The Endangered Language Fund is pleased to announce the awardees for our 2012 Language Legacies grant program. Fourteen awards were made to languages located at every corner of the world. The selected projects went to language activists, teachers, and academics, and covered everything from video documentation projects, to teaching botany, to language revitalization.

The deadline for the Language Legacies applications for the 2013 cycle is April 22, 2013. Description and process for applying can be found on our website, at http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org/request.php. Projects are generally for one year in duration, with an average budget of $2,000. As always, we are eager to receive this year’s applications in the spring.

**Amani Lusekelo (University of Dar es Salaam): “A Documentation of Expression of Cardinal Directions and Naming Strategies in Hadza (Tingdiga) Community in Tanzania”**

Approximately 800 Hadza people, an Eastern Khoisan hunter-gatherer society located in north-central Tanzania, speak the Hadzabe language (ISO 639 language code: hts). There exists limited prior documentation; this study aims to explore the sociolinguistic aspects of the language. These areas include perceptions of the language, how naming children is decided, and the expression of cardinal directions. Language shift to Kiswahili is occurring, so the research will investigate which contexts each language is used. All collected texts and videos will be translated to both Kiswahili and English.

**Bennett Walker (Yalanjiwarra Jalunji Marrjanga Aboriginal Corporation - YJMAC: “Kukubalka Kaykay-Kaykay: Eastern Kuku Yalanji Talking With The Kids Project”**

The threat to the Kuku Yalanji language (ISO: gvn) is severe, as there are only a few fluent elder speakers left. In order to bridge the gap between language and culture, the project will bring children to the Eastern Kuku Yalanji land, where the Elders will show them the botanical names of a wide array of flora and fauna on the river, the sea, a traditional fishing spot, and the rainforest. As the entire project will be recorded both digitally and in writing, the final products will help YJMAC build a long-term language curriculum.

**Pauthang Haokip (Assam University): “Documentation and description of Syriem”**

In the Barak Valley of Assam, India, there are approximately 600 speakers of a Kuki-Chin language called Syriem (which currently lacks an ISO code). Essentially no documentation of this language exists; academic awareness of it has only been in the last couple of years. A broad goal of this project is to help speakers recognize Syriem as a separate language and to foster a sense of pride in using Syriem. The project’s aims include outlining the phonology and grammar,
as well as audio- and video-recording stories, folklore, and legends.

Stephanie Morse (University of California - Santa Barbara): “A Survey of Odawa Conversation”

Odawa is a very endangered dialect of Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) spoken primarily in regions of Michigan and Ontario, Canada. Today, there are at most 330-559 speakers of Odawa (ISO: otw) in Michigan. One aspect of this project will be describing pragmatics such as humor, echoing, and idiomatic expressions. The primary method will be gathering conversational data through recording the audio and videos of both spontaneous and planned conversations between speakers.

Martin Kohlberger (Leiden University Centre for Linguistics): “A Descriptive Grammar of Shiwiar”

Nestled between the foothills of the Andean mountains and the Amazon basin, between the political borders of Ecuador and Peru, is the linguistic community of Shiwiar (ISO: acu). The number of speakers is approximately 700. The aim of Kohlberger’s research is to produce the first descriptive grammar of Shiwiar. Because of the mix of languages in this area, Kohlberger wishes to investigate how language contact may be occurring. The majority of the data will be audio recordings of oral histories, local folklore, and anecdotes. Extensive word lists, full phonological descriptions, and archived transcriptions are the end goals of this project.

Inam Ullah (University of Management and Technology): “Documentation of oral traditions and wordlist of Ushojo: a critically endangered language of Pakistan”

In northern Pakistan, a group of approximately 2000 people speak the language of Ushojo (ISO: ush). In order to reverse the stigmatization of the language, this project attempts to foster a sense of pride of Ushojo through recording and transcribing spoken stories, local historical lore, and poetry. After compiling a wordlist and common phrases, with the help of the community members, the data will be both digitally archived and made into booklets that will be distributed back to the community.

Nathalie Vlcek (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro): “Documentation of Warekena: a severely endangered Amazonian language”

Warekena is a language from the Arawak family, spoken by only about 50 people who live on the Xie river in Brazil (ISO: gae). Transmission of the language to younger generations has not occurred in some time; only a small portion of the grandparents speak it. Because time is of the essence, Vlcek plans to record more audio and video than can be transcribed in the scope of this grant. These recordings, however, will provide an immense base for future work. In addition to describing the entire grammar, Vlcek intends to work with the enthusiastic community of Warekena speakers to produce useful teaching materials.

Marcos Morreira with Carlos Maroto Guerola (Itaty Indigenous Public School): “Nhemo’e kuua awa (Early Literacy Materials in Mbya-Guarani)”

Though there are almost 6,000 speakers of Mbya-Guarani (ISO: gun) in Brazil, this language is quickly disappearing as its speakers shift to Portuguese. Unlike many endangered languages, however, Mbya-Guarani is spoken by all children with everyone in all contexts; it is still being passed on. However, literacy in Portuguese is linked to economic success and communication with the government. In this project, the
To capture the most authentic ways of communicating, researchers are opting for discreet recordings of natural conversations and story-telling.

