



SPIRIT OF THE HAWK

The Problem

Most people in all segments of society cannot operate a computer beyond texting, gaming or social media apps. Because of this, most are unable to obtain quality employment that would make a significant impact in their quality of life, limiting their options for a productive future. The Native American community is particularly affected due to negative stereotyping and a spreading sense of hopelessness and defeatism. Many tribal communities suffer disproportionately from high dropout rates, corruption, drug and alcohol abuse, and growing rates of suicide on and off reservations.

REQUIREMENTS

Sage Hawk only require three things to become a student – a basic ability to read, write and a genuine desire to learn and improve his or her life. Age is not important.



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THE HAWK HAS LANDED

Three years ago this month, the Sage Hawk Foundation was born. This Delaware-formed 501(C)3 was created by retired veteran and current Executive Director Jeffrey Gilchrist to serve Native Americans across the United States. Its mission is to provide free computer literacy training and job placement services that allow this training to be used for the purpose of enabling its students to attain a better quality of life. It doesn't matter whether Sage Hawk students are suffering from poverty, underrepresentation marginalization, or have simply fallen behind the technological curve, the end result is the same - lack of empowerment and crippling dependency. Sage Hawk believes that self-sufficiency can overcome any obstacle, and one of the best ways to rise above one's circumstances is by leveraging the power of the computer.

While we believe that education is an important component of success, it is not enough. The missing part of the equation is ambition. Without ambition, education is like a new car with no fuel – it looks nice, but *it's not going anywhere.*

Education + Ambition = Success!

WHAT OUR MISSION DOES

- ✓ Improves quality of life
- ✓ Promotes self-sufficiency
- ✓ Fosters higher self-esteem
- ✓ Enables self-learning
- ✓ Destroys dependency
- ✓ Encourages entrepreneurship
- ✓ Instills pride
- ✓ Unleashes ability
- ✓ Multiplies confidence
- ✓ Levels the playing field
- ✓ Inspires personal growth
- ✓ Stimulates creativity
- ✓ Allows preservation of heritage

The Importance of Native American Leadership

One of the goals of the Sage Hawk Foundation is the empowerment and enabling of Native Americans to reclaim, hold and preserve their magnificent and colorful heritage. As part of this process, we believe it is absolutely vital that tribal leadership be a part of our computer literacy program. To that end, Sage Hawk launches each course with a known and respected keynote speaker from the local tribal community.

Paying it Forward

In its second year, Sage Hawk was able to launch its anticipated pilot program in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. This was only possible through the selfless generosity of Osage ranch owners, Jim and Debbie Taylor – of “The Lodge at Taylor Ranch and Disc Golf Course”. Below, Executive Director Jeffrey Gilchrist presents Jim and Debbie with a much deserved Certificate of Appreciation.



Instructor Denise Felton guides her students through Windows 10 at the OSU Osage Extension Office Classroom in Pawhuska, Oklahoma

