

Joanne Shenandoah: We have with us today Candida Hunter, manager Hualapai Green Entry Program, did I pronounce that correctly, I hope.

Candida Hunter: Hualapai.

Joanne Shenandoah: Hualapai, excuse me. I kind of like Hualapai, I thought it was kind of cute. Hualapai, please forgive me, Hualapai Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation Center. We also have Carol Justice, Coordinator, Indian Country Methamphetamine Program, Shoshone and Arapaho Tribes. We also have Jesse Deardoff, Manager of Lummi Safe House. So we have 10 minutes for each speaker, followed by 20 minutes of questioning by the Advisory Committee. Please proceed, Miss Hunter.

Candida Hunter: Thank you for this opportunity to present what we're doing at the Hualapai Indian Reservation. For some of you who don't know, we're located on the northwest corner of Arizona, 108 miles of our northern boundary is the Colorado River. We have about 2300 tribal members, of which 30 percent of our population is under the age of 18, so we have a very young population. In our facility, which is the Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, we have a 30 bed facility, which was developed because in our community, our children were being taken to Gallup, which is a five hour drive, one way, or to Colorado. So we knew that there was a need, not only for that but rehabilitation in our community, both for alcohol and drug abuse.

It started with some elders, some stakeholders in the community who designed the facility, and saying we're going to look at programming, we're not going to look at bed space, we're not going to look at how are we going to continue to build on top of this facility, but how are we going to treat our young people. With that, at the same time, when we took over, it was a 638 contract, we also received a juvenile Green Re-entry Demonstration Program grant through the OJJDP. Hualapai was one of three tribes to receive that.

When we did that, we looked at what is currently in our community because we know with grants it gives us great opportunities to start something new, but it also gives us the opportunity to, again, look at our current resources and make sure that we're collaborating and leveraging those

resources. So we looked at, okay, the youth that came into the facility, what programming were we going to get, how are we going to work as a community to resolve and meet our youth's needs?

So we looked at our cultural department, which has, nine months out of the year, they offer culture, arts and language classes, they started coming into our facility and working with our youth. We started a sweat lodge, there were some issues with starting the sweat lodge in our facility, because of the liability, different BIA regulations, so after we got through all that red tape, it's something that we do every week with the youth.

The other thing is we also looked at gardening, because we're gardeners, we're hunters, we also manage cattle, so how is it that we're teaching our youth to be healthy? In our garden we have different beds in which we grow different crops and we also started a greenhouse facility in there which we use hydroponics. This is all different projects that our youth are involved in, we have the culinary arts program, which our kitchen staff teach the youth how to prepare the crops and we also use those for different community events.

The other thing we did was for each youth, they have an assessment to decide what are your needs, what are the family's needs and we meet with our various resources, whether it be behavioral health, the cultural department, as well as the families. That was sometimes a challenge in that not all the families would be involved with what are your youth's needs, what are your strengths as a family and how can we get you to overcome this challenge?

Some of our other Green components, as we refer to them as, is we also built a greenhouse, a straw bale greenhouse at our boys and girls club, and as you read, we did have some issues with that because of weather and having to prepare homes, but the nice thing about that was we, again, looking at our community, we worked with housing and with the Re-entry we also started an apprenticeship program where we were able to hire youth as well as young adults, who had not completed their high school or GED. With that, we were able to hire them, they worked so many hours a day

and then they were able to continue doing their—whether it be online schooling or GED.

The tribe saw the need that we were meeting and the tribe also decided to hire a teacher to work in our department of education and training, which is actually where I work now, and I'm no longer the Green Re-entry program manager, but I'm the education coordinator.

So that was another way that our community worked together. Am I okay on time, I talk a lot. Okay, so we had the schooling. One of the issues that we have is that all of our high schoolers either go to school to a boarding school, or they ride a bus 50 miles one way or 38 miles another. So when our youth are at school, they're gone for long periods of time and then they come back home, one of the issues that we saw with our youth was that nobody knew where they were at, as far as when they got in trouble. They might have been suspended or expelled from their boarding school and no one was following up. So we worked closely with the education department to try to track our youth and make sure, again, that we're meeting those needs as a part of prevention.

