



ARORP Advisory Board ARORP23-103 American Indian Center of Arkansas (AICA) grant application

Tuesday, August 8, 2023, | 10:00am

Via Email

Board members

Danny Ormand – Judge, Lafayette County | **Tom Barron** – Attorney, Bear State Law | **Dr. Johnathan Gore** – Chair of the Opioid Stewardship Committee-UAMS | **Jerry Jones** – Chief Legal and Ethics Officer and Executive Vice President, LiveRamp | **Cindy Smith**, Strong-Huttig School Board President | **Gloria Gordon** – Grant Writer, Researcher | **James Sanders** – Mayor, Blytheville | **John Wilkerson** – General Counsel, Arkansas Municipal League | **Colin Jorgensen** – Litigation Attorney, Association of Arkansas Counties | **Dr. Virginia Stanick** – Retired Project Director, The State Opioid Response Project | **Tim Helder**, Sheriff Washington County | **Danny Bradley** – Retired Police Chief, North Little Rock Police Department |

An email was sent to ARORP Advisory Board Members on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, to recommend ARORP23- 103 American Indian Center of Arkansas (AICA) grant application

From: Tenesha Barnes <tbarnes@arorp.org>

Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2023, 10:00 AM

To: ARORP BOARD

Subject: Vote: ARORP23- American Indian Center of Arkansas (AICA) grant application

Hello Advisory Board Members,

On July 12, 2023, during the board meeting, the board had some concerns about the American Indian Center of Arkansas (AICA) grant application. The board requested to hold the proposal until questions and concerns were addressed. **Please see below.**

I also will need your vote of “**YES- Approve or NO- Not Approve**” if **NO**, please provide your reasons. I will need your **vote by noon Friday August 11, 2023.**

Also please see the attached packet for reference.

Concerns Addressed:

On 8/3/2023 Tenesha, Gloria, Joy, and I met in-person with Star Jackson and two AICA staff members on 8/3/2023 to address the following issues:

1401 W. Capitol Avenue, Suite 330, Victory Building, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

1. Concerns that some of the grant application proposed services were already funded by the Department of Labor.

Response: It is true that AICA provides job training and placement programs funded annually by the Dept. of Labor. However, these programs target individuals who speak English and are familiar with the job market and performance expectations for job applicants. The ARORP grant application proposes to provide a culturally sensitive workforce program for their target population of individuals who do not speak English, in partnership with local employers who will hire them.

We were assured by Corinna Ortiz, MA, the bilingual AICA Fiscal Manager (with 15 years of experience in financial management, 8 years of experience in health care, and familiarity with federal and state grant management regulations) that the budgets for the state and federal grants that fund AICA programs are maintained totally separate from one another, as will be the budget for the ARORP grant.

2. Questions about selection of the target counties - Van Buren and White.

Response: Ms. Jackson and Ms. Ortiz told us that choice of these counties was based on needs identified in eligible county residents by AICA case managers already working in these counties. In addition, they discussed the problems inherent in current census procedures that record the race and ethnicity of heads of households only, without regard to race/ethnicity of other family members, which results in significant under-reporting of the minority populations they serve.

3. Lack of information on the internet about an organization that has been in operation since 1977. I was unable to find anything about where in Arkansas their services were provided and how many individuals they serve currently.

Response: Although AICA has only one office in Little Rock, they have access to every county workforce office without charge, so their various programs are available statewide. In addition, individual case management is conducted primarily by phone or telehealth, depending on type of services.

All the various AICA programs are presented in different areas of the state with separate class schedules. Program participants enroll and roll off at different times, and there are waiting lists for most of their programs.

Outcome: Gloria Gordan and the team was very impressed with AICA staff and feel confident in their ability to make the most of the ARORP funding they are requesting. For that reason, she approved their proposal and have made a personal commitment to work with them in the near future. Special thanks to Gloria Gordon for helping us resolve these issues and her passion to help us be great.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,

Tenesha Barnes, Deputy Director

Recommendations:

John Wilkerson, Colin Jorgenson, Gloria Gordon, Tom Barron, , Cindy Smith, Tim Helder, Jerry Jones (Dr. Johnathon Goree, James Sanders, Danny Ormand, Danny Bradley, Dr. Virginia Stanick, - did not receive a recommendation)