



Society of American Indian
Government Employees

The Talking Leaf

Issue #7

SAIGE Newsletter

November 2012

Message from the Chair Danny Garceau



Boozhoo (Greetings)
SAIGE family,

As the year winds down and we ease into winter it's time to reflect. It is easy for me to look back and say, "It was another good year."

We celebrated our 10th Anniversary as an organization with a successful Annual Training Program in the beautiful foothills of the Rocky Mountains. We gathered as an organization and as a family, a family that is still growing. It was

great to see so many old friends and to make new ones. It never ceases to amaze me at the quality and uniqueness of our Training Program. It truly is the gold standard when it comes to a training experience which provides professional and personal development while integrating cultural exposure to the diversity in Indian Country. We pack our week full of relevant subject matter presented by some of the best in the nation. Both those that are perennial attendees and those attending for the first time leave at the end of the week having more knowledge, understanding, and with smiles on their faces making them better employees. We do all that while remaining the vanguard in training cost efficiency. We have worked hard to not only put on a top notch annual training program but do it with keeping cost down for all of our attendees. I can with full confidence tell people that we provide the most bang for the buck. We do this with dedicated membership, partners, and an amazing planning committee.

This year two major Memorandums of Understanding (MOU'S) were signed. SAIGE and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) became partners providing us with another formal ally in the education house and providing us with another tool for our Youth Program. We also signed an MOU with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) which laid the framework for mutual promotion and made our partnership official. Jefferson Keel, NCAI President, came and participated in our Training Program and was truly moved by our organization, membership and training program. Having friends like President Keel and partners like NCAI continue to help SAIGE grow.

SAIGE continued to develop its relationship with government agencies and began to reach out to tribal government employees. This year several board members had speaking opportunities to promote SAIGE. I was able to address the winter session of United Tribes of Michigan, the National Coalition of Equity in Public Service Diversity Summit, the annual gathering of Federal Asian Pacific American Council, Federally Employed Women, the National Diversity Leadership Conference for the National Guard and the year is not yet over.

Recently SAIGE's official website got a major face lift, making it more of a tool for our organization and its members. If you haven't visited www.saige.org in a while I recommend you pay it a visit. On our new website you can view several great video products by Jeff Barehand promoting SAIGE and download a copy of SAIGE's American Indian Heritage Month poster.

In November, over Veterans Day weekend, the SAIGE Board will meet for the first time for a multiday Strategic Planning Session. SAIGE has grown much in the past 10 years and all signs show the potential for greater growth. To facilitate this growth and best serve our membership we need to review our bylaws, operating procedures and clarify our organizational focus. Don't expect SAIGE to change, just get better at how we do things.

[Continued on page 2](#)



November is also election month for SAIGE. This year we will be electing a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and 5 Board Directors. We have some excellent candidates and I know SAIGE will be in good hands when all the votes are tallied. I will not be on the ballot for Chair this election and wanted to take a few minutes to thank the SAIGE officers and board over the

past 4 years for their support to me and efforts for SAIGE. You, the SAIGE family, have all made me feel truly blessed to serve as your Chair; it has been a privilege and honor. I will not be wandering far and pledge to support the new Chair and SAIGE Board.

Miigwech (thank you!), Danny Garceau, SAIGE Chair

Student Perspectives: 2012 Youth Track A Memorable Experience



The SAIGE Youth Track was a very memorable experience and I would highly recommend it to any Native American college student who is interested in learning more about working for the government. I learned many things from all of the events at the conference.

For many of us, this was our first trip “on our own.” It gave us a sense of independence and it was one of the first of the many steps we will take as we grow into an adult. Many of us were traveling alone and without really knowing anyone else who was attending. Prior to the trip, we were assigned roommates and their contact information was given to us. This allowed my roommate, Jennifer Whitewolf, and I to get to know each other. We are both from Oklahoma and not too far from each other’s cities. We texted each other and instantly clicked. It really helped us become more comfortable and at ease when we met in person. Throughout the week our schedules consisted of presentations by motivational speakers, career

networking, informational and educational meetings, cultural events, and a few other activities. The main topic for the conference was Sustainability.

Our motivational speakers and music artists, Smoke and Mimi, really opened their personal lives to us. They proved that you really can do anything that you set your mind to. *You* can make a difference. To achieve your dreams and aspirations you must set your mind to it and remain dedicated.

We also gained a lot of insight to situations on reservations and tribal lands. Jennifer and I being from Oklahoma, did not have much personal experience with some of the issues that arose and it really opened our eyes to what issues needed to be addressed. We learned how we could make a difference on our college campuses as well. We were given many opportunities to speak with potential employers and discuss job opportunities.