We worked with our boys and girls club and at first they were actually the facility where all of our youth would go to because when we look at bringing our community resources into our juvenile detention center, they were there to meet staff that worked in our community build a rapport and go back into the community and have that sense of belonging, which has been really helpful. Also the boys and girls club is also another good resource we have there.

Healing and spirituality, we work with our health department as well as our spiritual leaders in the community. So not only did we have sweat and prayer in our community, but they came into our facility as well, and I think that's the really good thing about it, was because as an individual, I can come and say hey, I have this great idea, we're going to do this, but if nobody believes in it, it doesn't go anywhere. So that's why it's really important for whatever need we're addressing, to come from the community, to take it further.

Just recently, we did start bee-keeping in our community, and in September they brought me a little jar, like this big, of

honey, which was really nice because it was, again, another piece of our gardening, as well as teaching the youth about marketing. In our community, we have a lot of tourists that come in and out, so we saw that as a way of teaching our youth another life skill.

The other thing I'd just like to mention is employment. We were able to work with our housing department in them setting up, looking at their Indian housing plan and hiring youth during the summer and again, for the program, like we worked with the apprenticeship, to allow them to work and then on their off time, they worked on their GED or high school, online high school.

With that, I think I will end there, thank you.

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you very much, Miss Hunter from Hualapai, and we appreciate your words and it sounds like you have some really great programs going, it's very inspiring.

Next we'd like to hear from Ms. Justice, please.

Carole Justice: Thank you, thank you so much for the honor to be here, thanks to the tribal communities for sharing this wonderful facility and their land with us here today.

I'm kind of Judge Abby, she says she's crabby, I'm the old warhorse. I started out in juvenile justice in 1972, under Creative Programs, funded by the LEAA and Richard Nixon, so that's how long I've been around, seeing promising programs for youth. Unfortunately, they come and they go.

Today, you have heard the judges, I don't think I can say anything greater than they said. You've just heard Miss Hunter and I'm taking notes because I want to send a contingent down to see her program. You heard Miss Fletcher talk about the wonderful things at Salt River, I remember when they came to Wind River and educated us.

By the way, I am not Northern Arapaho, obviously, I have had the honor to work for the tribes on the Wind River Reservation for over 20 years. The Indian Country Math Initiative is of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, I'm also a tribal prosecutor for the tribal court, which is jointly operated by the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribes. We have two sovereign nations at Wind River, and they come together jointly to

operate the court system, so I do need to clarify that, while these are who I work for, these are my words, not theirs. Thank you, I wanted to make sure that that got into the record before I start saying please, lower the barriers.

Back in about seven years ago, Chairman Richard Brannon, the then Northern Arapaho chairman, spoke before Senator Dorgan, Senate of Indian Affairs Committee, about the torture death of a 22-month-old on the Wind Indian Reservation. Last week I read about the torture death of an 11-month-old at Rocky Boy. Every victim I've ever had in my office has one request, make it stop. And that is my request to this committee, make it stop. Address the barriers to programming and the barriers for tribal nations to be able to create their own programs to help their own people, through flexible funding, block grants, and not these requirements. You heard Judge Abby say the forced competition between and among tribes is wrong.

I was with Tracy King in St. Paul, in the Rocky Mountain session in 2009, and what I heard tribes tell the federal government is we want block grants, what we got was CTAS. It is my understanding that CTAS also, since 2011, that the federal programs have had the ability to sit down and relook at how the moneys are spent. To put the moneys and pull them together, tribes are required to come up wonderful plans, then it is the crap shoot of ten purpose areas, whether or not you're going to get something or nothing or hit big. That's Indian gaming, by the federal government.

