

# Diné Artisans + Authors Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) 2024 Fellowship Program

Final Report - June 30, 2024



**Crystal Littleben and Shaina A. Nez**

Diné College, Shiprock, New Mexico

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## INTRODUCTION

This final report is to present outcomes and deliverables of the proposed fellowship program, Diné Artisans + Authors Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) Fellowship program supports the development of allying emerging and established creativepreneurs in New Mexico with the provision of professional services and experiences. DAACBI is a Navajo-based program intended to create equity in the cultural arts and literary publishing world.

The fellowship program seeks to collaborate with institutional programs such as the *Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) emphases in Creative Writing (CW), Navajo Silversmithing, and Navajo Weaving*. We partnered with Navajo-based programs and nonprofits include *Navajo Cultural Arts Program (NCAP), Abalone Mountain Press (AMP), Poetic Fire, LLC, NDN Girls Book Club, LLC, The Many Nations team* based at the Pima County Library in Tucson, Arizona, *Words of the People* based in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and *4Kinship* based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

DAACBI is housed at Diné College's extended campus in Shiprock, New Mexico, under the supervision of BFA CW faculty member, Shaina A. Nez, and NCAP's program manager, Crystal Littleben.

## SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOMES

The DAACBI 2024 Fellowship began at the end of January 2024, with sixteen fellows selected to participate in one artistic discipline in either Hybrid-Writing, Navajo Silversmithing, or Navajo Weaving. Four artistic discipline mentors were hired to teach the respective disciplines for 8-9 weeks in the second phase of the fellowship program. Here are the fellow selections in January 2024 along with mentor information and alum who've completed the program in June 2024.

*January 2024*

**Hybrid-Writing fellows working with mentors, Amber McCrary and Byron Aspaas:** Danielle Burbank, Danielle Emerson, Shannel Garcia, Christopher Hoshnic, Lambert Martin Jr., Akeemi Martinez, Roanna Shebala, and Cara Talamante.

**Navajo Silversmithing fellows working with mentor, Anthony Goldrooth:** Dalton Arviso, Catherine Harrison, Rhonda Lane, and Samuel Sumpter.

**Navajo Weaving fellows working with mentor, Venancio Aragon:** Brandon Kelly, Lindsey Clark, Jeffrey Begay, and Pamela Harrison.

