Tolani Lake
Sustainable Housing

Developing remote and affordable strategies for construction, that offer construction training for locals.

Tolani Lake is a remote community located within the Navajo Nation. The community is part of the Bennet Freeze area, where land disputes halted home construction since 1966, and residents suffer some of the worst living conditions in the nation. Tolani Lake's challenge is cost-effective and expedient housing solutions and construction skills training.

Co-Design Methodology
The co-design methodology developed at the University of California was employed by the students. It was IDC's first applied class project, led by a group of construction students in 2016, to imagine how a university can convene stakeholders (user groups, faculty, students and building specialists), in service of local communities.

Solving for Complexity
The aim of the interdisciplinary applied coursework at ASU is to allow students to work through competing issues related to tribal housing including economic, social, cultural, regulatory, environmental, legal and technical considerations, and to understand how university students and faculty can assist.

Infrastructure impacting Kinship Systems
Infrastructure is one of the biggest challenges to planned developments in tribal communities (Arviso 2018). The expense of installation drives concentrated development, with an unfortunate recurring consequence: dissolving traditional support kinship systems as families are relocated to new developments.