



PINAL COUNTY

WIDE OPEN OPPORTUNITY

Proposition 202 Tribal Gaming Application Sponsorship/Support Form Requesting Pinal County serve as the Fiscal Agent/Pass Through Entity

Name of the Tribal Community: Ak-Chin Indian Community

Due date of the application to the Tribal community: July 15, 2025

The following information will be used by Pinal County to 1) send the resolution and grant documents for the applicant to submit to the Tribal community, 2) send the funds, if awarded.

Name of the Non-profit: Hoofbeats with Heart

Contact person/title: Kelley Hullihen, Founder and CEO

Email address: kelley@hoofbeatswithheart.org

Address: 43491 N. Coyote Road - Santan Valley, AZ 85140

Project name: Hoofbeats Equine Therapy Scholarship Program

Amount being requested: \$15,000

Project summary: Please see attached

Beneficiaries: Individuals of all ages with physical and mental health challenges,

Supervisor District: District 2 Supervisory Goodman

The undersigns hereby certifies they have read and comply with the responsibilities set forth in the PINAL COUNTY TRIBAL GAMING GRANT PROGRAM
Request for fiscal agent/pass through support documentation.

Kelley Hullihen

Director name and signature

2025 Ak-Chin Indian Community Grant Application Cover Sheet

Name of Applicant:	Applicant is a: ☐ City/Town/County (circle) XX ☒ Other _____
Contact Person and Title: Kelley Hullihen, Founder and CEO	
Applicant Address (administrative office): 43491 N. Coyote Road	
City: Santan Valley	Zip Code: 85140
Applicant Mailing Address (if different):	
City:	Zip Code:
Phone Number: 602-421-7718	Fax Number: 602-883-8670
E-mail Address: kelly@hoofbeatswithheart.org	
Fiscal Agent for any Applicant that is not a City, Town, or County (<i>Special Taxing Districts/Fire Districts must have a Fiscal Agent</i>)	
Contact Person: Heather Patel, Grants Administrator	
City/Town/County Mailing Address: PO Box 1348	
City: Florence	Zip Code: 85132
Phone Number: 520-866-6422	Fax Number:
E-mail Address: heather.patel@pinal.gov	

Program or Project Name: Hoofbeats Equine Therapy Scholarship Program	
Priority Area (Check all that apply) ☐ education ☐ public safety ☒ health ☐ environment ☐ promotion of commerce ☐ economic and community development	
Purpose of Grant (brief statement):	
To provide Equine Therapy Scholarships to Pinal County children and adults with physical disabilities and Behavioral health disorders.	
Target Audience/Beneficiaries: Scholarships are awarded to underserved populations with physical disabilities and behavioral health disorders.	
Beginning and Ending Date of Program or Project: September 1, 2025 through August 30, 2026	
Amount Requested: \$15,000	Total Cost: \$15,000
Geographic Area Served: Pinal County	

By the execution of this Grant Application the undersigned agrees that the information contained in this Application is true, to the best of the Applicant's knowledge. The Applicant shall notify the Community if any information in this Application changes.

Signature: Kelley Hullihen
For the Applicant: _____ Date: 5-22-25

Typed/Printed Name and Title: KH Kelley Hullihen, Founder and CEO Kelley Hullihen

For the Fiscal Agent: _____ Date: _____
(If applicable)

Typed/Printed Name and Title: _____

Ak-Chin Indian Community 2025 Prop 202-12% Contribution Grant Application

Submitted by:

Organization: Hoofbeats with a Heart

Project: Hoofbeats Equine Therapy Scholarship Program

NARRATIVE

PURPOSE OF GRANT

Program Description

Hoofbeats with Heart is requesting support for its Equine Therapy Scholarship Program serving Pinal County children and adults with physical disabilities and behavioral health disorders. As the only equine therapy center in Arizona's East Valley offering all four equine therapy services recognized by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International, Hoofbeats provides critical therapeutic interventions through:

- **Therapeutic Riding** - Horseback riding lessons adapted for individuals with disabilities
- **Hippotherapy** - Using horse movement as a treatment strategy by occupational, physical, and speech therapists
- **Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL)** - Educational approach incorporating horses for skill development
- **Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy** - Mental health treatment incorporating horses to promote emotional growth

The requested funding will support two primary components:

1. **Scholarship Program:** Providing partial and full scholarships for equine therapy sessions for underserved populations, covering the cost of eight student cohorts with up to five students each participating in eight weekly group sessions.
2. **Professional Development:** Training two additional therapists to become certified equine therapists through the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA).

