



# Indian Country

THIS WEEK FROM

## TODAY

THE PREMIER E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE NATIONS, CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE

### *A Letter from the Publisher*

*Shekóli.* There is no dispute: Mainstream American culture has issues when it comes to Indians. On TV, it is rare to see a Native character, let alone a sitcom, depicting a contemporary Indian family. On-air hosts for national variety and news shows have become remarkably diverse in recent years, with one exception: no Indians. All too often, Natives are presented as relics, or depicted as stereotypes and mascots. Looking at arrays of mainstream websites or magazines, one would think the First Peoples of Turtle Island have all but vanished.

Thankfully, the reality is that some of the most successful, talented and visionary people and communities today are Indigenous. Middle America just hasn't realized it yet. While Jacoby Ellsbury, Adam Beach and Rickie Fowler are household names, few Americans stop and think about their heritage. The country watches as Suzan Shown Harjo is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and savors the memories associated with singer and songwriter Buffy St. Marie's "Up Where We Belong." Yet the word "Indian" still conjures up associations with casinos or headdresses or worse. Thus the need to bring together some



of Indian country's brightest lights and change all those misguided, ingrained perceptions.

The most critical reason behind the genesis of the special digital edition of *The Fifty Faces of Indian Country 2015* (which is attached to this week's newsletter) has to do with the future as much as the present. Simply put, our young people deserve to learn about the individual and collective achievements of Natives presented in a visual, dramatic way. Indian kids need to see people like themselves and role models that they can aspire to be—lawyers, doctors, artists, business leaders, models

and musicians. Here, then, is a showcase where Indian strength and beauty is not overlooked or shunned. By honoring these worthy individuals, we hope to celebrate our audience, and future stars of *50 Faces* as well.

*Na k'ir wa,*

Ray Halbritter

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### **Saving Ourselves From Addiction**

**Larry Spotted Crow Mann** (*Nipmuc*), who is working with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to combat substance addiction, urges Natives to reject alcohol and drugs for their own sake and that of their progeny:

A 2008 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 11.7 percent of deaths among Native Americans and Alaska Natives between 2001 and 2005 were alcohol-related—compared with 3.3 percent for the country. It also found that 66 percent of Native

Americans who died from alcohol were younger than 50 years old, and that seven percent were younger than 20.

Alcohol and drugs have given us teen suicide, birth defects, the breakup of families, violence in the home and community and high incarceration rates. This not-so-sobering list goes on and on.

There are many reasons why people turn to these substances. They include the illusion of the escape from pain or reality, the “separateness” that we try to overcome, and the need to “fit in.” This is where alcohol and drugs does its best lying—under the pretense to “connect” or “free” us from something. When we

use, we cause a rippling effect of hurt within—for those who love us and for the people who will be the victims of our next blackout.

Booze and drugs constitute “unnatural selection” when you consider how vibrant our purpose here can ultimately be. Much like saying no to Native mascots and the misappropriation of Native culture, let us stop the misappropriation of our souls to these substances. There is no simple answer to this dilemma. However, with more people engaged to deal with this crisis, the better chance we have to save our next generation. <http://bit.ly/1KfvvKt> ☞

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### **Money And Soul Are Not Mutually Exclusive**

**Jon Magnuson**, a former Peace Corps volunteer and director of the collaborative, five-tribe *Zaagkii Project*, asserts that Natives can profit both financially and culturally with commercial initiatives that stay true to their roots:

The economic prosperity resulting from the gaming industry legal agreements among tribes, states and the federal government has been historic. But tribal efforts to protect traditional spiritual and cultural values will increasingly become the real battleground.

This should not be a choice between

money and soul. There’s nothing wrong with a healthy tribal income from the casino industry—as long as a significant portion of that income can be set aside by tribes to fight intrusions of irresponsible mining companies, short-term forest harvesting practices, and profit-driven corporate polluters. With a priority of protecting the sanctity of natural resources on treaty lands, American Indian peoples will recover and claim their rightful place as original custodians and defenders of our land, our air and water.

Here, in a remote part of Northern Michigan, the heart of such a vision is emerging in a collaborative effort by five tribes. Communities are working

together to establish centers for environmental education, field training, and the promotion of Native seed harvesting and butterfly/bee protection. Those efforts are intentionally framed by ceremony and Native traditional spiritual teachings.

The test is real. Harvesting wild rice, processing maple sugar, and growing ginseng holds extraordinary and untapped potential revenue for tribe-based economies. If such intentional investments can be sustained, they will certainly outlast and—with the selected promise of global markets—one day outpace revenues from blackjack tables and slot machines. <http://bit.ly/1NnpYI7> ☞

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### **When Reservations Are In The Blood**

**Micah Armstrong** (*Blackfoot*) bewails the tribe-on-tribe arguments being fought over blood quantum standards and reservation property rights:

Many tribal councils do not offer a way for those who are lineal descendants of a tribe to live on reservations and to legally own land there. This causes many people to be torn between two options.

One side claims that by abolishing the certificate of blood standards, and by creating a way for lineal descendants to join the tribe, down the road there

would be no full-bloods left living on the reservations—thus destroying a culture. This seems like a reasonable argument to many. But it can pose a problem for those who have lived on the reservation with their families, even if they have less than the minimum blood quantum for being fully enrolled. Just because they weren’t enrolled by the government’s standards, that doesn’t always mean they are disconnected from their cultures or their people’s languages.

On the other hand, many people believe that by allowing lineal descendants to join their tribe, there would be less disconnection among family members.

There could also be a greater opportunity to teach others who had not lived on the reservations—or who had not been raised in that culture—how to continue to use the traditions and trades that had been passed down from generation to generation. Many also think that by allowing only those with a minimum blood-quantum level to be, or stay enrolled, in the tribe, one day there would be no one left alive on the reservations to take care of the land, culture or traditions.

One thing is for sure: It’s hard for a family to own land if there is no more family to pass it down to. <http://bit.ly/1ILvbTH> ☞

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## Crow Tribe Opts For Share In Washington State Coal Port

The Crow Tribe of Montana has joined in a partnership with Cloud Peak Energy and SSA Marine for a five percent share of Gateway Pacific Terminal, the coal export terminal that is being proposed in northwest Washington State near the Canadian border.

The tribe's buy-in cost will be decided upon approval of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the export project, reported the *Billings Gazette*. The Crow tribal legislature must also approve the agreement, made by Crow Tribal Chairman Darren Old Coyote, when its members convene in October.

Proponents estimate the terminal could open in five years and ship roughly 48 million metric tons of coal annually to international markets.

The Crow Tribe will have an option to secure five percent from shareholder Cloud Peak Energy's 49 percent stake. SSA Marine—the largest U.S. owned and largest, privately held container terminal operator and cargo handling company in the world—owns the other 51 percent. A Wyoming-based mining company, Cloud Peak Energy, paid SSA Marine \$2 million upon signing and will pay all future permitting expenses up to \$30 million, which is anticipated to cover expenses through 2019. The owners will then share any additional permitting expenses based on their ownership interests.

The Gateway Pacific Terminal would export coal internationally and handle products other like grain and potash. If given the green light, Gateway Pacific Terminal would also export the Crow's farm commodities, offering more income diversity to the tribe.

Coal reserves on Crow tribal land in southeast Montana are estimated at 17 billion tons. <http://bit.ly/1MGW9Sw> ☞

## Don't Sign Toxic Spill Claim Form, Says Navajo Nation President BY ALYSA LANDRY

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye is urging tribal members affected by the August 5 waste spill at a Colorado mine not to submit claim forms issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

"Don't sign it," said Begaye. He called the EPA's distribution of Standard Form 95 "insensitive and minimizing" for Navajo citizens who may face years of hardship caused by the accident.

The spill occurred when an EPA contractor, tasked with pumping toxic wastewater from the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado, ruptured its roof, releasing three million gallons of mineral-filled effluvia into tributaries of the San Juan River in New Mexico. The San Juan runs for 215 miles along the northern portion of the Navajo Nation.

Begaye warned that the EPA forms, once signed, would effectively waive an individual's right to seek future damages caused by the contaminated water.

"People will continue to need resources," he said. "The question is, how will we know that when our children are out there playing, or when cattle are out there drinking, that the toxins won't rise to the top and get on their bodies, or be consumed? Since cleanup will take decades, is that how long we will wait to have complete certainty that we will not be ingesting that stuff?"

The EPA has said that failure to complete the document within two years of the incident may render any claim invalid. The agency is still taking water and soil samples and has not yet indicated when cleanup will begin. <http://bit.ly/1WEQqzX> ☞

## Federal Inspector Criticizes Indian Mortgage Program

BY MARK FOGARTY

A federal inspector general's office has criticized a popular American Indian mortgage program, alleging lax underwriting—an assertion that the guarantor of the loans has challenged.

The Inspector General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has charged that its Office of Native American Programs (ONAP)'s Office of Loan Guarantee did not provide adequate loan oversight. This resulted "in an increased overall risk to the program, including guaran-

teeing 3,845 loans totaling more than \$705 million," the inspector general's office said.

A review of 95 statistically sampled loans over more than four and one-half years, ending on July 31, 2014, "determined that 32 of 95 loans had material underwriting deficiencies," the inspector general specified. "This lack of oversight and high incidence of poorly underwritten loans has the potential to negatively impact the financial standing of Native American communities."

But Roger Boyd (Navajo), HUD assistant deputy secretary for Native programs, responded that the statistical sample in question was too small and

did not correlate with actual program losses. He also said that claims on the program from inception to March 31 of this year come to 662 loans for \$114 million. That is about 2.5 percent of total loans, less than the amount HUD has received in fees and the guarantee amounts provided by Congress.

Many of the losses came during the years after the financial collapse of 2008, Boyd told the inspector general. He also said that the Office of Loan Guarantee has initiated an increase in premiums to reduce risk to the agency. Boyd acknowledged, "[T]here is significant room for improvement in this area." <http://bit.ly/1Lm79ll> ☞



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\*Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce forecasts of educational demand through 2020.

  
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# A Dugout Greets Mystic

*Eastern Nations Are United By 'Mission Mishoon'* BY CHRISTINA ROSE



*The new mishoon completed its first voyage to Mystic, Connecticut, where passengers on boats readied their cameras and well-wishers gathered.*

**Bottom Line:** *The paddlers of a massive dugout canoe did more than complete a journey. They reconnected through an appreciation of their living history.*

At the Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut, small shops modeled after those that lined the same wide street 275 years ago recall the last time the Mashantucket Pequots rode a *mishoon*, or dugout canoe, along the Mystic River.

Before the arrival of Europeans, the Pequots traveled by mishoons to their 26 shoreline villages from Old Saybrook, Connecticut, to Pawcatuck, Rhode Island. They also paddled to and from Long Island, a voyage of more than 30 miles.

On August 8, a dozen members of several Eastern tribes made a shorter but equally significant voyage when they launched a newly crafted, 36-foot-

long mishoon into the Mystic River. The mishoon's initial six-mile trip—dubbed “Mission Mishoon”—took them past the massacre grounds where hundreds of Pequots were killed in 1637 and up the Mystic River to Noank, the first reservation established for the Pequots in 1666.

The Pequots held Noank for only 50 years. Nonetheless, said Mashantucket Pequot chairman Rodney Butler, the connection was palpable: “These are our historical lands. To paddle where our ancestors paddled, in their honor—it’s an incredible feeling, something you can’t describe.

“The original reservation was 500 acres of direct waterfront. As the colonists settled in, they relocated us to the hills of Mashantucket, which is all swamp, steep rocky ledges and snakes.”

“Mission Mishoon” was a project of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and

Research Center. It evolved from conversations between Jonathan Perry (Aquinnah Wampanoag) and Jason Mancini, the museum’s director, who was hired to reopen the museum this May after it closed for a winter hiatus.

When the museum reopened, Mancini made it his goal to bring the East Coast tribes together with projects like this. Perry teamed up with Darius Coombs (Aquinnah Wampanoag) to create the canoe. Over the last 30 years they have fashioned 80 mishoons together and with other teams.

The tulip poplar tree that Mancini and his crew chose for the canoe was 10 feet longer than had been expected, Perry said. “So it was a bigger project than we envisioned, but it worked out beautifully. It’s an impressive vessel.”

To create a dugout canoe, a low fire is kept lit by burning smaller pieces of hard-



*Mashantucket Pequot tribal chairman Rodney Butler was a paddler in the mishoon's first voyage. At right, Darius Coombs (Wampanoag), who has been burning out canoes for 30 years, tends to the creation of the new craft.*

woods atop the tree while it is laid on the ground. As the top of the dugout turns to charcoal, the ash is continually scraped away with tools similar to those that were used in the past. The mishoon, emerging from the charred remains, is then shaped and polished to its final state.

