Gardens/Greenhouses

Some of the poorest counties in the United States are on Indian reservations. Families with limited funds often lack access to nutritious food including vegetables and fruits. Gardens play a critical role in combating diabetes and obesity. They can also be the heart of a community.

Greenhouses built by Running Strong play an important role in successful gardening on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations. Greenhouses are critical in South Dakota, where the growing season is short. Volunteers plant trays of seed varieties that are nurtured in the greenhouse until they become baby plants. Gardeners can then start with baby plants rather than seeds, which sets the stage for a successful growing season.

One of the greenhouses Running Strong built on Pine Ridge is the Slim Buttes Agricultural Development Program greenhouse, which is a special type of greenhouse called a hoop house.

Thanks to your support 20,000 vegetable seedlings thrived in the greenhouse last year and were distributed to gardeners in the community. These seedlings included more than 15 varieties of vegetables such as broccoli, cherry tomatoes, sweet peppers, and cabbage.

You can help support self-sufficiency and healthy eating by donating to Running Strong’s garden programs. Donate today on our website www.IndianYouth.org!

Visit Our Updated Website! New Design!

We are excited to announce the official launch of our brand-new, redesigned website. The new site includes the latest news about what is going on in Indian Country, an improved store selling fair-trade, Native-made art and jewelry, and updates from Billy Mills and the American Indian kids and families that you support.

Our new website’s design makes it easier for you to access information, and it works on your phone or other mobile device! Please visit www.IndianYouth.org and let us know what you think!

Be sure to also sign up for our email list so that you don’t miss any upcoming news or events!
Leading up to 1964 Olympics, the favorite to win the 10,000 meter race was Australian Ron Clarke. Billy’s qualifying time was almost a minute slower than Clarke’s. Pre-race media coverage didn’t give much attention to Billy and focused on Clarke and Tunisian Mohammad Gammoudi. Previously, Billy had finished second to Gammoudi in the 1963 Interservice 10K run in Belgium.

With only two laps left to go, the Olympic 10,000 meter race came down to Billy, Clarke, and Gammoudi, with most of the other runners far behind. Billy and Clarke were neck-and-neck until Gammoudi shoved them both aside, and Billy fell back a few yards.

"Look at Mills, look at Mills!"

In the end Billy was able to surge ahead from the outside to win the race and set a new 10K record. Those who saw the race on American television may remember NBC’s Dick Bank exclaiming “Look at Mills, look at Mills!” in the final moments. Billy’s time was 28min 24sec. His win remains an inspiration to all of us.

Where were you when Billy won his gold medal? Visit our website at www.IndianYouth.org to see Billy’s race and tell us where you were during this historic moment!
Saying Goodbye to Winter...

Heat Match Update

Last winter was especially hard for families in South Dakota, with the first snow coming in October and blizzards continuing into March. When Ken and Dave Lone Elk from Running Strong’s field office on Pine Ridge reported to the Board of Directors this spring, they told us about the incredible demand for our heat match program this past year.

Our program provides utilities assistance to American Indian families to help meet their heating needs by matching the funds families put toward propane, electricity, and gas.

Running Strong experienced “a constant pour of calls asking about the heat program,” according to Ken.

Thanks to your support, we were able to help over 1,128 families on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation keep warm this winter with our heat match program!

…Saying Hello to Spring!

Boxes of healthy food arrived in Indian Country in April, just in time for Easter! In addition to the menu of ham, vegetables, and other hearty foods, families who received Running Strong’s food boxes found chocolate bunnies and jelly beans in these boxes to celebrate the holiday.

Running Strong’s food boxes provide critical food assistance to American Indian children and families throughout the year. Each food box contains enough food to feed a family of four for a week.

All of the food boxes Running Strong distributes to Native families are filled with high quality foods. We know how important good nutrition is, especially for kids, so we make sure the boxes we send are packed with wholesome meals. Thanks to your help and many volunteers, this year we delivered 8,300 food boxes to hungry families on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations.

