

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2023

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**Avantus Partners with Navajo United Way to Invest
\$100,000 Annually in the LeChee Chapter with New Red
Antelope Community Fund**

**Community Fund Resources Support Community Impacted by Coal Plant Retirement
Transitioning to Clean Renewable Energy Development**

LECHEE, Ariz.— December 19: Avantus (formerly 8minute) has partnered with Navajo United Way to invest nearly \$100,000 per year in the LeChee Chapter of the Navajo Nation through the newly created Red Antelope Community Fund (Fund). The Fund will support local initiatives and projects that create social, environmental, economic, and other benefits important to community members.

Since announcing the proposed Red Antelope Solar and Energy Storage project, Avantus has conducted extensive outreach to inform the community about the project's many benefits. According to Community and Tribal Relations Director Collette Brown-Rodriguez, in addition to the promise of job opportunities, lease revenues, and a cleaner environment, it is essential to forge lasting partnerships with communities that host Avantus projects.

"This Fund is the result of extensive outreach and feedback from community members concerning our proposed project," she said. "It allows us to support and directly invest in local education and youth programs, elder services, environmental stewardship, and community development. We have already begun funding short-term requests, including ten Chromebooks for the Chapter's afterschool program and kitchen supplies for the Community Senior Center."

According to Brown-Rodriguez, Avantus will eventually look to fund long-term projects such as the Light Up Navajo initiative, entrepreneurial and small business training, and other community development projects. She says the company looks to build upon its record of successful partnerships with other Native American tribes impacted by coal plant retirement.

"We hope to be long-standing and active partners in the community," said Brown-Rodriguez. "The annual contributions will be in place throughout the project's expected lifespan, which, if approved, will span 35 years. With the help of Navajo United Way, we expect this Fund to do wonderful things for the chapter residents."

Navajo United Way Executive Director Dr. Laura Mike says she is thrilled to partner with Avantus to meet the community's needs.

"We are thrilled to partner with Avantus to help meet some of the needs in the LeChee Chapter," she said. "We have a lot of experience setting up and administering community funds to serve under-resourced and marginalized communities. Community funds are a terrific way for organizations to give back while maintaining transparency and accountability for how funds are used."

For more information about the Red Antelope Community Fund, including how to apply for funding or to provide feedback via survey, visit www.redantelopesolar.com/community-fund.

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About Red Antelope Solar

Red Antelope is a proposed solar and energy storage project (Project) under development by Avantus (formerly 8minute) and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA). The Project will create job opportunities, revenue, and a cleaner environment for the local community. The Project is expected to create up to 650 construction jobs and 10 to 20 long-term operations and maintenance jobs for the 35-year operational life of the facility. In addition, the Project is expected to result in reduced carbon emissions equivalent to removing 260,000 cars from the road each year.

About Avantus

Avantus is shaping the future by making reliable, low-cost renewable energy a global reality. Our legacy of leadership in next-generation solar energy includes developing the nation's largest solar cluster and the first plant to beat fossil fuel prices back in 2016. Today, we are expanding the boundaries of existing technologies to build one of the largest portfolios of smart power plants with integrated storage, capable of providing 30 million people with affordable, zero-emission energy – day and night. Through our relentless pursuit of better, we are decarbonizing our planet at the gigaton level and bringing the advantages of renewable energy to all of us.

Photo: Simone Richardson of Avantus (left) and chapter member Michelle Alex (middle) deliver supplies to the LeChee Chapter Senior Center with funds from the Red Antelope Community Fund.