The cultural events that we attended were fun and

[*Continued on page 3*](#)

educational as well. Though we may all be Native American or Alaskan Native, our cultures, traditions and beliefs vary. We learned a lot about our peers. As a group, we transformed in many ways. We made lifelong friends. Some of us discovered our true passion and became more involved. Some of us went home and started to make differences in our own communities. SAIGE Youth Track made a lasting impact on many of our lives.

By Sallye Ann Countz

Thinking back to when I was a little boy helping my Grandfather run greyhounds, I always used to hear my Grandfather speak about the best quality of being a leader is leading by example. You see, he was never one to boast about his achievements and awards he garnered throughout his life. He never showed off the trophies he had through greyhound racing. If someone asked him about them, he would not say much. My father is the same way; he has all kinds of coaching awards, but few people know that. I like to believe they “rubbed off” on me. Even though I have a few state championship rings and all kinds of trophies, a lot of people, even my friends, do not know that I have them. To me, there is no point in boasting; I just “do me,” and carry on about my business. I always like to tell people not to sit around and “watch the flowers grow.” Finish the task and move on to the next one. *By Kelly Berry*

I have had the honor of participating in the SAIGE Youth Track as both a student and a group leader. As a student, we received valuable information through small group trainings and attended seminars showcasing motivational speakers. Trainings provide students valuable social skills needed to network, and the encouragement to pursue their endeavors. Social events are held for students to mingle and interact with others from diverse native cultures. After receiving training students are asked to practice what they’ve recently learned. Students attend functions and events where they are showcased and meet with Native Americans professionals representing a variety of government agencies. Students network with SAIGE members and are encouraged to ask questions about careers and the education needed in the respective fields. The very last day of the conference students share their SAIGE Youth Track experience with conference attendees.

As a group leader, I was given an opportunity to practice what I learned and provided encouragement to new youth track participants to take full advantage of every opportunity given. Group leaders help the Youth Track Coordinator with youth track events and functions, transportation, and keeping organizational structure of Youth. Group leaders are also given a chance to network

with other members of SAIGE. Group leaders serve as role models for the Youth Track.

SAIGE Youth Track has been a life changing experience. The experience has allowed me to interact with Native American professionals at a personal level. It gives me an opportunity to ask questions about professions in different agencies. It’s also given me a chance to relate to other Native Americans from diverse areas and discuss issues all native people face. I’m truly inspired to see the native roots spread throughout the federal government. One of my favorite quotes came from speaker Gerard Baker, “Get mad, Stay mad, Get educated... React in a positive way.”

By Wes Wilson



SAIGE Conference Photos by David H. Barehand

Coming Full Circle: My SAIGE Journey

By Tomee L. Brown



I was employed during my summer break at the Aberdeen Area Indian Health Service location with a temporary position. One of the female employees, knowing I had completed my freshman year of college, asked me about my post-collegiate plans. In reflection, I can honestly say that was not even on my radar to think about, let alone plan for. I told her I was not sure yet but did know that I wanted to have a

job that was meaningful and could help my people.

She said she had something for me and wanted me to think about applying. She gave me the SAIGE Youth Track application and told me she wanted me to apply. She said maybe it would give me a sense of direction of what I was going to do. I applied and surprise! I boarded a plane to Washington, D.C. for the SAIGE Conference! Unbeknownst to me, I had been selected to be a part of the first Youth Track student group for the annual Society of American Indian Government Employees conference. I did not have words to articulate what was to come or how I felt but intuitively I knew that my journey was about to get a little more interesting.

I met other American Indian and Alaskan Native students from Kansas, Oklahoma, Alaska, Arizona, and Idaho. I met students who were going to be graduating soon and thinking about graduate school. I met students who were going to be entering their freshman year of college in the fall. Most importantly, I met students who were like me – a student who made a choice and walked through the door of higher education. They were students who came from reservations or rural areas or were first-generation college students. They were students who wanted to do great things in Indian Country to improve ways for our people.

I met some amazing people from Indian Country that week, people who have continued to have an impact on my life today. Dr. Gerard Baker shared his gift of storytelling of fortitude and perseverance when standing up for what

is right; James Anderson demonstrated the difference between “I try...” and “I will...” and the strong conviction that comes with the latter; Roger Willie’s humor and experience being a part of a project showcasing our Navajo relatives’ courageous efforts during World War II; being taken under Jack Soto’s wing and gaining a valuable friend and advocate in Indian Country; and Leandra Bitsie reminding us that we are all reflections of our people.

