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# ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS News on Indian Affairs

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## Working Towards Justice for Native American Youth

Native American youth are the children of 573 sovereign federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and more than 300 other state recognized and non-recognized Tribal communities that continue to be affected by historical and intergenerational trauma. Statistics regarding school suspensions, detentions, drop-out rates, deaths, suicides, arrests and detentions are all disproportionately higher for Native youth as compared to other groups. “Juvenile Justice” for Native youth must start early in the adolescent’s life—and understanding what culturally appropriate programs are available will help youth heal the historic and intergenerational trauma that continues to feed these horrible disproportionate statistics.



*Treatment at school often feeds the successes or failures of Native youth.*

Treatment at school often feeds the successes or failures of Native youth. Native students receive higher rates of disciplinary actions at school such as detentions and suspensions though students of color and white students show behavioral issues in school settings at roughly equal rates. A recent report by the American Civil Liberties Union in Montana showed that Montana Native students experienced the highest disparities regarding school discipline, causing Native students to lose nearly six times the amount of instruction as white students: Native students lost 44 days of instruction, black students lost 21.4 days and white students lost 12.4 days. These students miss valuable instruction time, making it hard to catch up even when they do return to school.

Nationally, Native youth are more likely to be suspended or expelled from high school than any other racial group, excluding African Americans. According to a 2017 report by the National Center for Education Statistics, Native graduation rates of about 72% remain the lowest of any racial/ethnic demographic group. Even more

detrimental to their development is that being away from school increases the likelihood that a Native youth will become involved in the juvenile justice system. Native youth have a higher incidence of risky activity than other youth, and in addition, up to 20% of Native youth ages 10-24 report attempting suicide each year – that is 2.5 times greater the national rate.

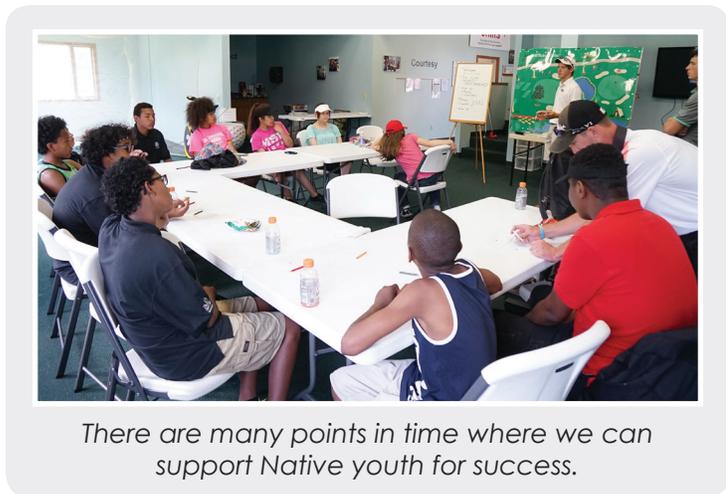
In Montana, the ACLU report found that Native youth were arrested more than six times as often

are beyond their control. These circumstances disproportionately push poorly served Native youth into the justice system where they are more likely to be subject to biases and harsher discipline than their non-Native peers.

It seems that there are many points in time where we can support Native youth before they are incarcerated that will increase the likelihood that a Native youth will not resort to destructive behavior, damaging themselves and their communities in the process. The Association is developing several research and hands-on projects to address historic and intergenerational trauma experienced by Native youth, as well as providing education about how to access culturally appropriate programming that will support their development.

One project that the Association is undertaking is in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Foundation's juvenile detention reform objectives to eliminate the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention, minimize re-arrest and failure-to-appear rates pending adjudication, ensure appropriate conditions of confinement in secure facilities, redirect public finances to sustain successful reforms, and achieve fair and equitable outcomes for all youth. With the Foundation, the Association is developing research that will support the identification of Tribal programs and policies that provide culturally appropriate programming and support for Native American youth within Indian Country. Serving in an educational role, this research and its findings will build capacity and awareness, draw more attention to Tribal youth programs around the country and build better relationships between state, federal and Tribal juvenile justice programs so that the justice systems have the tools they need to address the unique circumstances faced by Native youth.

The Association is also building its capacity with its Native Youth Summer Camps efforts to address the roots of historic and intergenerational trauma through creative curriculum development, self-advocacy training, culturally appropriate healing and wellness, and community advocacy to change the course of history for Native youth! More to come!! We hope you will be a part of our growing efforts to address historic and intergenerational trauma with Native youth!



*There are many points in time where we can support Native youth for success.*

as white students. The study and its findings are significant considering that the numbers of Native youth in detention are disproportionately higher compared to any other group. In 2013, Native youth nationally had the highest rate of detainment for status offenses (19.5 per 100,000 youth) (these are offenses that would not be considered criminal if committed by an adult, such as truancy or alcohol use) and drug offenses (19.2 per 100,000), as well as for technical violations (42.4 per 100,000) among all youth categories.