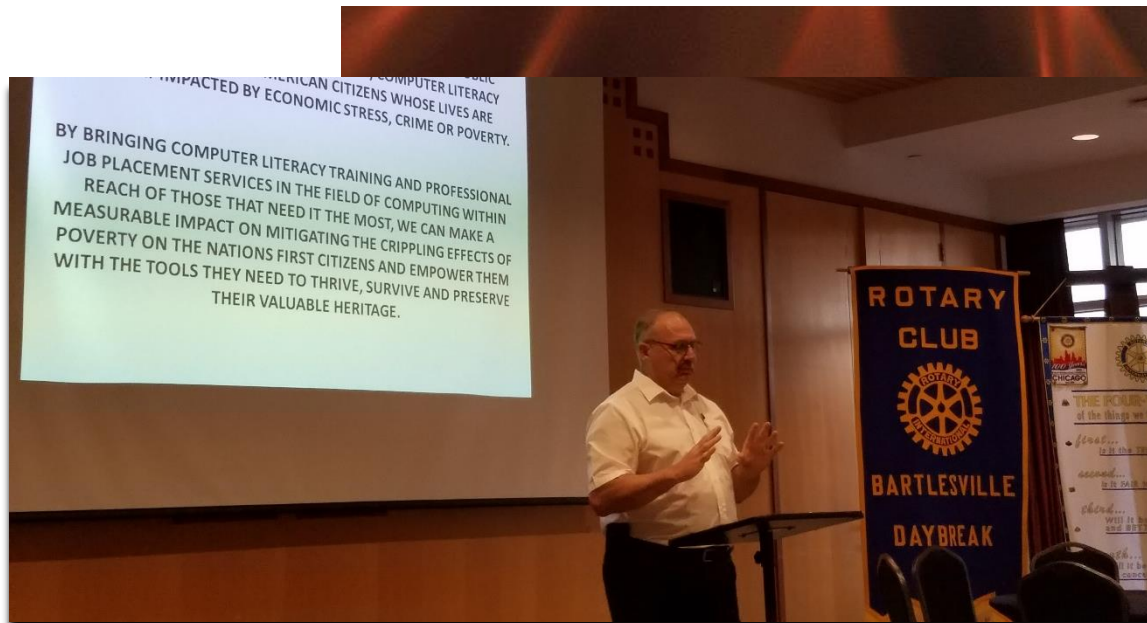
Mrs. Denise Whiteurst Felton has been serving as the Computer Literacy Instructor for Sage Hawk since 2018. Denise grew up in South Chicago, and attended Roosevelt University, having majored in Business and Information Science (1987-91). She currently lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Her resume is impressive. From 1984-87, she was the Illinois Chairman of the Concerned Women for America (CWA) where she served throughout her home state to educate women about family-related issues and legislation. She has worked as a corporate trainer at a multi-state steel-manufacturing company where she facilitated company-wide conversion and upgrades of legacy versions of Microsoft Office, was a SharePoint trainer and worked as a Help Desk representative aiding their IT staff.

Osage Nation Community Leader Electa Hare-Redcorn (right) presented the 2018 Sage Hawk class with an inspirational keynote speech on the importance of Native American women in technology today and the high demand for coders in the field of computing.



(above) Osage students from Sage Hawk's 2018 pilot computer course at the Lodge at Taylor Ranch explore the intricacies of Microsoft Office





Founder and Executive Director Jeffery Gilchrist introduces the Sage Hawk mission to the Daybreak Rotary Club in Bartlesville, Oklahoma

THE FUTURE VISION OF SAGE HAWK

GED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

As important as the computer literacy component is to its mission, there are plans on the horizon to expand the impact on its students. Future plans include the addition of a GED Scholarship Program. If a Sage Hawk student has dropped out of school yet demonstrates an ability that causes her to outperform her Sage Hawk peers, she may be awarded a check payable to a local GED program upon graduation. This will enable her to re-enter the education system.

JOB PREPARATION SERVICES

Sage Hawk's answer to addressing the high employment faced by many Native Americans is the addition of a Job Preparation Module near the end of the computer literacy curriculum. This module will be dedicated to writing a resume and how to dress and behave for an interview. We will conduct mock interviews using real local business leaders. The second component to this module will be in the form of a partnership with a local employment placement service

FINANCIAL LITERACY AND BANKING

Too many people today do not know how to set up and maintain a personal budget or monitor their credit score. What's just as bad, many people take their hard-earned paycheck to a local check cashing business and pay a crippling fee for their service instead of having a bank account. A bank account would solve this problem and so many others. After the financial literacy module, Sage Hawk would help its students set up their own checking and savings account at a local bank.

MOBILE CLASSROOM

The nature of our mission causes us to reach out to Native Americans that often times do not have transportation. Limiting ourselves to a static classroom environment keeps our services local and does a disservice to remotely-located students. A scalable mobile solution would greatly enhance and extend Sage Hawk's impact. A mobile classroom can be deployed to remote areas any time for considerably less money.

THE SAGE HAWK TEAM



Connor Gilchrist, President



Jim Mills, Vice President



Sandy Mills, Secretary



Donna Robbins, Director of the Osage Region



Caroline Hutchison, Director of Communications



Jeffery Gilchrist, Executive Director