SAIGE Board Member Shana Greenberg Barehand continued to cheerlead for me in my education and projects that followed. Former SAIGE Chair Cheryle Cobell Zwang sent words of encouragement in the years thereafter. The Youth Track program connected me to relatives in Indian Country that were passionate about helping our relatives, our people. It connected me to other American Indians and Alaskan Natives who were doing what I wanted for me – to work in a professional environment that provided opportunities to advocate for Indian Country in a meaningful way.



To be invited back by Shana and JoAnn (Brant) to serve as a student leader/mentor to the 2012 SAIGE Youth Track cohort was an honor and humbling experience. To return full circle to SAIGE and see Dr. [Gerard] Baker again and have him say, “Hey, I remember you, you were from Wakpala [South Dakota]!” greeting me with a hug and warm smile, I was grateful I decided to board the plane seven years ago. My SAIGE experience was an integral moment in my development as a leader and advocate in Indian Country. And for that, I will always be indebted.

Tomee L. Brown, *Tokaheya Win*, is from Wakpala, SD, located on the Standing Rock Lakota Reservation, straddling the North Dakota/South Dakota border. She also has familial ties to the Ho-Chunk Nation, WI, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, NV, and the Klamath Tribe, OR. She graduated from Northern State University in May 2010 with Bachelor of Arts degrees in Sociology: Professional specialization and Criminal Justice. She is currently pursuing her Master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She is the American Indian Advisor, for Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

SAIGE IN THE COMMUNITY

[Millie Titla, SAIGE Board Member teaches Youth How to Grow Traditional Crops](#)

Gardening has been a traditional activity for the Apaches for thousands of years. Many Apaches have lost the culture of growing and harvesting traditional crops, changing their diets dramatically in the past 100 years, with adverse health consequences. These problems include diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

Millie Titla, SAIGE Board Member and a District Conservationist at the San Carlos NRCS Field Office, along with other tribal members and non-tribal members, volunteered to teach others how to grow their own food and install their own gardens at home. Millie provided traditional Apache heirloom corn and squash seeds that were grown in the back of her field office. She assisted with the installation of the gardens and taught the Garden Group when and how to plant the seeds and when to harvest, and also how to make compost. A total of 11 gardens were installed in 2011 and 30 gardens were installed in 2012, including 5 youth gardens.

This summer Millie volunteered to be the San Carlos 4-H/Community Youth Garden Club Leader. She taught 6 weeks of garden instructions to a total of 15 Club Members ages 6-17 at the San Carlos UA Cooperative Extension Office. With a grant funded by USDA Rural Development, Titla helped the Club Members install a water drip system. The members also learned about the soil,

parts of a seed and the plant, and important garden tool safety. The 4-H Garden Club members all won first place blue ribbons at the local County fair for their Apache squash and corn entries, with one member earning the Grand Champion Award for his entry and interviewing skills.

“I wanted to teach an appreciation of gardening and show how fun it can be,” she said. Millie has been an avid gardener for 20 years and has pursued an interest in finding and growing her own heirloom Apache squash and corn.



Millie with 4 H Youth Club Members.

[SAIGE Members at NCAI in Sacramento, CA](#)



Photo: Becky Lewis, Danny Garceau, Shana Barehand, and Cedric DeCory at the SAIGE exhibit booth at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) 69th Annual Convention in Sacramento, CA, October 21 to 26, 2012.

SAIGE has a MOU with NCAI. NCAI is a non-profit organization founded in 1944. It is the oldest and largest Native organization serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities.

Other SAIGE members at NCAI included Pedro Molina, Luke Jones and Don Chapman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Society of American Indian Government Employees

National Training Program

June 3 -7, 2013, Spokane, Washington

Northern Quest Resort & Casino - Kalispel Tribe of Indians



All photos courtesy of Jeff Barehand and taken at SAIGE 2012 National Training Program, Denver, CO.

