



Society of American Indian  
Government Employees

# The Talking Leaf

SPRING ISSUE

SAIGE Newsletter

MAY 2016

*Message from the Chair,  
Fredericka Joseph*



## Serving Our Nations- 2016 SAIGE National Training Program - Designed for You!

We at SAIGE are excited and quite busy! Our National Training Program (NTP) is fast approaching and the planning committee under the direction of our Co-Chairs, Susan Morris and Jay Spaan, have outdone themselves this year by providing the best in workshops and plenary speakers. Please look at our agenda on our website at [www.saige.org](http://www.saige.org).

This year we are meeting June 6-9, 2016, at the Hard Rock Hotel in Catoosa, Oklahoma. Our theme, **"Serving Our Nations"** brings together three tribal representatives including the Principal Chair John Baker, Cherokee Nation, Chief John Floyd, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear, Osage Nation and that's just in the Opening Ceremony on June 7<sup>th</sup>.



Principal Chief John Baker, Cherokee Nation



Chief John Floyd, Muscogee (Creek) Nation

LaDonna Harris, President of Americans for Indian Opportunity will be the luncheon speaker on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> and on Wednesday, our luncheon speaker is

Matlika Wilbur from the Project 562 – Positive Portrayals of Contemporary Native America. Karen Diver from the White House and Khalilah Harris Senior Advisor to the Director at Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will also be our plenary speakers.



Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear, Osage Nation

Throughout the week employees can attend workshops in our following tracks: Indian Country/ Federal Indian Law; Indigenous Natural Resources/ Culture; EEO/HR; and Professional Development. Based on last year's evaluations the planning committee has included a variety of professional training for the GS-5's to the SES



LaDonna Harris, President, Americans for Indian Opportunity

rank so there is something for everyone. Professional development is critical today in growing careers and preparing ourselves for the future. Our Warrior Society and our Youth Program are one of a kind so be sure you make time to meet our veterans and our youth.

We understand that the Training Managers and your leaders ask for justification to attend trainings. Since OPM no longer issues memorandums to the agencies, SAIGE has prepared a special announcement to Federal Agency Heads and Training Directors describing SAIGE as an excellent training source to meet the criteria under Section 4110 of Title 5, U.S.C. SAIGE provides vital information



## SERVING OUR NATIONS - 2016 NTP HIGHLIGHTS



Karen Diver, Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs

to you the employee, on issues and topics affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives.

The Professional track offers career advancement training for everyone and is taught by instructors from OPM and subject matter experts from a number of Federal agencies.

General session speakers provide valuable information on timely topics that are relevant to

attendees. Sixty percent of our training consists of interactive workshops including exercises and questions and answer time.

Networking opportunities provide attendees with interaction with other Federal and Tribal employees and a myriad of professionals. The content of the training program has been planned around individual and organizational performance including training in leadership development workshops as well as offering training in Indian law regarding Federal Indian Trust Responsibility.

We look forward to hosting you at our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual National Training Program this year. Please remember to go on-line and register by May 27<sup>th</sup> and make your room reservations by May 15<sup>th</sup> to obtain the per diem price. See you in Oklahoma!!!



Khalilah M. Harris, Senior Advisor to the Director, OPM



Matika Wilbur, Photographer

## Recognition and Awards Reception - Free Concert Featuring Keith Secola and Don Chapman

The Tuesday evening awards program will have a special treat. As part of the SAIGE Achievement Awards and Partners Recognition, there will be a free concert by Native folk and blues rocker, Keith Secola and our own SAIGE Lifetime member, Don Chapman.



Keith Secola

Keith is an accomplished artist, award-winning musician, guitarist, flute player, singer, songwriter, and producer. His music is familiar to thousands of fans across North America and Europe. Keith's famous song, *NDN KARS*, is considered the contemporary Native American anthem and is the most requested song on Native radio in the US and Canada. Keith is Anishinabe (Ojibwa) originally from the Mesabi Iron Range country of northern Minnesota. He is a seven-time Native American Music Awards winner and in 2011, Keith was inducted into the Native American Music Awards Hall of Fame.

Keith will be joined by Don Chapman (Côqayohômuwôk).



Don Chapman

Don is also an accomplished artist and well known for his work with Firefall's Larry Burnett and their 2010 NAMMY Award Winning CD, *Guitars and Vocals*. Don has performed at SAIGE events and has a large fan base. He joined SAIGE when he was the Senior Advisor on Native American Affairs for the US Department of Commerce. Since then Don has gone on to continue working with the federal government and several native owned businesses. His passion has always been family, the Native American community and music. Don continues to write, record and perform both individually and in collaboration with a variety of artists including several 70s American Rockers.

## Warrior Society – Veterans Track and Meritorious Awards Program

By Director Danny Garceau

The SAIGE Warrior Society continues to grow and play an important role within the SAIGE organization. Currently we have 50 members made up of both veterans and currently serving military members representing all branches of service. The main focus over the past few months has been planning of the NTP Veterans Track and Military Meritorious Awards program.

