Shaping the Future Through Heavy Equipment Training

by Alice Poulu Karsma, Editor

Members of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin's Heavy Construction Department have recently completed a segment of training workshops on the operation, care and maintenance of heavy equipment, and are arranging for more.

Ervin John, Heavy Construction Manager for the Oneida Tribe, is waiting to schedule for the next round of equipment training in the TTAP series. The training series includes both classroom and hands-on field training involving a variety of equipment.

Training Goals
The TTAP workshops were designed and delivered by John Lovato, Construction Manager for the Hannahville Indian Community in Wilson, Michigan. One of Lovato's goals in offering this kind of training is "to provide a future - so these guys can move forward towards better paying jobs across the United States."

Trainees brought their own goals and aspirations to the workshops, as well. Among these were to reach a better understanding on how to bid, to acquire a background to apply on or off-reservation, the desire to take advantage of minority work opportunities in Wisconsin's highway construction industry, and the hope that getting personal certification will provide a future.

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Wrapping Up Another Year

by R. Evan Fulton, Program Manager

The year actually was summed up nicely in early November when representatives of the Federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs visited Houghton to review our program. Overall, the review was quite favorable. Preparing for it provided an opportunity to look back at our activities not only for the past year, but over the eighteen months that I have managed this program.

The FHWA clearly recognizes the limits to which a small program, such as ours, can adequately deliver comprehensive services over a region encompassing the eastern half of the United States. For this reason, the program initiative emphasizes the need to reach as great an audience as possible with each effort.

It is clear, however, that the contract, legislation and regulations governing the overall program's activities limit the extent to which we can innovate on delivery.

Continued on page 7
Greetings . . .
From the TTAP!

We have tried, in this issue, to review some of last year's activities and to provide a glimpse into the future, sighting along the path before us. We describe, here, our perceived course; and hope you will feel free to give us your thoughts and perspectives on that course, offering navigational advice and correction where needed.

We thank all those who have utilized our program, for your valuable contributions, suggestions and help in our efforts to define and deliver technical assistance, information and training with that form and content best suited to your needs. You have indeed enriched our experience.

In May of this coming year, TTAP is looking forward to hosting the 1997 National Tribal LTAP Conference in Duluth, MN. We are actively recruiting tribal as well as governmental participation, and welcome all who are interested in attending. We will send out announcements after plans are finalized, and will provide more details about the upcoming conference in our spring edition of Pathways.

We look forward to working with you through the coming year.

Visit our updated web page:
http://www.ttcu.mtu.edu/ttap/TTAPindex.html

Pathways is published quarterly by the Tribal Technical Assistance Program in Michigan's Transportation Technology Transfer Center at Michigan Technological University. The Tribal Technical Assistance Program is part of a nationwide effort financed by the Federal Highway Administration and supported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It intends to relate the latest technology and information on tribal roads and bridges, tourism and recreation, and related economic development to tribal transportation and planning personnel. TTAP's regional tribes are in the BIA agency's Minnesotan and Eastern Areas. Contact the TTAP office for a free Pathways subscription or to obtain permission to reprint any articles. Articles and suggestions may be submitted to the TTAP staff at the following address:

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Understanding the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

by Wes Underwood, DBE Support Services Specialist, Montana DOT

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program was created to enhance opportunities in transportation-related projects for socially and economically disadvantaged, women-owned and minority-owned businesses.

The DBE Program provides technical assistance and a variety of supportive services which enhance the capabilities of these small firms, and aids in making them competitive in bidding on projects. Under the Federal-aid Highway Program, the US Department of Transportation, through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), makes funds available to the separate State Departments of Transportation to assist in statewide transportation construction projects and improvement programs.

Under the program, the State Department of Transportation develops construction projects and provides many contract opportunities. The role of the FHWA is one of program monitoring and technical assistance.

**DBE Definition and Intent**

When Congress enacted the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (STURAA), it directed that a percentage of Federal-Aid highway funds be expended with small disadvantaged business firms. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) directs that not less than 10 percent of the amounts authorized shall be expended with small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. The prime objective of the program is to ensure DBE firms have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts and subcontracts administered by the state DOTs for which DBE goals are set.