The challenges were minimal. "Mosquitoes at night and bees during the day, broken tools," Perry said, smiling. Along with Coombs, Perry and a number of tribal members from various East Coast Nations kept the canoe burning for 28-hour stints—"from Friday afternoon until Saturday night, over four weekends," said Perry. "We were burning around the clock"

Volunteers from other tribes were invited to participate. "We had community feasts with some tribal members traveling from hundreds of miles," Perry recalled. "We had great conversations in the wee hours of the night and shared a lot of great experiences. We strengthened our relationship and collaborations."

Coombs believes the vessels are impor-

tant to the culture of coastal peoples. "They keep the tradition going, they keep who you are going," he said. "It gives the younger generation pride. But what gets me about this project is not just burning out the boat itself. It's the boat seeing the water. Being part of this is something special."

The launch had many meanings for those who participated in the burning and paddling. For Leah Hopkins (Narragansett/Niantic), paddling with at least one person from every Nation in southern New England especially resonated.

"This is the uniting of nations," she said. "There are Wampanoags, Pequot, Narragansett, Shinnecock, Passamaquoddy, and more here. This is such a big project for the Mashantucket and for Native people in general."

Jason Mancini agreed. "Seeing the tribes come together was really great," he said. He believes the mishoon project will increase the visibility of the tribes and their history: "I think a lot people are unfamiliar with the rich cultural history of New England, and they forget there are

Native people here. I wanted to draw attention to that."

Chanie Bullock (Shinnecock) has paddled across the Long Island Sound and with the Nipmucks from Deer Island to Boston Harbor. Because of her experience, she was asked to sit in the front and steer the new canoe. At the end of the day, she said the only difficulties the crew faced were the wakes from passing powerboats and establishing a balanced rhythm among the paddlers.

Altogether, said Perry, the six-mile trip was a powerful experience. "Our paddles in the water connects us to Mother Earth and our ancestors. We had a long period of time in New England where the tribes lost a lot. We were created at this time when there is a change of perception and respect of indigenous people."

"We have a long way to go, but if the fight is carried by all people, and no one tolerates the disrespect of the indigenous people who deserve to rest here for all of eternity, then we have a future and we will move forward." <http://bit.ly/1LhcytH> 🌿

# Tribes Hit Back On Proposed Plant-Picking Rule

*Taking issue with gathering guidelines from Washington* BY MICHELLE TIRADO

**Bottom Line:** *A federal proposal to give Native Americans greater leeway to partake of flora in national parks is not going over well.*

The National Park Service (NPS) may have thought it was doing Native Americans a favor this spring when it proposed a rule that would legally allow them to gather certain plants on its property.

But so far, the response from Indian country has not exactly been enthusiastic.

"Today, we are still getting massacred by words, by manmade laws," Chief Arvol Looking Horse, spiritual leader of the Great Sioux Nation told Indian Country Today Media Network. "They [the federal government] are not respecting who we are as the original people of this land."

The proposed federal rule, published in the *Federal Register* on April 20, would permit Natives to gather traditional and medicinal plants, for food and cultural purposes, among the 84 million acres and 408 areas of the National Park System. Tribes have long been allowed to acquire flora in national parks on an informal, case-by-case basis, mainly in instances where the parks have overtaken tribal lands.

Nonetheless, many tribal members, including elders, have received citations for gathering within park boundaries. The new rule would formally broaden such access.

Such allowances, however, would be governed by agreements between the National Park Service and tribes. The procedures would also be subject to permits that identify the tribal members who may conduct these activities.

The new rule would provide exemptions to members of federally recognized tribes and on the parklands associated with them. It would also create "an orderly and consistent process" that would include individual agreements with area superintendents, subject to approval or rejection.



*Some Texas tribes use mesquite berries for traditional dress. Must they ask to pick them?*

"The rule itself is going to put a little more onus on the tribes," Joe Watkins, American Indian officer for the Park Service, told the Associated Press.

To enter into an agreement, a tribe would have to submit a request that demonstrates its association with a park; identifies designated gatherers; explains how the gatherers were identified; and specifies which plants or plant parts will be gathered, as well as where, when, and how they will be gathered.

An environmental analysis, conducted by the park superintendent to gauge the potential impacts of a tribe's gathering activities, would also be required.

Since the proposal was made more than four months ago, many of the responses from tribal members have been negative. In general, they have objected to the specific provisions of the proposal.

"Our sacred relationship with these plants, and the ceremonies and customs connected to them, is an essential part of

our spiritual way of life," wrote the Indigenous Elders and Medicine People Council. "To place the Superintendent and/or Regional Director and/or designated person between the Creator and the Indigenous Peoples is a direct violation of our rights."

"There is no one individual in any tribal community that knows all of the traditional purposes of every plant or plant part in their region," wrote Sherri Mitchell (Penobscot), an indigenous peoples' law and policy attorney and director of the Land Peace Foundation. She was especially concerned about the so-called designated gatherers requirement. "In a traditional context, our knowledge is shared by many individuals."

She added, "The only appropriate step here would be to remove the prohibitions placed on indigenous people completely, not create new rules that allow restricted access that actually defeats traditional purposes."

Bobby Cypress Billie, a spiritual leader of the Original Miccosukee Simanolee Nation, also objected to the proposal: "Even if they come out with it, we are still going to maintain our way of life and our land."

Jeffrey Olson, a National Park Service public affairs officer, pledged that the comments on the proposed rule would be examined, analyzed and addressed.

"NPS can decide to alter the final rule to meet the concerns of the commenters, leave the rule the way it is, or, a mixture of the two," he said. "In the extreme case, the NPS can, as a last option, decide to pull the rule from consideration."

The federally mandated 90-day public comment period for the proposed rule—which closed July 20—generated 69 responses from federally recognized tribes, indigenous groups and individuals. In drafting the rule, the National Park Service contacted more than 120 tribes. <http://bit.ly/1LmOkBi> ☞

# Ten Minutes With Pritzker

*In Michigan, the Secretary of Commerce talks tribal business* BY BRENDA AUSTIN

**Author's Introduction:** Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker recently met with Native leaders and students in Michigan to discuss how Washington can help tribes create a stronger and more vibrant economic future. She met with officials from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and toured the Great Lakes Composites Institute, owned by the Bay Mills Indian Community. She also spoke with Sault Tribe and Bay Mills high school and college students. And she sat down for a quick interview with Indian Country Today Media Network:

**What is the goal of your meetings and how many tribes have you visited so far?**

I have met with the leadership of four different tribes. The President has asked each department in his administration to engage with tribal leaders to better understand their issues and to work with them to make sure they are aware of the services that we have and can bring to bear.

Fortunately, I have a terrific Senior Advisor for Native American Affairs—Cisco Minthorn, who works with tribes across the country to make sure they are aware of the various services the Department of Commerce has. Those include working with tribal leaders on diversifying their economy or growing their various businesses, promoting tourism or helping the next generation of leaders. We also help businesses work to expand trade and investment.

Part of my trip has been to talk about what we do and how we can do more together. It was great to talk with the students about their aspirations and the vision they have for themselves, whether it's to be a veterinarian or a Marine, a photographer for *National Geographic*, or an animator or lawyer, artist or baker.

**What are some of the economic chal-**

**lenges faced by Native-owned businesses?**

The businesses and leaders I talked to were particularly interested in a number of things. First of all, extending fiber optics for several miles in order to make sure that their training facilities are able to bring the best to bear. Infrastructure is an issue in every community and certain-



Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker

ly one here, particularly as you get more into a rural location.

The second issue was workforce development and making sure that we are providing the right kind of training. Another issue was the availability of capital and making sure businesses can gain access to capital. Of course access to markets all over the world was also an issue of importance.

Then there was quite a bit of interest in the census and making sure that we are getting an accurate count of the population of Native communities. One of the things in our trust responsibility, as the

federal government, certainly begins with making sure that we get the census right, because that is so much of the foundation of funding and support for these communities.

**Is exporting to other countries something that tribes could benefit from? Are there any tribes to your knowledge who are currently exporting products?**

Tribes were very interested in our U.S. Export Assistance Centers. I think we have four here in Michigan. Their job is to help companies that have products they want to export. They can help them figure out where in the world those products are competitive. We also have foreign commercial service officers in about 75 countries around the world that help companies navigate their local economies.

One of the examples of the work we have done with Native stakeholders includes a longstanding memorandum of understanding with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to attract tourism and sales from abroad. We could also help companies, if they have products they want to export, by giving them assistance as to which markets to approach and how to navigate once they are in those markets.

**Is this a good economic environment for Native American's looking to start a business venture?**

The concern that I heard here in the Upper Peninsula is that they are worried that too much of their economics is dependent on the tourism industry and that they want to diversify their economy. Young folks are talking about all kinds of aspirations and issues. The leadership here would like to see a more diversified economy so they have confidence that they can have self-sufficiency. <http://bit.ly/1WCkagP> 📱



## Moapa Indian Housing Authority

### JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Title: MIHA Executive Director

Reports to: BOC

Salary: DOE

Opens: 7/20/2015

Closes: until filled

**Qualifications:** Candidates should have some experience in HUD programs, Grant writing and Budgets, or at least some experience in governmental programs of a similar and diverse functions; ability to retain detailed information on numerous housing subjects and easily recall them when required is essential; must be familiar with management of a housing authority agency or related agency; must be able to express oneself in a clear and concise manner, both in speech and in writing; prefer contract administration experience. Must have a valid Nevada driver's license; must furnish own automobile; must be able to work weekends and evenings when required.

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## Domestic Violence Staff Attorney – Scottsbluff

Legal Aid of Nebraska, a law firm providing free civil legal services to low-income persons, seeks an attorney to serve Native American victims of domestic violence in Western Nebraska. Must be admitted to practice in Nebraska or have a Nebraska license pending, and be licensed or willing to become licensed in the Ponca, Winnebago, Omaha and Santee Tribal Courts. This position entails extensive travel throughout panhandle and Cherry counties. Duties will include but will not be limited to: provide assistance to members of the Omaha, Ponca, Santee, and Winnebago and to other Native Americans who are victims of domestic violence primarily residing in the panhandle and Cherry counties. This position entails providing training to law enforcement; making community presentations; conducting outreach to Native American victims of domestic violence; developing culturally appropriate materials providing legal information and information about Legal Aid of Nebraska's Native American Project and domestic violence; fostering relationships with the Tribes, tribal members, domestic violence agencies and other service providers. The attorney in this position also provides quality and aggressive representation of low-income Native American domestic violence victims who are clients of LAN primarily in state court, and, engages in the day-to-day practice of law according to the priorities and practices set by Legal Aid of Nebraska. Ideal candidate will possess expertise in the area of domestic violence and have a connection to Native American issues. This is a full-time position requiring a committed individual. Company cell phone and laptop will be provided. Location in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

Legal Aid of Nebraska offers excellent supervision, training and support, and state-of-the-art technology. Loan assistance repayment may be available assuming eligibility for Legal Aid's repayment program. Experience-based competitive salary. Excellent benefits package. Please send resume, references, writing sample and cover letter via email to: Jonathan Seagrass, Managing Attorney of Legal Aid of Nebraska's Native American Project, at [jseagrass@legalaidofnebraska.org](mailto:jseagrass@legalaidofnebraska.org). EOE. Position open until filled.

## Ute Indian Tribally Designated Housing Entity

### Request for Proposals for Audit Services for FY 2015

The Ute Indian Tribally Designated Housing Entity (UITDHE), hereafter referred to as the Housing Authority, located in Fort Duchesne, Utah is seeking proposals from interested accounting/auditing firms that provide auditing service specifically for Indian Housing Authorities or Tribally Designated Housing Entities as defined in the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996.

The Auditor must be responsible, qualified, and must be able to perform the audit in accordance with the requirements of the Single Audit Act.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is being advertised as an open procurement with Indian Preference. Firms claiming Indian Preference must submit proof of enrollment with a federal or state recognized Indian tribe and proof of at least 51% Indian ownership of their firm. All sealed proposals are due no later than **5:00 PM, September 25, 2015** at the business office for Ute Indian Designated Tribally Housing Entity.

**Scope of Work for Audit Services – Length of Contract 1 year renewable based upon an annual review of services by the Housing Authority.**

For a complete copy of the RFP and rating schedule please call UITDHE at 435-722-4656 between the hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm MST.

## Executive Director, EPICS

EPICS seeks a full-time Executive Director (ED) to manage the EPICS organization. The ED serves as liaison between program staff and the public, monitors financial administration and directs overall program planning and activities for all projects.

Candidates must have excellent organizational, verbal, written and interpersonal skills; ability to work independently and as a team member; past success with a governing board; and experience with nonprofit accounting, budgeting and fundraising. MS/MA degree in related field with 3+ year's administrative experience. Native American preferred.

To apply, submit a Resume and Letter of interest as to why you would like to be considered for this position, and contact information (names, addresses phone, email) for three references to Veronia Sandoval at [vsandoval@epicsnm.org](mailto:vsandoval@epicsnm.org). For more information visit: [www.epicsnm.org](http://www.epicsnm.org).