These programs start and they finish, they come back, tribes are promised you do a good job and we'll have more money for you. It doesn't happen, programs are ended. So yes, I'm here to talk about promising programs, but you can talk about them all day and night, if you're just going to pull the rug out on them, as the federal government has done in the past. Indian Country does not have the funds to sustain them, if they did they wouldn't ask the federal government for it, they'd do their own.

You heard Gila River today, they have other funding streams, I can tell you Wind River does not. Trying to get federal dollars down through states doesn't work, it just

doesn't because in states like Wyoming, they'll say hey, that's the federal responsibility. They don't have a trust responsibility, the feds do, and it blocks grants.

I first came to Wind River under a non-participating juvenile justice and delinquency prevention grant in 1981, through Wind River Legal Aid. I later wrote the grant for the state of Wyoming in the 1990's, to participate in OJJDP. They did for three years and pulled out. I will tell you this, though, because of that original grant, the Wind River Indian Reservation is the only true juvenile court in the state of Wyoming. Wyoming doesn't have them, they are a division of the district court and it is still, if you want to go to juvenile court in the state of Wyoming, don't steal the hubcap, take the car, otherwise you go to city and circuit court, as an adult, no matter what your age. It's the only of the 50 states.

But so many other JJDPAs can't even get into the tribes, treat tribes equally, let tribes get the funds direct. Currently, the Wyoming legislature is in, there is a bill, one to try to get the 1115 waiver to address the high deaths at Wind River. The average life expectancy is 51 years of age, we're even lower than Pine Ridge. If you abuse substances, such as alcohol, you die at 49 and if you abuse drugs, you die at 31. Over half of the Northern Arapaho Tribe and Eastern Shoshone Tribe are children. We have to have services, so at the same time Wyoming is not looking or has opposition to an 1115 waiver for Medicaid because tribes can't get it from the feds unless the state agrees. Our same state legislature is considering a bill to spend \$2.5 million to oppose the EPA ruling that said certain withdrawal of lands are part of the Wind River Indian Reservation. I submit to you, if you don't have direct government to government working with the tribes, you will never address these child deaths and make it stop.

The Tribal Justice Wellness and Safety meetings is a place where people share ideas. I've been taking notes all day, from just the folks that testify here. The CTAS grant trainings, the value of that is bringing tribes together as collaborative partners and sharing ideas. I had the privilege of being a CTAS grant reviewer last year, on a couple of things because we weren't applying, I wasn't involved in applying for any grants. I read wonderful stuff, I was so excited sometimes I'd cry. They weren't all funded, and

guess what, then the orders are you shred it, the orders are you cannot speak of it and it is these ideas of tribal governments how to solve their problems that need to be shared, so please encourage that.

I will now speak very briefly, because you do have some of it in your materials, to best practices. Indian Country Meth Initiative, which Dr. Broderick funded directly out of his office, flexible funds. We did so much with that money. Twelve programs were started, now most of them are on life support or trying to wobble through anyway because again, ICMI doesn't happen anymore. The report out in Rockville, Maryland, of the tribal colleges initiatives and of the five, SAMHSA funded tribes and the other tribes funded by Dr. Murtha Beetle, when she was with minority health, you have never seen such wonderful results from so little money. Please, look at the programs that worked, at New Mexico with the Defending Childhood Initiative, I heard so many of these good programs, I don't want this young woman to devote her life to starting it and then the funds go away. It's wrong, and children die, families die because of it.

Prevention through intervention is our one-stop campus, sounds similar, we've been talking about it at Indian Country for seven years and we just broke ground, but we only have a small component to build it. It's a 52-acre campus with family courts and everything, and there is one of your solutions, family courts, check the American Bar Association model.