The definition of the intent and purpose of the DBE program is published in 49 CFR Part 23. The US Department of Transportation (USDOT) program:

- Encourages the formation and growth of new and existing DBEs;

- Seeks to create an environment where eligible entrepreneurs have the opportunity to realize the full economic benefits of DOT funded and assisted procurement opportunities, and

- Works so former DBE firms function as full fledged participants in the free enterprise system, capable of gaining their share of transportation business activity without the help of a DBE program.

**DBE Certification**

To be certain the DBE Program benefits only firms owned and controlled by disadvantaged individuals, DBEs are certified by the State DOT. Prime contractors are generally not given credit toward meeting the contract DBE goal unless subcontractors are hired from this directory. A series of inspections and compliance requirements are administered by the State DOT to preclude difficulties in this area. A prime contractor will only be given credit toward meeting DBE goals when the DBE performs a commercially useful function. This occurs when a DBE is responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of a contract by actually managing, supervising and performing the work involved in accordance with standard industry practices except where such practices are inconsistent with DBE regulation.

In order to become certified, applicant firms must meet specific criteria. As a minimum, a firm must be woman or minority owned, already be in business, be capable of performing transportation-related work, and/or be economically or socially disadvantaged. Interested individuals should contact their State DOT for applications and qualification information.

Not all DBE firms are construction-oriented. Any business activity which acts in support of transportation projects may become certified if they meet the other eligibility requirements. Consulting firms (cultural, historical, archeological, architectural, biological, chemical, environmental, e.g.), accountants business advisory groups, fencing contractors, trainers, trucking companies, supply companies and others should all be considered as possible DBE firms.

**Available Support Services**

Once a firm has become certified, they become eligible for a variety of free or very low cost technical assistance and support. Providing supportive services program is voluntary for states, however, most states do have some sort of program. The term “supportive services” denotes business development training and assistance provided to assist DBEs in achieving the proficiency needed to compete for federal contracts. The range of services provided by states with supportive services include (GAO, 1994):

- Services related to certification;
- Estimating, bidding and assistance
- Development of technical skills proficiency;
- Services to develop and improve immediate and long term business management, record-keeping and financial accounting capabilities;
- Services to help DBEs obtain bonding and financial assistance; and
- Other services contributing to long term development, increasing opportunities and eventual self sufficiency of the DBE.

Minority and women-owned businesses should seriously consider the DBE program as an aid to success. In addition to the technical assistance and support, the networking and interaction with other firms is invaluable. For more information on this program, contact your state DOT or the regional FHWA Civil Rights Office.

Source: Wes Underwood, 1-800-683-5611 or email u9241@long.dot.mt.gov
of services. In particular, the program’s initiative requires by definition that we provide one or two day training workshops on technical subjects pertaining to road construction and maintenance, planning, transportation related tourism issues, and economic development, in addition to information services and administrative functions. An objective under this definition is for us to provide at least ten of these technical workshops per year.

1996 Workshops

Over the past year we exceeded the goal of ten workshops, although the nature of these workshops varied according to the particular needs of tribes requesting this training. An issue that has arisen from this is whether this program should stick to its contractual obligations of regional, one to two day workshops, or whether it should offer services that fit with the needs of individual tribes. Prior to my arrival, the program ran standardized workshops across various regions. These were advertised to tribes in that region, and were presented in a number of locations throughout the eastern U.S. over a short period. In reviewing the files on these workshops, I found that we were spending large sums of money for workshops that attracted very little attendance. To better serve the individual needs of tribes, and to ensure that our efforts were relevant to tribes, I instituted a policy of offering specially tailored workshops on an “as requested” basis. As a result, technical training offered through this program is currently often achieved through a “one-to-one” relationship. However, this is clearly not what Congress envisioned when establishing the Tribal LTAPs.

Before addressing this dilemma, here are the workshops we participated in over this past year:

1) Transportation Planning & PMS/GPS Workshop
   Lac du Flambeau, WI
   February 19, 1996

2) Oneida Planning & Transit
   Oneida Nation, WI
   February 20, 1996

3) Heavy Equipment Operation
   - Part I (40 Hours)
   Hannahville Community, MI
   March 25 - 29, 1996

4) Heavy Equipment Operation
   - Part 2 (40 Hours)
   Hannahville Community, MI
   April 1 - 5, 1996

5) Transportation Planning
   Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
   April 25, 1996

6) Intergovernmental Coalition Building
   Annual BIA Conference
   Mt. Pleasant, MI
   May 7, 1996

7) Intergovernmental Coordination,
   IRR Update & 638 Contracting
   Eastern Cherokee, NC
   June 10, 1996

