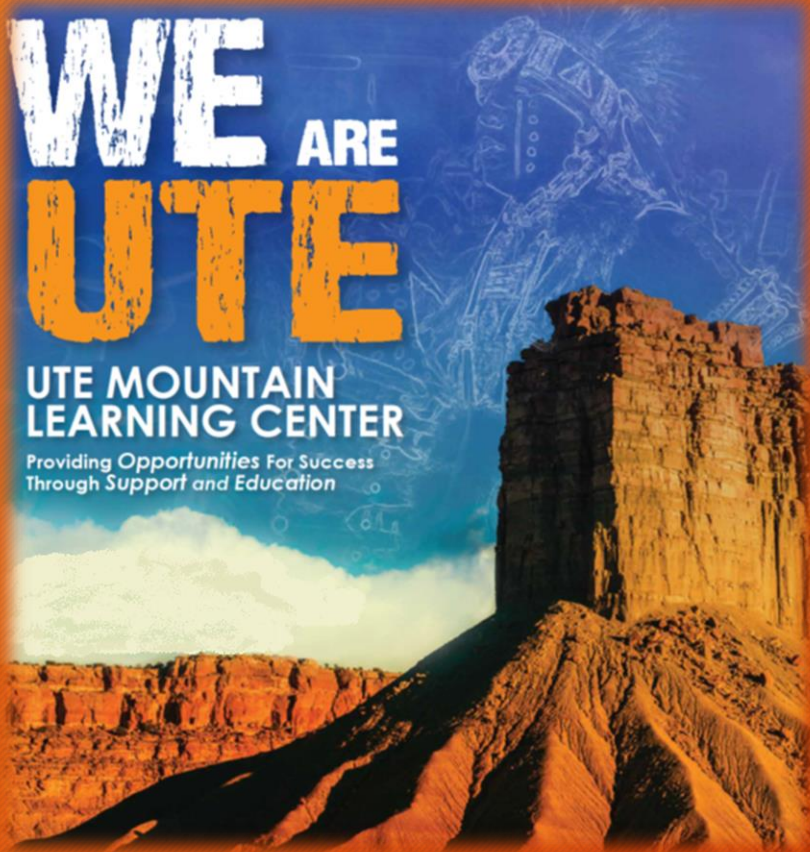


# HPOG at Ute Mountain

HPOG Roundtable 2019

Denver, Colorado

# HPOG Roundtable 2019



The HPOG grant was implemented at Ute Mountain Ute Tribal reservation in 2015. It spans a region of about 150,000 square miles, with widely separated townships and a population (less than 60,000) sparsely settled over remote rural areas.

From the start our grant aimed at some radical “innovations”: internet-based training options, cross-networking through employers, intensive co-enrollment of adult GED students, heavy investment in “case manager” personnel, etc. Many of these have proven difficult to activate...

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The historical realities of our region—chronic prejudice and social fear, hardened apathy and political entitlements, physical remoteness, a culture of economic “dependency”—have proven the old maxim: *the enemy of change is not resistance, but inertia.*

Despite much and often debilitating turnover within our HPOG initiative, however, certain key themes repeat:

- *What attracts me is talking with students—their hopes, their curiosities, their interests even beyond school... I like ‘being there’ for them if they need to vent, get advice, share worries...*
- *It means so much to me to see them graduate. Knowing what all they’ve been through, seeing them triumph and knowing I helped...*

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- *Having one of my students ask, “well how did you get through it?” not only made me realize how far I’ve come, myself, the struggles I overcame, but that I could reassure HER and make sure she wouldn’t be alone.*

What’s exhilarating for us—as HPOG staff and coaches—are the relationships. “Being there” for clients’ progress and success.

Not surprisingly, too, “relationships” are the key element of all traditional Ute teaching; our collective wellbeing depends on how well we connect and support each other

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## The Practice of Case Management (the germ of relationship-building)

What it looks like now:

- During intake, clients meet and engage with HPOG staff about goals and plans
- Assigned to a “case manager,” the client knows she has somebody to call on if problems or complications arise
- Since clients are often “off rez,” case managers send out or phone reminders and check ups to students
- The case manager works on tracking their progress in training, identifying employment prospects, providing tools or reimbursements, etc.

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The Practice of Case Management (what we want it to be now):

- High-frequency, face-to-face interaction (twice weekly)—not always with an agenda, just “being there” and understanding the student’s wellbeing
- Through conversations clients gain ever-increasing trust—in the process, in peers, in advisors—and thus use HPOG options better.
- Their Case Manager becomes their champion, their ally against doubts/fears
- Students “cases” become the routine focus of weekly HPOG meetings, allowing us to share difficulties and successes, get reinforcement and insights, bond
- Students become “first links” to family, relations, friends, that expand the HPOG impact and reputation

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How will this innovation improve results?

1. Help meet agency vision, to become essential refuge for adults trying to improve career and life options
2. Connect staff to community welfare, to each other by shared altruism/passion, to team achievement
3. Exercise “trust” in practical ways that can influence affiliate programs, improve host infrastructure
4. Prove to clients that success in HPOG is only a first step in their potential

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Expanding the practice of trust, of loyalty and advocacy of students in HPOG could be transformative for the community.

Personal connection is often seen as opposed to “professional” habit—in this case, it might be leveraged to become its foundation.

Education that succeeds through relationships upholds cherished cultural traditions.

