



City Council Report

Date: April 20, 2026
To: City Council
Through: Miranda DeWitt, Government Relations Director
From: Sharon Skinner, Grants Coordinator
Subject: Resolution of support for the submittal of a grant application by United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc., (UNITY) to the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in the amount of \$50,000 for their Arizona UNITY Leadership Trainings and approving the City Manager to accept and administer subsequent awarded funds as a pass-thru grant.

Purpose and Recommendation

This request is seeking a City Council resolution of support for UNITY application to Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation for Proposition 202 funding. If awarded, the grant will provide \$50,000 in funding for Arizona UNITY Leadership Trainings. A Council Resolution supports this effort to secure a grant and commits the city to receive it on behalf of the non-profit and pass it through in its entirety to them if awarded. As these programs serve the needs of City of Mesa residents, staff recommendation is for Council to adopt this resolution.

Background

UNITY, a 50-year-old 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Mesa, is responsible for designing, organizing, and hosting the trainings, which is open to all Native American youth ages 14 to 24.

UNITY proposes four (4) two-day Native Youth Leadership Trainings in Arizona from September 2026 to September 2027. Trainings will be conducted by skilled trainers with four focus areas: 1) Advocacy; 2) Digital Storytelling; 3) Environmental Stewardship; and 4) Mental Health/Wellness. Studies show youth leadership training fosters positive community, tribal, and school engagement. Native youth want to make a difference. Therefore, the proposed project aims to empower Native youth to make a positive impact and achieve their goals of becoming community leaders.

The project will serve up to 400 Arizona Native youth ages 14–24, including those who reside in Mesa and surrounding Maricopa County communities. About 100 or 25% of all participants are projected to be from Mesa and surrounding communities.

Discussion

A resolution of support for this grant request will complete the necessary documentation for the organization to file their application by the funder's deadline and be considered for funding from Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Mesa's participation in Proposition 202 Indian Gaming Grants has returned over \$1 billion to Arizona communities since its passage in 2002 from four surrounding tribal governments.

Alternatives

The only alternative to adopting this resolution would be to not adopt. Such an action would deny Mesa sponsorship for this request and require the organization to seek an alternate local government for access to this funding source.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact on the City of Mesa, should this grant be awarded, will be negligible except overhead expenses in accounting to accept and reissue the grant check. The City does not administer the grant and signs an MOU or IGA with each tribe to limit our liability to only the pass-through transaction.