

Ho-Chunk Invests in Youth With Donation to New Green Education Center

Black River Falls, WI – A new Environmental Education Center will soon become a reality thanks to a large donation from the Ho-Chunk Nation and contributions from other local companies. The “green” building will provide an education facility within the Black River Falls School Forest.

“The Ho-Chunk Nation has proven to be a valuable asset and resource for the Black River Falls community,” said Quinn Robinson, BRAGS teacher. “With its donation, the Ho-Chunk Nation demonstrates its belief that the community’s best and most important natural resource is the youth of the community.”

The new education building will be built using “green” ideas being studied by the students of the Black River Area Green School (BRAGS), a Black River Falls School District charter school supported by the Ho-Chunk Nation. The BRAGS students and community members will plan and construct the building together.

“This new center will provide a unique, hands-on learning environment for the BRAGS students,” said Anne Thundercloud Ho-Chunk public relations officer. “The Ho-Chunk Nation is committed to investing in innovative green ideas, and this building will follow those ideals by using solar heat, wastewater treatment, and groundwater monitoring wells.”

The new Environmental Education Center will provide year-round classroom space for K-12 science students and community groups. The building is being designed so it can be expanded as a possible permanent home for BRAGS.

Black River Falls Mayor Ron Danielson and City Administrator William Arndt released the following statement about the new education center, “We believe that this school forest building would enhance the education of the students of the school district, the charter school, and will also benefit the greater community.” Along with the Ho-Chunk Nation and Black River Falls School District, Pipkin Electric, Fresh Start, Friends of the Black River, Halverson Plumbing, Knouric Enterprises, Guyer Construction, Brad and Anne Eberhardt, Milestone Materials, and Hoffman Construction have also donated materials, time or expertise to the project.



Photo caption: Black River Falls area students gather to thank Ho-Chunk Nation leaders for the generous donation to the new Environmental Education Center. *Pictured in the front row (left to right): Alex Koboski, Bella Blackdeer, Madison Eberhardt.*

Second Row: Jaron Thompson, Silas Cleveland, Ho-Chunk Nation District 1 Legislator Greg Blackdeer, Lucas Johnson, BRAGS Director Mark Weddig, and Ho-Chunk Nation District 1 Legislator Clarence Pettibone.

Third Row: Jacob Peterson, Chelsea Tucker, Dakota Knourek, BRAGS teacher Quinn Robinson, and Gerrid Greenwood.