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*Sahar Khadjenoury (Diné/Iranian) appears in the Navajo writer and director Blackhorse Lowe's new film Chasing the Light.*



*Some 200 Native high school students from five states shot hoops in the first One Day All Nations Camp in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.*



*Surviving World War II Navajo Code Talkers were celebrated in Window Rock, Arizona on the 70th anniversary of V-J Day.*



*New research confirms that sweetgrass, often used in Native ceremonies and sweat lodges, is an effective insect repellent.*

ACHIMOWIN FILMS; COURTESY OF SANFORD HEALTH; ALYSA LANDRY; JACKIE MCNEEL

# Headlines from the Web

## SNOQUAIMIE TRIBE SAYS CITY IS BUILDING ON SACRED GROUND

<http://bit.ly/1UMdURH>

## TRIBE HELPS PROVIDE PUBLIC BIKE PROGRAM IN PELLSTON

<http://bit.ly/1J4sc86>

## GAY MARRIAGE DISCOURAGED WITHIN AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

<http://bit.ly/1E0MKTg>

## TULALIP COPE WITH LOSS OF FOUR YOUNG LIVES

<http://kng5.tv/1NoxwtZ>

## TRIBE HALTS GUN LAKE CASINO PAYMENTS TO STATE

<http://bit.ly/1Mz36Fk>

## DESPITE MEETING, OKLA. TRIBES SAY MARIJUANA NOT IN PLANS

<http://bit.ly/1EC4hfg>

## Upcoming Events

### MASSACHUSETTS NATIVE PEOPLES LISTENING SESSION AUGUST 29

"Massachusetts Native Peoples and the Social Contract: A Reassessment For Our Times" is the first of four roundtable discussions and listening sessions in areas of the state with substantial Native populations. The goal is to engage Native peoples in Massachusetts in looking at the past, present and future through the lens of the social contract between them and the commonwealth. Hosted by the Nipmuc Tribe, the sessions are being conducted by UMass Boston's Institute for New England Native American Studies and Suffolk University Law School's Indigenous Peoples Rights Clinic.

**Location:** Worcester Public Library, Worcester, Massachusetts

### NATIVE WOMEN'S JUSTICE TRAINING SEPTEMBER 1-3

Conducted by the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, this criminal justice institute is offered to assist tribes in providing a review of issues connected with implementation of inherent tribal

special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction, especially in regard to the 2013 Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. Topics include "Using Experiences of Domestic Violence Survivors & Advocates to Inform Policy and Practice Reforms" and "Response to Sex Trafficking of Native Women 'Trapped' in Violence." The keynote address will be "Protecting Our Women & Children Under Intense Legal Scrutiny Challenges Us To Be Better Together."

**Location:** Wild Horse Pass Hotel & Casino, Chandler, Arizona

### SELF SUFFICIENCY—HUD/NAIHC TRAINING SEPTEMBER 2-3

The course will enable participants to explore the use of Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) funding to design programming and support partnerships to promote self-sufficiency. It will combine hands-on participatory activities, small group exercises and large group discussions. Beginning with definitions and examples of self-sufficiency, the course will examine how participants are currently using NAHASDA funds, look at asset

building and then turn to workforce development efforts and entrepreneurship as a workforce development strategy. Participants will then have an opportunity to start designing actual self-sufficiency programming.

**Location:** Hampton Inn & Suites Tacoma-Mall, Tacoma, Washington

### NATIONAL INDIAN JUSTICE CENTER TRAINING SESSIONS SEPTEMBER 2-4

The National Indian Justice Center will offer two training sessions in furtherance of its goals of designing and delivering legal education, research and assistance to improve the quality of life for Native communities and the administration of justice in Indian country. "Protecting Tribal Children and Tribal Culture" will focus on the Indian Child Welfare Act, Adoption and Safe Families Act & Title IV-E, while "Tribal Grant Administration will provide a comprehensive overview of how federally funded tribal grant programs should be implemented and managed from beginning to conclusion.

**Location:** Hyatt French Quarter New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: "In Memory of Stallone Trosper," from the family of the young Northern Arapaho man who was fatally shot in a possible hate crime last month (July 23):

I am saddened that you needed to write this letter, but I thank you. I had the honor of knowing Stallone. I could go on with the many wonderful qualities

and attributes he had, but you all know already. I do want to say that he had a decided impact on my life. He had wisdom beyond his years and a sense of respect and kindness that truly touched my soul.

My deepest condolences to your family.

—Kelleen Gilstad

Re: Vincent Schilling's "Women Are Our Strongest Warriors" (August 4):

Personally, sometimes I think I was created to have a woman tell me what to do!

—Bill Brown  
Long Branch, New Jersey



## TOP NEWS ALERTS

From [IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com](http://IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com)

### ST. PAUL ABANDONS 'COLUMBUS DAY'

The city council of St. Paul, Minnesota has unanimously resolved to rename the federal holiday of Columbus Day. On August 12, the council approved a resolution that would "declare the second day in October as Indigenous Peoples Day in the City of Saint Paul; encouraging other institutions to recognize the Day; and reaffirming the City's commitment to promote the well-being and growth of Saint Paul's American Indian and Indigenous community." The move follows last year's similar decision by St. Paul's twin city of Minneapolis.

### MORONGO BAND OUTFITS 800 FOR SCHOOL

As it has for 19 years, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians in

California has distributed school supplies and casual wear to low-income children for their return to the classroom in September. This month, the Morongo Band provided 800 children with hooded sweatshirts and athletic shoes, as well as backpacks containing pencils, crayons and pens. The products were made possible by \$60,000 that was raised at the Morongo Charity Gold Tournament in June.

### CHICKASAW ELECTION RESULTS ANNOUNCED

In last month's Chickasaw Nation elections, incumbents Toby Perkins and David Woerz retained two legislative seats and challenger Linda English Weeks won a judicial seat. Perkins received 1,486 votes to defeat Mary Holden-Nordwall (627) and Oscar W. Gore (300)

for Pontotoc District Seat 1. Woerz received 1,486 votes to defeat Mike Watson (677) for Pickens District Seat 1. Weeks defeated incumbent Barbara Anne Smith for Supreme Court Seat 2 by a vote of 5,138 to 2,356. The officials will be sworn in October 1.

### NATIVE CHILD SAFETY PROGRAM UNVEILED

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is taking additional steps to assist federally recognized tribal social services agencies seeking to place Native children in safe homes. As administered by the bureau's Office of Justice Services, the new initiative will offer "dispatch centers" that will be available to provide 24-hour access to criminal history records, so that name-based checks can be conducted im-

mediately. Authorization for the checks comes from the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council.

### SCIENCE CONFIRMS THE POWER OF SWEETGRASS

Mainstream science has affirmed what Natives have known for generations: that sweetgrass is a useful insect repellent. The effectiveness of chemicals in sweetgrass oil in warding off insects compares favorably with those found in commercially available compounds, the American Chemical Society said last week. "The findings come from studies of traditional therapies in Native American tribes," noted *The Washington Post*. In addition to using sweetgrass to keep away bugs, numerous Native cultures employ the plant as incense in ritual purifications.

# How Did I Miss That?

*Politics as usual, the return of Harry and Louise, and the tragedy of 'Junior' Seau*

BY STEVE RUSSELL

Following his less than exciting performance in the first GOP primary debate, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker endorsed corporate welfare with his pen, signing a bill to provide \$250 million in taxpayer funding to build a new stadium for the Milwaukee Bucks.

"That's not all he endorsed," my cousin, Ray Sixkiller, remarked in his most snarky tone.

Ray told me that Jon Hammes, one of the Bucks owners, is the finance chair of Walker's presidential campaign. *The New York Times* reported that a corporation that is registered to a relative of Hammes donated \$150,000 to a super PAC for Walker.

\* \* \*

*The Jackson Clarion-Ledger* reported that Muhammad Dakhalla and Jaelyn Young, both former students at Mississippi State University, were arrested at the Golden Triangle Regional Airport on a criminal complaint of conspiracy to render aid to a foreign terrorist organization. They were flying to Turkey, where they planned to cross the border into Syria and join ISIS.

"Stranger than fiction," quoth Cousin Ray.

\* \* \*

*The Detroit News* published a report even stranger. Republicans Todd Courser and Cindy Gamrat, self-described Tea Party "gladiators," took their legislative seats from establishment Republicans. Both subscribe to a fundamentalist stripe of Christianity that mixes religion with public policy but apparently not with private conduct. Married, although not to each other, Courser and Gamrat were having an affair.

Courser, concerned that the affair

was about to become public, asked an aide to help him achieve a "controlled burn" by sending an anonymous and bogus email to Republican leaders statewide claiming that he, Courser, had been caught in a sex act with a male prostitute. The aide, who recorded the conversation, was subsequently fired. Courser explained, "In a controlled burn, you do a little bit of truth mixed in with a lot of lies."

"Sounds to me," Cousin Ray said, "like politics as usual."

\* \* \*

"Junior" Seau is the first Native Pacific Islander in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Before his suicide in 2012, Seau asked that his daughter, Sydney, give his acceptance speech. The Hall of Fame refused to let her speak. But this month, *The New York Times* posted a video of what wasn't said.

When Junior Seau shot himself in the chest at age 43, it was rumored that he did so to preserve his brain for study. His brain was "blinded"—that is, sent for examination to several authorities who did not know the origin of the tissue or the stakes in the results. All agreed that Seau was suffering from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative disease caused by repeated blows to the head.

CTE symptoms include dementia, memory loss, headaches—and depression. Seau's family sued the National Football League. They have thus become part of the traumatic brain injury scandal that has been nip and tuck with the league's domestic violence scandal.

This might explain silencing Sydney Seau, but a look at her speech reveals the NFL had nothing to fear. Suppressing her voice just made them look deaf.

\* \* \*

Freedom Partners, the deep pockets behind the deep-pocketed Charles and David Koch, meets twice a year in some suitable lap of luxury, this month at the St. Regis Monarch Beach in California. For a change of pace, some reporters were allowed in, provided they agreed not to report who was there.


"Reporters who agreed not to report who was there?" Cousin Ray was shocked, as my grandkids would say, "for reals."

\* \* \*

Harry and Louise, those advertising icons whose rather stiff marital conversations about Hillary Clinton's health-care reform proposal turned public opinion against the initiative, are back. Theirs was a breathtaking exercise in big money persuasion by the Health Insurance Association of America. Harry and Louise proved, at least for complicated issues, that truth does not matter. Ditto obvious conflicts of interest.

Now the same advertising trope is being deployed against a Department of Labor proposal to impose a "fiduciary duty" on stockbrokers who manage retirement accounts. This means the brokers would have to put their clients' interests above their own interest in, for example, getting kickbacks from steering clients to certain investments.

Who could be against that? Everybody who profits from the current situation. "Americans to Protect Family Security" spots have the modern Harry and Louise claiming that the new rule would keep ordinary people from getting the best advice.