Services are provided at the Hoofbeats ranch in San Tan Valley and at local schools during spring and fall months. With an outdoor arena, therapy sessions are not offered during summer months due to extreme heat. Each therapy session lasts approximately one hour, with a focus on addressing the unique physical, emotional, and behavioral needs of each participant.

The Hoofbeats program leverages the well-documented therapeutic benefits of the human-horse bond. For people with physical disabilities, the gait of a horse closely resembles the human stride, providing therapy that no manufactured machine can simulate. For those with emotional or behavioral challenges, horses provide immediate feedback to human emotions and behaviors, creating opportunities for personal growth and self-awareness. Pinal County faces significant challenges in providing adequate therapeutic services for individuals with physical disabilities and behavioral health disorders. The Pinal County Community Health Needs Assessment highlighted mental health as the most pressing health concern, with 57% of respondents identifying it as the most significant health problem in their community. Additionally, respondents emphasized the need for "resources to manage stress/mental health issues" (63%) and "programs for kids/teens" (59%) as crucial resources that would help reduce drug and alcohol misuse.

Several critical issues are addressed through this project:

1. **Limited Access to Specialized Therapy:** For many Pinal County residents with disabilities or behavioral health challenges, access to effective therapies is restricted by geographic isolation, high costs, and limited provider availability. This is particularly true for specialized services like equine therapy, which offers unique therapeutic benefits not available through conventional treatments.
2. **Financial Barriers to Care:** Many families cannot afford the full cost of therapeutic services, especially those requiring specialized facilities and trained professionals. Without scholarship support, vulnerable populations miss opportunities for significant health improvements and enhanced quality of life.
3. **Service Gap for Children with Disabilities:** With over 13,000 children living with disabilities in Pinal County and 1 in 44 children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder nationally, there is a substantial need for effective intervention programs. Traditional therapies alone are often insufficient to address the complex needs of these children.

4. **Mental Health Service Shortage:** Arizona ranks 49th among all states for access to mental health care, with rural counties like Pinal experiencing even more severe shortages of qualified providers. Alternative therapeutic approaches like equine-assisted psychotherapy help fill this critical gap in services.
5. **Need for Trauma-Informed Care:** Many individuals in Pinal County have experienced significant trauma, including veterans with PTSD and children who have suffered abuse or neglect. Equine therapy provides a unique, non-threatening environment for trauma recovery that complements traditional therapeutic approaches.

Hoofbeats with Heart's equine therapy program directly addresses these challenges by providing innovative, evidence-supported interventions for those most in need while removing financial barriers through scholarships. The expansion of certified therapists further increases the county's capacity to serve this vulnerable population.

Target Population

Hoofbeats with Heart serves the most vulnerable and at-risk children and adults in Pinal County, including: Individuals with physical disabilities (paralysis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida); People with intellectual and developmental disabilities; Children and adults with autism spectrum disorder; Individuals experiencing emotional trauma, including PTSD; People with behavioral health disorders; and Those recovering from substance use disorders.

The scholarship program specifically targets underserved populations including: Low-income families. Veterans, Ethnic and racial minorities, Uninsured and unemployed individuals and their family members, and Indigenous groups.

Based on historical data, approximately 75% of scholarships are awarded to children under the age of 18. The demographic makeup of scholarship recipients typically includes white, Hispanic, and Native American participants. The need for these services in Pinal County is substantial. Current statistics show 1 in 44 children are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (National Center for Health Statistics). Approximately 17% or 241,000 Arizona children have one or more emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions. Over 13,000 children are living with disabilities in Pinal County (Annie Casey Kids Count Data Center). Nearly 57% of respondents to the Pinal County Community Health Needs Assessment named mental health issues as the most significant health problem in their community

Project Goals and Objectives and How to Meet the Goals

Goal 1: Increase access to equine therapy services for underserved populations in Pinal County

Objectives	How to Meet These Goals
• Provide partial or full scholarships to 40 Pinal County residents over a 12-month period • Conduct eight cohorts of equine therapy sessions with up to five participants per cohort • Complete 64 total group therapy sessions (8 sessions per cohort × 8 cohorts)	• Implement a scholarship application and review process through the Scholarship Committee • Verify financial need through proof of income documentation • Promote scholarship opportunities through the website, social media, and networking with social service agencies, the court system, schools, and healthcare providers • Schedule regular cohort sessions during spring and fall months, avoiding summer heat

Goal 2: Improve physical, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for participants