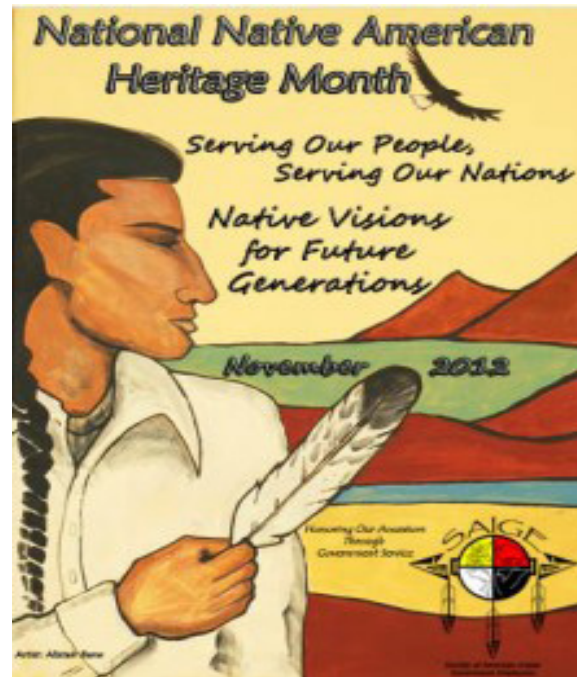
- Exceptional Plenary Session Speakers
- Accredited Federal Indian Law Immersion Course
- DoD and VA Supported Veterans' Program (Open to the Public)
- Nationally Acclaimed Youth Program
- Six Tracks of Professional Workshops
- Native Cultural Presentations
- Career Fair (Open to the Public)



Save the Date

www.saige.org

NOVEMBER IS :



Heritage Month History

From website:www.ainheritagemonth.org/

Over the past century, efforts to establish a Native American Heritage Day have led to today's celebration of an American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. Early advocates for an official day eagerly urged organizations, states, and the U.S. government to officially designate a day to celebrate the traditions, cultures, histories, and contributions of Native people. One advocate, Red Fox James (Blackfeet), rode by horseback from state to state and obtained the support of 24 state governments which he presented to the White House in 1915. While no official, national day was declared following James' efforts, in 1916 the Governor of New York declared the second Saturday in May as American Indian Day (the first ever official celebration). Today, several states, including California, South Dakota, and Tennessee observe Native American Day every year, and Native Heritage is celebrated on a national level.

In the past couple decades, the idea of a Native American Heritage Month has become a nationally-recognized reality. 1986 when Congress passed Pub. L. 99-471, authorizing and requesting the President to proclaim the week of November 23-30, 1986 as "American Indian Week." With Presidential Proclamation 5577, President Ronald Reagan declared the first American Indian Week. From 1987-1989, Presidents Reagan and George H. W. Bush issued annual proclamations for National American Indian week, until, in 1990, President Bush approved a joint resolution to declare November as National American Indian Heritage Month. Since 1990, Presidents have continued to dedicate this month to American Indian Heritage on a consistent basis. In addition to the month, the Obama Administration declared National Native American Heritage Day at the end of November. To get more information and to view the Presidential Proclamations, click here.

One day of particular importance during the month of November is Veterans Day. Historically, Native Americans have the highest record of service per capita as compared any other ethnic groups. During Heritage Month, as we celebrate the traditions and contributions of Native people to the greater society, this day in particular is an important time to honor the Native veterans who have sacrificed to protect our nation.

NCEPS PARTNERS - 2013 CONFERENCES

Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC)

May 6 - 10, 2013, Long Beach, CA

www.fapac.org

Federally Employed Women (FEW)

July 22-26, 2013, Orlando, FL

www.few.org

Blacks In Government (BIG)

August 19-23, 2013, Dallas, TX

www.bignet.org

National Image, Inc -

September 2013

<http://national-image.org/>

SES Candidate Development Program Opportunity

Submitted by: Darlene T. Negrin, Human Resources Specialist - darlene.negrin@nrc.gov



U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Opportunities: Senior Executive Service (SES) Candidate Development Program (CDP)

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which is proud to be ranked as a BEST Place to Work in the Federal Government, is seeking candidates from within its own employment ranks AND from other Federal agencies for its Senior Executive Service (SES) Candidate Development Program (CDP).

What is the NRC SES CDP?

NRC's SES CDP prepares individuals who have demonstrated exceptional executive and managerial potential for leadership positions at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Participants in the program engage in developmental assignments and formal training activities to enhance their executive competencies and to increase their awareness of public policy, programs, and issues.

This is an 18-month, part-time program. Participants normally continue to occupy their regular positions except while they are attending training or seminars, or while on rotational assignments.

Who can apply for the NRC SES CDP?

NRC is seeking candidates from within its own employment ranks AND from individuals from other Federal agencies. Candidates must have at least one year of supervisory/leadership experience and have demonstrated exceptional executive leadership potential. Leadership experience is normally obtained by serving in positions at the Grade 15 level or equivalent.

Candidates from other Federal agencies may participate in the NRC SES CDP while continuing to serve in their current agencies by a Memorandum of Understanding with their home agency or, if appropriate, by acceptance of an NRC General Grade Schedule (GG) 15 level position.

What types of opportunities exist?

NRC's SES CDP opportunities include positions in technical (engineering/scientific disciplines, nuclear security, etc.), corporate support (financial management, human capital management, information technology management, contract management, etc.) and legal career fields.