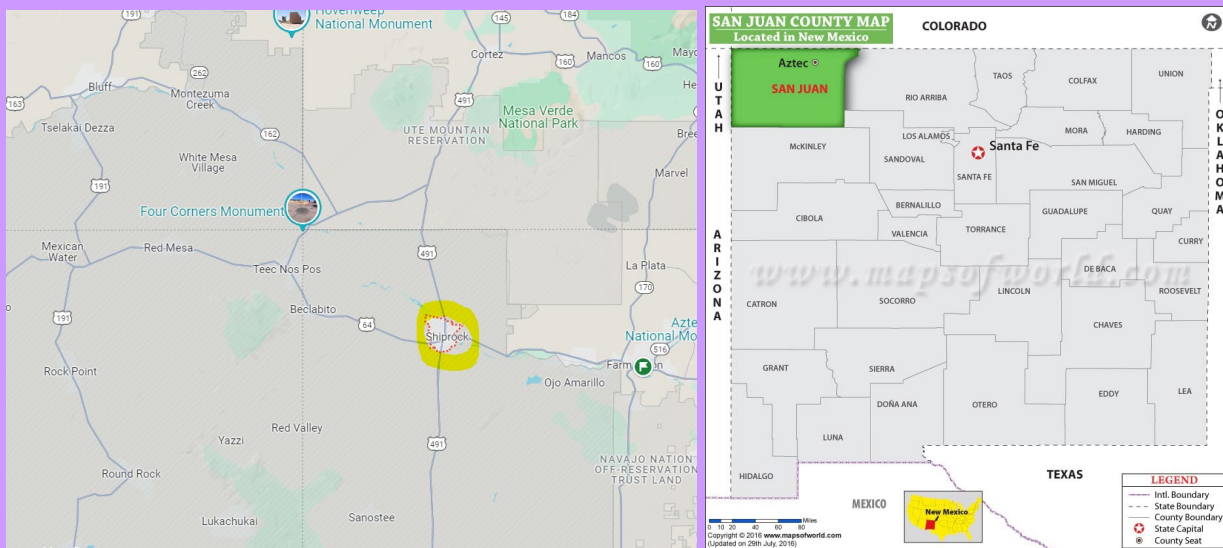
*June 2024*

**Alum of DAACBI fellowship:** Fifteen out of the original sixteen fellows completed instruction,

services to the Navajo communities, and presented at the *DAACBI Virtual Community Exhibition* on June 11, 2024. Alum received a \$2,000.00 stipend, a certificate of completion, toolkits and books, donated care packages from Native organizations such as *Abalone Mountain Press*, *Words of the People*, and *Many Nations team*, and DAACBI merchandise such as a t-shirt and accessorized custom DAACBI logo clothing pin.

## COUNTY/LOCATION OF PROJECT

Shiprock is a town located in San Juan County, part of the northwestern region of the state of New Mexico. Shiprock, also known as Tse Bida’i, which translates into the English language as *Winged Rock*, is located on the Navajo Nation.



## ANTICIPATED JOB CREATION

The DAACBI program is a paid fellowship opportunity for emerging artisans and writers who identify as Navajo/Diné, “originally from or currently reside” in the State of New Mexico, and can commit to 3-4 hours a week for the duration of sixteen weeks.

Fellows received a stipend of \$2,000.00 in two installments. The first installment of \$1,000.00 was granted when fellows completed their artistic discipline instruction with mentor(s), and the second installment was granted when fellows completed their projects, properly communicated with their mentors, performed service to their communities individually or collectively, and presented during the virtual community exhibition on June 11, 2024, from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm.

*Completed projects from alum will be compiled into a Fellowship Hybrid-Cultural Arts Anthology published by Abalone Mountain Press. Fellows and Mentors will receive additional printed*

*copies to use for any arts, fine arts, cultural and literary arts job applications as related experience to the field. Abalone Mountain Press is a mobilized non-profit organization based in Tuba City, Arizona. Earnings from the Fellowship Hybrid-Cultural Arts anthology will be labeled and considered as a circle-back initiative, meaning earnings from the anthology will go back into the non-profit organization for only the continuation of re-printing and re-promoting the anthology. The circle-back initiative was created to sustain the existence of Indigenous and Native-led nonprofit entities. DAACBI fellowship program believes in the camaraderie of banding with other Native-led nonprofits and organizations for kinship, autonomy, respect, and reciprocity, key elements to building up our Native and Indigenous collaborators and their respective businesses. Additional copies of the printed anthology will be purchased for institutional use only, such as submitting the anthology to the institutional libraries at Tsaile-Main Campus and Shiprock-South Campus, and to the Navajo Nation library location in Window Rock, Arizona.*

## **EXPLANATION OF THE COMMUNITY**

### *About Shiprock, New Mexico*

According to the 2022 Census Bureau report, the Shiprock community has about a population of 8,275 people. The Shiprock community is part of San Juan County in the State of New Mexico, and as a town of the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation is approximately 27,000 miles long located in three states (AZ, NM, and UT) with a total population of nearly 400,000 tribally-enrolled members.

### *About Diné College (DC)*

DC is the first tribally controlled and accredited collegiate institution in the United States. Established in 1968 as Navajo Community College, it was later renamed Diné College. Today, DC serves a predominantly Navajo student population, in addition to non-Navajo students. The College offers General Education courses that provide students with a high-quality experience while earning various Certificate as well as Associate, Bachelor, and Master degree programs in the areas important to the economic, political, environmental, and social development of the Navajo Nation. Diné College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604-1411, (800) 621-7440, [www.hlcommission.org](http://www.hlcommission.org).

