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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Great Plains Asset Building Coalition to Serve 52,500 Native Americans through Citi Foundation Grant

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Kyle, South Dakota – *April 13, 2012* – The Great Plains Asset Building Coalition, a group of six organizations dedicated to growing asset development strategies in the region’s Native communities, was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant by Citi Foundation to expand its reach to serve 52,500 Native Americans with a variety of financial education, entrepreneurship development, and assistance programs.

Specifically, this grant will enable the Great Plains Asset Building Coalition to build its capacity through the development of a website that will create a virtual learning center for coalition partners to share best practices and grow from each others’ experiences. With this platform coalition members will build upon successful asset building models that have already been created, practiced, and improved by other members in the areas of matched savings programs, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs, farmer and rancher programs, and various other business development and asset building programs.

Tawney Brunsch, Executive Director of Lakota Funds, lead organization of the coalition, comments, “As a result of this grant, all six coalition partners will maximize their focus in serving low-income Native Americans and extend their reach to the most rural and remote areas in the Great Plains region. We see this as a great opportunity to strengthen and unite the asset building movement and help our Native communities to thrive.”

Great Plains Native Asset Building Coalition is comprised of six organizations: Four Bands Community Fund, Hunkpati Investments, Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce, Mazaska Owecaso Otipi Financial, Sinte Gleska University, and Lakota Funds.

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About Lakota Funds

Lakota Funds is a Native community development financial institution (CDFI) leading an economic resurgence of the Oglala Lakota Oyate on the Pine Ridge Reservation through culturally appropriate strategies reigniting the traditional Lakota spirit of productivity, commerce, and trade. For over 25 years, Lakota Funds has played a vital role in improving the quality of life for the Oglala Lakota Oyate by placing capital with new and growing businesses, providing customized business development services, and educating adults and youth on financial management concepts.