



Date of Submission: August 6, 2010
Submitting Agency: First Things First, White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council
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First Things First White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council Welcomes New Members

Volunteers will direct spending of voter-approved funds for kids five and younger

The First Things First White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council has welcomed four new members, all volunteers who will direct spending of voter-approved funds set aside for the early education and health services that will help the Fort Apache Indian Reservation's youngest kids arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.

First Things First was created by Arizona voters in 2006 to give more Arizona children the tools they need to be successful in school and in life. Decisions about how to spend those funds are made by 31 regional councils across the state, each with 11 members.

Regional Councils have direct responsibility to: collect information on the strengths and desires of their community; prioritize the specific needs of children from birth through age five; plan how to address those needs; choose who to partner and collaborate with to ensure success for the children in their area; and, make funding decisions necessary to carry out their plan.

Regional Council members also participate in community outreach to educate community leaders, public policymakers and the general public about First Things First and the importance of investing in early childhood.

The new members on the White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Council include:

- Ranelda Hastings, Parent Representative; Currently works for Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health.
- Dawnafe Whitesinger, At Large Representative; Currently works for Cibecue community schools.

- a. Kathleen Wynn, Health Services Provider; Currently works for the Public Health Nursing Department at I.H.S.
- b. Valerie Dehombreux, School Administrator; Currently works as the school principal for Cradleboard elementary.

The new members will serve 4-year terms that began July 1.

There are still three open seats on the White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Council. For more information please contact Rochelle Lacapa at (928) 532-5041 or via email at rlacapa@azftf.gov. To apply to serve on a First Things First Regional Partnership Council, go to www.azftf.gov/apply.

First Things First was created in 2006, when Arizona voters – through the Proposition 203 ballot initiative – decided to set aside 80 cents from each pack of cigarettes sold in order to fund the expansion of education and health programs for children from birth through age five. Under the terms of the proposition, decisions about how to best use the funds are made on a per-region basis by 31 councils made up of local leaders. The statewide board – which has final approval of the councils’ recommendations – is responsible for ensuring that the funds are used on programs proven to work at improving outcomes for children.