### *About the Bachelor of Fine Arts Program*

The Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree is a four-year art degree encompassing a variety of media. Students may choose from one of six areas of emphasis:

- Creative Writing
- Digital Photography
- Graphic Arts
- Navajo Silversmithing
- Navajo Weaving
- Traditional Painting

The Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program promotes Diné culture, creativity, and excellence in the creation of art. The program supports and promotes personal development in the visual, traditional, and literary arts. The DEP (Diné Educational Philosophy) Paradigm of Nitsáhákees (Thinking), Nahat’á (Planning), liná (Living and Achieving), and Siihasin (Evaluation and Competency) is imbedded in the approach to teaching and learning.

The BFA program prepares majors with the necessary knowledge skills, confidence, and values to succeed as independent artists or graduate students within an MFA or educational program. It offers Diné student the opportunity to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree while residing on the Diné nation.

*About Diné Artisans + Authors Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI)*

The DAACBI Fellowship benefits the State of New Mexico, as well as the local creative industry stakeholders and entrepreneurs, by partnering with Diné College in Shiprock, New Mexico, a tribal higher education institution. The BFA programs and its faculty understand the challenges of emerging artisans and authors establishing themselves in the arts-related field. It is known emerging creatives in New Mexico are competing with other established creatives in other states and parts of the world. Emerging creatives still need growth within mature, integrated, and developed creative enterprises within the scope of fellowship program opportunities. To exercise the wealth of culture and arts effectively in mainstream environments, New Mexico’s emerging creatives in the northwest region need more services, support, and paid opportunities. DAACBI becomes the bridge for underrepresented artisans and voices from the northwest region of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation.

## **EXPLANATION OF THE STAKEHOLDER**

Ensuring DAACBI’s success, our fellowship program partnered exclusively with the following institutional support, local nonprofits, state and individual businesses, and community affiliations:

1. *Diné College programs:* School of Arts & Humanities/BFA Programs, Navajo Cultural Arts Program (NCAP), Senator John Pinto Library on Shiprock-South campus, Marketing

and Communications Department, and the Grants department.

2. *Nonprofit Organizations:* Abalone Mountain Press, Poetic Fire, LLC, Words of the People, LLC, and NDN Girls Book Club, LLC.
3. *State & Individual Businesses:* 4Kinship, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Rio Grande Jewelry Supply Company and Arquilino Aragon, Weaver and Loom Maker based in the Upper Fruitland, New Mexico.
4. *Community Affiliations:* The Many Nations team based at Pima County Library in Tucson, Arizona, and Shiprock Chapter House (Public outreach only).

## EXPLANATION OF INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION

The New Mexico Economic Department's (NMEDD) Creative Industry Division (CID) are a phenomenal team with Shani Harvie, and their key consultants Mike Young, a poet and member of Creative Startups and Raashan Ahmad, an arts commissioner for the City of Santa Fe. Together, they helped showcase DAACBI's fellowship program in numerous light of the creative industry division specifically from localized and state lenses, such as the following endeavors:

- Creative Startups traveled the state of New Mexico to talk with the 18 projects funded by the New Mexico Creative Industries Division. On January 25, 2024, I met with both Mike and Raashan to talk about how the Creative Industries division could help more Native communities in the state of New Mexico, and other related questions key to advancing, promoting, and sustaining Navajo and Native-specific literary and cultural arts programming like DAACBI.
- Instagram Livestream with Creative Startups, Mike Young, DAACBI co-director, Shaina Nez and former Albuquerque Poet Laureate, Hakim Bellamy: On April 19, I collaborated with poets, Mike Young and Hakim Bellamy to talk about the role of literary industries and entrepreneurships in driving positive changes in our communities.
- New Mexico Creative Industries Week, June 3-9, 2024, Virtual Programming: This week-long virtual event and programming was dedicated to New Mexico's creativity and innovation as the first-ever event hosted by the CID team. Programming included 30+ speakers, entrepreneurs, investors, creatives, and technologists connecting and engaging in a wide range of topics related to economic opportunities, organizations, and individuals. *DAACBI participated on June 3<sup>rd</sup> during the Creative Industries Grant Awards – Celebrating the First 18 projects Event hosted by Shani Harvie, Justice/Equity/Diversity/Inclusion Coordinator, NMEDD.*
- Invitation sent to CID and Creative Startups to attend DAACBI's Virtual Community Exhibition on June 11, 2024.