"Give it up, Steve," said Cousin Ray, flashing "time out" with his hands. "The people about to get screwed don't care. It's all inside baseball played on big money AstroTurf." <http://bit.ly/1MxKt31> 

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[vmiller@omahatribe.com](mailto:vmiller@omahatribe.com)

[Omaha-NSN.gov](http://Omaha-NSN.gov)

## **7TH ANNUAL HEALING MOTHER EARTH INTERTRIBAL POW POW**

8/27/15—8/30/15

3924 Maple Road

Jefferson, OH

440-319-4483

[redwolf\\_0801@aol.com](mailto:redwolf_0801@aol.com)

## **FOOTHILLS NATIVE AMERICAN POW WOW**

8/28/15

Thurmond Community Center

Thurmond, NC

## **35TH ANNUAL CHA CHA BAH NING TRADITIONAL POW WOW**

8/28/15—8/30/15

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Inger, MN

218-256-6163

[LLOjibwe.com](http://LLOjibwe.com)

## **22ND ANNUAL POTAWATOMI TRAILS POW WOW**

8/29/15—8/30/15

Shiloh Park

2700 Emmuas Avenue

Zion, IL

847-746-5797

[wlb99@att.net](mailto:wlb99@att.net)

[GoFlo.com/powwow](http://GoFlo.com/powwow)



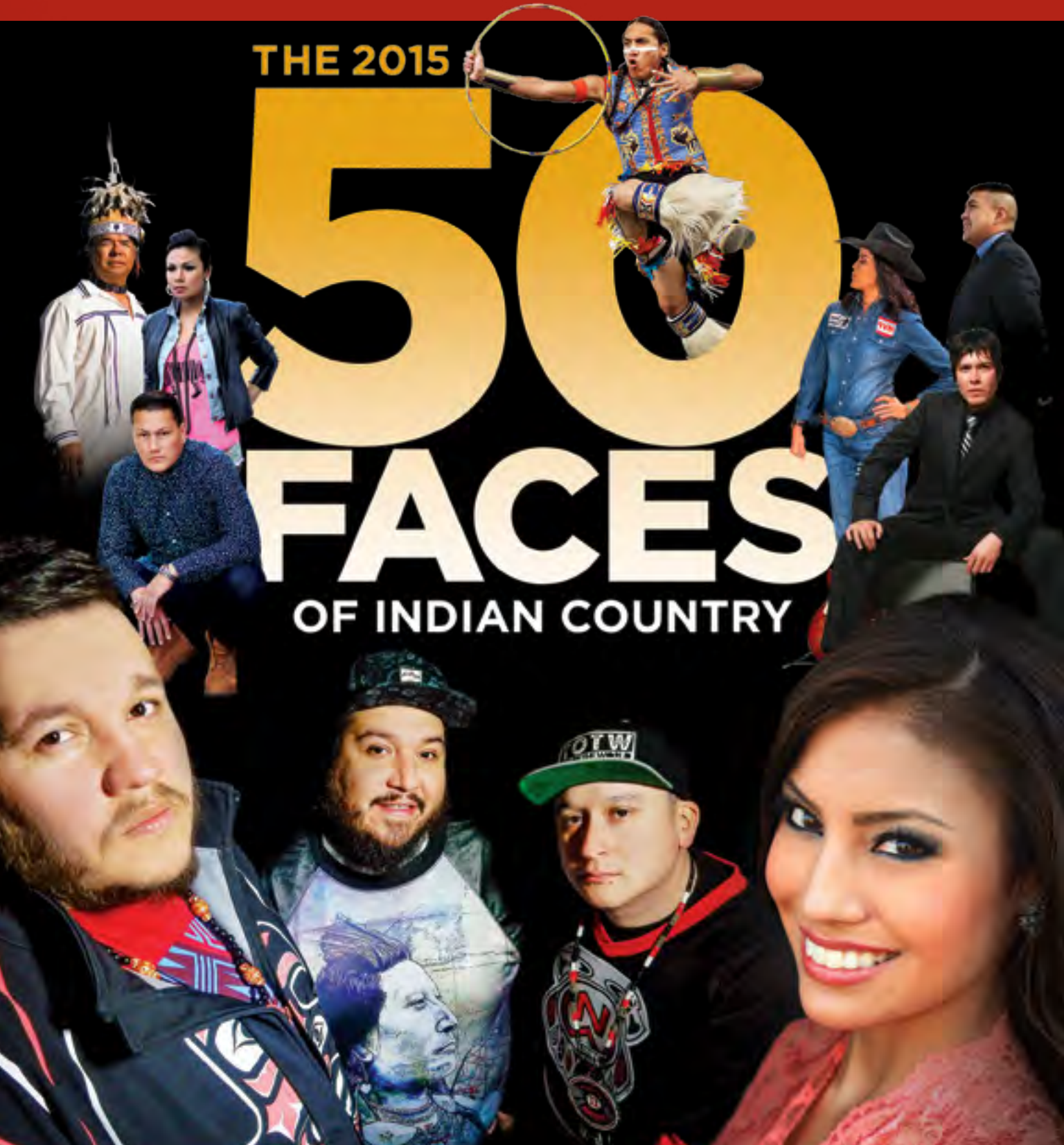
*Kristina Hyatt (Eastern Band of Cherokee) is the new Miss Native American USA.*

**THE BIG PICTURE**

# Indian Country

THIS WEEK FROM

**TODAY** THE PREMIER E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE NATIONS, CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE





ᏍᏍᏍᏍ  
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Inventor of Cherokee  
syllabary writing.

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## A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

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*Shekóli.* There is no dispute: Mainstream American culture has issues when it comes to Indians. On TV, it is rare to see a Native character, let alone a sitcom depicting a contemporary Indian family. On-air hosts for national variety and news shows have become remarkably diverse in recent years, with one exception: no Indians. All too often, Natives are presented as relics, or depicted as stereotypes and mascots. Looking at arrays of mainstream websites or magazines, one would think the First Peoples of Turtle Island have all but vanished.

Thankfully, the reality is that some of the most successful, talented and visionary people and communities today are Indigenous. The mainstream just hasn't realized it yet. While Jacoby Ellsbury, Adam Beach and Rickie Fowler are household names, few Americans stop and think about their heritage. The country watches as Suzan Shown Harjo is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and savors the memories connected to the singer and songwriter Buffy St. Marie's "Up Where We Belong," yet the word 'Indian' still conjures up associations with casinos or headdresses or worse. Thus the need to bring together some of Indian country's brightest



lights and change all those misguided, ingrained perceptions.

The most critical reason behind the genesis of this, *The Fifty Faces of Indian Country 2015*, has to do with the future as much as the present. Simply put, our young people deserve to learn about the individual and collective achievements of Natives presented in a visual, dramatic way. Indian kids need to see people like themselves and role models that they can aspire to be—lawyers, doctors, artists, business leaders, models and musicians. Here, then, is a showcase where Indian strength and beauty is not overlooked or shunned. By honoring these worthy individuals, we hope to celebrate our audience, and future stars of 50 Faces as well.

*Náki wa,*

Ray Halbritter



The 50 Faces of Indian Country 2015 pays tribute to the diversity, wisdom and energy of contemporary Natives. In this special print edition, the richness of our nations is on full display, represented by individuals who embody the spirit of what it is to be called Indian. Pulling it all together was no easy task. The concept was simple and powerful enough, but the devil is in the details. We looked to create a mix that included equal part leaders, actors, activists, musicians, business people, men, women, elders and youth. Finally, painfully, we arrived at The List. For now.

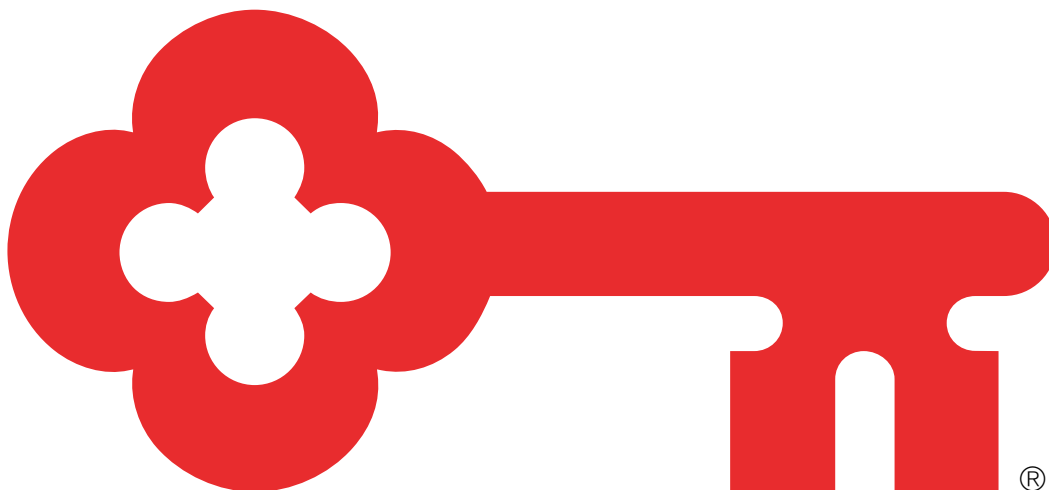
When it comes to Native superstars we will never be able to establish one definitive list and fifty is too small a number. There

are millions of faces of Indian country, and hundreds to be considered for the project this year and in future. Acclaimed actor Wes Studi, for example, is not included in these pages, but based on upcoming projects, he surely will appear on it next year. Similarly, cases could be made for San Manuel's James Ramos, or NIGA's Ernie Stevens, or any of the many talented actors (such as Martin Sensmeier) and writers (Joy Harjo) working today.

We celebrate the 2015 Faces to broadcast the vibrant spirit of Natives to a wider audience. Collectively, the first peoples of this land have an impact on the world in ways mainstream media rarely depicts. By honoring these worthy individuals, we are thanking them for their efforts in bringing good to us all.

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# Our strength is in our people.

Congratulations **Mike Lettig**, KeyBank National Executive, Native American Financial Services. Because of his hard work and dedication to serving the needs of the Native American and business communities, he has been named one of the “50 Faces of Indian Country.”

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**DEBORAH PARKER**

No other voice may have been louder in support of the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization of 2013 than Deborah Parker's. The former Tulalip Tribe vice-chair used her experiences as a survivor of physical and sexual violence as motivation for herself and inspiration for others to help bring VAWA to fruition. On March 7, 2013, when VAWA was signed into law, Parker knew that all her work, the regular red-eye flights from Washington state to Washington, D.C., and time away from family paid off. "I'm so grateful to all the advocates who came together so that no Native woman has to stand alone. Men and women of all nationalities really bonded to protect Native women. How beautiful is that?" Parker said. Her work didn't end once VAWA was signed into law though. She's now looking to prevent child abuse, and protect Alaska Native women – who were left out of the current bill by legislators reluctant to push Native jurisdiction issues in the "last frontier" state.

KAREN ORDERS PHOTOGRAPHY

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**DEREK MILLER**

He is Indian country's guilty pleasure. Derek Miller, Mohawk, is the late-night talk show host of "Guilt Free Zone," an all-indigenous program in Canada that stars musicians, comedians, a variety of other indigenous performers, and even discussions of sex, which, Miller admits, irritates and arouses some viewers. "I think talking about sex is a bit of a touchy subject to some. We definitely have received some complaints from people, but we're not doing our job, I don't think, if we don't

push boundaries," he told ICTMN earlier this year. "Being indigenous and having healthy sexuality is important, so we wanted to talk about it. It's the driving force around our creation." Miller, who is also a blues musician, performs across the U.S. and Canada. His latest album, *Rumble: A Tribute to Native Music Icons*, was released in association with the Smithsonian Museum. "Guilt Free Zone" airs at 10 p.m. in Canada on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

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Roshawna Atmore, Craig Fondren,  
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Financing the Development of a  
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Tribal Community Infrastructure  
Roshawna Atmore, Linda Johnson,  
Lisa Tompkins

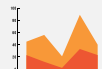


### ASSET BUILDING REQUIRES TRIBAL CAPACITY

TRACK 2, DAY 2

Asset Building Stage 1: Scope & Cost Management  
Asset Building Stage 2 & 3: Schedule Management  
& Delivery Methods and Project Planning &  
Design Management

Vicki Colgan, Wm. Gregory Combs, Craig Fondren  
Wm. Gregory Combs, Zeenab Fowk,  
Kevin Washington



### NATIVE BUSINESSES STRENGTHEN TRIBAL COMMUNITY

TRACK 3, DAY 3

The Power of CDFIs in Indian Country  
Lanalle Smith | (Navajo Nation)

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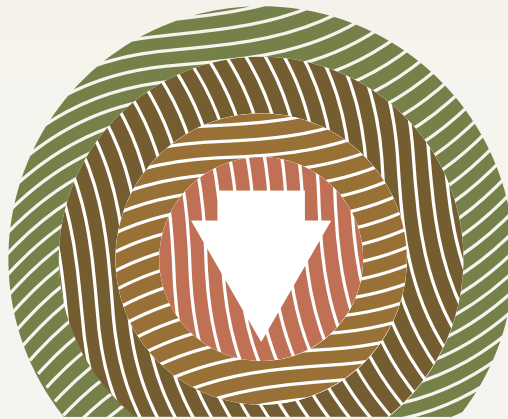
## NOTAH BEGAY

ESPN offered up this fitting, concise profile: “Notah Begay, child of the reservation, creation of the public links, graduate of Stanford University, registered member of the Navajo Nation and son of Mother Earth.” Begay has parlayed his passion for a sport he’s played since six into a way to help Native youth. He won four tournaments in his first two years on the PGA Tour, but his promising career was cut short by a bad back, so he became a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist. The Notah Begay

III Foundation is the only national Native American nonprofit solely dedicated to reversing childhood obesity and type-2 diabetes. He still picks up his clubs every year for the Notah Begay III Invitational, held at Turning Stone Resort Casino in Verona, New York. “This is a lifelong commitment for me,” he says of that event. “I’ll be doing it for decades to come, because that’s how long it will take to provide services to our Indian communities to address childhood obesity and the diabetes epidemic.”

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**KAWENNÁHERE  
DEVERY JACOBS**

Mohawk actress Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs has been appearing in movies and TV shows for years, but on the strength of her performance in a couple of diverse and Native-themed projects, she's suddenly today's most exciting up-and-coming Native actress. She plays the lead character, Alia, in the acclaimed *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, and was nominated in the Best Actress category at the 2014 Canadian Screen Awards. She then showed up in A Tribe Called Red's "Sisters" music video, and in Indian country you cannot be in a hipper place than a Tribe Called Red video. Still in her early 20s, Jacobs is likely to keep getting interesting film roles, but she is already planning on a career behind the camera as well. In March, her Kickstarter campaign to fund *Stolen*, a film about missing or murdered Indigenous women, met its goal.

