Native Rise – FY 2020 Proposal

How does this project support the Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) mission?
The University of Arizona resides on traditional Tohono O’odham ancestral tribal lands. SAEM serves a
diverse student body and delivers exemplary programs, services, resources and facilities with a measurable
impact that contributes to the well-being and advancement of our community. After a semester of grant
funding, Native Rise seeks continued SSF funding to allow the grant’s continued positive impact on Native
American students. The grant engages indigenous undergraduate and graduate students in: 1) Campus, 2)
Community, and 3) Culture. It is our hope that this anchors students to the University impacting retention, but
also contributing to students’ successful advancement toward degree attainment.

Native Rise is comprised of two long-standing programs that have been recognized as local, statewide and
national models impacting Native American students. Native SOAR engages undergraduates in an academic
course and in the community through mentorship of middle and high school students, all while providing a
context of culture to give students a place on campus that feels like home. The Native American Science &
Engineering Program (NASEP) engages undergraduates in a similar mentorship that goes beyond college
access and works to introduce students to the academic and career pathways available via STEM. The two
programs are intentional in introducing undergraduates to Native American mentors and leaders.

What is the reason for maintaining this project?
Early Academic Outreach, in partnership with the UA Center for the Study of Higher Education from the
College of Education, is asking to maintain funding to ensure that both these program continue to impact the
recruitment and retention of one of our most critical student populations. Native SOAR and NASEP have been
cited as contributing to the recruitment, retention and success of Native American students, a critical
population that is underrepresented on campus and that has historically had lower rates of retention and
graduation. The partnership does not want to lose out on these impactful programs. Additional years of SSF
funding, allow us to continue to diversify the program’s funding streams. In just the last 6 months, Microsoft
and Bosch, both industry partners have committed one-year funding for NASEP, with the possibility of
extended funding after the first year. Native SOAR has also been included in funding proposals.

Nearly 80% of proposed funds will support the employment of current undergraduate and graduate students,
while operational dollars allow those students to have deep engagement opportunities on-campus, in the
community, and always with their culture in mind. The use of funding from SSF places the primary impact of
awarded dollars on current students, with a nice secondary impact on future students.

Native SOAR Graduate Assistant
Support would allow for hiring one .50 FTE graduate student to coordinate, plan, recruit, execute and assess
the Fall & Spring 3-unit Native SOAR Course (HED397C) and overall service learning program. The graduate
assistant will: 1) organize two-tiered mentoring model (described below) both within local and rural high
schools and connecting with the University and community for mentors and 2) Plan two campus visits,
inclusive of Native American College Day to invite local and rural families to become acquainted with the
University and its incorporation of cultural resources toward the success of all students.

Native SOAR Mentors
Support would allow for hiring of twenty (20) undergraduate mentors each semester. Through Native SOAR,
undergraduates learn about college access and take on “change-maker” positions where they are sent out to
local and rural schools to mentor Native American middle and high school students. In the program’s two-tier
mentoring model, the undergraduates are also mentored by current graduate students and professionals, from
within the Tucson and University community. Culture is at the heart of both mentoring tiers. Native SOAR
draws from Secatero’s (2009) American Indian Well-Being Model (described below). Through mentoring and
an embeddedness in culture, Native SOAR contributes both to the recruitment and retention of Native
American students on campus, as evidenced by a published Data Byte (December 2016, Student Affairs
Assessment & Research).
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NASEP Graduate Assistant
Support would allow for hiring one .50 FTE graduate student to coordinate, plan, recruit, execute and assess four components of NASEP. The graduate assistant will plan 1) a residential, one-week, 80-hour STEM summer program serving 24 high school student participants, 2) a university-level research opportunity for the high school participants, 3) college knowledge, financial aid, and scholarship support, and 4) a community workshop series that engages families in college planning by taking the university into a Native community.

NASEP STEM Mentors
Support would allow hiring of seven (7) undergraduate STEM Mentors, who would have the opportunity to facilitate activities for students in the K-12 system. Undergraduates will gain workshop facilitation skills, public speaking, and social justice training as they work with youth and families to support and further their college aspirations. Incorporation of Secatero’s Well-Being Model frames college preparation and an introduction to STEM pathways through eight pillars that include Spiritual, Cultural, Professional, Social, Mental, Emotional, Physical, and Environmental Well-Beings that honors the student holistically.

Native SOAR & NASEP Operational and Travel
Most of the proposal’s funding (nearly 80%) is focused on current students. Operational dollars allow for employed students to be fingerprinted (necessary for work with minors) and engaged in going out to schools in the community or bringing schools onto the UA campus to enhance the mentoring relationship.

How many students will be directly impacted?
Native SOAR – 40 undergraduate students will be engaged in 45 hours of the Native SOAR course and 45 hours of community mentorship resulting in 3,600 hours of engagement. NASEP – 7 undergraduates engaged in 90 hours of working with students and families resulting in 630 engagement hours. Two graduate students will be engaged in 1,280 total hours of college access work. Native Rise represents over 5,500 total hours engaging nearly 50 Native American undergraduate and graduate students. The College of Education has funded an additional graduate assistant position for Native SOAR and both programs will continue to engage volunteers from the UA Student Chapter of AISES (American Indian Science & Engineering Society).

How the success of this initiative will be assessed?
EO partners with the Student Affairs Assessment & Research office to assess the impact of the SSF funding. This proposal is a direct response to that office’s Data Byte Report (Dec. 2016) entitled “Access and Retention of Native American Students Is On the Rise, where both Native SOAR and NASEP were referenced as contributing to a 16% increase in recruitment and a 7% increase to retention. Both of these increases are specifically for Native American students. Graduate students will also be engaged in assessment and we will call upon existing partnerships with the faculty of the Center for the Study of Higher Education. We have preliminary findings that student engagement in community outreach can positively impact their own resilience in college, as indicated by 100% retention of freshmen Native SOAR mentors.

How are you ensuring the longevity of this program?
EO and the College of Education both have a history of establishing on- and off-campus partnerships, seeking funding sources (such as the Student Services Fee), and strategically utilizing funding sources to sustain initiatives that were originally grant-funded. The Assistant Dean for Research Development and Outreach from the College of Education is committed to assist in finding more sustainable sources of funding. Partnerships and multiple funding sources will be evident in the Other Projected Sources of Funding in the budget, where we indicate that the grant funding would be matched with office, campus, and off-campus contributions. Student Services Fee would provide 63% of the funding, with other matching funding sources making up the remaining 37% of the costs associated with the successful implementation of these programs. We also have worked with Admissions, the College of Education and UA Tribal Relations in hopes of having both programs considered for institutional funding associated with the priorities of the university’s new strategic plan.