## OVERALL ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Diné Artisans + Authors Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) will provide a sixteen-week fellowship into four phases: 1) Nitsáhákees the first phase included outreaching and promoting the fellowship's call for applications, review of applications with Co-Directors and Mentors, and final selections and notifications sent to the selected fellows; 2) Nahat'á the second phase includes the 8-9 weeks of instruction between the mentors and fellows; 3) liná the third phase was for the fellows to volunteering and completing any number of services to community in a local capacity ranging from juried market applications and booth setup, guest readings, and connecting with community members and with DAACBI members; and 4) Sihasin the fourth phase is the final planning and execution of the DAACBI's first ever virtual community exhibition with special guests, Tanaya Winder (Poetic Fire, LLC) and Amy Denet Deal (4Kinship). On June 11, 2024, from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm, the DAACBI fellows and special guests came together to present their completed final project work and share experiences for literary and cultural arts appreciation and sustainment. The virtual exhibition was co-hosted by Crystal Littleben, Shaina Nez, and the four mentors, Amber McCrary, Byron Aspaas, Venancio Aragon, and Anthony Goldtooth.

**Request for No-Cost Extension:** We request to expend the remaining funds by executing the final phase of design, application, and marketing of the forthcoming printed DAACBI fellowship program anthology. Completed projects from the fifteen alum will be compiled into a fellowship anthology published by Abalone Mountain Press. A proper Book Launch Celebration will be planned and executed during AY 2024-2025. Other institutional endeavors such as creating a separate website to showcasing the recording of the DAACBI Virtual Community Exhibition and a photo gallery of the completed projects will be in collaboration with the DC Marketing & Communications department. ***With the granted extension, DAACBI will submit a continuing final report by November 15, 2024.***

**Benefits of the printed anthology:** Fellows and Mentors will receive additional printed copies to use for any arts, fine arts, cultural and literary arts job applications and as related experience to the field. Abalone Mountain Press is a mobilized non-profit organization based in Tuba City, Arizona. Earnings from the Fellowship anthology will be labeled and considered as a circle-back initiative, meaning earnings from the anthology will go back into the non-profit organization for only the continuation of re-printing and re-promoting the anthology. The circle-back initiative was created to sustain the existence of Indigenous and Native-led nonprofit entities. DAACBI fellowship program believes in the camaraderie of banding with other Native-led nonprofits and organizations for kinship, autonomy, respect, and reciprocity, key elements to building up our Native and Indigenous collaborators and their respective businesses. Additional copies of the printed anthology will be purchased for institutional use only, such as submitting the anthology to the institutional libraries at Tsaille-Main Campus and Shiprock-South Campus, and to the



Navajo Nation library location in Window Rock, Arizona.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

**Important note:** To view more photographs, reels, and initiatives from our collaborators, visit and follow Diné Artisans + Authors Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) on Instagram! @daacbi\_fellowship\_nm



Above: DAACBI Co-Directors, Crystal Littleben (Cultural Arts) and Shaina A. Nez (Writing). Below: Advertisement of the DAACBI Fellowship Program – Call for Fellow Applications!