8) AutoCAD Training Workshop
   Wampanoag Tribe of
   Gayhead, Massachusetts
   November 18 - 20, 1996

9) Heavy Equipment Operation
   - Part I (40 Hours)
   Oneida Nation, WI
   December 2 - 6, 1996

10) Heavy Equipment Operation
    - Part 2 (40 Hours)
    Oneida Nation, WI
    December 9 - 13, 1996

Circuit Riding Visits to Tribes

In addition to these workshops, I visited over 22 tribes in 1996, conducting what are referred to as Road Shows or Circuit Riding. These personal contacts have resulted in a number of training requests; which are pending until tribes would like to schedule these workshops. It is at these personal contact visits where most one-on-one training or technical assistance takes place.

The dilemma we face in these efforts is this: few tribes have on-going transportation programs. Many tribes do some work in transportation, but this varies greatly from tribe to tribe. To schedule technical workshops for regional presentation assumes that the needs of tribes are similar. This is not a valid assumption, at least in terms of technical issues. Only on such issues as TERO, 638 contracting, and developing transportation plans do we find enough common interest to attract a larger audience.

Current pending requests reveal a wide and varied range of training needs. Requested topics are:

- Transportation Planning & Technologies
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- 638 Contracting
- Tribal Employment Rights
- IRR Phase III Inventory
- Signs and Pavement Marking
- Funding and Grantwriting
- Internet Use & Home Page Development
- Management & Supervisory Skills
- Project Management
- Tourism Development
- GIS/GPS Technologies
- Pavement Management
- Metrics & Statistics
- Heavy Equipment Operation
- CDL Certification
- AutoCAD Training
- Injury Prevention & Environmental Health
- Transportation Enhancement

We have our work cut out for us. These upwards-of-twenty topics requested could, even under the best of circumstances, conceivably take over two years to deliver under our current contract and budget constraints. In an effort to address these training needs, we are (whenever possible) seeking out organizations and training personnel who are already poised and ready to deliver the desired training, and we are exploring ways and means by which we can subsidize such efforts.

Regional Coordination Option

One suggestion from FHWA is that we arrange for a regional transportation conference that would bring together tribal representatives from that region with a number of state DOT, BIA and FHWA personnel for purposes of coordination.

We proposed cosponsoring this effort
with USET (United Southern and Eastern Tribes) and have begun collaborating with USET along these lines.

With a show of support from tribal organizations, we will move ahead with drafting a proposal to FHWA to secure necessary funds to host the event. If this is something you would consider worthwhile, please call TTAP to voice your support (Toll-Free 1-888-230-0688).

Technical Assistance Measured

Another issue of concern raised is our ability to follow-up on technical assistance efforts. There is an adage in Indian Country that tells how people offering to work with tribes often do so for their own purposes and fail to produce any real benefits to the tribes.

The value of this program should be measured by the extent to which benefits accrue to Indian tribal organizations. In reality, this program is an experiment to determine if the strategy being used is effective. Its effectiveness has historically been measured in terms of numbers of workshops provided, number of attendees, workshop evaluations, numbers of technical assistance efforts, and so on. Whether any of these provides a benefit to a tribe, however, is a crucial indicator of program effectiveness.

The mandate to provide one and two day technical training workshops limits the extent to which we can coordinate one-on-one with tribes on specific projects. Technical assistance is currently provided through offering information services and materials. Greater benefits would accrue to tribes if the tribal LTAP could work one-on-one with tribes, contribute to the completion of actual or real projects, and help to develop and implement transportation plans.

The BIA representatives present at TTAP’s program review expressed their desire to work more closely with the TTAP in the future, recognizing that we are a resource to supplement their own efforts. We anticipate coordinating with them more closely in the future. Again, our ability to do this depends on the particular needs of each tribe in their transportation planning and implementation efforts.

The current process for tribes to develop road or construction priorities is one area that our program feels it could make a significant contribution to planning efforts of BIA and tribal personnel.

Last October, we coordinated a planning session between tribal representatives, federal and state transportation agencies, and the LTAPs to work on a tribal project selection process for the Eastern Band of Cherokee. Support from the Office of Technology Assessment enabled Michigan’s TTAP Director, Bernie Alkire, to develop a prioritization process whereby tribes can better make decisions on road construction priorities.

