



United States Department of the Interior  
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS  
Washington, DC 20240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 26, 2016

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## **Office of the Special Trustee Holds Native Youth Empowerment Symposium**

*Special Trustee Vince Logan hosts day of learning for Native Youth; stresses financial literacy*

WASHINGTON, DC – The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) held a financial literacy event today, the Native Youth Empowerment Symposium, in conjunction with the Pueblo of Isleta. The symposium was free to all attendees and was held in conjunction with National Financial Capability Month as well as the White House’s Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative.

OST’s mission to provide financial education comes to the forefront in all business conducted. The holistic approach to financial education, used by OST, addresses the entire lifecycle from youth to the elderly and all intermediary phases. This day-long, intensive symposium will address important issues such as financial capability, higher education opportunity, personal credit and lending, as well as entrepreneurship. A “spending frenzy”, or budgeting simulation, to illustrate responsible budgeting decisions will give participants an idea of how to plan ahead as well as invest in avenues that pay off as they mature.

“This Youth Symposium is the first such event organized by OST and we hope to help coordinate future events in other parts on Indian Country,” said Brian Ross, OST’s Director of Financial Education. “OST has put a lot of work into this event and we’re looking forward to getting Native youth excited about financial capability.”

Also in attendance will be William (Bill) Mendoza, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education, offering the keynote speech for the symposium. Bill has experienced, firsthand, through his professional and life experiences, the multitude of challenges facing American Indian students, educators, and tribes. In addition to being a teacher and principal, Bill has worked at the school, professional and community level to help foster leadership development and civic engagement among American Indians.

The Gen-I initiative focuses on improving the lives of Native youth through new investments and increased engagement. This initiative takes a comprehensive, culturally appropriate approach to ensure all young Native people can reach their full potential. Gen-I will help improve the lives of Native youth by promoting a national dialogue and policies and programs to mobilize and cultivate the next generation of Native leaders. Key programs address: education, health and nutrition, juvenile justice, housing, and youth engagement.

The Native Youth Empowerment Symposium is hosted by the Pueblo of Isleta in association with TIWA Lending, the OST, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation, and First Nations Development Institute (FNDI). Crafted with a wide range of attendees in

mind, the sessions will address tribal leaders and staff, Native youth, and advocates for education, financial literacy, economic development, entrepreneurship, and Native youth careers.

“This event will be covering a lot in a short amount of time, but we’re sure that each attendee will rise to the occasion and become advocates for their own future,” said Ross.

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