**SEEKING 16 Diné Artisans and Authors**  
Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) 2024 FELLOWS

**Amber McCrary**  
Diné Creative Writing Mentor

**Byron Aspaas**  
Diné Creative Writing Mentor

**Venancio Aragon**  
Diné Weaving Mentor

**Anthony Goldtooth**  
Silversmithing Mentor

**Paid Fellowship with Artist/Author Materials Included!**

**Deadline to Apply: January 12, 2024!**

Application Link: <https://forms.gle/cu35NFaxteZgSTvq8>

EDD  
Education Development Department

Diné College  
Navajo Nation

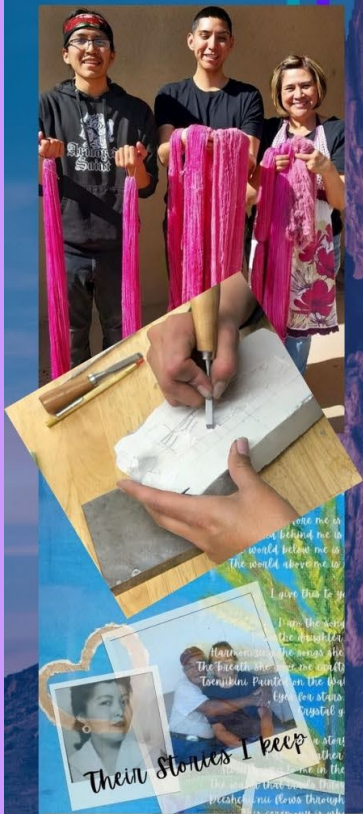


# DINÉ ARTISANS + AUTHORS PRESENTS

## VIRTUAL EXHIBITION CELEBRATION

JUNE 11 + 10AM TO 4PM

WITH SPECIAL  
GUEST SPEAKERS



Join us for this virtual  
celebration featuring  
our guest speakers  
and presentations  
from our fellows

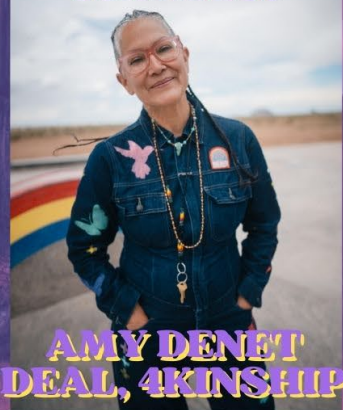


Use QR Code above  
for Event registration  
or the link below!

[https://dinecollege.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_G9D1Be1T6e9VT6OXjap2w](https://dinecollege.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_G9D1Be1T6e9VT6OXjap2w)



TANAYA  
WINDER, POETIC  
FIRE LLC.

