



## ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Sovereignty • Preserving Culture

Educating Youth • Building Capacity

SINCE 1922

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### **PRESIDENT FRANK ETTAWAGESHIK HONORED AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION LEGACY FUND ESTABLISHED**

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 1, 2019, 11:00 am E.S.T. – On March 6, 2019 during its annual Impact Week in Washington, DC, the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (M.A.S.T.) hosted an honoring of long-time Association on American Indian Affairs Board member and current President, Frank Ettawageshik. Frank is a renowned artist, storyteller, Tribal leader, friend and advisor to many, as well as a formidable defender of Tribal sovereignty, and an avid cultural preservationist. Additionally, a donation from Red Cedar Solutions LLC established, called “Can I Be Frank” in honor of President Ettawageshik, was initiated to support the Association on American Indian Affairs’ efforts promoting indigenous cultural resources protection.

President Ettawageshik is the former Chairman of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and now serves as the Executive Director of the United Tribes of Michigan and wears many other hats including the Board President of the Association on American Indian Affairs, the Chairman of the United League of Indigenous Nations Governing Board, a Co-chair of the National Congress of American Indians Federal Acknowledgment Task Force, and an advisor to the Alliance of Colonial Era Tribes (ACET).

In his honoring speech, Frank talked about the work of the Association on American Indian Affairs as an avid defender of diverse Tribal cultures and cultural resources for almost one hundred years. To continue honoring Frank’s legacy of cultural preservation, as well as help keep cultural heritage protection at the forefront of the Indian Country agenda, a \$1,500 check was presented to the Association on American Indian Affairs to carry out a new initiative appropriately called “*Can I Be Frank?*,” which is intended to help the Association fund its costs to host conversations, organize panels, and schedule individual presentations at intertribal meetings and conferences that present solutions and strategies for cultural heritage policy including but not limited to consultation with federal agencies, repatriation of Tribal ancestors and cultural items, protection of sacred places and revitalization of cultural traditions.

Ernie Stevens, Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Association, pledged support to the initiative and will be working with the Association to inspire Indian Tribes, intertribal organizations and other organizations to make the same commitment at their venues. “We challenge every intertribal organization to match this commitment to sponsor and host “Can I Be Frank” cultural protection discussions as a part of their regular policy agendas” said Earl Evans (Haliwa-Saponi), Director of New Market Initiatives at Red Cedar Solutions. “Together, we can be the kind of ancestors the next seven generations are proud to have.”

In the words of Frank Ettawageshik: “*Believe that you can do it, get out there and help other people, work for those coming generations and think about being a good ancestor.*”

The Association on American Indian Affairs is the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country and is a 501(c)(3) organization.  
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