Since 2008, the Little Shop of Physics (LSOP) has had a special relationship with the Oglala Lakota Sioux tribe on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. We have brought the LSOP Hands-On Science Experience on the reservation ten times, and have seen every school on the reservation at least once. LSOP has presented teacher workshops all around Pine Ridge, and has brought teachers and students from the reservation to Colorado State University for workshops and to take part in our Annual Open House.

The cornerstone of our relationship has been our partnership with Oglala Lakota College (OLC), a tribal college based on the Pine Ridge Reservation. From the beginning of our partnership, OLC has helped us reach out to reservation schools and teachers in order to facilitate science education in a culture that historically has been wary of outsiders. Back in 2011, OLC has started its own hands-on traveling science program based on the Little Shop of Physics. Though smaller than our 100+ hands-on experiments, the OLC Science Experience is able to impact more students on Pine Ridge between LSOP annual visits.

Every year, a group of teachers and students from OLC comes to Colorado State University to utilize the LSOP expertise to maintain their existing experiments and to create new ones. OLC brings a fresh perspective to the LSOP Crew. Their creativity in building experiments has lead us to re-imagine and re-design several of our own experiments. This year, with help from LSOP, OLC built over 20 new experiments for their program!

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