



# Yellowbird Fellowship

## Three Days in Browning, MT

### An Introduction to Native CDFIs

Last week, the Yellowbird Fellowship hosted its first in-person convening in Browning, MT! Our fellows, mentors, and instructors came together to build relationships, learn, and enjoy the beauty of the Blackfeet Nation. Fellows completed the first portion of the Introduction to Native CDFIs course, including: Visioning a Healthy Native Community, How History Shapes the Present, What Do Native Economies Look Like Now?, Native CDFIs: A Powerful Piece of the Puzzle, Mapping Community Assets, and Pulling it All Together: Making Our Case.



From left to right: Shila Aragon (WRDF), Shayla Jackson (NACDC), Zola Sellars (NACDC), Johanna Whiteplume (WRDF), Kylie Coby (MNGF), Emily Norum (NACDC), Ginna Arguello (NACDC), Roberta Glenn (PDCDC), Genevieve Simermeyer (MPCDC)



“The in person convening provided direct interaction with the instructor, collaborative learning, group activities and peer to peer interaction. It allowed us to have hands on practice and build relationships.”



### NACDC Site Visit

As part of the “A Native CDFI in Action: Visiting NACDC” module, fellows spent one afternoon visiting the NACDC Financial Services, Inc. office. Patty Gobert (Executive Loan Administrator) recounted the origin story of NACDC and the role Elouise Cobell had in its creation. Shayla Jackson (Fellow & Small Dollar Loan Administrator) told us about her work with small dollar lending and we met more of the NACDC staff.

# Thank you, Instructors & Mentors!

Special thanks to our instructors Lanalle Smith (Blacksheep Insight Consulting and Coaching) & Tommy Robinson (Four Bands), and our mentors Kole Fitzpatrick (Akpitan), April Anderson (Four Bands), Paula Crawford (NACDC), Patty Gobert (NACDC), DJ Fish (NACDC), Sara Felsi (Akiptan) & Melissa Curley (Akiptan). We appreciate your support and commitment to the Yellowbird Fellowship!



It provided an opportunity to connect with peers, mentors and other leaders in a positive way. I feel meeting in person allows for deeper connections and a sense of trust that allows us to feel comfortable in sharing personal stories with one another. These interactions create a sense of belonging.

## Theda New Breast

Mentors and staff were able to do some exploring of their own while fellows were in the classroom. Some even got to visit with Theda (Makoyohsokovi) New Breast in Glacier National Park. You can read more about Theda [here](#).



## Building Relationships

Throughout the three days, fellows and mentors deepened their relationships with each other inside and outside of the classroom. Fellows took the opportunity to explore Glacier National Park with the help of locals DJ Fish (Mentor & NACDC Business Specialist) and Kylie Coby (Fellow & MNGF Loan Intake Specialist) as tour guides.



The peer-to-peer interaction was great, and I feel I have built a network that will be supportive throughout the fellowship.

