

## The Power of Thank You

Life experiences that shaped my experience as an educator came from my culture. Native Americans are a tightly knit group believing that adults are responsible for the upbringing of children. Children need not be a blood relative, more importantly we are all connected thru our culture. My mother truly taught me the value of sharing our few possessions, food and most importantly our home. Sharing knowledge and wisdom of adults played a vital role in the shaping of my character. My parents believed we are obligated to respect peoples' values regardless of the absence of money or material wealth.

I understand how my parents' upbringing led me to choose my current profession as teacher and hopefully, mentor. To listen to the unheard voices of children, who for circumstances beyond their control, are shut from communicating their basic wants and needs.

Everyday, I see those innocent faces trying to make sense of their surroundings. Many of these children do not have families and live in residential facilities. In my heart I know my touch, my smile, my words of encouragement might radiate a smile, give hope or shed a small light in their eyes. Eyes that say "thank you, for paying attention to me".