2.0 Promoting Indian Economic Development

2.1 Development of Economic Infrastructure on Reservations

Narrowing the "Digital Divide" in Indian Country: To address the "digital divide" that prevents remote reservations from enjoying access to the Internet and the global high-technology economy, IEED has been working with the Houston-based Native American Chamber of Commerce (NACC), SeniorNet (the world's leading technology educator of older adults), and IBM since August 2006 to place IBM-donated computer equipment and software at various reservation locations recommended by IEED (called "Achievement Centers"). The computer equipment and software is donated to tribes and is used for employment training, job searches, genealogical research, internet commerce and home-based businesses, among other purposes. IEED is using these centers to help implement its job training mission. The objective for each center is that it become self-sustaining, with tribal members training their colleagues and the tribe funding computer replacement, maintenance, acquisition of new software, and upgrades. Each center is equipped with ten new computers, plus printers and a wide variety of software programs.

The first Achievement Center was inaugurated at the Blackfeet Nation in Browning, Montana. The second and third opened in 2007 for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Indians in Cass Lake, Minnesota and for the Tigua Tribe of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, in Socorro, Texas. In 2008, IEED launched four more centers for the: Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Houlton, Maine; Catawba Indian Nation, Rock Hill, South Carolina; Pine Ridge Reservation in Kyle, South Dakota; and the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in Eagle Butte, South Dakota. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad was the private sector sponsor for the two South Dakota centers.

IEED Division Chief participates in the opening ceremony at the Tigua Tribe of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo in August, 2007