How this program can offer more comprehensive assistance is a good question. To me, it is essential that service-oriented programs confine themselves to meet the needs of their customers. At the same time, we are constrained to conform to the needs of the FHWA and Congress. Since this is a new program there exists a need to assess its current strategy before allowing it to evolve into something different. In the future, new strategies may be allowed but, in the meantime, additional funding would help fill the effectiveness cracks. Additional funding would allow us to expand our operation into the area of comprehensive technical assistance, thereby increasing effectiveness.

ISTEA Reauthorization

The TTAP is in its last year of dedicated funding so, to a great extent, our future plans depend upon whether we can obtain additional funding through contracts with state DOTs, and whether congress reauthorizes funding for the LTAP centers in 1997.

In my mind, a significant question is whether this program is effective in providing the kind of training and the kind of technical assistance needed by tribes, in a manner that best suits the needs of the individual tribes. In my view, this requires the ability to work one-on-one with tribal planners on an ongoing basis. While we can provide training and some technical assistance, in addition to promoting coordination between tribes and other organizations, if we cannot effectively follow-up these individual efforts, we have no way of assuring that they will have a positive outcome.

Tribal / State Coordination

One way we are trying to offer comprehensive technical assistance is to offer services to states in their coordination efforts with Indian tribal governments. States are mandated by legislation to coordinate statewide transportation plans with Indian tribal governments. As this occurs, tribes and states will increasingly recognize the need to develop tribal transportation plans that mesh with those developed by state and local transportation agencies.

The TTAP can assist in this effort by offering the experience and capacity to work on transportation planning with tribes, and to coordinate with state departments of transportation; so that, where states offer to coordinate with tribes on transportation issues, tribes will have the opportunities to develop plans and needs assessment documentation necessary to provide input to statewide transportation plans. But we must largely rely on states to request our involvement, and fund these efforts, in order to meet their obligations in this area.

Towards this end, we recently sent letters to a number of state DOTs offering this service, at cost. If this service develops, we anticipate being able to provide a necessary and valuable component to both state efforts at developing transportation plans, and tribal efforts to develop both transportation plans and transportation programs. The funding provided through contracts with the state DOTs will allow us to hire additional staff, continue our workshops, and expand our ability to work on specific, on-going transportation planning and coordination projects, thus increasing effectiveness in real terms.

This effort, I believe, will be a model for future efforts by the tribal LTAPs. It is one that, I think, better fits the needs of individual tribes, it serves the need to coordinate planning between tribes and states, and it offers an opportunity for states and tribes to strengthen their working relationships.
Winter Blizzards Extract Huge Tolls
But Spirit of Intergovernmental Cooperation Shares the Burden

The Blizzards of 1997 have taken their toll on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota to the tune of $2 million in snow removal costs and untold costs to human and animal life.

Tribal Chairman, Greg Bourland, described conditions on the rural South Dakota reservation in a recent press release, and said the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is providing snow removal for ranches and farms regardless of race or tribal membership. He praised the cooperation his tribe has received from state and BIA officials.

"The relationship between the governor's office and the chairman's office has been superb," Bourland said. "Governor Bill Janklow has worked tirelessly to help wherever possible in snow removal efforts." Bourland also praised Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel, but said the agency suffered from lack of equipment to help the tribe. The BIA has had only one snowplow and one loader available due to the breakdown of aging BIA equipment, according to Bourland.

The tribe has set up an emergency operations office that has been open 24 hours a day since severe weather first hit the reservation in early December. It has provided much needed food and water to residents of the reservation, including a Rescue Rangers operation that has saved the lives of people in addition to providing ambulance services under the most extreme conditions.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, through the efforts of Cheyenne River Gas Company, has also provided fuel to whoever is in need. "This has created a large charge account at the company," Bourland said, "but so far, no family has been able to get the accounts settled because of the high cost of propane." The tribe is also providing emergency wood and fuel oil, and is in the process of transporting coal to the reservation.

The tribe has also gotten the U.S. Department of Agriculture to waive existing regulations regarding income guidelines for all reservation residents, regardless of membership, and has requested that all reservation residents receive a 90 day ration of USDA Commodities to help supplement their food stock. The tribe has also received some food from outside sources and is working closely with the Red Cross to distribute this food across the reservation. They have also made arrangements for emergency livestock feed.