But I also want to say one more thing, and then I know my time is up. The tribal and the western systems are two totally different things, TLOA and VAWA, unfortunately, are good, but now we have people trying to westernize tribal. You heard judge Yazzie speak and I can tell you the American justice system for children started when children were chattel, not sacred beings, that is the problem. We need to look at these blended systems, the blended juvenile justice systems that in the 1960's and '70's I was being taught about in college, that we have lost to our adversarial systems. Look to the tribes to solve the problem of America, because I know they can solve the problem of Indian Country. Thank you.

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you very much, Miss Justice, for your comments and dedication for all these years, very much appreciated your testimony. Now we'll move on to Miss Deardorff, of the Lummi Safe House.

Jessie Deardorff: Hello, my name is Jessie Deardorff, I am from the Lummi Nation, I am the manager of the Lummi Safe House. I'll just briefly tell you about our program, we are a 24/7 program. The safe house is located on the Lummi reservation, we provide basically a safe place and environment for our youth. We are not a detention facility, we offer a home environment. We are not a lockdown facility, we also provide services for male and female. The kids that we serve are 6 to 18 years old, their length of stay varies from one day up to three months.

Since we reopened in January 2011, a greater number of youth have come and do come from foster care programs, from a runaway status, respite care, for foster care placement and are Lummi Youth Academy. They also come from treatment or sometimes grandparents, aunts and uncles and family and guardians bring their children to us for numerous reasons.

We have had many positive outcomes, our youth are able to transition from foster care, transitioning to either new foster care or new placements within Lummi, like the Lummi Youth Academy or even better, transitioning to foster care, to family or relatives. We have had a number youth reunify with their family or extended family. Unfortunately we do have a number of kids who do run away from the safe house for one reason or another, because we are not a lockdown facility. Lummi Safe House also provides and has provided respite care, like I said, for foster care and parents or grandparents as requested.

I was asked to identify issues that the safe house are facing, with respect to youth exposed to violence. I just said that, as complicated as it is to identify the many issues, it is believed that the tragic lives we encounter at the safe house begins with our youth when they are children. Their home lives are encompassed by a tragic cycle of abuse, historical trauma, which leads to many facets of circumstances and situations beyond their control, such as abuse, neglect and trauma, like

we've heard today; removal from family, parents and guardians, placed in foster homes, numerous foster families, trouble in school and/or with authorities, continual lifestyle of uncertainty. They begin a lifestyle of using drugs and alcohol, the self-hate, the self-mutilation, attempts of suicide and some of these kids that we see do age out of the foster care system, with nowhere to go. Sometimes gang affiliations are developing with gang affiliations [sic].

The recommendations that we've come up with was basically I think we've been hearing today, is to provide facilities, such as a boys home and a girls home, not a detention center; provide cultural specific teachings that are handed down from generation to generation; men helping young men, women helping young women; respect for self and one another and helping their community and their families.

Teaching them life skills: how to cook for themselves, develop a resume, search for jobs, how to complete education packets, financial aid, scholarships, college enrollment and banking skills. Help provide education, provide mentors to help promote and follow through with education until graduation, because a lot of these kids don't know what to do or where to go, they've never had parents there to help them do that and neither have their parents.

To help them with employment, to provide a mentor to help them connect with job readiness; provide a mentor to help connect with employment opportunities.

Living environment, for those aging out of the foster care system, this is something that I think a lot of people don't want to talk about and don't like to talk about, but it is real, kids age out of the foster care system. We've had this happen at the safe house many times, and to me this is a really, really sore spot in this whole system. Once these kids turn 18, they're nobody's responsibility anymore. We've had messages from our case workers, that we release them at midnight when they turn 18. That is not culturally sensitive and that is not how we take care of our kids.

We would like to help them find a place to reside, transitional housing on reservations, it could happen. A mentor to help with locating a new place to live. This is, I think, another way

of tribes being able to develop jobs for somebody else, to become mentors and then helping those who can help themselves.

