



**RUNNING STRONG**  
for American Indian Youth®  
American Indian Youth Running Strong®

# 2017-2018 Annual Report



## Dear friends of American Indian Youth,

We at American Indian Youth Running Strong proudly present our 2017-2018 Annual Report as a snapshot to share the good work that you make possible. To save trees, look for more details, photos, and video on our website, **IndianYouth.org!** Together, we invest in Native community-led efforts to provide safe water and housing, healthy food and organic gardens, and essentials like backpacks filled with new school supplies, warm winter coats and boots, and dental care for their children. We empower Native



children to dream, share in their culture and language, and grow up healthy members of the next generation, **RUNNING STRONG** and proud of who they are.

Running Strong was cofounded over 25 years ago by Billy Mills (Oglala Lakota) as a “giveaway” to Native people in celebration of his 10,000 m. Olympic Gold Medal. Billy still travels the country to empower Native youth to not give up and believe in the power of dreams. In 2014, we launched Dreamstarter to mark the 50th anniversary of Billy’s winning dream by identifying 10 Native youth nationwide each year to receive a \$10,000 grant to make a dream come true in their community. In 2017 and 2018, we launched 20 more Dreamstarters focused on bringing their dreams to reality in Education (2017) and Science and the Environment (2018). We cannot feel more proud of these amazing youth leaders!

Our work continuously adapts to meet the needs identified by the Native communities we serve. Each year we face unique challenges. Rather than be discouraged, we seek new opportunities to help even more Native children. We strive for excellence and are committed to completing our mission with efficiency, transparency, and integrity.

We are in a time of rejuvenated strength in Native communities today. As you read here and online, we hope you share our pride in the incredibly important work that we do **TOGETHER** to empower and care for these children. With Billy and all of us here at Running Strong, we thank you for your generous hearts and loyalty to our cause. You honor us with your support.

**Billy Mills, (Oglala Lakota)**  
**National Spokesperson**



## Growing Strong – A Community Garden at a Time



On the reservation, many families and children lack nutritious food and fresh produce because of poverty and geographic isolation. Running Strong partners with community-based gardening programs to provide families with wholesome food, as well as teaching life skills and good nutrition.

## Supporting Dreams – Dreamstarter Young Adults and Teachers



Running Strong believes in the dreams of Native Youth: creating stronger communities, overcoming poverty, and building a better tomorrow for themselves and their families. Beginning in 2015, each year for 5 years the Dreamstarter program

will provide 10 exceptional Native American young people with \$10,000 grants to pursue their dreams. Dreamstarter Teachers was launched in 2017 to provide grants to meet an unmet classroom or school need and encourage Native students to follow their dreams.

## 'Tis the Season – Spreading Cheer



During the holiday season, Running Strong helps American Indian families celebrate in the joy of the season, providing holiday food boxes as well as "Toys for Tribes" to ensure that hundreds of children get exactly what they wished for.

## Follow Us



RunningStrongforAmericanIndianYouth



RunStrong4AIY



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## Smiling Strong – Dental Care for the Children



There is a dire need for proper dental care in Indian Country, particularly among young children. Running Strong's SmileStrong program provides thousands of children each year with a dental kit to take care of their teeth properly for three months, and a visit with a dental hygienist, many for the first time.

## Providing Hope – Caring for Native Children



Meeting basic needs of children is critical to success in school. Each year, Running Strong provides over 10,000 pairs of shoes and 5,000 backpacks to school-aged children, as well as hundreds of coats, boots, mittens and blankets to help children and their families survive the severe winters on the plains.

## Safe Housing



During the brutal winter months on the reservations, many Native American families cannot afford the cost of heat. Homes are often overcrowded and in need of serious repair – especially for the disabled. Running Strong is committed to providing safe and comfortable homes for children and their families, and the peace of mind it brings.

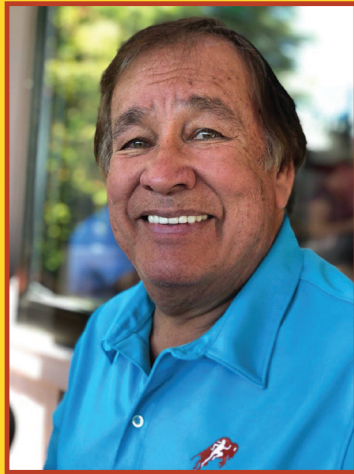
## Mni Wiconi – Water is Life



For many residents on Pine Ridge, access to potable water is virtually unattainable, as the cost to connect a home to the main water line is financially out of reach. Running Strong is working to connect running water to all families without water.

## Meet Billy Mills

Billy Mills, Oglala Lakota (Sioux), is Running Strong's National Spokesperson. Born and raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, Billy is an Olympic gold medalist and has dedicated his life to serving American Indian communities. Billy is a world-recognized humanitarian whose come-from-behind victory has been called one of the greatest moments in Olympic sports. Learn more at [IndianYouth.org](http://IndianYouth.org).



**Billy Mills**

## Board of Directors

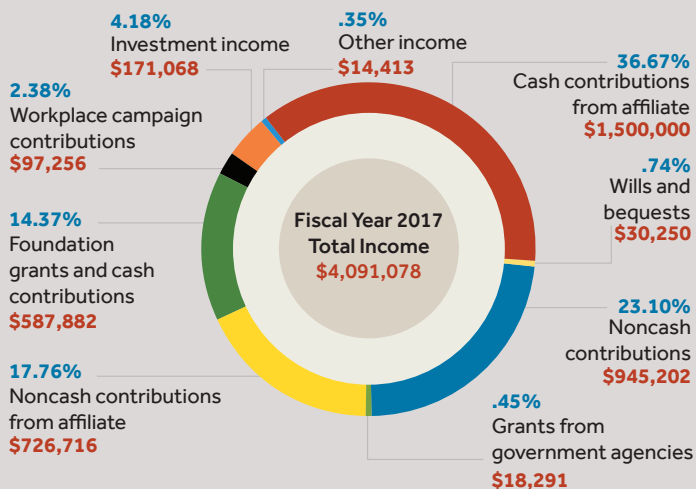
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**Dave Frank**, Fulfillment Manager  
**Kiera Parece**, Program Associate



### 2017 Financial Statement



### 2018 Financial Statement