Detaining and incarcerating Native youth does not reduce recidivism, and in fact has quite the opposite effect. Juvenile incarceration provides no net benefit to public safety, wastes vast sums of taxpayer money, and exposes youth to alarming levels of violence and abuse. The disproportionate contact that Native youth have with the juvenile justice system reflects the broader national trend that shows these children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Native youth are being punished for negative behaviors developed due to poor social and economic conditions, which are the product of historic injustices faced by Native people and

## Endnotes

- 1 "Empty Desks: Discipline and Policing in Montana's Public Schools," December 2019, at <https://www.aclumontana.org/sites/default/files/aclu-education-report-2019-v10.pdf>
- 2 Daniel Losen, Cheri Hodson, Michael A. Keith II, Katrina Morrison and Shakti Belway, "Are We Closing the School Discipline Gap?" University of Central Los Angeles, accessed October 27, 2018, [https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/are-we-closing-the-school-discipline-gap/AreWeClosingTheSchoolDisciplineGap\\_FINAL221.pdf](https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/are-we-closing-the-school-discipline-gap/AreWeClosingTheSchoolDisciplineGap_FINAL221.pdf).
- 3 "Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2016," US Department of Education, accessed October 27, 2018, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016007.pdf>.
- 4 Sarah E. Redfield and Jason P. Nance, "The American Bar Association Joint Task Force on Reversing the School-to-Prison Pipeline Preliminary Report," American Bar Association, accessed October 27, 2018, [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/diversity\\_pipeline/stp\\_preliminary\\_report\\_final\\_authc\\_heckdam.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/diversity_pipeline/stp_preliminary_report_final_authc_heckdam.pdf).
- 5 "Suicide Among Racial/Ethnic Populations in the US: American Indians and Alaska Natives," Suicide Prevention Resource Center, accessed October 27, 2018, <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/sites/default/files/resources/suicideethnic-populations.pdf>.
- 6 "Stemming the Rising Tide: Racial & Ethnic Disparities in Youth Incarceration and Strategies for Change," Burns Institute, accessed October 27, 2018, [https://www.burnsinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Stemming-theRising-Tide\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.burnsinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Stemming-theRising-Tide_FINAL.pdf).
- 7 Sarah E. Redfield and Jason P. Nance, "The American Bar Association Joint Task Force on Reversing the Schoolto-Prison Pipeline Preliminary Report," American Bar Association, accessed October 27, 2018, [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/diversity\\_pipeline/stp\\_preliminary\\_report\\_final\\_authc\\_heckdam.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/diversity_pipeline/stp_preliminary_report_final_authc_heckdam.pdf).
- 8 Francine Sherman and Annie Balck, "Gender Injustice: System-Level Juvenile Justice Reforms for Girl," National Crittenton Foundation, accessed October 27, 2018, [http://www.nationalcrittenton.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/09/Gender\\_Injustice\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nationalcrittenton.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/09/Gender_Injustice_Report.pdf).

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## A Report from Healing the Divide — the Fifth Annual Repatriation Conference

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*Keynote Speaker Professor Rebecca Tsosie*

The Association on American Indian Affairs held its Fifth Annual Repatriation Conference – Healing the Divide, on November 12-14, 2019 at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation's We-Ko-Pa Resort & Conference Center in Fountain Hills, Arizona. This year we had a record number of registrations! Our Conference began in 2014 with about 60 participants. Last year we topped 160. This year we had 193 registered for the event! The Association is so grateful for the overwhelming and growing support we continue to receive for this unique event. We also had the support of some incredible sponsors that helped us put together a well-rounded program. Our amazing exhibitors and vendors gave all of us some well-deserved shopping opportunities for beautiful contemporary Native arts and goods right before the holidays! You can still view our conference program and sponsors on our website at [https://www.indian-affairs.org/conference\\_2019.html](https://www.indian-affairs.org/conference_2019.html).

The Conference, as always, is an intense hands-on working experience where individuals and entities from many different backgrounds can come together and find community in the important work of repatriation. The theme this year of "Healing the Divide" was developed to expand participation to anyone involved or interested in Native American cultural heritage, even when opinions differ.

Fifty experts in their fields presented and shared their knowledge during three-days of interactive sessions about historic trauma and methods for community and individual healing; auction house sales and increasing due diligence practices for the sale of items; the extent of looting and theft and the burdens it places on law enforcement and Tribes; Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Cultural Affiliation Determinations and statistics on the failures to comply with NAGPRA; stories on NAGPRA successes; legal strategies; and international repatriation opportunities, among other things. The Conference hosted federal agency listening sessions from the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Department of State, Department of Justice and the National NAGPRA Program. Participants were also able to meet with museums, federal agencies and with partner Tribes in private spaces during the Conference for consultation meetings and other strategy development.