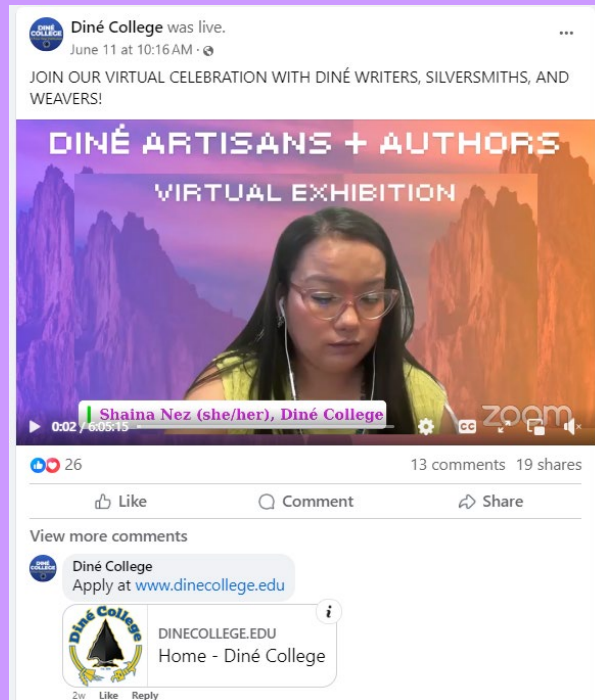


AMY DENET  
DEAL, 4KINSHIP



Advertisement of the DAACBI Virtual Community Exhibition

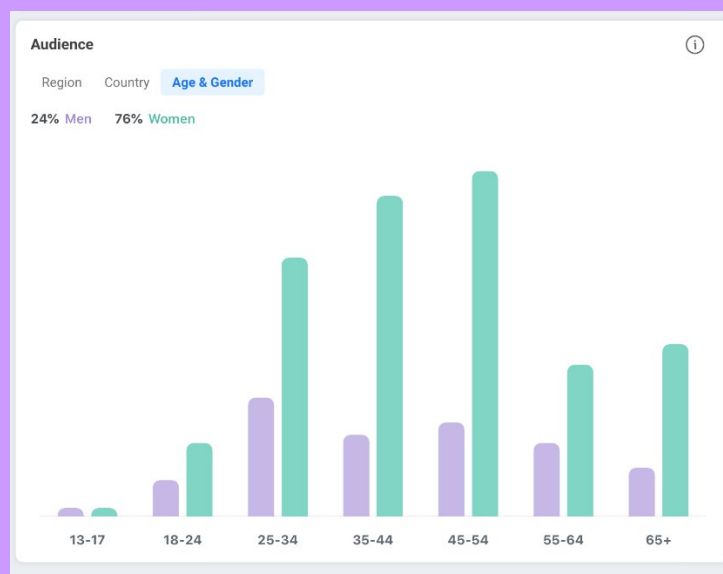
## VIRTUAL COMMUNITY EXHIBITION via Facebook Livestream!



### Livestream available on Diné Colleges Facebook page

*JOIN OUR VIRTUAL CELEBRATION WITH DINÉ WRITERS, SILVERSMITHS, AND WEAVERS!*

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/h2MspaKmwmsBb5mL/>



**Livestream Audience Report by Age & Gender**

## EXPLANATION & RESULT OF DELIVERABLES

### Copy of Revised Timeline for the Diné Artisans and Authors for Capacity Building Institute (DAACBI) 2024 Fellowship

#### **PHASE COMPLETED - Nitsáhákees - First Phase (November 2023 – January 2024):**

##### ***Call for Fellowship Applications***

- Application Deadline/Extension: Monday, January 23, 2024 by 11:59 p.m. (MT)
- Review applications: On the week of January 24-30, 2024
- Final selections/notifications sent out: Wednesday, January 31, 2024

#### **PHASE COMPLETED - Nahat'á - Second Phase (March-April 2024):** ***8-9 weeks of teaching fellows (all emphases)***

Consultants: Amber McCrary, Byron Aspaas, Venancio Aragon, and Anthony Goldtooth  
Instruction dates: March-May 2024

**16 DAACBI Fellows will receive first installments of \$1,000.00 for the end and completion of instruction. Fellows must submit their final projects to the mentors.**

#### **PHASE COMPLETED - Iiná - Third Phase (April-May 2024):** ***Fellows will perform services to communities in various capacities***

1. Presenting and/or reading work (Writing Fellows)
  - NDN Girls Book Club Book Drop Finale at DC Shiprock Library
  - Northern Arizona Book Festival 2024 in Flagstaff, Arizona
2. Presenting work (Silversmithing and Weaving Fellows)
  - Native American Art Market at DC Tsaile Main Campus, May 17-19, 2024

#### **PHASE IN-PROGRESS - Siihasin - Fourth Phase (May-June 2024):** ***Virtual Community Exhibition Planning*** ***DAACBI Anthology Planning***

##### **Virtual Community Exhibition – June 11, 2024**

- Fellow presentations: Silversmithing, Weaving, and Writing
- Additional Presentations by 4Kinship Amy Denet Deal and Tanaya Winder and guest for Silversmiths.
- Multicultural Community Poem – call for submissions – led by Christopher Hoshnic and Roanna Shebala
- DC Facebook Livestream
- Zoom Webinar Recording for new DAACBI website

## **After submitting June report to Creative Industries Division (CID) – DAACBI Anthology Work with Abalone Mountain Press - (Summer to Fall 2024):**