The blizzards have cost the tribe on the average of $25,000 per day just for snow removal, and does not include the costs to the state, county, or BIA, according to Bourland. The tribe estimates it has spent over $350,000 on the reservation cleanup so far. This estimate, according to Bourland, does not include emergency labor and overtime, emergency rescue, command center costs, or the propane company charges in excess of $250,000 to help people get through the storm.

Source: Barbara Johnson, Dakota Interconnect Demonstration Site, Aberdeen, South Dakota: Ph: 605/229-5988, barbarajohnson@midco.net.

Heavy Equipment Training, continued from pg 1:

Says Lovato, "I see hunger in their eyes to learn. I want to feed that hunger - and they sure do love equipment!" According to Lovato, "You don't have to motivate these students; they are already eager to just get out there and do it."

Will the training open future opportunities? According to Lovato, trades unions do seem enthused about the training of students, because they are gaining experience that will make them more valuable and trainable to their employer. "The trades union wants them to join," he says. "They are willing to sign them up as operators, first on smaller machines like backhoes and dump trucks. From there, they can work up to running heavier equipment.

"They can also bring their experience back to the reservation, and use it in building roads and foundations."

John Lovato brings a strong background to this training effort. He is state certified in Safety, in Gravel Pit Operations, and in Hazardous Materials. His 29 years of experience in highway construction included management, estimating bidding contracts, and the operation and maintenance of heavy equipment.

Lovato also has a teaching background, having previously taught at Gogebic Community College and Bay de Noc Community College, and attended Ferris State in Michigan. He also conducted tax commission seminars for the government, following a course of training through the University of Michigan.
National Indian Telecommunications Institute Helps Native Communities Get On-Line

Source: Bill Hunkapiller, NITI

The National Indian Telecommunications Institute is a dynamic, Native-founded and run organization dedicated to using the power of electronic technologies to provide American Indian and Alaskan Native communities with extensive educational tools, equal opportunity and a strong voice in self-determination.

Internet Training & Technical Assistance

NITI is helping Native communities come together on the Internet by providing both training and Internet connections. NITI's goals are to "employ advanced technology to serve American Indians and Alaska Natives in the areas of education, economic development, language and cultural preservation, tribal policy issues and self-determination." Capabilities include:
- On-site Internet Training
- Web Page Design and Instruction
- Web Site Storage
- Network Architecture
- List Serve Set-up and Management for Indigenous Groups
- Technical Support, and
- Culturally Relevant Curriculum Development.

Internships Available to Native Students

NITI also sponsors year-long internships for Native Americans and Alaska Natives college students. Interns assist in training teachers of Native American and Alaska Native students in the areas of Internet topics and web page construction, so they must have some experience in these areas. Interns also provide year-long technical support for NITI trained teachers. Interns are provided with travel, lodging, meals and a modest stipend, and must be able to attend 4 days for each training workshop.

For more information about NITI, please contact:

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Or visit the NITI Web Page at http://numa.niti.org

Project Management Institute
1997 Annual Seminars and Symposium
- Call for Speakers -

Source: H.S. Cooke, Project Management Institute

A Global Forum on Project Management, an independent floating meeting with worldwide representation, will be held in conjunction with the 1997 Project Management Institute's Annual Seminars & Symposium in Chicago, Illinois.

Both the Global Forum and the 1997 PMI Annual Seminar will take place September 26, 1997 at the Sheraton Chicago on the intersection of River and Lake Michigan, north of the Loop, in downtown Chicago.

1997 Global Forum will also be held in Australia on November 9th, and in South Africa on November 16th. Last year's Global Forum in Boston, Massachusetts attracted representatives from 40 different countries. Attendees came together to share perspectives from many different environments and all types of governments, large and small.

If you would like to provide a speaker for the PMI Annual Seminars & Symposium, please notify PMI Board of Director and Planning Committee Member, Helen S. Cooke, 5109 Lawn Avenue, Western Springs, IL 60558.

For more information regarding the independent Global Forum, please contact PMI representative David Pells at 214/526-8981.

For enrollment information to attend PMI's 1997 Annual Seminars & Symposium, contact PMI's Executive Offices at 610/734-3330.

Metrics Workshops

Metrics Workshops are currently being conducted for those tribes who call the TTAP to request them.

For an informational brochure, or to schedule a Metrics Workshop in your community, call the TTAP

Toll-Free 1-888-230-0688
Longing for Spring...

Contact the TTAP to request free videotapes, publications or individualized training workshops:

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