The meaning of the word “repatriation” for Native American cultural heritage is broadening at every year’s Conference. “Repatriation” is not limited to the return of Ancestors, their burial belongings, sacred and cultural patrimony from institutions and federal agencies as provided under NAGPRA. “Repatriation” also includes the return of all elements of culture including intellectual property, archival information, languages and songs, and sacred sites and places, all of which were discussed at this year’s Conference. All of these elements of culture were removed from Native America by force and violence, and genocidal acts of colonial governments including the United States. This has created a world today where the public thinks it is okay to mock, stereotype, misappropriate and steal diverse Native American cultural heritage – which is what the Association is working to dismantle in order to serve our vision of a world where diverse Native American cultures are lived, protected and respected.

At the final session of the Conference, all participants were able to help develop directions for efforts on these issues over the next year. The participants agreed that public education about the Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act and its limitations should continue, and that NAGPRA is only the minimum requirement for repatriation efforts, and more is needed including amendments to NAGPRA. Second, that institutions who have



*Christine Diindiisi McCleave, M.A.,  
Executive Director of the National Native  
American Boarding School Healing Coalition*

complied with NAGPRA should put pressure on those institutions that have not complied, citing to the statistics provided by the National NAGPRA Program:

- Over 120,000 Native American Ancestors that have been reported by museums and federal agencies are still in collections and have not yet been repatriated;
- These museums and federal agencies have not yet done what is required under NAGPRA to culturally affiliate 94% of those 120,000 Ancestors, including consulting with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes or Native Hawaiian Organizations, even though enough information exists to do so.

Third, the participants wanted to continue learning and working with the spiritual elements that support individuals who work with Native American cultural heritage and Ancestors and their burial belongings. It was agreed that repatriation work is rewarding for individuals, institutions and Tribes, but it is also physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually draining. Allowing time for everyone to come together to continue with healing ceremonies for the community, as well as self-care, is a required element for this work and for the Conference.

Finally, Tribes want to work more together to proceed with international repatriation efforts. International repatriation has been very slow because it is often just one Tribe seeking items from one institution. A coalition of Tribes could support one another and create a more efficient process for larger repatriations from foreign institutions.

Even before the 5th Annual Repatriation Conference was over, the Association had already begun work

on its 6th Annual Repatriation Conference – which will be commemorating the 30th anniversary of NAGPRA in Denver and in partnership with the University of Denver, and creating a national network of symposiums that will be studying NAGPRA and developing strategies to move beyond NAGPRA. It will be an exciting year for repatriation efforts!



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## Update on the Continuing Attack Against Indian Children and Families

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In August, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals delivered a resounding victory for Tribes, Native children, and families by striking down a Texas federal court decision that declared the Indian Child Welfare Act unconstitutional. In *Brackeen v. Bernhardt*, individual non-Indian plaintiffs and the States of Texas, Louisiana, and Indiana argued against ICWA, claiming that protections for Indian children and families constitute illegal racial discrimination, and that ICWA's federally-mandated state court standards illegally "commandeer" state courts and state agencies to carry out a federal scheme. The Fifth Circuit rejected the state and individual plaintiffs' arguments on all fronts, finding ICWA to be an appropriate exercise of the federal government's political government-to-government relationship with Tribes and Native peoples, and that ICWA did not unconstitutionally interfere with state child welfare systems.

The victory for ICWA in the *Brackeen* case has been an important recognition of the interpretation of federal Indian law that Congress has constitutional authority to develop legislation to protect Indian Country. The Association, joined by 56 other Tribal organizations, 325 Indian Nations, 21 state attorneys general, 20 law schools, and 30 child welfare organizations, filed an *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") brief to the Fifth Circuit (twenty-one states also filed an *amicus* brief supporting ICWA), providing important context into the horrific and well-documented abuses that led to the passage of the ICWA. The Association was heavily involved in documenting those abuses since the late 1960s –

collecting data, giving congressional testimony and drafting the legislation based on its efforts in state courts to return Indian children to their families.



*The Association will continue to defend ICWA in the courts and through education of state governments and the public.*

Unfortunately, the attack against ICWA in the courts is not over and we must still fight against interests that seek to dismantle ICWA's protections for Indian families. On November 7, 2019 the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the case to be reheard *en banc* (meaning that it will be heard before all the judges in the Fifth Circuit) and with oral argument. Oral argument is scheduled on January 22, 2020 and a final decision is expected in the months after. Given the strength of the Fifth Circuit's original decision, Tribes do have an advantage. On December 13, the Association, along with 58 other organizations and 486 federally recognized Tribes submitted its *amicus* brief to the Fifth Circuit supporting the constitutionality of ICWA.

Though we celebrate how 41 years of ICWA has strengthened Indian children and families, this litigation seeking to weaken ICWA seems non-stop. The stories of adoptions to non-Indian families being delayed or interrupted can often tear at the heart strings of the public. The information not included in those stories is that it is often the state courts' and state agencies' mistakes in implementing ICWA that have caused these delays in the first place. ICWA does not prevent adoption of an Indian child to a non-Indian family. Instead, ICWA provides procedures for identifying an Indian child early on and involving the child's Tribal Nation in the process to ensure that everything has been done to keep the Indian family whole, and cultural connections intact. Studies have shown that Indian children adopted to non-Indian families fair worse psychologically than white peers. Suicide rates, depression and alcoholism are higher in American Indian adoptees than in other groups. Involving the Tribal Nation in the placement or adoption is crucial to provide culturally appropriate services to support the Indian child and family.