ANTHONY THOSH COLLINS



**TWENTY-NINE PALMS  
BAND OF MISSION INDIANS**



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**DEREK VALDO**

Derek Valdo is the first Native CEO of AMERIND Risk, a not-for-profit risk pool management corporation created by 400 tribes to offer property, liability and workers' compensation insurance and employee benefits. Valdo has served AMERIND for 15 years, as CEO since 2012, and is also a councilman for the Pueblo of Acoma and a board member for the National Indian Child Welfare Association. Under Valdo's helm, AMERIND has achieved 200 percent growth through its workers' compensation program and increased its contributions to Native organizations to nearly half a million dollars annually. In 2014, Albuquerque Business First honored him as a Top Tribal CEO in New Mexico. He said then that his goal was to build AMERIND to be the largest tribal-preferred insurance provider in Indian country. "I don't take [this job] lightly," Valdo says. "I work for 567 federally recognized tribes. I can't fail. Failing would mean I failed a lot of tribes."

# AMERIND Risk: Protecting Tribes, Employees and Indian Country

BY KRISTIN BUTLER

AMERIND Risk is not your average insurance company. It's the only 100-percent tribally-owned insurance solutions provider, and it is based in Indian country, in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico. "Our competitors may have tribal names, but they are owned by Wall Street investors," says AMERIND Risk COO, Dennis McCann. "AMERIND is owned by over 400 federally recognized Tribes."

AMERIND Risk specializes in providing property, liability, and workers' compensation insurance for tribes, tribal governments, businesses, and individuals. It is a public entity risk pool, but unlike the other 500 or more risk pool insurance carriers in the United States, AMERIND is the only one that focuses on tribal governments and their affiliated businesses. Through cost-effective risk management and risk pooling to protect life and property in Indian country, small- to medium-sized tribes can enjoy the same benefits that large tribes get through self-funding, for catastrophic loss protection. In addition, as a tribally-owned company, AMERIND can protect and defend tribal sovereignty. AMERIND believes tribal governments and businesses should not be limited to the state statutory workers' compensation provided through corporate insurance companies.

"Unlike commercial insurers, AMERIND Risk is a Section 17, federal corporation. We enjoy the sovereignty of our chartering tribes," McCann explained. "Commercial insurers will agree to arbitration, but only in state courts. We, as a sovereign entity, agree to arbitration, but we insist on tribal courts."

AMERIND's exceptional Tribal Workers' Compensation program has helped the company grow its client base by 200 percent in the past two years. Workplace safety education, prevention and loss control are the cornerstones of its business. AMERIND performs on-site inspections to assess equipment and problem areas to avoid potential accidents, and AMERIND trains employees in safety protocol and emergency management, at no additional

cost to the policyholder.

"Our safety services team has a budget equal to 7 percent of our overall budget. If you look at regular insurance companies, safety probably amounts to 2 percent of their budget," AMERIND Risk CEO, Derek Valdo, Acoma Pueblo Council member, told ICTMN. AMERIND is particularly invested in raising awareness of fire safety. Over the course of AMERIND's 29 years of performing in Indian country, 72 percent of the more than \$385 million in claims paid by AMERIND have been fire-related. In response, AMERIND has hosted a fire safety poster contest for youth, every year for the last 22 years. "Tribal young people will be tribal homeowners, employees and leaders," Valdo said. "If we can educate them, and plant a seed when they're young, we can help change their behaviors and outcomes."

AMERIND's workers' compensation product is not just advantageous to tribal governments and businesses, it's great for employees. The company also goes beyond the call of duty to make sure employees or their families receive their fair settlement. Valdo offered one particular example when AMERIND adjusted its policy: When an employee of an AMERIND Risk Tribal client unfortunately died in an accident in California, "the state death benefits were payable to no one, because he had no relatives and no surviving spouse," Valdo said. "But we knew he was cohabitating with someone. We put in a common law exception, because we thought it was the right thing to do for the employee and for the tribe. Our product is very flexible and sensitive to the needs of the tribe."

AMERIND Benefits: Recently, in addition to its property, liability and workers' compensation insurance, AMERIND Risk has started offering solutions for employee benefits. In February 2015, AMERIND Risk acquired TWG Insurance and Financial Services and created a new division dubbed AMERIND Benefits. AMERIND Benefits delivers core and voluntary products—like health, dental, vision, short-

and long-term disability, accident plans, cancer insurance, and more—through proprietary plans with many carriers. It also designs comprehensive insurance plans, paying close attention to Affordable Care Act standards for compliance, and offers customized financial services such as retirement and investment packages for tribal governments and businesses. "With 567 federally recognized tribes, one size does not fit all," Valdo said. "We have a wealth of contracts available and can match a Tribe's risk appetite and safety culture with the best program."

Because 80 percent of employees in tribal companies are Native American, AMERIND has proprietary programs that are very culturally sensitive. "For example, Presbyterian has agreed to reimburse traditional healers—and that's not like writing a check to a doctor," Valdo explained. "If you go to a medicine man, you don't pay in cash, you pay in tobacco, corn meal, or food to feed their spirits. We've gotten a couple carriers to acknowledge that form of payment for services received."

AMERIND gives back: This year, AMERIND Risk is nearing the half-million mark for annual donations. One outreach effort close to Valdo's heart is the annual AMERIND All West Native American Basketball Classic tournament co-hosted with United Native American Housing Association and Great Plains Tribes in Denver. "About 15 years ago there was a high rate of suicide in many of the communities, and this is our fourteenth year being the main sponsor of the tournament intended to help prevent suicide. It's making significant strides with at-risk Native youth," Valdo said. AMERIND is also the only Native American insurance company that makes many contributions to the Native American Rights Fund and the National Congress for American Indians.

Created in 1986 by over 400 tribes to protect tribes, AMERIND Risk never loses sight of its greater mission to reinvest in Indian country and promote tribal growth and sustainability. "Tribes will survive by sticking together," Valdo said.

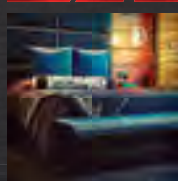
**BUFFY ST. MARIE**

Her music has inspired generations of singer-songwriters and activists. Buffy St. Marie, Cree, is celebrated as one of Indian country's most prolific musicians, and one of the best to ever make it to the mainstream. Her Stevie Nicks-like vibrato, matched with her poignant and piercing political lyrics – often concerning indigenous issues – put her in the musical elite with other 1960s socially conscious guitar pickers, such as Bob Dylan and the late Pete Seeger,

and she is still making moving, relevant music. She has been the recipient of numerous awards, including an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for the song “Up Where We Belong,” which she co-wrote for the 1982 film, *An Officer and a Gentleman*. Her latest album, *Power in the Blood*, was released this year. National Public Radio said it should stand as a reminder that her style “remains relevant, full of spit and vinegar and fun.”

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### **TERRY RAMBLER**

Terry Rambler was elected to the San Carlos Apache Tribal Council in 2004 and 2008, elected chairman in 2010 and re-elected in 2014. He is also chairman of the Arizona Indian Gaming Association. As tribal chairman, he has concentrated on improving education, creating jobs, providing better health care and developing the infrastructure to support growth and development. Rambler's administration established the San Carlos Training Institute, which trains tribal members as heavy

equipment operators, diesel mechanics, electricians, welders and plant equipment operators. He also continued the development of a second casino, and the tribe recently opened a hospital and medical campus that will provide almost 500 jobs. On the federal level, Rambler is leading negotiations to settle water rights issues for the tribe and has formed a nationwide coalition to save Oak Flat, the San Carlos Apache Tribe's traditional and most revered sacred site, from destruction by a copper mining project.

CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

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— A N D —

## KEVIN WASHBURN

A S S I S T A N T S E C R E T A R Y  
O F I N D I A N A F F A I R S



**GARY DAVIS**

Gary “Litefoot” Davis, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, has used his music, tours, films, speaking engagements, and books to inspire Native people across North America. Mr. Davis’s music has earned him Album of the Year and Artist of the Year honors from the Native American Music Awards, while his theatrical accomplishments include a starring role in *The Indian in the Cupboard*. He currently serves as President and CEO of the National Center for American Indian

Enterprise Development. Mr. Davis has advanced economic opportunity for Indian country by building government relationships, growing diversity presence in corporate America, and increasing training and business development via NCAIED programs such as its Reservation Economic Summits (RES) and Native Edge portal. His lifetime of accomplishment recently eared him the prestigious Sevenstar Award from the Cherokee Nation Historical Society.

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### BETHANY YELLOWTAIL

Young Bethany Yellowtail, Crow and Northern Cheyenne, was steadily working her way up in the fashion industry. Just a few years after she graduated from college, she'd worked as a patternmaker for BCBG Max Azria and Kellwood Company's popular BabyPhat line. But her passion was her own brand, B.Yellowtail, which was becoming a favorite of young Native entertainers in Los Angeles. In 2015, her dream came true, but so did her nightmare. In February, the Native fashion cognoscenti were shocked to see a dress design cribbed from Yellowtail on the runway at New York Fashion Week. "I felt gutted," Yellowtail said. "I felt erased, as if my voice and perspective of Indigenous design disappeared." Yet she didn't let the thievery discourage her, and two months later launched her byellowtail.com website and first collection, "Mighty Few," named after her home district on the Crow Nation.



MATIKA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY

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### TONY DUNCAN

Tony Duncan is an award-winning San Carlos Apache, Arikara, Mandan and Hidatsa hoop dancer. Along with his prowess with the hoops, Duncan is also a lauded musician. At the age of 10, his father taught him how to play traditional flute. Today, he's the lead flutist in the celebrated musical group Estan-Bah (Apache for "For the woman"). His performances are an amalgamation of traditional hoop dance and live music. In 2013, Duncan was named Artist of the Year at the Native American Music Awards for his musical talents and influence, and has starred in a music video with pop singer Nelly Furtado as well as a Ford commercial starring Bret Michaels of the hair-band Poison, that was filmed in association with the 2011 Grammy Awards. His music is available on iTunes.

ROBERT DOYLE/COURTESY CANYON RECORDS



### KARLENE HUNTER

CEO and co-founder of Native American Natural Foods, Karlene Hunter is an Oglala Lakota businesswoman and entrepreneur. Her company, founded in 2006, produces Tanka Bar, a low-calorie buffalo jerky and cranberry snack. Lauded for generating many jobs and much revenue in Indian country, Hunter, with Mark A. Tilsen, launched the "Tanka Fund" to raise money for the next generation of buffalo meat producers. "Buffalo producing is good for the environment, good for the economy, and we would like Native Americans to be able to participate in this industry," she told ICTMN in 2013. Hunter serves on the Board of Directors of the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development. She has also served on the Board of Directors for the Native American Rights Fund [NARF], the Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce, and the National Indian Business Association. She has an MBA from Oglala Lakota College, and was the recipient of the 2012 Vision Leadership Award by the Specialty Food Association.

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### SUZAN SHOWN HARJO

Suzan Harjo, Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee, is a poet, writer, lecturer, curator and policy advocate famous for initiating the movement to banish the racist name of the Washington football team and for the development of federal legislation protecting Native sovereignty, arts and cultures, language and human rights. Her initiatives include the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act, which protects Natives' rights to practice traditional religion and rituals; the 1989 National Museum of the American Indian Act, which required the Smithsonian to en-

gage in the repatriation of human remains, funerary and sacred objects; and the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which allows tribes to reclaim human remains and ceremonial items from publicly funded institutions, and she has helped secure the return of one million acres of tribal lands. In 1984, Harjo founded the Morning Star Institute, a nonprofit Native rights organization that organizes the National Sacred Places Prayer Days. In November 2014, Harjo received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

LUCY FOWLER WILLIAMS

## CHERYL CRAZY BULL

Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull, Sicangu Lakota, was named president and CEO of the American Indian College Fund in September 2012. In the midst of the College Fund's 25th anniversary celebration, she is focusing on a \$25-million fundraising campaign. As she pointed out at the fund's 25th Anniversary Gala in Chicago, every little bit can help Native students achieve their goals. Crazy Bull grew up on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation, graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1979, and has honorary doctorates from Sinte Gleska University and Seattle University. She has worked at Sinte Gleska University and St. Francis Indian School, and was president of Northwest Indian College. All of that adds up to more than 30 years of experience in education. In 2011, Crazy Bull was honored for her leadership in Indian education and community development with an Enduring Spirit Award from Native Action Network.



