



Hatito! My name is David G Blahna, I would like your support for the position of Director on the SAIGE board. I am Native American and a registered member of the Shawnee tribe. After completion of more than 20 years as a clinic owner and food animal production field veterinarian in MN, I have been employed by USDA/Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)/Veterinary Services (VS) for 7 years as a field Veterinary Medical Officer for Central PA. Currently, major duties have been related to assisting with Area Office regulatory activities, international cattle exports, export/import facility inspections, and Area Office Restricted Product coordination.

At the VS Area Office, I have been as active member of The EEO Civil Rights Advisory Committee and have served terms as President, Vice-President, and Native American Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM). I have also been appointed Native American SEPM for the Veterinary Services District 1 Civil Rights, Diversity Advisory Committee.

For over 40 years, I have explored knowledge related to not only my heritage but Native American culture and history. This voyage has been through reading, visiting heritage sites/reservations, attending pow-wows as well as through volunteer activities. These activities include: Summer internship in veterinary medicine on Navaho and Hopi Indian Reservations at Dine College (AZ); providing large animal ambulatory service to portions of Mille Lacs Indian Reservation (MN); active participation in historical tribal history research for Weyerhaeuser-Morrison County Historical Society (MN) and Mille Lacs Indian Museum (MN); and providing family history for tribal enrollment and efforts in support of federal acceptance of Shawnee Tribe under Tribal Status Act of 2000 (OK). At present I am contributing to Cumberland County Historical Society research/cataloging of Carlisle Indian School student activity records (PA).

I try to remain knowledgeable about Native issues through membership in SAIGE, National Museum of American Indian (NMAI) as well as subscribing to SAIGE list-serve, Indian Country Today, and Shawnee Journal.

Becoming a Director would not only help me become more aware of Native issues but more importantly would help me serve as a more effective conduit between my

agency, agency employees, as well as the external Native community stakeholders. It will also help me better understand challenges that other government agencies and Native employees face and to help contribute and explore opportunities to achieve more effective federal support to Native populations as well as increase opportunities for tribal youth to contribute not only to the tribe but to government service. From knowledge and diversity come strength. Niyaawe!