I think there needs to be a safe house on every reservation, a place that is not a detention facility, a place that is not a lockdown facility, a place that is home and they can feel what it's like to have a home. In our safe house, there's no penalty systems, we take care of our kids, we love our kids, we see them as kids when they walk in the door, we do not see them as that troubled kid or that one that just came from detention. Or even if they're on a runaway status, which means they came from who knows where, the cops bring them in and sign them in at the door and we take care of them.

At Lummi we do have a networking with a lot of different programs within our reservation and our Lummi Indian Business Council is top council. We work with Lummi children services, Lummi law and order, Lummi courts, Lummi behavior health, and again, the Lummi Youth Academy. We identify the needs of the community, we work within organizations within our community and develop partnerships to curtail the issues. We work closely—and I mean closely—with the case workers and legal guardians.

Our tribe has developed a grandparent committee and we have worked with our family services department, as far as foster care, and working with our kids who are in the foster care system. We have listened, the tribe has listened to the community and they have developed this committee, which we have changed the children's code of laws to help grandparents have the right to their kids. We have revisited and changed the foster care system to offer wraparound services for the whole family.

Today, I'm going to just say this real quickly, is that we had another success, I got a text message from one of the ladies back at home at the safe house, one of our young girls that had been in our system, in our department, for probably 56 days, was now transitioned to permanently live with her foster family, which is the success that we're looking for, one child at a time.

They've asked what—let me see real quick—the network...okay, we did that one. What we have to do is have an open communication with all of the departments, but also keep in mind of HIPAA and the confidentiality and then we keep, of course, all information locked. We have to build trust, developing trust relationships with clients; speak openly about the issues pertaining to each particular client; understand their issues without judgment; talk daily with the case workers on the plan to make progress; develop a trusting relationships with all partners involved, which means we have to meet often. And for the hope, we develop a hopeful relationship with the clients, we decide with them what is next; be truthful, speak honestly with the clients, if you don't know something, tell them you don't know and that you will find out, do not sugarcoat things.

Because the safe house is a transition facility, we're happy when our clients do transition to another place, whether it's temporary placement, we believe we have provided each client some life skills and experiences that can help better their lives. We invite them to come in, return for lunch or dinner, check in and let us know how they are doing. We have a number of clients return after aging out of the system, to have coffee, to have lunch or dinner. Many of these clients have returned to get help for applying for jobs, TANF or even apartments. This is when we know we have done our job, a job well done. That's it.

Joanne Shenandoah: Thank you very much, Miss Deardorff, for your words and also for your dedication to all those children that come into your life and that you affect. I'm sure that it gives you great joy to be able to do that. Right now I'd like to ask the Advisory Council to pose questions to Miss Hunter, Miss Justice and Miss Deardorff. The floor is open for questions.

Female 1: Hi, this question is for Miss Deardorff at Lummi. Your safe house sounds like a wonderful program that I think lots of people have talked about today, needed a place like this, that was not a detention facility. I'm curious about how your program is funded and how long you've been in existence.

Jessie Deardorff: Thank you for the question. Actually, this is the second opening of the safe house, we've had the safe house in the past. For whatever reason, number of reasons, it was

closed, then the community spoke up and said they needed this up and running again. The tribe actually is funding it, and so it's tribal hard dollars that we use.

Joanne Shenandoah: Dee?

Dolores Subia Bigfoot: Can you speak more a little bit about the transitions of the youth as they transition out? I think we should congratulate you that this young girl found a permanent foster home. And that's really good. But how do you prepare them for these transitions and how well do they adapt to these transitions? I think that's one of the things that—especially with our youth, transition times are really hard. Whether it's transitioning from one grade to the other, from one setting to the other.

Those are the kinds of skills we really need for them to develop, so that they can manage those challenging times. So if you could just speak a little bit more about that.

Jessie Deardorff: The kids that we see—normally we work with the court system. They are brought to us by a number of ways. Like I said, the tribal police will bring them in, if they're on a runaway status. We work really close with our Family Services program, which is the foster care system. So if we have kids that are either transitioning from a foster family or they have foster kids that don't have a place to go but are looking for another place, then they are placed with us.