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**CHARLIE VIG**

As chairman of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC), Charlie Vig leads the largest employer in Scott County, Minnesota. The SMSC workforce numbers more than 4,200, and the tribe operates an annual payroll of over \$157 million. The SMSC is the largest philanthropic benefactor for Indian country and one of the largest charitable givers in Minnesota, having donated more than \$325 million since opening its Gaming Enterprise in the 1990s, as well as providing more than \$500 million in economic development loans to other tribes. Today Chairman Vig serves as chairman of the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association, a member of the board of directors for Koda Energy, and the SMSC's representative to the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Gaming Association. He has also served for 14 years on the tribe's Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors, which oversees Mystic Lake Casino Hotel and Little Six Casino.

COURTESY SHAKOPEE MDEWAKANTON SIOUX COMMUNITY (SMSC)

**WINONA LADUKE**

She's best known for her activist and environmentalist work through the White Earth Land Recovery Project, of which she is Executive Director, and Honor the Earth, which she founded with Indigo Girls Amy Ray and Emily Saliers in 1993. But Winona LaDuke, Anishinaabe, wears many hats—she's an economist, writer and was twice a vice presidential candidate on the Green Party ticket. She has taken up the fight on GMO awareness, the Keystone XL Pipeline, uranium mining practices, food sustainability and more. LaDuke says she draws power and sustenance from her traditional Anishinabe Kwe religion. "Spirituality is the foundation of all my political work. In many of the progressive movements in this country, religion carries a lot of baggage," she told *Mother Jones*. "But I think that's changing. ... What we all need to do is find the wellspring that keeps us going, that gives us the strength and patience to keep up this struggle for a long time."



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**SEAN SHERMAN**

Sean Sherman, affectionately known as the “Sioux Chef,” is an Oglala Lakota chef who has been lauded as a culinary virtuoso. His creations in the kitchen, which are both rustic and elegant, are an affirmation that Native American cuisine endures and still delights more than 500 years after the European invasion of the Americas. Born on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, Sherman, 41, uses only the ingredients indigenous to the area when he cooks. What’s more, Sherman says he does not incorporate any colonialist European influences into his Native dishes. This summer, Sherman and his team are zipping around the Twin Cities passing out his edible masterpieces from his recently unveiled food truck, which he named, “Tatanka Truck.” “We’re kind of doing these indigenous tacos,” he told ICTMN. “They’re corn-based, wild rice-based. [There’s also] bison and rabbit and turkey and duck and walleye, pure maple soda, and cranberry and sage iced tea.”

HEIDI EHALT/COURTESY SEANSIOUXCHEF



### KEVIN K. WASHBURN

Kevin K. Washburn, a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, became the U.S. Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs (AS-IA) in October 9, 2012. From day one, he has been a smart and dogged advocate for Indian country, even sparring with Congressional subcommittees looking to curtail the rights of tribes. He has been particularly busy the past six months. Most recently he and Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell released a new “final rule” that would give federal acknowledgment regulations a major overhaul. Shortly after that, Washburn announced the federal recognition of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe. (The Virginia tribe became the 567th federally recognized tribe in the U.S. and the first in the state.) In February, he announced the Bureau of Indian Affairs had released new Indian Child Welfare Act guidelines to ensure the rights and protections of Native families and children under ICWA.



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### TATANKA MEANS

A son of the late Lakota leader Russell Means, Tatanka has his father's taste for showbiz, and ample talent to back it up. Tatanka is an actor, standup comedian, dancer and model. He's also a skilled horseback rider and former boxing champ -- really, there doesn't seem to be much Tatanka Means can't do. In 2013 he was a film festival star, winning Best Actor awards for his work in *Tiger Eyes* (adapted from the novel by Judy Blume) and the short film "Derby Kings." In the last two years, Means has had recurring roles on the TV series *Banshee* and *The Night Shift*. He's currently commuting to South Africa to film *Saints and Strangers*, a scripted miniseries that tells the story of the British separatists and adventurers who crossed the ocean on the Mayflower to settle on Turtle Island.

MATIKA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY



### PATRICIA MICHAELS

TV audiences got to know fashion designer Patricia Michaels, Taos Pueblo, on season 11 of *Project Runway*, where she made it to the final two. But Michaels' crowd-pleasing, judges-pleasing Indigenous style was well-established before reality TV came calling. She's been a fixture on the Santa Fe scene for over 20 years, and her PM Waterlily brand continues to show all over the country. In November 2014, she was honored by the National Museum of the American Indian with an Art & Design award as part of NMAI's 20th anniversary. Michaels is now not only a hot designer, she's also a source of inspiration and wisdom for a younger generation of Native American fashion talents. "You can be contemporary, but be part of your culture or you'll end up being like everyone else in the world, and lose all that our ancestors fought for," she tells them.



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## LYLE THOMPSON

Two-time Tewaaraton Award winner Lyle Thompson had one of the biggest years of his life in 2015. In addition to ending his college lacrosse career as the first men's repeat winner of that award, Thompson was chosen No. 1 overall in the Major League Lacrosse draft by the Florida Launch. That reunited him with his older brother Miles Thompson, with whom he played at the University of Albany. Lyle's final college numbers there were 175 goals and 225 assists; his

total of 400 points is a career record in collegiate lacrosse. Thompson is a N7 Ambassador for Nike, and hosts lacrosse camps for Native youth with his brothers. At home, Thompson, who was born on the Onondaga Reservation, has two young daughters with his fiancée Amanda Longboat. "Every game I play, I am thinking of my tradition, and the Creator, and why I am playing this game," Thompson told ICTMN in 2013. "To us, it's a lifestyle and not just a game."

**OREN LYONS**

Oren Lyons is a Faithkeeper of the Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation and a Chief of the Onondaga Nation Council of Chiefs of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Haudenosaunee. Lyons has been active in international Indigenous rights and sovereignty issues for over four decades at the United Nations and other international forums. In 1982, he helped establish the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at the United Nations, and was awarded the United Nations NGO World Peace Prize. In 1992, he addressed the General Assembly, where he opened the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. Lyons graduated with a degree in fine arts from Syracuse University where he was an All American lacrosse player, and he was elected to the Lacrosse Hall of Fame. He now serves as honorary chairman of the Iroquois Nationals Lacrosse Team.



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**MIKE LETTIG**

William “Mike” Lettig, a member of the Navajo Nation, grew up near the reservation in northern Arizona. He started working with KeyBank in 1994; a decade later he persuaded KeyBank to establish its Native American Financial Services segment with the goal of making financing more easily available to Native-owned companies and Native entrepreneurs who were often denied by mainstream lenders. The program now offers lending and leasing, construction

loans, investment management, Trust and other solutions for general financial needs, as well as specific funding for resorts, casinos and other big projects. Today, Lettig serves as executive vice president and national executive of the company’s Native American Financial Services, and he is KeyBank’s national executive for agribusiness. Over the past six years, KeyBank has helped to raise more than \$4 billion in capital for Indian country.

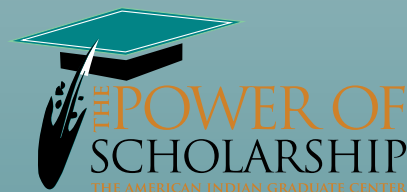
COURTESY KEYBANK



#### REP. TOM COLE

*Time* magazine called him, “one of the sharpest minds in the House.” Now serving in his seventh term, Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) is one of only two American Indians currently in Congress. The Chickasaw Nation member is an advocate for a strong national defense, a tireless advocate for taxpayers and small businesses, and a leader on issues dealing with Native Americans and tribal governments. Cole has been a champion of tribal sovereignty and a key player in the House vote in favor of the Violence Against Women Act. And while he supports pipeline construction and an increase in oil and gas production, has called for less federal spending, and votes for budgets that have negative impact on tribal communities, Cole has received the Congressional Leadership award by the National Congress of American Indians (2007) and was inducted into the Chickasaw Hall of Fame in 2004.

## THE AMERICAN INDIAN GRADUATE CENTER STAFF CONGRATULATES **SAM DELORIA,** **DIRECTOR OF AIGC!**



**JACOBY ELLSBURY**

After spending his entire career with the Boston Red Sox, the 31-year-old centerfielder became one of the highest paid players in baseball last year when he signed a seven-year, \$153-million contract to move down the East Coast (and trade sides in one of sport's fiercest rivalries) and play for the New York Yankees. But Ellsbury, the first man of Navajo and Colorado River Indian descent to play in the major leagues, has not forgotten what his culture teaches him about the importance of community and humility. He has donated generously to his alma mater, giving \$1 million to Oregon State University's baseball program, and is a N7 Nike Ambassador, inspiring Native youth to reach their fullest potential in sports. Ellsbury told *The New York Times*, "I'm very proud of my heritage, the traditional beliefs. I have a lot of respect for the culture, and how my mom and grandparents grew up."



COURTESY NIKE

For more than 30 years, the Northern Cree Singers drum group has delighted pow-wow-goers with their signature sound and harmony. (If you're lucky enough to see them perform, note the number of people who form a perimeter around the group with tape recorders in hand.) Founded in 1982 in Alberta, Canada by Steve Wood and his brothers, the Northern Cree Singers came together after Wood and several performers needed money to get back home from a trip to

Idaho, he told ICTMN in 2013. The group decided to play at a nearby pow wow, and that performance garnered them with enough money to make the trip back to Alberta. Since then, the group has been nominated for multiple Grammy and Juno awards, and has been invited to play across North America and even in Europe. “We have practically been to all four corners of Turtle Island, and it was our drum that took us there,” Wood says.

COURTESY CANYON RECORDS



## LOUIE GONG

Louie Gong says he grew up mixed, with strong ties to his father's Nooksack and Chinese culture. Today, as a professional, he's still mixed – Gong represents artistic talent, entrepreneurship and a helping hand for his people, all at the same time. His signature product is his hand-drawn custom shoes, but he's put his designs on skateboards, shower curtains, cell phone cases, pillows and now, blankets. His company, Eighth Generation, isn't simply a showcase for his skills; within the last year, he's

launched Inspired Natives, a program that helps Native artists build their entrepreneurial acumen and get their products to market. "Inspired Natives" is an inversion of "Native inspired," a detested euphemism for appropriations and knockoffs. The artists he's taken on "are capable of anything and hungry for ways to make their cultural art more sustainable," Gong says. "The challenge is that the business experience and capital needed to get something started is largely absent in our communities."



## VARENE MARTIN

VaRene Martin, who attended Oklahoma State University, and is now based in San Diego, has been tireless in her efforts to educate tribal communities about the role finance plays in fostering economic opportunities in Indian country. She is the first vice president of Native American Finance Officers Association, and brings more than 20 years of experience in the investment industry to her role in establishing a relationship between tribes and the NAFOA. In an interview with ICTMN, Martin, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, explained why she has been so diligent in her work for fellow Natives. "NAFOA and its continued success has been one of my passions. I have proudly told NAFOA's story as I travel throughout Indian country, encouraging the tribes to use the education that NAFOA offers to build the financial strength of tribal governments and their enterprises. It is truly a blessing to be a member of this board."

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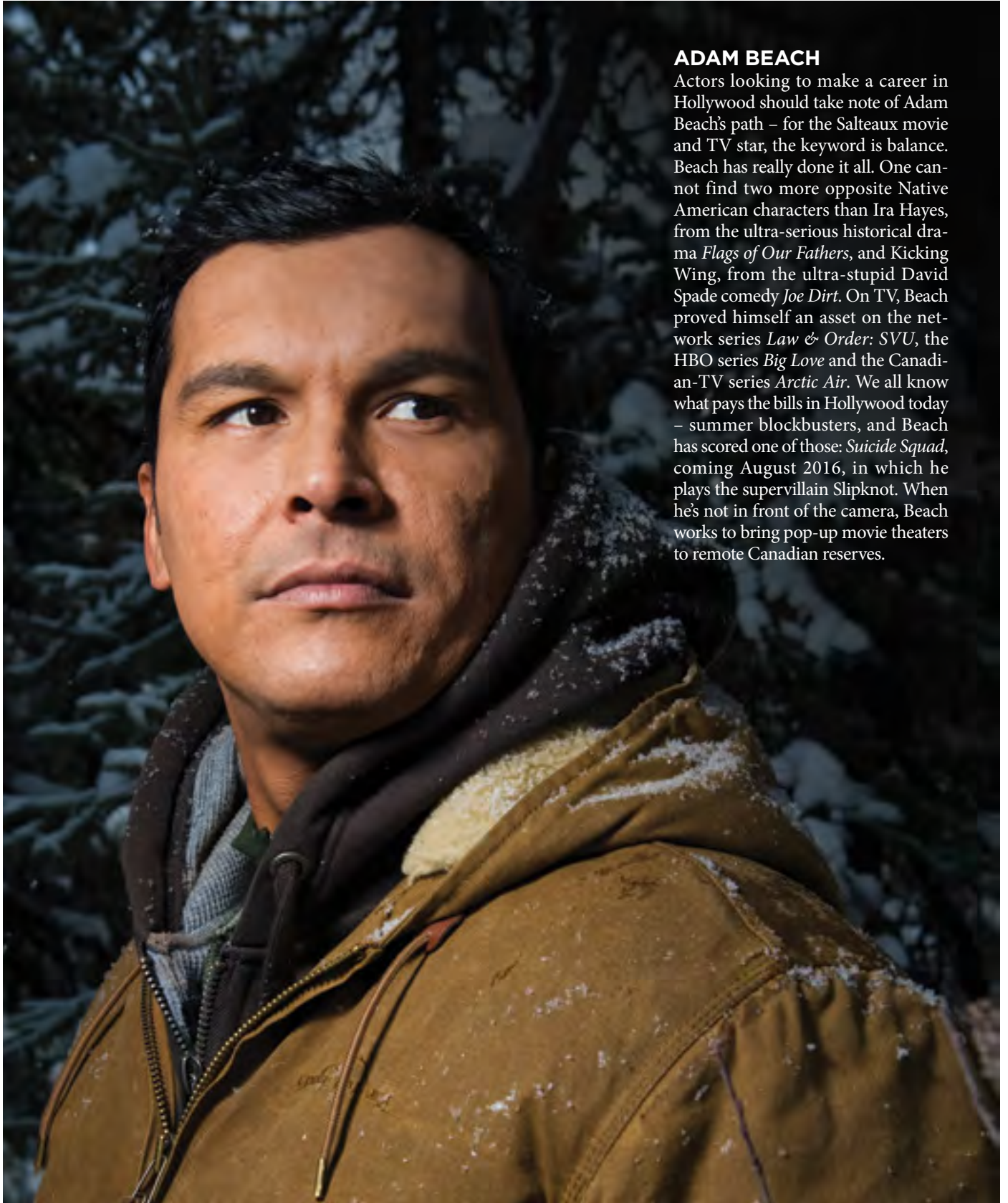
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## TRACY STANHOFF