Michel Musombwa Igunzi (Association for the Survival of the Cultural Heritage of the Nyindu Indigenous People, ASHPAN) with Mazambi Wikaliza (Pedagogical Superior Institute): “Nyindu Endangered Language Lexical Data Base”

Located in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo are the Nyindu indigenous people. Of the 2,000 speakers of Kinyindu (ISO: nyg), only approximately 10% of Nyindus are considered fluent in Kinyindu. While the average age of these speakers is 40 years, the war-ravaged circumstances of the DRC create a life-expectancy of only 46. In an effort to revitalize the language, the project aims to produce the first bilingual database in Kiswahili and Kinyindu. These materials, which include a collection of proverbs and a wordlist of flora and fauna, will form the basis for necessary teaching materials. Copies of a teaching booklet will be distributed to local primary schools.

James A. Rementer (Lenape Language Preservation Project) with Bruce L. Pearson: “Delaware Indian Code-Talkers Dictionary”

During World War II, a Delaware Indian named Lula Mae Gilliland discovered that Native American languages were used as communication “secret” codes. In order to contribute to wartime efforts, Ms. Gillian, who had no formal phonetic training, compiled her own vocabulary list of 2400 Delaware/ Lenape words (ISO: ). Since that time, Lenape, which was spoken in parts of the northeastern US, now has no native speakers. Starting in the 1990s, the Lenape Language Preservation has been revisiting this word list in an attempt to reconstruct the Lenape phonology. With the help of a childhood friend of Ms. Gilliland, the majority of the document has been fully translated and transcribed into standard phonetic notation. The ELF grant will help cover consultant compensation and allow the materials to be published.

Yoram Meroz: “Yahgan Texts”

At the very southern tip of Chile is a group of 100 ethnic Yahgans, a group of coastal fishermen. As a language isolate, Yahgan (ISO: yag) holds many valuable linguistic features, particularly with its verb morphology. Unfortunately, only one native speaker of Yahgan remains: Cristina Calderon, who is 84 years old. Recent years have seen a concerted effort to revitalize the language, which have produced several lexical and grammatical materials, dictionaries for children, and numerous community workshops. This project’s goals include finishing transcription work with Ms. Calderon, and producing an expanded learners’ dictionary and a collection of bilingual texts.

Natalie Weber (University of British Columbia): “Mangarla Storyboard and Documentation Project”

With twenty native speakers of Mangarla remaining in all of Western Australia, and only about six in the community of Looma, it is critical to document the various dialects. The dialect spoken in Looma is different enough to require drastic changes to be made to the existing teaching materials of Mangarla (ISO: mem). The primary means of creating new resources will be through an illustrated storyboard, which allows for a more natural story-telling and elicits variations in discourse. These audio recordings will be transcribed and translated both to a CD and a print version to be distributed to schools and archived.

Loretta Jackson-Kelly (Hulapai Department of Cultural Resources) with Carrie Cannon (Kiowa Tribe): “Audio Translating Hulapai Bilingual Ethno- botanical Publications”

Close to the beautiful Grand Canyon in northern Arizona is the Hulapai Tribe, who speak Hulapai (ISO: yuf). While the majority of elders and middle-aged members are fluent, a small percentage the younger generation still speaks it. The project builds off the previous work of Carrie Cannon, who created an ethnobotanical database with elders and...
youth. Much ethnobotanical knowledge is contained in the Hulapai language; for instance, the word for a cattail plant species translates roughly to star, which points to the shape of the plant when it seeds. This project will expand the database to include audio recordings and accompanying translations that will be archived and given to the Hulapai Ethnobotany Youth Project.

Jaemshid Guinashvili (Tbilisi State University) with Ciala Chartolani (Mestia Municipality): “Dece Gim: Svan-Georgian Commemorative Booklet for Children”

Once isolated in the northern Caucasus mountains of the nation Georgia, the Svan people are rapidly migrating out of their tradition community. Estimates of total number of speakers range from 30,000-80,000; however, the number of young speakers of Svan (ISO: sva) decreases every year. There is no writing system for this language, with its complex case-marking system and verb morphology. This project will analyze borrowed words, create a textbook, and produce an audio-visual aid with a bilingual translation.

ELF’S ANNUAL MEETING:
JANUARY 4, 2013

The ELF will hold its annual meeting during the Linguistic Society of America’s meeting in Boston, Massachusetts on Friday January 4th, 2013. It will be in the Orleans room of the Marriott Copley Place from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Registration for the LSA is not required to attend the ELF’s meeting; all are welcome. We will also have an open-door office hour immediately afterwards (from 9:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.) in the same room for anyone who would like to discuss our grant process or any details of a proposal you may be working on.

We look forward to seeing you in the New Year in Boston.