ICWA's provisions apply in state child custody proceedings when there is an Indian child involved. ICWA requires that: the state must inquire into the enrollment status of a Tribal child, provide Tribes and parents notice in child welfare proceedings, and ensure that Tribes are given the opportunity to intervene in the proceedings or transfer jurisdiction to the Tribal court. The party removing a child or terminating parental rights must provide active efforts to prevent the breakup of an Indian family and present testimony of a qualified expert witness supporting such a decision before placing an Indian child in foster care or terminating the parental rights over an Indian child. Such procedures seem reasonable for any child custody proceeding to ensure that the child is not removed from family and extended family without first trying to prevent the breakup of that family. And, these procedures are considered the "gold standard" in child welfare.

Even though the majority of child welfare organizations consider ICWA the "gold standard," ICWA is constantly being litigated. "State courts of appeal interpret the law across the country at a rate of once every other day. There are, on average, 200 appellate cases annually." Because of the numbers, many Tribes do not have the capacity to

take on these matters – especially since Tribes are often not notified by state courts properly, which increases the duration of litigation and the amount of harm on the child. Instead, many Tribes do not litigate and instead seek to support the cultural identity of the child and his or her connection with their Tribe; litigation almost always causes bitterness for the adoptive family and not healing. "In some decisions, the court's confusion [about the Tribe's position] is apparent and its ignorance of the Tribe's position comes through in the opinion."

Meanwhile, nationwide (even after 41 years of ICWA), American Indian and Alaska Native children are placed into foster care at a rate 2.7 times greater than their proportion in the general population. This disproportionality is not happening because there are higher reports of abuse or neglect in American Indian communities; in fact, these numbers are consistent with other populations. The disproportionality comes as one moves further into the state child welfare system decision-making processes: the rates of removal of Indian children from their families are disproportionate compared to non-Indian families. Studies that have researched systemic bias in the child welfare system have found that Indian families were two times more likely to be investigated and four times more likely to have their children removed and placed in foster care than their white counterparts. ICWA was meant to provide protections against this systemic bias and reduce the flow of Indian children into these systems.

The Association will continue to defend ICWA in the courts, and through education of state governments and the public.

Thanks to Samuel F. Daughety, the Association's Pro Bono Legal Counsel at Dentons US LLP, for contributing to this article, and the work of Kate Fort, Michigan State University College of Law, and other advocates around Indian Country on the ground protecting our children.

#### Endnotes

- 1 Kate Fort & Adrian T. Smith. "Indian Child Welfare Act Annual Case Law Update and Commentary," *American Indian Law Journal*, Vol. 7 Issue 2, May 16, 2019, pp. 27-28.
- 2 *Id.*, pp. 30-31.



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## DONOR HIGHLIGHT

### The Deeper Meaning of Donating: Recognizing Adele and Eddie London

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*Adele and Eddie London*

Some of our donors have been giving to the Association and its programs for decades. And some of those donors have been so committed to us, that they provide special legacy gifts in their wills. These gifts have been an absolute blessing for the Association, and have kept the doors open over the last (almost) 100 years!

We would like to introduce you to some very special donors who have left us with their legacy. In August the Association received a posthumous gift from Adele and Eddie London, mother and father of Alan London. Adele and Eddie's commitment to Indian Country arose from their own personal stories of genocide and injustice.

Adele was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1930 and her husband, Eddie, was born in Los Angeles in 1931. Adele experienced, first-hand, the terrible injustices imposed upon Jews in Europe during World War II. Adele was separated from her family in early 1940. She was only 11 years old, and was forced into hiding without her family until she was 16. She was saved by the kindness of nuns who sheltered her in a convent, and later, through the compassion of medical staff at a sanitarium. Adele was hidden to protect

her from being forced into a concentration camp. In 1945, Adele was finally reunited with her family and later moved to the United States.

The London's empathized with the struggles faced by American Indians because of their own personal experiences of the Holocaust during World War II. In fact, the Nazis' interest in United States policies and laws regarding American Indians originated with Adolf Hitler himself. In his book *Mein Kampf*, Hitler discussed U.S. laws and policies and noted that the United States was a racial model for Europe and that it was "the one state" in the world that was creating the kind of racist society that the Nazi regime wanted to establish. In a 1928 speech, Hitler stated that Americans had "gunned down the millions of Redskins to a few hundred thousand, and now keep the modest remnant under observation in a cage ...."

The plight of Native Americans keenly resonated with Adele because of her own experiences of being displaced and mistreated in Europe during the War. Adele and Eddie were compassionate towards the injustices perpetrated against Native Americans, who also endured civil rights violations, loss of land and livelihood, and genocide. It is because of this affinity with the Native American experience, that Adele and Eddie wanted to give back through the Association in solidarity.