So like I said, we do work really close with the case workers and then also with the clients. So we do an intake process with the kids. And then we also—my staff, I'm very fortunate to say, are all Lummi tribal members. So they do know the community. They do know the kids. They do know their families. They do know their grandparents.

So when we do get kids that do come into the program, they're able to connect with them somehow. And a lot of kids are very reluctant about talking about any kind of issues. So, yes, it's on their time when they want to talk about certain issues. We do have some kids that have come from foster families that just never have known they were even Lummi tribal members. And we've had a few of those kids. And it is hard. It is a very traumatic transition for them.

But I think the way we are in our tribal community is we don't force ourselves on the kids. We don't expect a whole lot from them. We offer them the best care possible. We offer them food when they come in. We, you know, help them with whatever they need. We have a number of kids that have come in that did not have clothes but what was on their back. And maybe a—what do you call those—noodle—Cup O' Noodles. You know, we've had kids come in with that only.

So we have to be careful, when we take the kids in, to understand where they're coming from. And my staff is really good about doing that. And we just take it one step at a time, which could be even one hour at a time. And then we go from there. And then we develop with a case worker what their plan is going to be. How we transition them in and how we're going to transition them out.

And it's not a secret. So the clients know what's going to happen. Because one of the things that we were finding out was there's so much uncertainty in these kids' lives that we don't want to be a part of that. We want to be a part that assures and that they can trust us and that they can have hope again. And from there we just work until they do become successful.

And this young lady that we had today, which I'm so happy for her because she came into the Safe House—definitely she's the toughest girl in the world and she thought she was. She did not like, you know, anybody. She had her arm's length with everybody. And that included her foster mother, her case worker, you know, this and that.

And I'm not even really sure why she wasn't transitioned back to her foster care, but we kept her until she was ready. Until she decided, "Yes, I do want somebody to take care of me." And it was having her, you know, let her guard down to be—she's 12 years old. To let her be a little girl again. And her foster mom, god bless her heart, and I told her that, you know, "Thank you for taking her and taking her in like this." We've had kids that—you've heard stories here.

Those are our kids, too. You know, we've had kids come in with more baggage than we could even carry. And those are the kind of kids that we see on a daily basis. And I wanted to applaud those two young people that were up here. The young girl said she didn't feel like she was important. I want her to know she is. And so is that young man. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Candida Hunter:

I'd also like to address how we transition our youth and preparing them. And I think what was key is having people from our community involved in the facility. That was really important to us because, again, keeping them tied to the community. A lot of times when our people leave the reservation, they come back and it's like, "Oh, why are you back?" or "Oh, you were here or you were there."

And so that was, I think, a key in keeping them tied to the community. The other thing is we also run another program called Positive Warrior Work Service, which is they have a level system in our facility, but once the youth got to level four they were able to complete an application, meet before a panel, have an interview. And from that point the panel decides whether, you know, they can request a temporary release or not from our court.

So when they get that, then they were able to go back into the community and give back. Chopping wood for elders. Being involved in community activities. Which was kind of different for our community because, you know, we had now our youth who were juveniles in our facility, back in the community and serving. So it was kind of at first like, "Why are you rewarding them when they were in trouble?"

But yet they're still a part of our community, so it's important to make them feel, you know, wanted and that they are our people. The other thing, too, was visits I think are really important. Again, with the family. Not just family, either, but natural supports. You know, uncles, aunts. Whoever it is that they, you know, find is going to be helpful in their transition. And mentors, too.

We have difficulty with finding mentors or, you know, having consistency. So that was a challenge. But when we were able to have a mentor or volunteers, that again helped with the transition of our youth.

Joanne Shenandoah: Are there any more questions from the advisory council? Committee. No? Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony. Really you being here today and for sharing with us. [APPLAUSE] Now Dr. Brown is going to facilitate the public testimony. And I'll turn the microphone over to you.

[END PANEL 5]