 “…It was very difficult to turn anyone away because of their determination to do their match … due to the very cold temperatures we were experiencing during this period and I mean cold, the State of South Dakota broke every past cold weather temperature reading during this period.”

– Ken Lone Elk

Save Your Spot on the Running Strong Tour

Visit the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservations with Running Strong! Running Strong’s 25th Annual Reservations Tour is taking place September 7-13, 2014. Come join us!

For one incredible week, join the Running Strong staff and volunteers as we visit the programs you care about. See the daily miracles that you make possible. Together, we will travel in comfort with local guides through unique parts of the country rarely visited and gain understanding about why your support matters. While on the tour you will visit our gardens and food programs, meet Billy Mills, enjoy a Lakota wacipi (powwow) and meet the American Indian children that you help every day.

This year, in celebration of our 25th tour, and the 50th Anniversary of Billy Mills Olympic gold medal, the powwow will be our biggest yet!

But hurry, this special anniversary tour is sure to fill up quickly! Check off the tour information box on the enclosed reply form. You can also visit www.IndianYouth.org to register and pay online.
A Lasting Legacy of Caring for American Indian Children

Like so many Running Strong supporters, Charlie and Mary Bowers spent their lives in service to their country and community, and even in their passing they continue to give to others through The Charles and Mary Bowers Living Trust.

In March, the trust notified Christian Relief Services that Running Strong for American Indian Youth® is a recipient of a large contribution to improve the future for American Indian youth.

Both Charlie (b. 1918) and Mary (b. 1924) grew up in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, from humble beginnings. Charlie became an accomplished musician, and in 1942 enlisted in the Marine Corps and served as Bandmaster 14th Defense Battalion in the Pacific. Meanwhile, Mary, at age 19, decided to put her education on hold and “get a war job” with the FBI in Washington, DC. She subsequently decided to do something more satisfying, moved to Utah and became a “Rosie the Riveter” and repaired aircraft.

They married in 1948 and moved to Arizona where Charlie became a music professor and Mary taught junior high – all the while filling their lives with music, teaching, and travels.

“Everything they did in their lives reflects their concern and dedication to helping others,” Bowers Living Trust trustee Joyce Matheson told Running Strong. “Knowing them and watching them in action gave me a lesson in what Jesus meant when He said, ‘Love your neighbor…’. They did, and their love continues through their gifts to family and friends.”

Leave a legacy and help American Indian children. Join the Bowers and Running Strong’s spokesperson, Billy Mills (who also has designated the charity as the beneficiary of his life insurance), and include Running Strong for American Indian Youth® in your will or other estate plan. Your legacy gift will become a lasting tribute of your commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of American Indians and their well-being, especially that of the children. Legacy gifts provide an estate tax deduction and have a tremendous positive impact on American Indian families for years to come. For more information on how to include Christian Relief Services’ project, Running Strong for American Indian Youth®, in your charitable giving plans, please contact Paul at 1-800-337-3543 extension 107 or by email at paul@indianyouth.org.

Help Native Children Dream. Join the Dream Catcher Society!

As a Running Strong supporter, you have helped thousands of American Indian children climb out of poverty and improve their future. You have enabled them to have hope and create dreams!

Please consider joining the Dream Catcher Society and help these precious children with a recurring, monthly gift. Any amount will make a difference! Your monthly gift will provide steady and reliable support for these critical programs. And, you can enjoy these other benefits!

- **It’s easy and convenient:** You can join today! You choose the amount, donation date, and payment method. Then, each month on that date, your monthly gift will be conveniently transferred from your checking account or charged from your credit/debit card.
- **It saves money:** For both you and us! No more stamps or driving to the post office. And you help reduce our fundraising costs so that more goes directly to our programs!
- **Your membership will automatically renew each year,** but you have the option to increase, decrease or suspend your gift at any time simply by calling us.

As a special thank you for joining the Dream Catcher Society, we will send you a hand-crafted Lakota Dream Catcher so you can remember the Dreams you are helping to make come true.

Please call 1-800-337-3543 or visit www.IndianYouth.org for more information or to join.