).

### **SACRED SITES, CO-STEWARDSHIP & INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE (OH MY!)**

During the Tribal Nations Summit, the Administration made a [number of announcements](#) of interest to us, regarding issues on which NATHPO has been engaged.

The White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) released their new Best Practices Guide for Federal Agencies Regarding Tribal and Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites. You can read that new guide [HERE](#). In September, NATHPO [sent a letter](#) to the WHCNAA highlighting some key issues we hoped to see included. We are very pleased with this guide and hope you can make some time to check it out.

The Interior Department released its [second annual report on Tribal co-stewardship](#), which outlines implementation of [Secretarial Order 3403](#) and highlights the agreements that the Interior Department entered into in the past year.

Secretary Haaland also announced that the Department has published departmental guidance on the inclusion and protection of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in decision making and scientific research. A [new chapter in the agency’s Departmental Manual](#) formalizes IK as a foundational piece of the Department’s mission and formally recognizes IK as one of the many important knowledge systems that contribute to the well-being of the United States and to the collective understanding of the natural world. This new chapter is intended to facilitate and encourage the Department’s consistent, broad and equitable inclusion of IK internally and externally.

**Artifact analysis suggests** ancient Scythian fighters used human skin to make leather; findings support contemporary accounts from the ancient Greek historian Herodotus ([More](#)) | **Who were the Scythians?** ([More](#))

**Great apes and chimpanzees** can remember faces of friends and relatives for more than two decades, study finds; sets record for longest nonhuman memory ([More](#))

**Nevada Arts Council = Watch our Fall Seminar**

Want to answer to public art bids? Looking to solicit for public art in your community? Learn from experts, Mickey Sprott (Clark County) and Megan Berner (City of Reno) how to navigate the world of RFPs and RFQs

In our two-part series on Request for Proposals and Request for Qualifications our experts help tackle the differences and best practices for artists and administrators

[RFP & RFQ for Artist](#)

[RFP & RFQ for Arts Administrator](#)

This November we hosted the first Rural Arts Symposium. Together, we discovered the Power of Creative Connections in rural Nevada with guest speakers Astrid Larsen (Goldfield), Catherine Wines (Elko), and Elizabeth Woolsey (Baker). Catch the special opening reading by Nevada Arts Council Literary Fellow, Shaun Griffin (Virginia City)

[Watch the Rural Arts Symposiu](#)



[Bethany Sam is with Toby Stump.](#) [Toby Stump finally got a 20lber. I had the pleasure of](#)

[netting it](#) 🌟😊 #MerryFishmas #XmasEve2023 🌲🎣 [Pyramid Lake Fisheries Patagonia Reno Fly Shop](#)