The Sitting Bull College GED Program deserves this nomination for Most Significant Innovation. This is a clear-eyed solution to a problem; how to help tribal members complete GED testing and certification, so they can be employed in tribal enterprises. At the same time, the program helps nine local AmeriCorps members who are often tribal members going to college. They acquire experience, training, professional development, and are part of the first Native Community Development (NCD) curriculum in the United States. This innovative program gives 90 hours of training in the GED process, areas of Reasoning Through Language Arts; Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies.

The Sitting Bull GED Program addresses a community need that affects a high proportion of local tribal members; the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe had enacted regulations requiring a GED for tribal employment; approximately 1800 adult tribal members could not meet this requirement, and at the same time unemployment is extremely high, and per capita income about $13,000/year. This positive program increased the number of GED graduates every year, by matching AmeriCorps members as tutors, with all GED applicants, at three sites. Previously only seven people received their GED each year; now it almost sixteen a year, a 115% increase. (In 2017, 18 GED students graduated!).

We hope you will consider this program for Most Significant innovation. It is a Win-Win-Win for everyone; the AmeriCorps members get help to go to college; they help students pass the GED, and the GED graduates can now have a chance at employment with their tribe, the largest employer in the area.