As president of the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of California, Tracy Stanhoff is breaking down barriers that prevent Native American businesses from achieving success. Under her leadership, the AICCC provides educational support, mentoring, networking and advocacy for more than 38,000 Indian-owned ventures in California. In the last year, in partnership with the Verizon Foundation, Stanhoff (Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation/Choctaw Nation) helped set up a \$25,000

grant to assist Indian country's businesses increase business capacity through the use of technology in training workshops. In an op-ed on ICTMN's website, Stanhoff explained how she believes Native American businesses can and should succeed. "The goals are simply to get business back to our own – and there is plenty of business for us all. It is very simple: Keep more of our money in Indian country. Be open-minded, overcome petty politics, stop the rhetoric and just 'Buy Native!'"

**ADAM BEACH**

Actors looking to make a career in Hollywood should take note of Adam Beach's path – for the Salteaux movie and TV star, the keyword is balance. Beach has really done it all. One cannot find two more opposite Native American characters than Ira Hayes, from the ultra-serious historical drama *Flags of Our Fathers*, and Kicking Wing, from the ultra-stupid David Spade comedy *Joe Dirt*. On TV, Beach proved himself an asset on the network series *Law & Order: SVU*, the HBO series *Big Love* and the Canadian-TV series *Arctic Air*. We all know what pays the bills in Hollywood today – summer blockbusters, and Beach has scored one of those: *Suicide Squad*, coming August 2016, in which he plays the supervillain Slipknot. When he's not in front of the camera, Beach works to bring pop-up movie theaters to remote Canadian reserves.

**Q'ORIANKA KILCHER**

In the 2005 film *The New World*, directed by Terrence Malick, Q'orianka Kilcher played Pocahontas, and won recognition as the breakthrough performance of the year from the National Board of Review. The Quechua actress was back in 2009, headlining *Princess Kaiulani*, a film based on the life of the last monarch of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Kilcher again tells a story of a strong Indigenous woman this year in *Te Ata*, a film about a Chickasaw cultural hero, the storyteller Te Ata Fisher; the film was shot on location in Oklahoma and produced by the Chickasaw Nation. When not making movies, Kilcher is a tireless advocate for environmental and indigenous causes, lending her time and celebrity visibility to Amnesty International, International Forum on Globalization, Amazon Watch and other activist organizations.

IMAGE ON-Q/KAINOA KILCHER

**ASHLEY CALLINGBULL**

Watch any pageant and you'll hear a lot about leadership and positive role models – take a look at Ashley Callingbull's achievements and you'll see both in practice. In 2010, Callingbull, Enoch Cree, grabbed national and Native attention by finishing second runner-up in the Miss Universe Canada pageant. She immediately put her fame to work as an ambassador and advocate, for causes including Stollery Children's Hospital, Walk for the Cure and Run for the Lung. She also cultivated her interest in acting, landing a recurring role on the acclaimed APTN series *Blackstone*. Today, she's an in-demand motivational speaker, and she hasn't stopped competing in pageants: She'll be in Minsk, Belarus during the last week of August representing Canada in the Mrs. Universe pageant. (Yes, Mrs. Universe – Miss Callingbull got married.) In what spare time she has, Callingbull still jingle dances at as many pow wows as she can.



### JASON MOMOA

It seems likely that the world has yet to fully grasp the power of Jason Momoa. This brooding hunk has been a fixture on TV since he showed up on *Baywatch* in 1999. Stretches on *North Shore* and *Stargate: Atlantis* ensued, and he starred in a promising but overlooked remake of *Conan The Barbarian*. Then came *Game of Thrones*, on which he played Khal Drogo, and Momoa-mania kicked into a higher gear. Female fans swooned over the bare-chested, tattooed Dothraki chieftain, and mourned when he was killed off after appearing in just 10 episodes. Momoa, meanwhile, explored Native culture and issues in two subsequent projects, the TV series *The Red Road* and his own film *Road to Paloma*. He'll be back to showing off that physique soon enough, as he's signed on to play Aquaman in multiple movies based on the DC comics character.

**AMANDA  
BLACKHORSE**

This Diné mother and activist has seen more than her share of hate mail – but that’s an accepted part of the fight when you’re the lead plaintiff taking on the Washington NFL football team. The vitriol against Amanda Blackhorse surged earlier this year when the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board granted the cancellation of the Washington team’s registrations. Blackhorse was handed this torch by Harjo in 2006, when a similar trademark ruling in *Harjo et al v. Pro-Football Inc.* was tossed because the plaintiffs waited too long to assert their rights. Harjo recruited Blackhorse, along with five others to carry on the fight, in *Blackhorse et al v. Pro-Football Inc.* On July 8, a federal judge upheld the TTAB decision, leading Blackhorse to state, “yet again another confirmation by a federal tribunal that the R-word is offensive and disparaging to Native Americans.” In a column for ICTMN, Blackhorse wrote, “When we stand up to racism and corporate giants, we rise above, we unveil the racist institution, which has been for so long sheltered and protected.”



RYAN RED CORN

**LYNN  
VALBUENA**

"I have a passion to do this – it's just what I do," Lynn Valbuena told the *San Bernardino County Sun* in 2014 and that says all you need to know about the chairwoman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. That passion has driven her through more than four decades of service to San Manuel and Indian country. She is also chairwoman of the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations, a trustee for the Autry National Center in L.A., a board member for the Northern Arizona University Foundation in Flagstaff and serves on the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of California advisory board. Lynn is a former elected officer for the National Indian Gaming Association and a former trustee for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. She says her mother and grandmother are her main inspirations because, "Both women were not afraid to speak up for what they thought was right."

COURTESY SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS

**GIL BIRMINGHAM**

Today, Gil Birmingham, Comanche, is best known as one of Indian country's leading actors. His film credits include *Twilight* movies, *Crooked Arrows*, *Shouting Secrets* and *The Lone Ranger*; and he's been a recurring character in the TV series *House of Cards*, *Banshee* and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. What's less well known about Birmingham, though, is the path his career took before he settled on acting. He graduated from the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Science degree, and worked for a time as a petrochemical engineer. He was also a competitive bodybuilder, and while working out at a gym was noticed by a talent scout. Thanks to his muscles, Birmingham landed a role in a video by a pop-music legend: the 1982 hit "Muscles," by Diana Ross. He portrayed Conan for a time at Universal Studios theme park while waiting for the acting thing to take off – which it did, in 1986, with an appearance on *Riptide*.



## FRANK WALN

Frank Waln, Sicangu Lakota, is a hip-hop artist and environmental activist. In 2014, he was the subject of the MTV series *Rebel Music* for its episode on Native American musicians who use music to raise awareness about issues plaguing Indian country. A recipient of the 40 Under 40 Award by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, Waln tours the country performing his music and evangelizing for the rights of indigenous

peoples, proclaiming that they are the stewards of the land. Waln is also widely known as one of the leading Native American voices against the Keystone XL Pipeline; last year, he performed alongside music legends Willie Nelson and Neil Young at a concert to galvanize opposition to the pipeline. He says his early musical influences ranged from Robbie Robertson to Eminem and Nas, as well as the Sundance songs and going to ceremonies.

**STACEY THUNDER**

Journalist and actress Stacey Thunder, Red Lake and Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe, has been telling contemporary stories from Indian country for over a decade. In 2004, she began her job as host of the PBS weekly news magazine *Native Report*, a mix of news and lifestyle reporting that spotlighted an astonishing variety of topics and people during its 10-year run. Embracing the DIY spirit of the Internet, she's now launched her own series, *Indigenous With Stacey Thunder*, on YouTube. "For too long our people have been treated unfairly and negatively portrayed, and I'd love to help change that," Thunder says. She's also an attorney, and an accomplished actress, having most recently appeared in *The Jingle Dress* with Chaske Spencer and Kimberly Guerrero.



CAMERON PASHAK

**RAY HALBRITTER**

In 2003, Harvard Law School announced the establishment of The Oneida Indian Nation Professorship of Law, its first endowed chair in American Indian Studies, and the only professorship of its kind on the East Coast. The endowment is not the Nation's only connection with this prestigious school. Ray Halbritter, a former ironworker and now CEO of Oneida Nation Enterprises for three-plus decades, was a Harvard Law graduate. Under his leadership, the Nation has experienced a rags-to-riches transformation driven by its Turning Stone Resort Casino, its SavOn chain of gas station/convenience stores and a multi-media operation that includes ICTMN. The Nation, on Halbritter's initiative, also sponsored the "True Spirit of Thanksgiving" – the first American Indian-sponsored float in the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, donated \$10 million to the National Museum of the American Indian, and launched the nationwide Change the Mascot media blitz against the offensive name for Washington's NFL team.



### **BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL**

In 1992, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Northern Cheyenne, became the first Native American to serve in the U.S. Senate in more than 60 years. Before entering politics, Campbell was a fruit picker and fought in the Korean War. He won a judo gold medal in the Pan-American Games in 1963 and was captain of the U.S. judo team at the Tokyo Olympics. In 1986 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and was re-elected three times before moving on to the

Senate. In D.C., he was a key player in laws settling Native American water rights disputes, won the fight to change the name of Custer Battlefield Monument in Montana to Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, and was instrumental in establishing the National Museum of the American Indian. Campbell left Congress in 2004, and became a lobbyist. He is also an award-winning designer of Native American jewelry.



