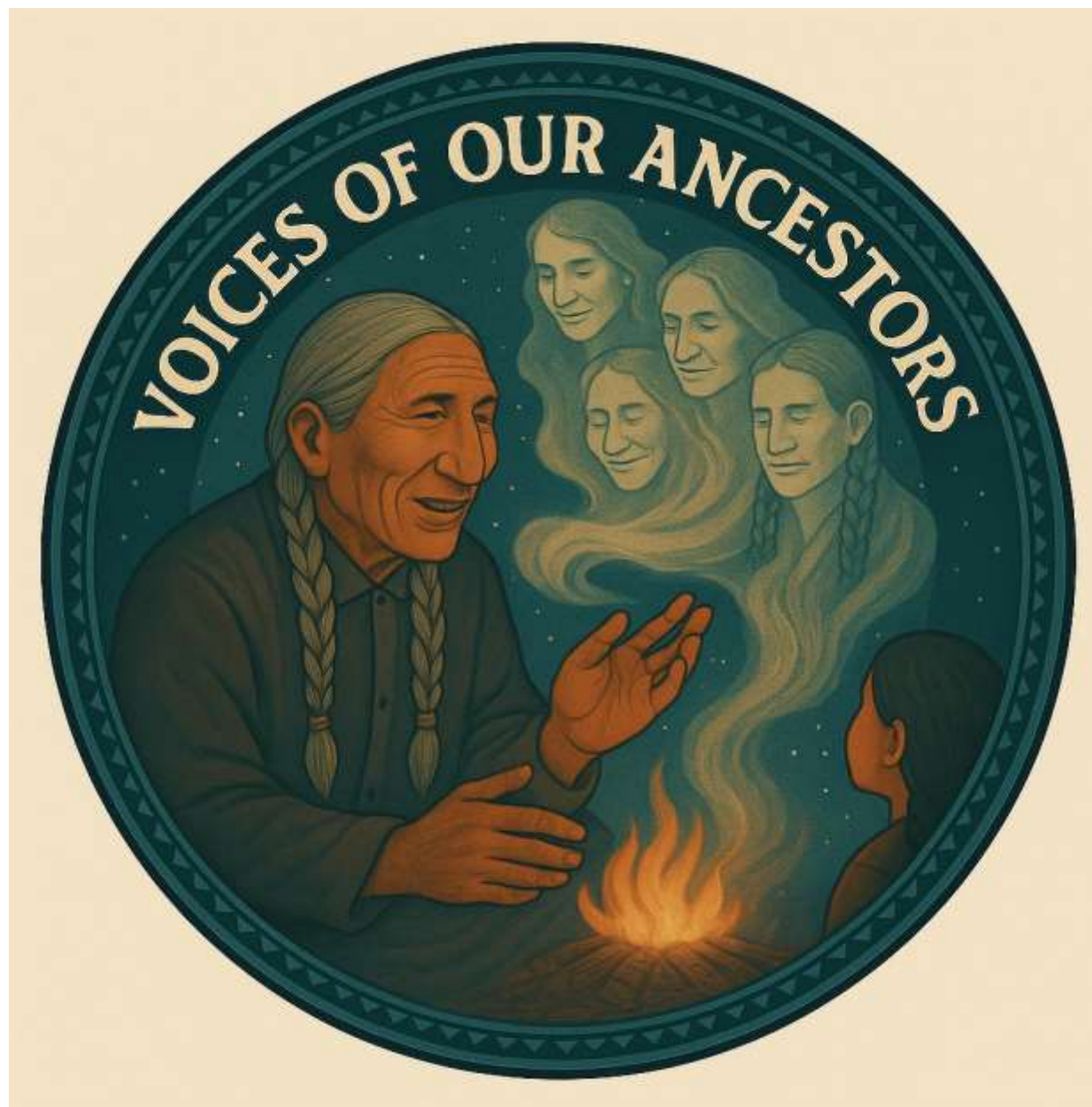


Voices of
Our
Ancestors



1.0 Background on VOA Program

- Started in 2017
- Five partners:
 - Sisseton Wahpeton College
 - Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
 - Cankdeska Cík'ana Community College
 - Fort Peck Community College
 - Nebraska Indian Community College Santee Campus
- Built upon SWC Dakota Language Teaching Certificate (2014)
- Our program is an intensive Dakota language-learning program, employing both interns (beginning level) and apprentices (more advanced).
- We pay our learners and apprentices a living wage so that they can focus entirely on Dakota language and culture.
- They graduate with a teaching certificate so that they can become language teachers, and use the language at home and in the community.

2.0 Demand for Dakota language teachers

- Dakota language teachers are currently in high demand, both in South Dakota and in Minnesota.
- We are currently aware of the following vacancies for Dakota language teachers:
 - Sisseton Wahpeton College – 1 position
 - Tiošpa Zina – 3 positions
 - Enemy Swim – 1 position
 - Sisseton High School – 1 position
 - Lower Sioux – 1 position
 - Prairie Island – 1 position
- Thus, students who complete our program have excellent employment prospects and will be very valuable members of the community.

3.0 SWO Staff

- Learners

- Take Dakota language classes, meet with apprentices several times a week for one-on-one sessions, and also meet with elders to speak only in Dakota.

- Apprentices

- Meet one-on-one with elders every day to speak only in Dakota, also have daily sessions with learners to practice Dakota.