Objectives	How to Meet These Goals
• Develop individualized therapy plans for each participant addressing their specific needs • Document progress on personal objectives throughout the program • Demonstrate measurable improvements in self-esteem, social support, and quality of life	• Utilize skilled therapists to create personalized therapy plans in collaboration with participants and caregivers • Conduct regular reviews of progress and make adjustments as needed • Implement pre- and post-program assessments using Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale and the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (with culturally appropriate language adaptations) • Document observed improvements in physical abilities (balance, coordination), attention span, ability to follow directions, language development, and communication skills

Goal 3: Expand organizational capacity to serve more clients

Objectives	How to Meet These Goals
• Train two additional therapists in EAGALA certification • Increase the number of qualified professionals available to conduct equine therapy sessions	• Enroll two therapists in EAGALA certification training • Complete all required coursework and supervised practice • Integrate newly certified therapists into the program schedule

Timetable

Months 1-2 (Pre-Implementation)	Months 3-4 (Spring Sessions)	Months 5-6	Months 7-8	Months 9-10 (Fall Sessions)	Months 11-12
• Review and select scholarship recipients for first two cohorts • Schedule training for therapists pursuing EAGALA certification • Develop evaluation tools and establish baseline measurements • Create individualized therapy plans for first cohort participants	• Launch first two cohorts of equine therapy sessions (Cohorts 1 & 2) • Begin 8-week therapy program for each cohort • Conduct weekly documentation of participant progress • Continue therapist training	• Complete therapy sessions for Cohorts 1 & 2 • Conduct post-program evaluations for completed cohorts • Select and prepare for Cohorts 3 & 4 • Continue therapist training	• Begin therapy sessions for Cohorts 3 & 4 • Complete EAGALA certification for therapists • Analyze evaluation data from first two cohorts • Make program adjustments based on initial findings	• Complete therapy sessions for Cohorts 3 & 4 • Select participants for Cohorts 5 & 6 • Begin therapy sessions for Cohorts 5 & 6 • Integrate newly certified therapists into program delivery	• Complete therapy sessions for Cohorts 5 & 6 • Select participants for Cohorts 7 & 8 • Begin and complete therapy sessions for Cohorts 7 & 8 • Conduct final program evaluations • Compile comprehensive program outcomes report • Develop sustainability plan for continued scholarship support

RESOURCES

Current Funding Sources

Hoofbeats with Heart's Equine Therapy Scholarship Program relies on the following funding sources:

Long-term Funding Sources:

Arizona Department of Developmental Disabilities - Ongoing contracted services partnership since 2012; Private Pay Students - Continuous source of operational funding; Insurance Reimbursements - Recurring revenue stream for therapy services; Program Fees - Ongoing operational funding

One-time Funding Sources:

Pinal County Grant (\$20,000) - Received 2023-24 for Equine Scholarships; AZ Complete Health Community Giving - Scholarship contribution; AZ Masonic Charities - Scholarship contribution; Cardinals Charities - Scholarship contribution; Autism Speaks - Scholarship contribution

Partner Organizations and Contributions

Several key organizations contribute to our Equine Therapy Scholarship Program without providing direct financial support:

Pinal County Sheriff's Department	○ Provides referrals for at-risk youth ○ Collaborated on previous Pre-Diversion Youth Program
Local Schools	○ Provide facilities for therapy sessions during spring and fall months ○ Assist with identifying and referring eligible students ○ Support program implementation and scheduling
Healthcare and Social Service Providers	○ Facilitate referrals of eligible participants ○ Provide complementary services to enhance therapy outcomes ○ Share expertise and resources for participant support
Argosy University and Arizona State University	○ Supply additional behavioral health staff through contracted mental health professionals ○ Provide clinical supervision and support ○ Contribute to program quality and professional standards
Behavioral Health Providers	○ Offer referrals and follow-up support for participants ○ Provide professional consultation for complex cases ○ Collaborate on treatment plans for shared clients

Project Status and Sustainability Plan

This is a **continuing project**, building upon Hoofbeats with Heart's established equine therapy programs that have been operating since the organization's founding in 2007. The Equine Therapy Scholarship Program specifically has demonstrated significant impact through participant testimonials and improved outcomes for children and adults with physical disabilities and behavioral health disorders.

Post-grant sustainability will be achieved through:

1. **Diversified Funding Strategy**

Continuing to cultivate relationships with tribal and foundation funders; expanding our base of recurring donors and corporate sponsors; and pursuing additional insurance reimbursement opportunities as a newly licensed behavioral health provider.

2. **Capacity Building**

Investing in EAGALA certification for additional therapists (as outlined in this grant request); increasing operational efficiency to serve more clients with existing resources and developing a volunteer program to support operations and reduce costs.