The Association is honored to have known Adele and Eddie – and now their son Alan and his wife Kim. Thank you for being a part of our lives and work at the Association. Thank you and your family for your continued courage and support of civil and human rights.



## Higher Education is a High Priority



*Alexis Wagner is Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit from the Metlakatla Indian Community. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Rural Development from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.*

One of the Association's legacy programs is its Native American Graduate and Undergraduate Scholarships. The Association's Scholarship program began in 1947, and from what we can gather, is the oldest college scholarship for Native American students! In the past four years, the Association has awarded 226 scholarships to 88 Native undergraduate and graduate students. Funding for the scholarship program comes from an endowment created by several estate gifts, which provides about \$22,000 per year. The remaining funds for our Scholarship Program come from individual donors.

The Association's Scholarship Program currently provides \$1,500 per year (\$750 for Fall and \$750 for Spring semesters) until the student graduates. To receive the scholarship, the Native American student must be recognized by his or her Tribal Nation (the Nation does not have to be acknowledged by the federal government), and show a continuing commitment to their community or Indian Country as a whole. The student will keep the scholarship

throughout their college career as long as they maintain a 2.5 grade point average and full-time status as a student. The Association has continued this seventy-year-old legacy program and is grateful for donors and contributors who believe that protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity requires a higher education!

In the Fall, we awarded twenty students with scholarship awards. The Association congratulates its Fall 2019 Scholarship Recipients!

- **Ryann M. Unabia** - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Rush University - Master of Science in Nursing - Clinical Nurse Leader
- **Lashai Jake** - Navajo Nation University of Utah - Master of Public Health and Social Work
- **Lynn Martell** - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians University of North Dakota - Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
- **Cherish Tsoie** - Navajo Nation Fort Lewis College - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science
- **Jordan Cheresposy** - Laguna Pueblo Central New Mexico Community College - Bachelor of Arts in Business
- **Rhianna Deschinny** - Navajo Nation University of New Mexico - Bachelor of Science in Psychology
- **Jakeem Ray Paul** - Navajo Nation University of New Mexico - Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- **Joshua Max** - Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe Institute of American Indian Arts - Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
- **Simone Richardson** - Navajo Nation Northern Arizona University - Bachelor of Science in Public Health
- **Jerome Garcia** - Cochiti Pueblo University of New Mexico - Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Native American Studies



Megan Warren is a member of the Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Raven/Coho/Frog house. She graduated from the University of Alaska Anchorage with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with a GPA of 3.96 and high honors (Magna Cum Laude).

- **Desiree Quintana** - Santa Domingo Pueblo Arizona State University - Associate of Science in Human Nutrition
- **Stephani Watson** - Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Arizona State University- Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law - Master of Legal Studies
- **Shayla French** - Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians - Michigan State University - Bachelor of Arts in Media and Information
- **Chambreigh Onesalt** - Navajo Nation University of New Mexico - Associate of Science in Human Nutrition
- **Presleigh Smiley**- Navajo Nation University of New Mexico - Bachelor of Science in Nursing

- **Kellen Claymore** - Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Black Hills State University - Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Psychology
- **Terri Yellowhorse** - Navajo Nation Academy of Art University - Bachelor in Media Arts and Animation
- **Nicholas Hill** - Muscogee (Creek) Nation University of Tulsa - Bachelor of Fine Arts
- **Ashley Lomay** - Navajo Nation Arizona State University - Bachelor of Arts in Business Law
- **William Allread** - Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Stanford University Law School - Juris Doctorate

## How to Apply for an Association Scholarship

Go to our webpage at [www.Indian-affairs.org/scholarships.html](http://www.Indian-affairs.org/scholarships.html)

Review the Frequently Asked Questions page and the criteria required in the application process, which includes:

- Submission of unofficial transcripts from college or high school
- Submission of your Fall 2020 schedule
- Completion of an essay
- Enrollment in a federally recognized, state recognized, or other Tribal Nation, band or community within the United States.

The application and question for the essay are not available until May on the scholarship webpage. The application process will only be open for a short period of time. Submission of applications will be through an online portal. The Association receives 200 to 500 scholarship applications every year. The successful applicant will be able to show they have a connection with their Tribal Nation, band or community and that they will utilize their degree to work for their Nation, band or community, Indian Country or indigenous peoples.

## 97th Annual Membership Meeting, Cultural Event & Elder Honoring

This year is the Association's 97th year serving Indian Country! As a membership organization, the Association's members have a unique part to play in making sure the organization fulfills its fiduciary responsibilities, and meets every year at the organization's Annual Membership Meeting. The Annual Membership Meeting is also a time where membership can learn about the progress the Association has made, eat together and celebrate all we have to be grateful for. The Association's 97th Annual Membership Meeting was held on November 13, 2019 at the WeKoPa Resort & Conference Center on the lands of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, in Arizona, during the 5th Annual Repatriation Conference.

