

DEBUT OF LARGEST NATIVE AMERICAN DICTIONARY: NEW LAKOTA DICTIONARY AND APP BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN GENERATIONS TO KEEP LAKOTA LANGUAGE, CULTURE ALIVE

New, 3rd Edition Contains 20,000 New Entries – 50% More Words and Phrases Than First Edition; More Than 400 Native Speakers Interviewed for Content

KYLE, S.D., Dec. 19, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- The Lakota Language Consortium (LLC), a nonprofit dedicated to the preservation of Lakota language and culture, has announced the debut of the *New Lakota Dictionary*. LLC has also released an accompanying, updated, free app that enables Lakota speakers of all ages, and especially youth, to hear the language spoken.

The impetus for releasing the expanded dictionary now is the fact that Native American languages have experienced serious decline at extremely high rates. Lakota people and linguists, however, took action over 20 years ago to start documenting the language out of concern for further decline. Since the mid-1950s, Native Americans have experienced accelerated language loss. To exacerbate the issue, the last generation of first language speakers are largely now in their 70s and soon, younger generations won't have access to their knowledge and wisdom.

"When it comes to preserving our language, the *New Lakota Dictionary* is a game-changer in so many ways," says Alex FireThunder, Deputy Director of LLC. "It is an essential tool in how we can ensure our language is passed down from one generation to the next. The dictionary honors our ancestors and speakers and enables them to share our beautiful language with the next generation in a profound and enduring way."

The *New Lakota Dictionary* was inspired by the early work of the first trained Lakota linguist, Ella Deloria, and was developed from the transcription of narratives and conversations with first language speakers. LLC used a rigorous method to corroborate words and phrases, resulting in a monumental "encyclopedia" not only of language but also of culture. Linguists used technology and software to accelerate this process and the creation of apps and other accessible tools.

"The *New Lakota Dictionary* exponentially expands the breadth and depth with which people can now express themselves in Lakota," says Wil Meya, Executive Director of Lakota Language Consortium. "It demonstrates the power of technology, which enables us to fast forward the work – and art – of language preservation and revitalization. The app itself holds enormous power to connect youth with their heritage and vibrant Native language."

About Lakota Language Consortium (LLC)

The Lakota Language Consortium is a nonprofit organization of Lakota community members, educators, linguists, and volunteers leading the way to revitalize the Lakota language through educational programs, teacher trainings, dictionaries, textbooks, apps, and other language learning materials. The Consortium advocates for Lakota language and culture through the production of award-winning media like the Lakota version of The Berenstain Bears and the documentary, Rising Voices. For more information, please visit www.lakhota.org.

SOURCE Lakota Language Consortium (LLC)

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