>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

NEXT-GEN MINI GRANT



GREETINGS

Welcome to the quarterly update on College of Menominee Nations Next Gen Mini-Grants, where we celebrate the hard work and achievements of our grantees. This report highlights each project's progress, and impact on the community. Thank you for supporting initiatives that empower our Indigenous communities and promote sustainable growth.

YEAR 4 GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

College of Menominee Nation Next Gen Mini-Grant began accepting applications on February 08, 2026!

- Deadline to Apply: March 15, 2026

For more information on eligibility and application guidelines, please visit our website or contact us directly.

INDIGENOUS ADVISE LLC

College of Menominee Nation
KESHENA • GREEN BAY

USDA nextgen



2025 MINI-GRANT PROJECT UPDATES

QUARTER 2 OCTOBER - DECEMBER

ALLEN QUINNEY - MINI FARM EXPANSION

During this quarter, all asparagus foliage was cut back following multiple frosts, with stalks removed and composted off-site, and rows covered with mulch to prepare for winter. A final tilling and weeding were completed earlier in the season, over 70 hours of labor were invested in site maintenance. The project remains under budget, with continued coordination with the Stockbridge Munsee Agriculture Department.

MARCI HAWPETOSS - COOPERATIVE DECOLONIZATION

Earth and Sky dedicated 90 hours to advancing the development of a seasonally guided, mosaic-based game centered on cooperative decision-making and long-term social change. Building on prior research, the team refined the core mechanics and integrated cultural anthropological frameworks that emphasized community-building. Community engagement and gameplay analysis of existing Indigenous-created games have further informed development, with the project remaining on track and within budget.

CANDY MAHKIMETAS - MACKS BAITS ORGANIC WORM FARM

Macks Baits successfully launched its organic worm farm by purchasing initial worm stock, durable housing tubs, bedding materials, food, shelving, and lighting to establish a controlled production environment. Early efforts have focused on refining moisture balance and feeding practices to support worm health and reproduction. These foundational investments have positioned the farm for long-term sustainability and reduced reliance on outside bait suppliers.



BROCK SCHREIBER - SHIITAKE HIGH TUNNEL

This quarter, Winding River Acres focused on site preparation and infrastructure improvements, including outfitting the garage with flooring and storage systems, repairing shade tunnels, and installing a high tunnel irrigation system. A full inventory of shiitake logs was completed to guide spring inoculation and production planning, while electrical installation for the walk-in cooler was rescheduled for spring due to sequencing and weather delays. The team is coordinating with the cooler manufacturer to determine the most cost-effective timing for purchase and delivery.

AMY POUPART - GLITC FOOD SOVEREIGNTY PROGRAM

Progress this quarter has been steady, with expanded composting efforts and improved waste reduction practices implemented during the growing season. Updated quotes have been secured for the wood chipper/shredder, and steps are underway to finalize its purchase, which will significantly enhance compost production and soil health efforts. Soil testing and tractor attachment purchases are pending, with potential minor budget adjustments to be discussed following completion of the chipper acquisition.

DARRYL PYAWASAY - SUSTAINING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

During this quarter, Pyawasay Farms successfully completed the processing of its honey harvest, including extracting, spinning, and jarring activities at the farm. The result is a fully processed, market-ready product prepared for sale. The project remains on budget with funds fully expended as planned.



SHANE DIXON SR. – MAPLE SYRUP EQUIPMENT

This quarter focused on the design phase of new syrup-making equipment to improve sap processing capacity. The project team is currently seeking a fabricator to build a custom pan and base for syrup production. Once constructed, the upgraded equipment will strengthen efficiency and overall production readiness for the upcoming season.

RICHARD OSHKESHEQUOM – KEMÄËNÄËHTAMENOH (IN FRONT OF ME, MY FUTURE)

This quarter, Chef Paemap advanced seasonal recipe development centered on the 13 Moons, featuring traditional ingredients such as berries, wild rice, squash, and onions while exploring innovative preparations. The project also strengthened partnerships with other Indigenous businesses and incorporated eco-friendly catering supplies to support sustainable practices. Growing recognition of the work, including a summit invitation, reflects the project's expanding cultural and professional impact.

CRAIG PENASS SR. – MILLER SUGAR CAMP MAPLE SYRUP PROJECT

This quarter focused on preparation for the upcoming maple sugaring season, which begins in April. Plans are in place to pick up equipment in March, complete setup, and gather firewood to ensure readiness for sap collection and syrup production. The project has also initiated outreach to Historic Preservation to provide maple candies and syrup for the Sturgeon Feast celebration.