Samuel Fayuant from the Tohono O'Odham Nation opened up the event with a prayer and blessing. Frank Ettawageshik, citizen of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and President of the Board of Directors for the Association, emceed the event and spoke about the Association's 100-year anniversary. The Association's Executive Director and Attorney, Shannon Keller O'Loughlin, Choctaw, gave a presentation on the organization's programs, progress and finances. Membership then elected two new members of the Association's Board of Directors to continue the organization's great progress. Membership voted in Sandy White Hawk and Rory Wheeler. Sandy is Sicangu Lakota and is the founder and Director of First

Nations Repatriation, which assists Native adoptees to return home, reconnect, and reclaim their identity. Rory is a citizen of the Seneca Nation and serves as the Youth Commission Co-President for the National Congress of American Indians, Youth Advisory Board Vice Chairman for the Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute, is a My Brother's Keeper Peer Coach with the Obama Foundation, and is a Peer Guide for UNITY, Inc.

After the Membership Meeting, the Association honored two special elders who have been working to repatriate Ancestors and cultural items for decades – Dr. Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma of the Hopi Tribe, and Barnaby V. Lewis, Akimel O'odham. Both Dr. Kuwanwisiwma and Mr. Lewis were honored by the Association, and from Tribal leadership from their Nations. The Association then provided incredible indigenous singers and dancers from Pascua Yaqui, Gila River Indian Tribe, Salt River Pima- Maricopa Indian Tribe and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Apache Tribe.

Next year's 98th Annual Membership Meeting will be held in Denver, Colorado on Tuesday, October 27, 2020. The Association is a 501(c)(3) organization governed by its members. Members are individuals from the public – Native or non-Native – who support the Association's vision, mission and goals and pay \$35 per year. We hope you will join our family!

## Be a Part of Our Family – Become a Member!

The Association on American Indian Affairs is a public non-profit member organization. Any individual can be a member of the Association, whether you are Native American or support the Association's vision, mission and goals. For only \$35 per year, you can show your commitment to Indian Country, be a part of the direction of the organization, and receive special publications, such as our Bi-Annual *Indian Affairs* Newsletter and other alerts.

### WE NEED YOU – YOUR VOICE – YOUR COMMITMENT!

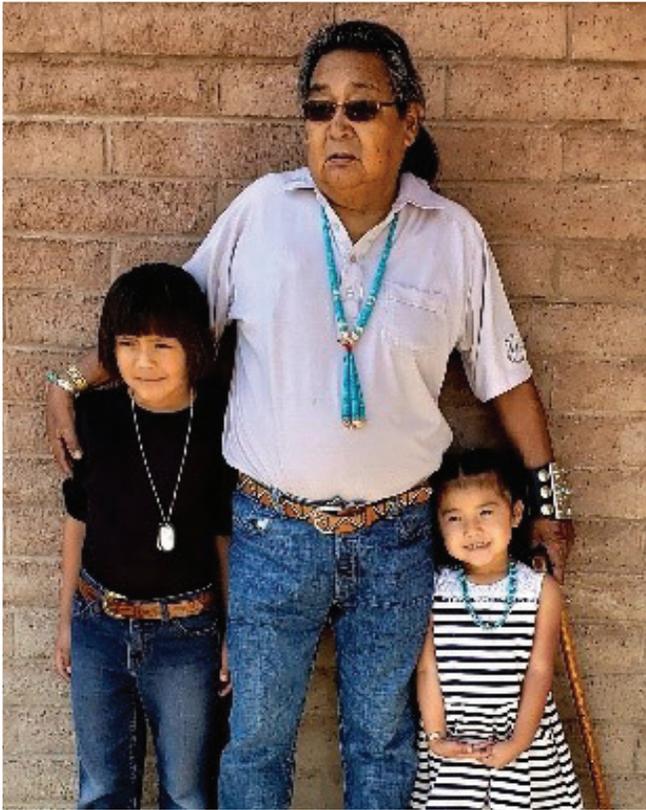
Go to [www.Indian-affairs.org](http://www.Indian-affairs.org), hit the **MEMBERSHIP** button and become a member today!

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## The Association Honors its Elders for Decades of Repatriation Efforts

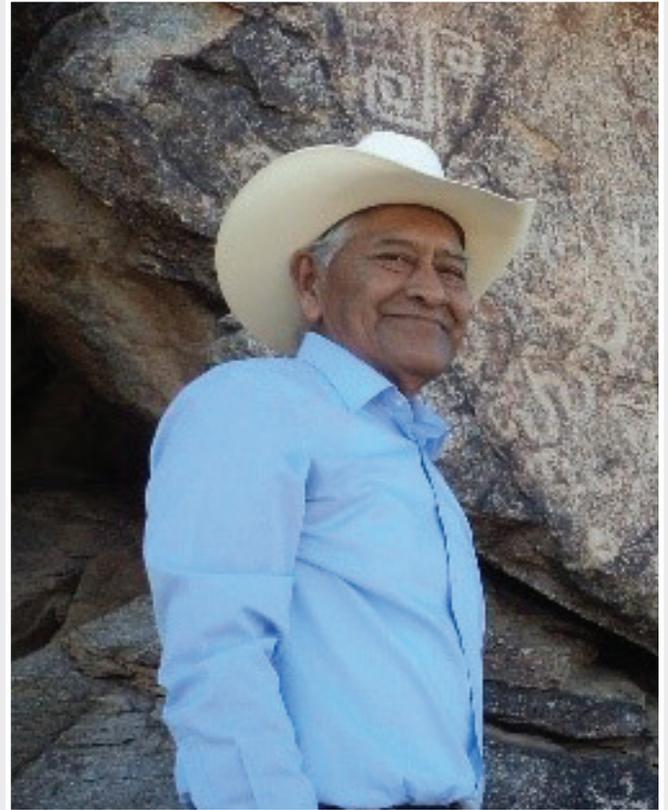
### Dr. Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi, & Barnaby V. Lewis, Akimel O'odham

