

For release: July 25, 2019

For more information contact: Morgan Elliott at morgan@repairourworld.org; 303.887.1821

TIKKUN OLAM HELPS WOLF POINT RECRUIT TEACHERS, BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY
WOLF POINT, MONTANA – Do you want to help improve lives and strengthen a community? Tikkun Olam is looking for you. The Montana, Christian nonprofit is seeking K-8 teachers for the Wolf Point School District, and will even provide free housing.

Tikkun Olam’s mission is “bringing compassionate and inspiring people to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.” The goal is to create a supportive community to help indigenous children succeed.

Native American children in the U.S. face inordinate obstacles, and Wolf Point is no exception. Based on the Fort Peck Reservation, the community is 80 percent Native American. A recent *New York Times* article chronicles challenges, citing high rates of poverty, alcoholism, suicide, a 50 percent high school graduation rate, discipline issues, and a cycle of despair for many.

Tikkun Olam helps alleviate that despair by supporting organizations and people who are striving for a better community, according to founder and Chairman Morgan Elliott. Specifically, the organization purchases houses so that teachers have a place to live and is spearheading a foster care movement for children needing a home. They are also forging relationships with the tribal council, city leaders, and schools to provide a stable environment for youngsters.

In Wolf Point, Elliott says, “Many kids fall asleep at school because they can’t at home. They fall behind in their studies because of the burdens they carry.” However, Elliott knows that compassionate teachers make a difference. “Our teachers get engaged with our kids, helping with after-school activities and creating relationships to build our community.”

Elliott and Tikkun Olam are following her mother’s example. As a Wolf Point teacher, Jana Elliott mentored students outside of class, taking them fishing, organizing Easter egg hunts, and providing some of their everyday needs. She and husband Ken were foster parents for eight children before Jana passed away in a car accident in 2016. That year, Jana was named Foster Care Parent of the Year by Montana’s DPPHS, which has since renamed the award after Jana to honor her legacy and commitment to helping children.

Tikkun Olam (Hebrew for “repair the world”) was founded the following year to continue Jana’s work. “She loved kids and invited them into her life,” says Morgan Elliott. “The work and the people of Tikkun Olam are the best way to carry on my mom’s legacy.”

Olivia Hooper came to Wolf Point from the Midwest. She spent previous years working in downtown Chicago before serving as a kindergarten teacher and foster care parent with Tikkun Olam. She says, “Teachers by themselves are one, but they are many if we are able to add to the ripple effect that Jana started.”

The organization purchased its third house this year for educators and foster children, with help from Bozeman’s Gianforte Family Foundation and the Hamann Family Fund of Omaha, Nebraska. Elliott is hoping to fill it by fall with new teachers for the 2019-20 school year; ideally, a two-year teaching commitment is preferred. “The state offers provisional teaching licenses for individuals with a four-year degree. This has allowed us to recruit individuals of varying backgrounds.

Everyone, of course, has one main thing in common—they love our kids and feel called to serve,” she says.

“It’s an opportunity to have a good job and a safe, comfortable place to live in a great part of the country,” says Elliott. “And you’re going to make a greater impact in Wolf Point serving our kids than in a typical corporate job,” she says.

For more information on Tikkun Olam, available housing, and paid, professional teaching opportunities in Wolf Point, visit repairourworld.org.