DARWIN MARTIN – RANCH IMPROVEMENTS

This quarter, Crooked Fence Ranch successfully installed buried water and electrical lines to service livestock pens and troughs, significantly reducing daily labor and improving ranch efficiency. Despite higher-than-expected excavation costs, the project was completed in one day with water fully operational, and a new turkey coop was constructed. The improvements have strengthened overall ranch operations and long-term sustainability.

JENNIFER FALCK – TRIBAL FOOD SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH FOOD PROCESSING EDUCATION & EQUIPMENT USE

The infrastructure improvements project has been successfully completed, enhancing community access to food processing facilities. The space has supported beef, turkey, chicken, and venison processing for multiple community members, as well as corn husking, braiding, cooking, and freezing activities. The project came in under budget on labor, with additional investments made in food safety supplies to support safe and sustainable use.



2026 MINI-GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The College of Menominee Nation is proud to announce the 2026 Next Gen Mini Grant recipients supporting innovative, community-driven projects that strengthen food sovereignty, sustainable agriculture, natural resource stewardship, and cultural preservation across Tribal communities in Wisconsin.

These projects reflect the creativity, resilience, and leadership of local producers, artists, and entrepreneurs who are building stronger, healthier communities grounded in tradition and sustainability.

We look forward to sharing their progress and celebrating the impact of this year's awardees.

Jack Holmes– St. Croix Food Sovereignty Ag Beginnings
This initiative lays the groundwork for expanded agricultural development within the St. Croix community. By increasing local food production and strengthening growing capacity, the project advances long-term food sovereignty goals.

William Mott – Honey Production Expansion
This project expands honey processing capabilities through upgraded extraction equipment to improve efficiency and output. The investment strengthens local pollinator-based food systems while supporting business growth.

Eliza Skenandore – Beading Our Roots
Beading Our Roots is a cultural arts initiative that connects Indigenous food systems and traditional medicines with artistic expression. Through beadwork and storytelling, the project preserves cultural knowledge while engaging community members in hands-on learning.

Sterling Schreiber – Northern Climate Honeybee Improvement Initiative
This initiative focuses on improving honeybee genetics suited for northern climates, prioritizing overwintering success and resilience. Stronger bee populations will enhance pollination, honey production, and Tribal food system sustainability.

Brock Schreiber – Walk In Cooler for Inoculated Mushroom Blocks and Post-Harvest Storage
This project supports the expansion of a family-run mushroom operation through the installation of temperature-controlled storage for inoculated blocks and harvested products. Improved infrastructure will increase efficiency, reduce loss, and strengthen local food production capacity.

Ho-Chunk Nation Resiliency Gardens Project

The Resiliency Gardens Project supports community members in growing their own food through education and hands-on gardening support. By increasing access to fresh produce, the initiative strengthens food security and household self-sufficiency.

Veda Faith - Sacred Earth

Sacred Earth LLC is a Native woman-owned botanicals business rooted in Anishinaabe teachings and traditional plant knowledge. The project supports sustainable harvesting, value-added product development, and the continuation of cultural wellness practices within the community.

Gary Dodge – Sustaining Our Forest: A Story of Balance and Tradition

This project will produce a short documentary highlighting Menominee sustainable forest management practices and the balance between economic development and environmental stewardship. The film will feature local loggers and community members, preserving cultural knowledge while educating broader audiences about Tribal forestry leadership

Richard Elm-Hill – Storywell Farm: Oneida Family Revival Project

This project restores family farmland to active food production while revitalizing cultural connections to land-based practices. The farm revival increases local food availability and builds long-term sustainability for future generations.

Daniel Cornelius – Demonstrating Indigenous Focused Poultry

This project models sustainable turkey and chicken production rooted in Indigenous agricultural values. By increasing local protein production and sharing best practices, the initiative supports community-based food sovereignty.

Dustin Neibauer – Microgreens Farm

Northern Lights Organics is expanding microgreens production to provide nutrient-dense, locally grown foods year-round. The project strengthens local markets while promoting sustainable, small-scale agriculture.

Keshena Save a Lot. - Healthy & Organic Foods

This project establishes a dedicated healthy and organic foods section within the Keshena Save A Lot grocery store. The expansion increases community access to nutritious options and supports healthier purchasing choices.



LOOKING AHEAD

UPCOMING EVENTS AND GOALS

TRAINING

Through NextGen, we are supporting a Logger Rescue Training in partnership with the Forestry Department to strengthen safety, emergency preparedness, and workforce development within our Tribal forestry sector. This hands-on training will equip loggers with critical rescue skills while reinforcing our shared commitment to safe, sustainable forest operations.



FOLLOW US

Stay updated with the latest news:
Website
https://www.menominee.edu/nextgen-grants
Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/collegeofmenomineenation

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jennifer Peters - Indigenous Advise LLC
Email: jenniferp@indigenousadvise.com