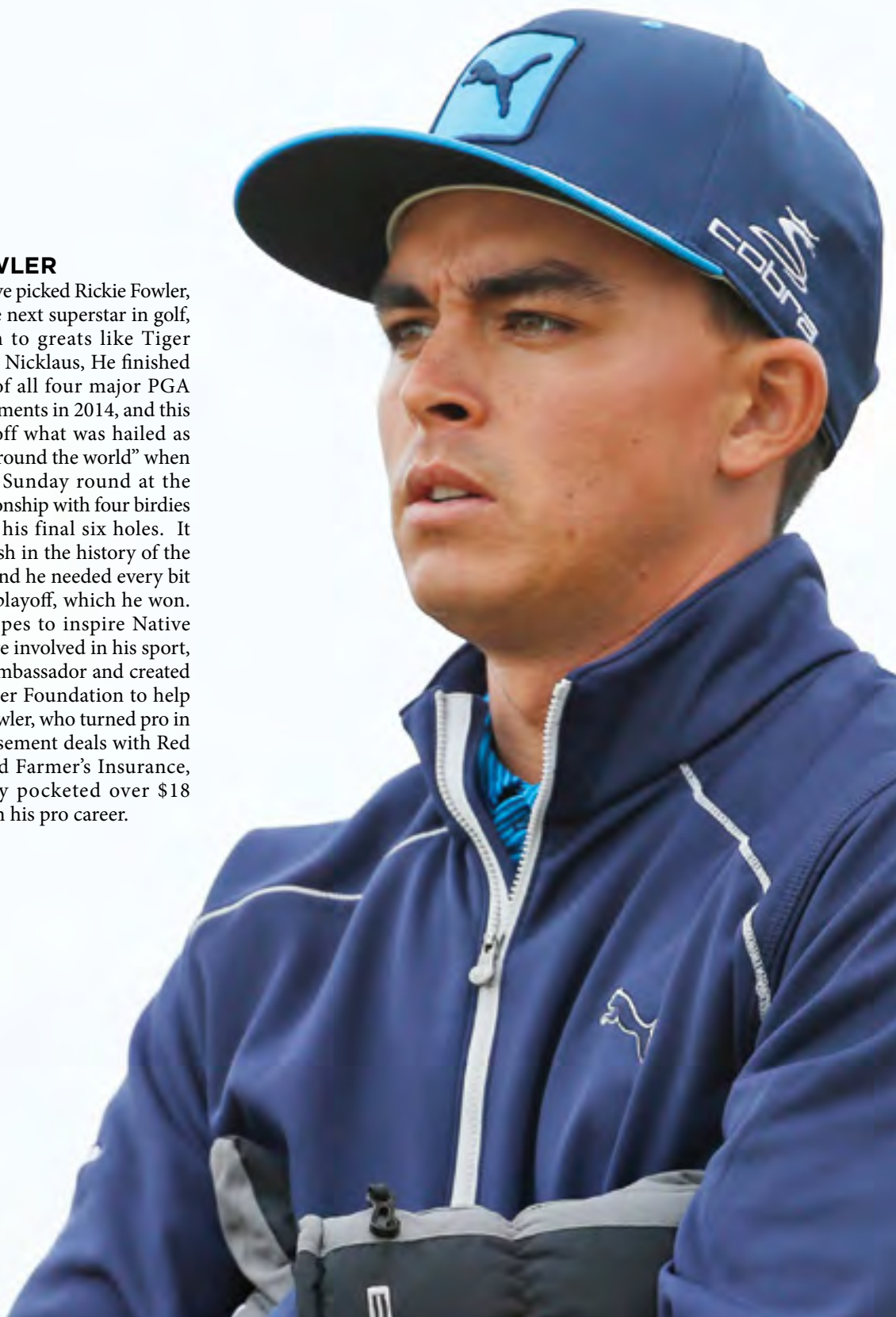
## IRENE BEDARD

In the '90s, Irene Bedard (Inupiat/Yup'ik/Cree) did two things that endeared her to two mostly-separate viewerships. She provided the voice of the title character for Disney's successful animated feature *Pocahontas*, but that film never won any awards for historical accuracy. It was her performance as Suzy Song in *Smoke Signals* three years later that established her as one of Indian country's favorite actresses. She's most recently been seen playing May Stillwater on *Longmire*, and was one of the guiding

talents in *Songs My Brothers Taught Me*, a drama filmed on Pine Ridge with many first-time actors that screened at the Sundance Film Festival. But these days Bedard has new frontiers to explore with her production company Sleeping Lady Films Waking Giants Productions. The company produces chef Freddie Bitsoie's show *Rezervations Not Required*, and earlier this year Bedard announced she plans to make a movie of the 1993 novel *Two Old Women* by Gwich'in author Velma Wallis.

**RICKIE FOWLER**

Some experts have picked Rickie Fowler, Navajo, to be the next superstar in golf, comparing him to greats like Tiger Woods and Jack Nicklaus. He finished in the top five of all four major PGA Tour golf tournaments in 2014, and this season, pulled off what was hailed as “the win heard around the world” when he finished his Sunday round at the Player’s Championship with four birdies and an eagle in his final six holes. It was the best finish in the history of the championship, and he needed every bit of it to get in a playoff, which he won. Fowler, who hopes to inspire Native youth to get more involved in his sport, is an N7 Nike Ambassador and created The Rickie Fowler Foundation to help at-risk youth. Fowler, who turned pro in 2009, has endorsement deals with Red Bull, Titleist and Farmer’s Insurance, and has already pocketed over \$18 million dollars in his pro career.



JON SUPER/AP IMAGES

**SAM DELORIA**

Sam Deloria, of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, has been the director of the American Indian Graduate Center since 2007. AIGC, formerly American Indian Scholarships, is a national nonprofit dedicated to helping Indian graduate students. He went to Yale University for both his undergraduate degree and law school, and is president of the American Indian Law Center. He founded, and was the first Secretary-General of the World Council of Indigenous People. In 1976, he was one of the found-

ers of the Commission on State-Tribal Relations. In 2001, he spent time in Greenland with a group of instructors teaching people from nine countries about international measures to protect human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as on how to testify before the United Nations regarding indigenous issues. Deloria also serves as a member of the National Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects of research, which was established by the Indian Health Service.

DIANE SCHMIDT

**SHONI SCHIMMEL**

Shoni Schimmel's popularity and influence in the Native American community cannot be understated. The 23-year-old basketball player, who was born on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, is one of the most recognized faces in Indian country, and in America. After playing her collegiate ball at Louisville, Schimmel was selected 8th overall in the WNBA draft to the Atlanta Dream in 2014, and went on to become the first rookie to be named MVP of the WNBA All-Star Game. She was so popular last year that her No. 23 jersey became the top-selling jersey in the WNBA. Schimmel travels tirelessly throughout Indian country speaking to children who hope to follow in her footsteps. After visiting with youth at the Flathead Reservation in Montana, she said, "The message has always been to follow your dreams. I grew up on the rez. Being Native American is something to be proud of."



ROBBY KLEIN

**RENAE  
YELLOWHORSE**

Within the Grand Canyon is a place where the Colorado River and the Little Colorado River meet. It's known as the Confluence and for the past few years this area has been under attack, says Renae Yellowhorse. One of the leaders of the Save the Confluence coalition, Yellowhorse, 53, has lived her entire life on the Navajo Nation and she holds the Confluence close to her heart, so she's been challenging tourist and economic projects in this area that is sacred to Native tribes. These projects include a potential \$1 billion Grand Canyon Escalade development that would include restaurants, hotels, stores, a trailer park and much more. A tram to reach the bottom of the canyon has also been planned. Yellowhorse says the coalition is not opposed to economic development, but wants people to work with the Navajo Nation to develop sound projects.

**DIANE HUMETEWA**

"Diane Humetewa is an inspiration to Native people, especially Native women across Indian country," said Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) in 2014 following the Hopi citizen's confirmation to sit on the federal bench. Humetewa received an unanimous vote from the Senate on May 14, 2015 to become a judge for the U.S. District Court for Arizona. The appointment made her the first Native American woman federal judge in U.S. history and the third Native American to hold such a position. When she was appointed, former U.S. Attorney Paul Charlton told *USA Today* that Humetewa, "has extraordinarily sound judgment. She's fair and impartial... In this state, more than any other, where we have 21 reservations and all felony offenses are tried in federal court, we do not have a bench that reflects the community it serves. And now, for the first time in our nation's history, we'll have a representative to the bench."



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**KASSIDY DENNISON**

Kassidy Dennison is the darling of Native rodeo, but don't underestimate how tough she is. She was the first Navajo barrel racer to qualify for the 2014 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo, is a five-time Indian World Champion All Around Cowgirl and, in 2011, she became the first Native woman to earn a spot on the Classic Equine Brand team. After the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo last year, Dennison moved up in the rankings from tenth to fourth in the world in her event. On her website, Dennison says, "It has been my lifelong dream to become a professional athlete in the sport of rodeo. [It] has definitely taught me to be a winner. Not only in the rodeo arena, but more importantly, in the arena of life." On Nov. 1, 2014, also the first day of Native American Heritage Month, the city of Gallup, N.M. honored her with "Kassidy Dennison Day."

DEVYN DENNISON/COURTESY KASSIDYDENNISON.SQUARESPACE.COM

**WAB KINEW**

Journalist. Educator. Author. Activist. Rapper. Wab Kinew, Anishinaabe, is a man of many talents and a star on the rise in Canada. Kinew established himself as a voice for Indigenous Canadians as host of *8th Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & the Way Forward*, a four-part documentary that aired on Canadian TV in 2012. His career in TV journalism also includes the program *Fault Lines* for Al Jazeera America and a stint filling in as the host of *Q* after the departure of Jian Ghomeshi. He's employed by the University of Winnipeg as Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Affairs, and he may be eyeing a career in politics. He seriously considered running for a leadership position in the Assembly of First Nations in 2014.

**INEZ JASPER**

A musician, activist, mother and member of the Sto:lo Nation, Inez Jasper emerged as a strong Native voice when she was featured on the MTV program *Rebel Music: Native America*. In her music and on-stage persona, Jasper tries to strike a balance between strength and sensuality, cognizant of the issues of violence and abuse that threaten Indigenous women. "We are spiritual life-givers," she says. "We are sensual and sexual because we are human, but because of the colonized thought process, there is no safe space to be an indigenous woman. ... That is what I advocate for: to stand strong and be proud to be an indigenous woman." Jasper's most recent album, *Burn Me Down*, was nominated for the Juno award for Aboriginal Album of the Year, and won Best Pop Album at the Aboriginal People's Choice Music Awards.



KAROLINA TUREK/COURTESY © 2013 INEZ JASPER



## STEVEN PAUL JUDD

Steven Paul Judd, Kiowa and Choctaw, is the Renaissance Man of Native art and entertainment. His initial trajectory put him on a path to success as a filmmaker – he’s directed features (*American Indian Graffiti*, *Death Factory*), shorts (including “Search for the World’s Best Indian Taco”), and a music video (“The Storm,” by Doc featuring Spencer Battiest); he’s written scripts (for *Shouting Secrets* and the Disney XD series *Zeke*

*and Luther*); and he’s even done a little acting. But a few years ago, he took a turn into studio art, and began churning out clever paintings that mixed American pop culture with Indian imagery and in-jokes, and some of that imagery spawned a t-shirt line. He’s currently channeling his vast energy into “Ronnie BoDean,” a short film starring Wes Studi that Judd would like to make into a feature film or even TV series.

### A TRIBE CALLED RED

Last year, a Tribe Called Red was named as the breakthrough group of the year at the 2014 Juno Awards. Their music has been called “pow wow step” – an amalgamation of electronic dubstep and Native American traditional drum and singing. Lauded as truly unique in their approach to fusing these musical genres, A Tribe Called Red, based out of Ottawa, Canada, reels in crowds at festivals all over the globe with their cutting-edge take on

EDM (electronic dance music). But don’t expect to attend one of their performances if you are bringing a chicken-feather headdress or plan to show up in redface. The trio – Ian “DJ NDN” Campeau of the Nipissing First Nation, Zoolman, a Mohawk from Six Nations, and Bear Witness of the Cayuga First Nation – have asked their fans to not don faux headdresses for their shows, calling it an offense to Native American cultures.



FALLING TREE PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY ATCR



### RYAN RED CORN

Ryan Red Corn, Osage, is one busy guy. When he's not creating brilliant sketch comedy with the 1491s or working with kids in his hometown of Pawhuska, Oklahoma (the Osage Nation capital), he has a day job: Chief Creative Officer of Buffalo Nickel Creative, a multifaceted agency that helps organizations reach the public with web, print and video content. He is also co-executive director of NVision, training reservation youth in the media arts. Portrait photography is his most recent creative obsession, and he's attacking it with his usual passion. The results, such as his portrait of Amanda Blackhorse, exhibit his commitment and talent.



### THOSH COLLINS

There is little doubt about who is Indian country's leading entertainment photographer – when a Native designer wants to shoot a lookbook or an actor needs new head shots, the name at the top of the list is Anthony “Thosh” Collins. Collins (Salt River Pima/Osage/Seneca/Cayuga) specializes in Indigenous actors and models, but shoots people of all ethnicities – his goal, he states in his official biography, is “to portray his subjects positively, to dispel stereotypes and to counteract pre-existing and harmful representations.” His other passion is fitness, specifically working within Native communities and contemporary Native culture to make wellness a priority.



### MATIKA WILBUR

Photographer Matika Wilbur, Swinomish and Tulalip, announced her grand plan in 2012: travel throughout Turtle Island, camera in hand, to capture images of people from all 562 federally recognized Indian Tribes and Nations. Though the name of that endeavor, Project 562, may be out of date (the Pamunkey Tribe recently became the 567th federally recognized tribe), Wilbur's dedication hasn't wavered. She's currently in her summer 2015 swing through New England, where the Nations ready for their closeup include the Narragansett, Mashpee Wampanoag, Passamaquoddy, Oneida, Cayuga and Tuscarora. Project 562 has been compared, in terms of scope, to Edward S. Curtis's immense portfolio *The North American Indian*, but Wilbur's aim is the opposite of that work's goal of documenting a “dying” race. “People understand that we survived, but the stereotypes remain,” Wilbur says. “Many people fail to recognize the tremendous number of professionals in Indian country, the number of people who are living in cultural duality.”

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MATIKA WILBUR PHOTOGRAPHY

*Star Flower Montoya, Digueno and Barona, photographed by  
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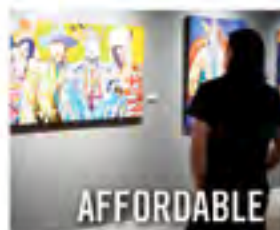
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