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*Dr. Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma*

Dr. Leigh J. Kuwanwisiwma was born in the village of Paaqavi, on the Hopi Reservation to Marshall and Pauline Jenkins. A member of the Tepngyam (Greasewood Clan), he is a dedicated farmer and Hopi cultural practitioner. Dr. Kuwanwisiwma served as the Director of the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office for nearly three decades, from 1989-2017. Over his tenure, Dr. Kuwanwisiwma helped facilitate the repatriation of Hopi friends and Ancestors from several museums, oversaw several major research efforts involving the Hopi language and ethno-history and was central in representing Hopi interests in national and international legal issues, government-to-government consultations, academic inquiries, and requests from the general public about Hopi culture. In 2019, he received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters also from Northern Arizona University.



*Barnaby V. Lewis*

Barnaby V. Lewis, Akimel O'odham, is from the village of Blackwater located on the Gila River Indian Community in south-central Arizona. He has over 20 years of experience and has served as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for GRIC since 2009. Prior to that, Mr. Lewis was the Cultural Resource Specialist responsible for all cultural resource consultations. As THPO, Mr. Lewis oversees all repatriation efforts related the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and Arizona Burial Discovery Laws. He has repatriated Huhugam Ancestors from across the U.S. from Maine to California. Mr. Lewis is a traditional Akimel O'odham singer and has an extensive knowledge of the prehistory and history of GRIC. He continues to educate all members of GRIC and his staff, emphasizing respect for Akimel O'odham and Pee Posh culture.



## Another Amazing Year of Native Youth Summer Camps

The Association began providing grants to Native Youth Summer Camps in 1963 as a powerful way that the Association can work to accomplish all of its goals: to protect sovereignty, preserve culture, educate youth and build Tribal capacity. There is significant research that shows when young Native people are connected to their culture, they fare better mentally and emotionally than those who are not. Healthy and strong Native American youth will sustain strong Tribal cultures and protect Tribal sovereignty for years to come.

The Association provides funding for summer camps who are connecting Native youth with cultural experiences. Between 2003 and 2019, the Association has granted \$212,395 to 136 Native Youth Summer Camps! This year the Association provided funding for ten summer camps that provided educational opportunities regarding health and wellness, cultural practices and languages. The following camps received grants from AAIA for Summer 2019:

- Kamiah Nimiipuu Health Youth Wellness & Culture Camp, Kamiah, ID - 30 Native youth attended from 5 Tribes
- Zuni Youth Enrichment Project, Zuni, NM - 180 Native youth attended from 2 Tribes
- Pathkeepers 7th Annual Native Youth Leadership Camp, Culpeper, VA - 35 Native youth attended from 14 Tribes
- American Indian Resource Center, Oakland, CA - 50 Native youth attended from 10 Tribes
- American Indian Education Association, Phoenix, AZ - 35 Native youth attended from 8 Tribes
- Herbal Garden Wellness Native Immersion Camp, Hartsel, CO - 25 Native youth attended from 17 Tribes
- The Living Well Traditionally Diabetes Prevention Youth Camp, Happy Jack, AZ - 66 Native youth served from 17 Tribes



- Native Youth Summer Program: Camp TAMIT, San Fernando, CA - 13 Native youth attended from 5 Tribes
- Dlóó' Yázhí Day Camp, Thoreau, NM - 63 Native youth attended from 1 Tribe
- Indigenous Youth Empowerment Program, East Lansing, MI - 30 Native Youth attended from 3 Tribes

Currently, the majority of our summer camp program is funded through a single donor: the Ben Plucknett Charitable Trust, and through other small individual donations. The Association sees a real need to develop a consistent national program throughout Indian Country that will address self-advocacy and build the Native youth voice. In doing so, a national summer camp program will help youth develop leadership skills that will support Tribal sovereignty and self-determination while fulfilling the Association's vision of creating a world where Native American cultures are lived, protected and respected. The Association is developing a detailed project design that will support its vision to develop this annual national opportunity to Native youth. If you would like to participate in the development of this national opportunity, please contact the Association!