### **Anthology Review:** all emphases

- Typesetting (Amber)
- Fellows review stage 1
- Editors stage 1 (Amber, Crystal, and Shaina)
- Fellows review stage 2
- Editors stage 2 (Amber, Crystal, and Shaina)

### **Abalone Mountain Press (Owned by Amber McCrary, Tuba City)**

### **Printed Anthology contract: \$5,000.00**

### **Deadline for pages:**

- Theme/Title for the Anthology: TBD (base on a common theme for artwork and writing)
- Anthology Editors: DAACBI Co-Directors and Amber McCrary
- Foreword: Written by DAACBI Mentors (Amber McCrary, Byron Aspaas, Venancio Aragaon, and Anthony Goldtooth)
- Introduction (Written by Grant Co-Directors)
- Instructors page (headshots and bios included)
- Fellows page (headshots and bios included)
- Co-Directors page (headshots and bios included)
- Photographer : Bryan Roessel

### **Anthology Book Launch Celebration during AY 2024-2025 at Diné College – Shiprock Campus**

**Explanation and Result of Deliverables:** We request a no-cost extension to complete the final phase Siihasin. This request will help us to expend the remaining funds by executing the final phase of design, application, and marketing of the forthcoming printed DAACBI fellowship program anthology. Completed projects from the fifteen alum will be compiled into a fellowship anthology published by Abalone Mountain Press. A proper Book Launch Celebration will be planned and executed during AY 2024-2025. Other institutional endeavors such as creating a separate website to showcasing the recording of the DAACBI Virtual Community Exhibition, the Multicultural Community Poem, and a photo gallery of the completed projects will be in collaboration with the DC Marketing & Communications department. With the granted extension,

DAACBI will submit a continuing final report by November 15, 2024.

## CONCLUSION

Seventy-five percent of the fellowship work was completed (three out of the four phases completed), and the last twenty-five percent of the anthology work will be completed before the final reporting deadline of November 15, 2024. Designing, applying, and marketing this first ever artisans and authors fellowship for specifically Navajo people has been memorable. To offer another fellowship in the future would be ideally beneficial for the next generation of artists and voices in the state of New Mexico and we would love to expand the application pool to our neighboring Native, Indigenous, and POC communities for further outreach and support. It would be beneficial to also have another partnering institution or nonprofit, like San Juan College and Abalone Mountain Press again, to be the second-in-command and point of contact for another funded grant term.

The DAACBI Fellowship program in its first year will continue to improve the structure of the 16-week program setting, with some of the following suggestions received verbally and/or by email by the public: hybrid-setting of offering mentorship/instruction, additional weekly group meetings with all fellows and mentors, offering online and/or in-person workshops with special guests, more hands-on workshops that deal with the business aspects of selling artwork and publishing, increasing of the amount of projects for a printed anthology, professional/ethical practices and mannerisms during the duration of the fellowship program included in the orientation, and having a chance for fellows to swap mentorship in a different discipline boosting their skills and training (e.g. having silversmiths and weavers write creatively about their artwork and vice versa, etc.).

At this time, we would like to thank the New Mexico Creative Industries division for offering the call for project applications in its first grant term. This funding has inspired and motivated the fifteen alum from the DAACBI Fellowship program to further their skills and training in becoming successful artisans, creativepreneurs, and authors in the state of New Mexico. In no particular order, we would also like to extend gratitude to the many individuals and organizations that have provided our fellows and programming with opportunities: Abalone Mountain Press, DAACBI mentors Amber, Byron, Venancio, and Anthony, Navajo Cultural Arts Program (NCAP), Native American Art Market at DC, Words of the People, 4Kinship, The Many Nations team, NDN Girls Book Club, Tanaya Winder, Amy Denet Deal, and many more that have participated in the Multicultural Community Poem endeavor co-hosted by our writing fellows, Christopher Hoshnic and Roanna Shebala.