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The Climate Change Leadership Institute
Robb Hirsch
911 Stagecoach Road
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Robb,

Young people are the future, and, too often, their abilities are neglected, unacknowledged, or misunderstood. We know, through our work in the Santa Fe Indian School Community Based Education Program, that there is very little youth cannot do if they are given the support and respect they deserve, and a meaningful context in which to apply their significant, and in many ways superior mental, intuitive, and creative capabilities.

When they are given the responsibility to apply themselves to problems that are current, relevant, and important to them and their communities the learning is exponentially superior, giving them true experiences on which to base their interests. We have seen that these experiences have led many of them to pursue further education in related fields and return to their communities to apply themselves to creating solutions for the challenges their communities face.

It has been my deeply gratifying experience to be an education facilitator for these young people, and to be able to provide interdisciplinary instruction in the complex and intangible reality of climate change, and the myriad scientific, social, technological, legal, political and personal challenges and opportunities it poses for the environment, biodiversity, and all people. I am deeply appreciative and honored that CCLI has chosen me to receive this recognition for work that is so interesting and joyful to carry out; and, on behalf of the SFIS Green Team, thank you very much for your monetary award, which has given us great encouragement, and increases the range of possibilities of the work we can do to make our campus more energy sustainable.

Sincerely,

Mark Ericson