**In 2019, the Association funded 10 Native Youth Summer Camps that served 527 Native youth from approximately 65 different Tribal affiliations including:**

Apache, Big Sandy Rancheria Band of the Western Mono Indians, Blackfeet, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Chippewa Cree, Choctaw, Potawatomi, Dakota, Navajo, Eastern Shoshone, Paiute, Gila River, Haliwa-Saponi, Ho-Chunk, Hoopa, Hopi, Hualapai, Huichol, Karuk, Laguna Pueblo, Lakota, Menominee, Muckleshoot, Nakota, Nez Perce, Odawa, Ojibwe, Oneida, Pascua Yaqui, Pawnee, Pomo, Ponca, Quechan, Salt River Pima-Maricopa, Santa Domingo Pueblo, Santee Sioux, Sault St. Marie Chippewa, Shoshone-Bannock, Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Tewa, Umatilla, Ute, Waccamaw Siouan, Washoe, Yakama, Yurok and Zuni Pueblo.

# The Association Nears its 100-Year Anniversary!

In 2022, the Association will be celebrating its 100-year anniversary of service to Indian Country! To commemorate this momentous milestone, the Association is developing its history for a book and short film that will tell about the struggles and victories of changing federal Indian policy over the last century from assimilation and termination to self-determination and sovereignty.

The Association began its advocacy in 1922 by working to defeat the Bursum Bill, a bill which would have allowed the state of New Mexico to steal lands from the Pueblo Nations and restrict their ability to partake in traditional practices. Some of the Association's efforts that will be covered in the 100 year history will include this as well as: fighting to pass the Indian Reorganization Act, helping form the National Congress of American Indians, countering the federal policies of termination and relocation, the establishment of the first American Indian scholarships, fighting in courts to bring home one stolen child at a time from foster homes and developing the Indian Child Welfare Act, advocating for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, protecting Taos Blue Lake, Pyramid Lake, Medicine Wheel and other sacred sites, and many other efforts to support Tribal sovereignty and to protect diverse Native American cultural practices.

The Association is very grateful to have the distinguished Matthew L.M. Fletcher (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa) volunteering to author our history as a generous gift to the Association. Mr. Fletcher is a Professor of Law at Michigan State University College of Law and Director of the University's Indigenous Law and Policy Center. His list of contributions to Indian Country is endless, but to name a few, he sits as a Judge on many Tribal Courts, and has authored numerous legal and academic articles. You can find out more about Professor Fletcher at [www.law.msu.edu](http://www.law.msu.edu) website, click on faculty profiles ([http://www.law.msu.edu/faculty\\_staff/profile.php?prof=494](http://www.law.msu.edu/faculty_staff/profile.php?prof=494)).

Many of the Association's century-worth of records and history are housed at the Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library in Princeton, New Jersey, where Professor Fletcher will conduct research about the Association. He will also be conducting interviews with current and former board members and directors of the Association to learn first-hand of the organization's current past.

As the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country, the Association has a rich and inspiring history and we are excited for the opportunity to share it with the world—and utilize this history to lay the groundwork for the next 100 years of service to Indian Country!





# TOGETHER we can make a difference!

## Give to the 100 Year Cultural Sovereignty Campaign

Be a part of investing in Indian Country sovereignty, culture, and education by supporting the capacity of the Association on American Indian Affairs.

To better serve the changing needs of Indian Country into the next 100 years, the Association must continue to build sustainability and is creating an endowment that will feed the Association's operations now and for the next century. In order to tackle this goal, we created the **100 Year Cultural Sovereignty Campaign**.

There are two ways to participate in this Campaign:

### 100 months for 100 years

Commit to the Association monthly in whatever amount you are comfortable with for the next 100 months. This will help the Association build a sustainable source of funding that will support our efforts.

### 100 Year Legacy Council

The Association is looking for 10 special Legacy Donors to help us build a \$10 million endowment to serve Indian Country for the next 100 years. Each member of the 100 Year Legacy Council may give \$1 million (or increments adding to \$1 million) to build the sustainable endowment. These 10 donors will forever be enshrined as our **100 Year Legacy Council**. Please contact us at [general.aaia@indian-affairs.org](mailto:general.aaia@indian-affairs.org) to become a part of this Legacy.

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## ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Sovereignty • Preserving Culture  
Educating Youth • Building Capacity  
SINCE 1922

**Enclosed is my Gift of:**  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$125  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

With your gift of \$35 or more, you also become an annual MEMBER and will receive newsletters, calls to action and share in other information and opportunities for advocacy!

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## **2020 SIXTH ANNUAL REPATRIATION CONFERENCE** **Growing Community & Moving Forward After 30 Years of NAGPRA** **October 27-28, 2020—Denver, Colorado**

In partnership with the University of Denver, the Association will be commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (and going beyond NAGPRA).

The Association is also planning NATIONAL EVENTS to take place all around Indian Country (including at Arizona State University) to memorialize NAGPRA's anniversary and advocate for stronger repatriation practices.

The Sixth Annual Repatriation Conference and other National Events commemorating the 30th anniversary of NAGPRA will be available to stream! Please contact the Association if you would like to be involved in this national symposium, provide resources or volunteer!