Where are the opportunities located?

We anticipate selecting approximately 20-25 individuals for opportunities in NRC's Rockville, MD Headquarters location and NRC's regional offices in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and, Arlington, TX. The willingness of individuals to be geographically mobile is an important aspect of the SES and NRC's SES Candidate Development Program. Mobility is primarily focused on candidates in technical disciplines (engineering/scientific disciplines, nuclear security, etc.) although opportunities may arise for corporate and legal candidates. Most NRC executive opportunities for corporate and legal disciplines will be in NRC Headquarters. NRC will need executives in technical disciplines in each of its Regions as well as Headquarters.

How do I apply?

Please visit www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/employment.html and then click the link to the right of the page that says SES Candidate Development Program Vacancy and apply on-line by November 30, 2012.

About SAIGE

THE TALKING LEAF NEWSLETTER

The *Talking Leaf* newsletter is a publication of SAIGE. The name Talking Leaf is derived from the Cherokee paper that Sequoyah started. We invite you to submit articles and provide suggestions and comments. Please send to Georgia Madrid at georgia.madrid@noaa.gov

MISSION

To promote the recruitment, retention, development and advancement of American Indian and Alaska Native government employees, and work to ensure their equal treatment under the law; to educate federal agencies in the history and obligations of the Federal Indian Trust Responsibility and to assist them in its implementation; to assist government agencies in the development and delivery of initiatives and programs which honor the unique Federal-Tribal relationship; and to provide a national forum for issues and topics affecting American Indian and Alaska Native government employees. For more information on SAIGE, please visit our website at www.saige.org.

[JOIN THE SAIGE NETWORK!](#)

SAIGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Contact board at: chair@saige.org

OFFICER POSITIONS

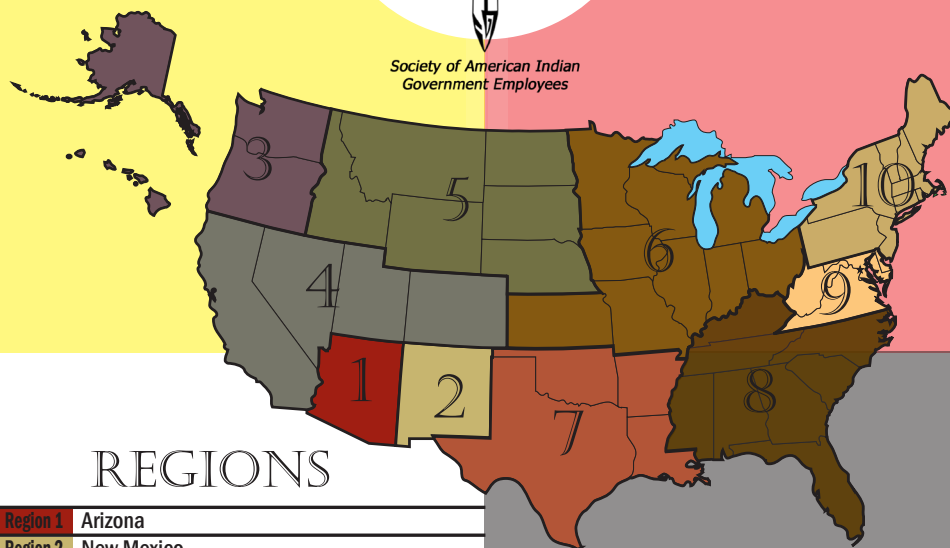
- Chair:** Danny Garceau (Lake Superior Chippewa ancestry) - chair@saige.org
- Vice Chair:** Lori Windle (White Earth Chippewa)
- Secretary:** Fredericka Joseph (Kaw Nation)
- Treasurer:** Shana Barehand (Mono)

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- Phil Hamel (Mohawk ancestry)
- Susan Johnson (Three Affiliated Tribes - Arikara, Hidatsa & Mandan)
- Becky Lewis (Lac Courte Orielles Ojibwe)
- Sue Marcus
- Pedro Molina (Yaqui Nation)
- Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)
- Jinny Shulenberger (Echota Cherokee of Alabama/Creek)
- Brenda Takes Horse (Kenaitze)
- Millie Titla (San Carlos Apache)
- Veronica Vasquez (Chumash)



Society of American Indian Government Employees



REGIONS

Region 1	Arizona
Region 2	New Mexico
Region 3	Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii
Region 4	California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado
Region 5	Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska
Region 6	Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio
Region 7	Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana
Region 8	Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida
Region 9	Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Washington D.C.
Region 10	Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts