



# language legacies

## ENDANGERED LANGUAGE FUND MAKES TEN GRANT AWARDS FOR 2009

The Endangered Language Fund is pleased to announce grant recipients for 2009. Ten projects from around the world were selected for funding from a record ninety competitive proposals. ELF supports endangered language preservation and documentation projects that benefit both the indigenous community and the field of linguistics. These awards are funded by the generous support of our donors. If you would like to help ELF make such awards available in the future, please visit the donor information page at <http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org/donate.html>

2010 grant proposals are due on April 20, 2010. For submission instructions and additional information, please visit <http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org/request.html>

The ten ELF grant recipients for 2009 are:

### Ruth Rouvier and Susan Gehr (The Karuk Tribe): Karuk Master-Apprentice Documentation Project Expansion Plan

This proposal is the Bright Award winner. Bill Bright was a Professor of Linguistics and Anthropology at UCLA and Adjunct Professor of Linguistics at the University of Colorado, Boulder. His lifelong research and greatest contribution to the field was his study of the Native American language Karuk, a Northern Hokan language spoken by a small group in northwestern California. The Bill Bright Memorial Fund commemorates his work and is awarded to projects consistent with his linguistic interests. This year's award is especially appropriate given the long involvement that Bill had with the language and the tribe, starting with his first field trip in 1949. The Karuk Tribe, from the mountains of Northern California, currently has 3,508 enrolled members. The tribe's ancestral territory is in geographically isolated spans of the Klamath River. There are approximately eight fluent speakers of Karuk, and at least five children are

being raised with Karuk as their first language. The Karuk Master-Apprentice Documentation Project has already begun to train apprentices in language documentation, transcription, and analysis techniques. Together with their master speaker partners, the apprentices have started to compile twenty video recordings focusing on vocabulary. Vocabulary words are listed on the Karuk Dictionary Web site, and pronunciation sound files are being prepared as well. Recordings will include additional topics, such as personal narratives, cultural descriptions, daily routines, conversations, and traditional stories. The recordings will be transcribed, analyzed, and disseminated by the apprentices, and podcasts will be produced to expand the distribution of the materials to the extended community of Karuk descendants. This award will fund a new master-apprentice team in

Yreka, CA. Master speaker Lucille Albers will partner with her granddaughter, Tamara Alexander, who studies early childhood education. Together they will focus on language pertaining to childrearing, use of traditional baby baskets, and children's stories.

[ISO 639-3 language code: kyh]

### Daniel Ochieng Orwenjo (Kenyatta University, Kenya): Living on Borrowed Time; Giving a Lifeline to the Olusuba Language of Kenya through Orature

The Suba people are currently settled on the northeastern shore of Lake Victoria, Mfangano Island, and Rusinga Island, Kenya. The reported number of Suba varies from source to source, but it is clear that over the last half a century, many Olusuba speakers have become multilingual (Olusuba,

*Bill Bright's lifetime of work with the Karuk language and tribe is continued by this year's award to Ruth Rouvier and Susan Gehr.*

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English, Kiswahili, Luo) or bilingual (Olusuba, Luo). Over time, many began abandoning Olusuba and adopting the Luo language Dholuo as their language of choice, some losing the ability to speak their native language. The Government of Kenya's population census, conducted in 1999, indicates that the number of monolingual speakers is 2,200. This award will fund the documentation of Olusuba oral literature and folklore, including fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, and tongue twisters. For a period of eight months, the researcher, a native Dholuo speaker, and two research assistants will live among and interact with the most fluent Olusuba speakers, producing audio and video recordings and transcribing and editing the collected materials. The fieldwork will result in a linguistic database with lexical, phonological, syntactic, and sociolinguistic information. Project findings and recordings will be compiled on a CD that, it is hoped, will become a valuable pedagogical resource.

[ISO 639-3 language code: sxb]

**Carolina Coelho Aragon (University of Utah): Documentation of Akuntsú**

The Akuntsú tribe is currently located near the Omerê River in Rondônia, Brazil where its members settled after experiencing a devastating genocide. Only six members of the tribe survived, all of whom are monolingual speakers of Akuntsú. The tribe was first contacted in 1995 by the National Indian Foundation. None of the survivors have or plan to have children, and the tribe will disappear. These circumstances prompted linguistic documentation of Akuntsú to commence in 2004. This award will fund additional fieldwork focusing on syntactic analysis while refining the morphology, improving the phonology description, and recording ethnographic materials relating to tribal songs, folktales, oral traditions, religious ceremonies, and other cultural activities. Given that the six remaining Akuntsú are monolingual, the fieldwork will consist of the researcher living with the group, participating in daily activities and

asking questions in Akuntsú rather than relying on conventional linguistic elicitation techniques. The long-term objective of this project is the creation of a complete reference grammar and a dictionary.

[ISO 639-3 language code: aqz (under review)]

**Tammy Goss (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Jim Thunder, Billy Daniels, and Mary Jane Thunder: Potawatomi Dictionary Project**

Potawatomi was historically spoken by Native American tribes in Michigan, Wisconsin, Kansas, and Oklahoma. The known speakers of Potawatomi include eight individuals from the Forest County Potawatomi in Wisconsin, three from the Prairie Band in Kansas, and possibly several more from the Citizen Potawatomi in Oklahoma. In this project, members of the Forest County Potawatomi and linguists from the University of Wisconsin, Madison will collaborate to produce and publish a bilingual dictionary of Potawatomi. The award will be used to conduct fieldwork in Forest County, to obtain digital recording equipment, and create a computer database for the dictionary. Fieldwork will include interviews with and recordings of three fluent native Potawatomi speakers who will also aid researchers in verifying and standardizing lexical items.

[ISO 639-3 language code: pot]

**Marsha Relyea Miles (Pioneer Bible Translators) and Steven Dazim (Aruamu community leader): Aruamu BIG BOOK Project**

Aruamu is spoken by approximately 10,000 people in the rain forest of Madang Province, Papua New Guinea. This project focuses on developing the reading skills of Aruamu children. To this end, an alphabet has been developed

*The Aramu "Big Book" project is expected to reach 300 children per year. "This represents a quantum leap for the overall literacy level," say Miles and Dazim.*

and tested, and literacy courses have already taken place. The BIG BOOK Project will address the need for literacy and instructional materials in Aruamu classrooms. Big Books will include text and images large enough for the entire class to see and topics will range from Aruamu folktales and customs familiar to the children to practical everyday life stories, such as on nutrition, local politics, and how to treat a snakebite. The goal of the project is to provide sixteen Aruamu community-based preschool classrooms with a set of 56 Big Books. These books will make it possible for three hundred Aruamu children each year to learn to read their native language.

[ISO 639-3 language code: msy]

**Tanis C. Thorne (University of California, Irvine), Michael L. Connolly, Richard L. Carrico (San Diego State University), and Richard Bugbee: “Place-Making:” Mapping Kumeyaay Place-names**

This project seeks to collect indigenous place-names in the Ipaay and Tipaay dialects of Kumeyaay, also known as Diegueño, spoken in Baja California, Mexico and San Diego County, California. The primary researcher, Tanis Thorne, has consulted archival materials, archeological records, ethnographic, linguistic, and historical sources, and memories of Kumeyaay people to develop interactive maps that convey the indigenous view of the landscape. The ELF award will be used to conduct interviews in Mexico and San Diego County with tribal consultants, representatives from the last generation familiar with both the significant sites and their indigenous names. Verifying documentary sources with tribe members and visiting the sites are critical to completing the mapping process. A major challenge of such an undertaking is to locate the sites on contemporary maps using GPS technology and GIS software. Project findings will be made available on a Web site containing maps, place-names, and their significance for the tribe.