4.0 VOA Support Staff

- Dakota Language Faculty
 - College credit classes always have Learners but also include other students
- Dakota Studies Director
 - Supervises all staff, manages program operations, and ensures proper documentation
- Dakota Studies Office Manager
 - Assists Director in keeping program, grant, and financial records up to date

5.0 Language Classes

- One aspect of our program is intensive Dakota language classes based on culturally appropriate topics.
- Our language classes include:
 - Dakota Language 1
 - Dakota Language 2
 - Dakota vocabulary review
 - Hunting and Fishing
 - Gardening and Gathering
 - Quillwork
 - Moccasin Game
 - Dakota Language Teaching Methodologies



6.0 Elders

- An essential part of our program involves elders' participation.
- Our apprentices meet with elders every day to speak only in Dakota.
- Our interns also meet with elders several times a week, including Friday elders' session.
- We also include elders in cultural activities.



7.0 Cultural Activities



8.0 Language Bowl

- Our Dakota studies wínyan recently won first place in the intermediate category at the Dakota language bowl in Shakopee.
- Jasmine Akipa and Jordyn LaBlanc have also attended language bowls in Canada.



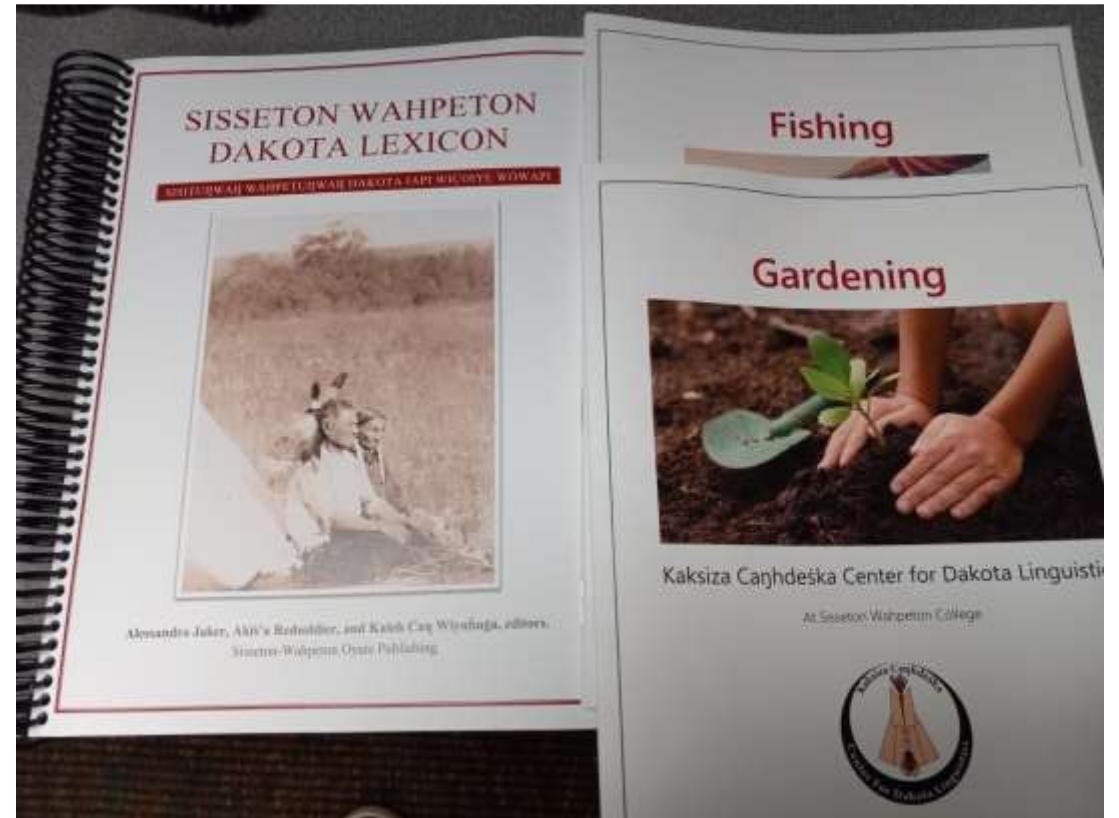
9.0 Language Conferences

- Our Dakota Studies staff (Alessandro Jaker, Kaleb Çan Wíyuhuga and Akiša Redsoldier) have previously attended the Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference in Oklahoma, to present our work on the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Lexicon.
- This year the conference is in Montana, and nearly the entire department will be going.



10.0 Materials produced by Dakota Studies

- The Department of Dakota Studies has also produced other Dakota language materials, using other funding (NSF TEA Center Grant):
 - Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Lexicon (over 300 free copies have been distributed)
 - Online dictionary (soon to appear)
 - Transcribed elders' stories
 - Language teaching materials



11.0 Other sources of funding

- In the Dakota Studies program at SWC, we have different funding sources that fund different things:
 - SWO Voices of Our Ancestors Program funds apprentices' and interns' stipends and elders' honoraria.
 - NSF TEA Center Grant funds linguistic research, the dictionary, transcribing elders' stories, and making other teaching materials.
 - Bush Community Innovations Grant funds professional development.
 - IMLS Grant funds free books for the community and cultural activities.



12.0 Pidaun̄yayapi

- The Voices of our Ancestors Program is an expensive program—it is one of the most expensive programs we have at the college.
- However, it actually works for what it's supposed to do: our program produces new fluent speakers every year.
- This is something many people previously said was impossible.
- If you can continue to support us, we will continue to bring back the Dakota language, and provide meaningful employment opportunities for young people.

