The Land Grant Office for Sustainability at the Tohono O’odham Community College

Empowering people for a sustainable life in the Sonoran desert

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Purpose

The Land Grant Office for Sustainability (LGOS) at the Tohono O’odham Community College (TOCC) is to ensure that the principles of sustainability, both modern and those rooted in Tohono O’odham Himdag, are committed to by TOCC and are integrated into the academic life and all activities within the college.
The Tohono O’odham Himdag, “way of life,” tells a person how to interact with the environment, what foods to eat, and how to work with the community, thus maintaining a balance with the world.
Historical Background

1. In 2003 the Office of Civil Rights and the US Department of Education approved TOCC as a Tribal College, an institution serving minorities.

2. 2004-2005, TOCC becomes a Land Grant Institution

3. In 2005 TOCC receives its first Equity award from USDA

4. In 2006 TOCC established the Agriculture Extension Program with funding from USDA/APHIS

5. In 2006 TOCC receives its first distribution of the Endowment Interest from USDA

6. In 2010 TOCC receives its first Research award from USDA/NIFA

7. In 2011 at the FALCON Conference USDA/NIFA recommended the establishment of the Land Grant Office

8. In 2012 the Board of Trustees approved the use of part of the Endowment funds to fund the LGO Director position.
Objectives

1. Learning from elders on aspects of Tohono O’odham Himdag.
2. Applying these aspects of Tohono O’odham Himdag in sustainability planning.
3. Educating TOCC students and local communities about sustainable ways of life.
4. Organizing sustainability colloquia and presentations on campus and in the communities.
5. Examining on sound and sustainable institutional practices.
6. Fostering collaboration at Tohono O’odham Nation, and external partners in sustainability.
Current Activities

1. The LGOS and TOCC faculty are incorporating sustainability into their curricula of the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) program.

2. The LGOS is also fostering the diversification of the ANR program by supporting the hiring of an Agroecology specialist.

3. Currently the LGOS enjoy the participation of TOCC faculty in the fields of Plant Biology, Ethnobotany, Agroecology & Soil Science, and Wildlife Conservation & Management.

4. Other activities of this team include the development of grants proposals to support the educational objectives of the LGOS and TOCC.
Personnel and TOCC collaborators

Clifford Pablo
Casey Thornbrugh
Teresa Newberry
Adrian Quijada

Mario Montes-Helu
David Stone & Richard Pablo
SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND COLLABORATIONS
USDA-NIFA Equity Program
USDA-NIFA Extension Program
The Farm and Food Working Group is a collaboration of individuals and organizations committed to culturally relevant, sustainable, agriculture, including promoting healthy living and eating.
EPA Tribal ecoAmbassador Program
EPA Tribal ecoAmbassador
Himdag Ki: (Tohono O’odham Cultural Center) Project

PAVERS AND BLOCKS
MADE WITH RECYCLED GLASS, CaCO$_3$ & WASTE STEEL DUST
Future directions

Partnerships with other tribal community colleges, universities, and sustainable stakeholder organizations.

Current collaboration initiatives: University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University & the Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA).

Please contact us to explore venues of collaboration!
Our Challenges

We are still without policy for sharing, disseminating and data management in research (i.e. No institutional review board).

We require the implementation of a community-based Participatory research protocol.

Until we are able to develop our institutional research capacity for our TOCC-LGOS, access to funding for the purpose of research will be limited.
Coming soon!

Our vision
We support Tohono O’odham Community College (TOCC) to grow and develop into a sustainable, environmentally-culturally sound campus grounded in Tohono O’odham Himdag values. We embrace tribal traditions and knowledge related to desert farming and the appropriate use of natural resources while also integrating agriculture, environmental sciences, and renewable energy education to ensure a sustainable future for TOCC and for the Tohono O’odham Nation it serves.
Questions?