[ISO 639-3 language code: dih]

**Richard Pouliot (Gedakina, Inc): Bagadal-8mow8gannawal, Bringing Back Our Songs**

Gedakina is an organization that encourages and promotes cultural identity among Native American youth and families in northern New England through

traditional cultural teachings. The organization also seeks to conserve Native American land and sacred sites. Gedakina’s programs are available primarily to youth from the Abenaki, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy tribal nations in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. “Bringing Back Our Songs” is a program that focuses on traditional tribal songs relating to ceremony, healing, harvesting, planting, and other traditional activities. The goal of the program is to use these songs to revitalize community gatherings and the indigenous language. Youth learn ceremonial and social songs from fluent speakers, and together they write new songs of greater relevance for the younger generation. Hand drums are an integral part of this tradition, and the program participants attend a

multi-day summer camp, free of charge, where they make their own hand drums and learn how to care for them. The camps also include language instruction and leadership and team building activities. The program continues with monthly drum circles taking place in the participants’ home communities.

[ISO 639-3 language codes: mac, abe, mic]

**Defen Yu (Yunnan Nationalities University, Kunming, China): The Documentation of Zijun Samadu, a Tibeto-Burman Language of China**

This project will develop a grammatical description of Zijun Samadu, which is spoken by approximately four hundred people in the village of Zijun in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. It will also produce a corpus of annotated texts and a word list to be included in the grammar book, digital video recordings of native speakers, and pedagogical materials for teaching Samadu language and culture to the younger generation. The award will fund twelve weeks of fieldwork in Zijun Samadu during which Samadu conversations and stories will be recorded and transcribed and four weeks of fieldwork in Zhenkang and Yongde where texts written in the Western Samadu dialect will be collected and analyzed. DVDs containing project materials, including the video recordings, will be distributed in the area, where DVD players abound.

[ISO 639-3 language code: ysd]

*This year’s awards, as is typical, are spread across the globe. The majority are in the Americas, but Africa, Asia and Oceania are covered as well.*

language legacies:

Noam Manor, *Editor*

*The Endangered  
Language Fund,  
New Haven, CT*

Volume 13, No. 2,  
October 2009  
Printed in New Haven,  
CT  
©2009,  
Endangered Language  
Fund, Inc.

### Pilar M. Valenzuela (Chapman University): Awakening Shiwilu Voices

Shiwilu, also known as Jebero, is spoken in the Amazon in northeastern Peru. Approximately 20 elders speak Shiwilu, the youngest fluent speaker being about sixty years old. This language revitalization project will take place in conjunction with a documentation project funded by a National Science Foundation grant. The goals of “Awakening Shiwilu Voices” are to encourage the use of Shiwilu among the fluent elders and among speakers with more limited knowledge, to produce a collection of audio recordings and pedagogical materials for teaching Shiwilu as a second language, and to teach Shiwilu to a group of thirty children. Conversation sessions will be led by Mr. Meneleo Careajano, a Shiwilu cultural leader. Mr. Careajano and other participants will be trained in recording, transcribing, and translating ethnographic materials. These materials will be used for language instruction and will be made available, along with their Spanish translations, on a specially designed Web site for use by linguists, social scientists, and the general public.

[ISO 639-3 language code: jeb]

### Anita Heard (Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture & Lifeways, The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan): Mnaajchigaadenoon Ngamwinan. Celebrating Songs Harvest Project

There are 3,460 members of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe located in Isabella County, Michigan where less than five fluent native speakers of Anishinabemowin (Ojibwe Language) remain. The Ziibiwing Center is a cultural learning center that seeks to preserve and perpetuate the tribe’s culture and language. The theme of this year’s activities at the center is: “Celebrating Songs: Mnaajchigaadenoon Ngamwinan.” In this context, the center wishes to obtain re-recordings of wax cylinders of traditional Ojibwe songs made by ethnographer and ethnomusicologist Frances Densmore between 1904 and 1910. These recordings are currently housed at the Library of Congress’ Archive of Folk Culture. This award will fund the acquisition of duplications of selected Densmore recordings and accompanying field notes. The recordings will enrich the language resources available at the Ziibiwing Center. They will be integrated into the center’s archives and incorporated into language instruction programs for youth and adults.

[ISO 639-3 language code: ciw]



the  
endangered  
language  
fund

300 George Street, Suite 900; New Haven, CT 06511

p : 203.865-6163, ext. 265 f : 203.865-8963 [www.endangeredlanguagefund.org](http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org)