3. **Strategic Partnerships**

Strengthening relationships with referral sources to ensure steady client flow; formalizing agreements with educational institutions for internship placements; and developing collaborative programs with complementary service providers

Recent Funding History

Pending Funding Requests (Last 18 Months)

No pending tribal funding requests have been submitted within the last 18 months for the Equine Therapy Scholarship Program.

Funded Requests (Last 5 Years)

1. **Gila River Indian Community**

- Awarded: Ongoing contracted services partnership
- Amount received: Varies based on service utilization
- Project summary: Provision of equine therapy services to tribal members with physical and behavioral health needs
- Key achievements: Ongoing service delivery to tribal members, improved physical and emotional outcomes for participants

2. **Pinal County**

-
- Awarded: 2023-24
 - Amount received: \$20,000
 - Project summary: Equine Scholarships for Pinal County residents
 - Key achievements: Provided therapy services to approximately 20 children/youth
3. **Pinal County**
- Awarded: 2020-21
 - Amount received: \$20,000
 - Project summary: Pre-Diversion Youth Program in collaboration with the Pinal County Sheriff's Department
 - Key achievements: Served 20 at-risk children/youth, submitted all required reports including survey quotes and attendance records

REPORTING

Quarterly internal progress reports tracking: Number of scholarships awarded; Demographic information of recipients; Session attendance and completion rates; and Progress toward individual therapy goals. Comprehensive final grant report including: Detailed expenditure accounting; Program outcomes and impact measurements; Participant success stories and testimonials; Lessons learned and program improvements. Staff Accountability will include: Certified Equine Specialists (Debbie Patrick and Gina Krause) and Licensed Behavioral Health Professional (Leticia Martinez) will maintain detailed session records; regular supervision and case review meetings to ensure quality service delivery; and documentation of EAGALA certification progress for staff receiving training funds.

This comprehensive approach to fund management and accountability ensures that all grant requirements will be met and that program outcomes can be clearly demonstrated, similar to our successful management of previous grants from Pinal County, Gila River Indian Community, Reeve Foundation, Sundt Foundation, and others.

BUDGET

Total Requested Amount: \$15,000 (Equine Therapy Scholarships \$10,000 - Therapist Training \$5,000)
Amount of funding provided by agency: Hoofbeats with Heart's primary revenue sources include contracted services with Gila River Indian Community, private pay students, insurance reimbursements, and referrals whose fees are paid by the Arizona Department of Developmental Disabilities. The proposed Pinal County Partnership Grant will support needs that are not covered by these resources including therapist training and scholarships for underserved populations including low-income families, veterans, minorities, uninsured and unemployed individuals, and their family members.

Budget Narrative:

Budget - Partial or full scholarships will be awarded for up to 40 Pinal County residents, depending on need and available funds. The cost of equine therapy is as follows: Each cohort has up to four students participating in eight weekly group sessions, lasting approximately one hour per session. Each session costs \$600 for four students (\$200 per hour for therapist, \$100 per hour for horse handlers, and a \$300 horse fee). Each student pays \$150 per session or a total of \$1,200 for all eight sessions. Scholarships range from \$500 to \$1,200. A \$10,000 grant would provide twenty \$500 scholarships for Pinal County residents or twenty \$1,000 scholarships. \$5,000 EAGALA Training - expenses for two therapists @\$2,500 each to attend training and become EAGALA certified through the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association.

Percentage of annual budget being requested: 5%

Partial Funding: The amount of funding will impact the number of students who are able to receive scholarships and access equine therapy programs. Hoofbeats will ensure that Pinal County funds are used to support students who need financial support and have the greatest need based on health conditions and personal challenges. Scholarship funds are the priority for funding followed by therapist training.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Our program model is supported by nearly 50 years of research demonstrating that equine therapy yields measurable improvements in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. The unique biomechanical benefits of equine therapy cannot be replicated by manufactured equipment, while the human-horse bond provides therapeutic benefits that extend far beyond traditional therapy modalities.



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 0248455888
Nov. 21, 2008 LTR 4168C E0
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BODC: TE

HOOFBEATS WITH HEART
% KELLEY A HULLIHEN
PO BOX 2098
HIGLEY AZ 85236-2098980

015263

Employer Identification Number: 14-1988788
Person to Contact: SELLERS
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear TAXPAYER:

This is in response to your request of Nov. 12, 2008, regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that a determination letter was issued in DECEMBER 2007, that recognized you as exempt from Federal income tax, and discloses that you are currently exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records also indicate you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Michele M. Sullivan, Oper. Mgr.
Accounts Management Operations I