Mary Culley, Warrior Society member and Veterans Affairs employee, has played an instrumental role in the planning of the Veterans Track. The Veteran's Track will take place on Thursday in the Sky Room. The training will provide a combination of presenters on veteran and military issues along with the awards program luncheon for our military meritorious award winners. The top 15 nominations will be recognized along with the 2016 award winners: MSG James Dean Badwound South Dakota ARNG, SSgt Thereasa M. Barker-Figueroa USAF, CPT Anna C. Cichocki Connecticut ANG, TSgt Ragina A. James USAF, CPT Warren C. Queton Oklahoma ARNG and MCPO Timothy W. Vickers Special Agent Defense Intelligence Agency. The Veteran's Track and luncheon is free and open to all veterans, military members and family members. The SAIGE Youth will join the Veterans Track participants for the award and luncheon program. There will also be several information tables on special veteran programs, organizations, and Warrior Society hat sales.



Danny Garceau

On Sunday June 5 at the Hard Rock Hotel golf course (Cherokee Hills), there will be a Golf Tournament to benefit our Warrior Society. We are always looking for hole sponsors. If your business or organization would like to sponsor a hole, want more information about the golf tournament or if you want to learn more about the Warrior Society, please contact me at [danny.garceau@saige.org](mailto:danny.garceau@saige.org).

### Screening of *Red Power Energy* documentary with Q & A with Director Larry Pourier

*Red Power Energy* recognized by the U.S. Department of Energy for its "[solid reporting, compelling storytelling, and journalistic integrity.](#)" A provocative film from the American Indian perspective that reframes today's controversial energy debate while the fate of the environment hangs in the balance.



**REDPOWERENERGY**

#### Can energy development empower a people while powering the nation?

Tribal lands are the microcosm of today's controversial energy debate. Between the fears that fossil fuels cause climate change and the hope that renewable energy can save the planet, lies the complex reality of American Indian reservations grappling with the balance of culture verse progress, poverty verse new-found wealth, and the fate of the environment.

Fifty-six million acres of tribal lands contain 10% of the nation's renewable energy potential and 20% of America's onshore oil and gas reserves. Tribal lands hold roughly 30% of the coal found west of the Mississippi, nearly 20% of the known natural gas and oil reserves and up to 50% of potential uranium reserves. Solar power could produce 9,275 million MWh of electricity per year; twice the nation's requirement, and wind power on tribal lands could power to 50 million homes.

Read More from the Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Service: <http://www.rmpbs.org/redpowerenergy/>

# Natasha Myhal Featured in AISES Winds of Change Magazine

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### SAIGE YOUTH TRACK



Natasha Myhal

The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) is a national organization dedicated to increasing representation and development of Native employees in federal, state, local, and tribal government. The organization fosters a professional network among its members and hosts an annual weeklong National Training Program on topics, like “Federal Indian Law,” that are integral to the complex Federal Indian Trust Responsibility. The organization also offers specialized training for

veterans. An important part of the annual training program is the Native Youth Track, which exposes college students to career opportunities in government and shows how these roles can contribute to fulfilling the SAIGE motto, “Honoring Our Ancestors Through Government Service.” This experience includes leadership training, mentoring, networking opportunities, workshops, and a career fair. Participants in this competitive program receive full funding.

### ASK A PARTICIPANT

Natasha Myhal, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, is a master’s student at the University of Kansas in Indigenous Studies. She attended her first SAIGE conference in Tulsa, Okla., in 2011, and she says that, like AISES, SAIGE has been an integral part of her educational journey.

#### What is the focus of your research?

My field of study is ethnobotany, the medical and cultural uses of plants important to Native American and indigenous groups in the United States and Mexico, specifically a plant called *Ligusticum porteri*, or Oshá/ Bear Root. My research will also focus on the policy of harvesting on national forest lands and how that is impacting tribes’ ability to harvest medicinal plants. Ultimately, my research and continued education stem

from attending my first SAIGE conference.

#### How did you find out about SAIGE?

My older sister emailed me information for the conference. We both attended the University of Minnesota Morris for our bachelor’s degrees.

#### What do you find especially satisfying about this program?

SAIGE is a unique program for American Indians and Alaska Natives centering on workshops throughout the conference that focus on the different aspects of a government career and what opportunities are out there. Besides workshops, SAIGE focuses on career building, professional development, networking with government employees, and group activities to get to know other members of the youth track. The presentations at the conference and during my time at SAIGE were truly informative and had a significant impact on my undergraduate coursework and ultimate career goals. In addition, SAIGE provides cultural events for the participants during the conference.

**What is your ultimate career goal, and how will your participation help you get there?** I hope to become a natural resource lawyer and help tribal groups protect their natural resources. Participation in SAIGE truly allowed me to learn about the different aspects of government work and how that impacts Indian Country today. The networks I formed with fellow youth track members and professionals working in Indian Country are some that still follow me today. SAIGE covers a variety of topics from culture and diversity to professional development and natural resources. All are relevant and helpful for making a positive impact on Indian Country.

**What are some of the things about this opportunity that would make you recommend it to other aspiring Native American professionals?** There is definitely something for everyone who attends SAIGE, whether you are thinking about a career in any type of government sector. The connections and opportunities that SAIGE provided me have continued well after the conference. I would highly recommend this conference, as it provides lifelong friendships and encourages you to reach for opportunities that will help you meet your goals.

## Developing Future Native Leaders

Every year, SAIGE offers scholarships for youth (18 to 25) to attend the Annual National Training Program. The youth must be attending an accredited school and who are interested in government careers. These scholarships consist of the full cost of program registration, travel, lodging and per diem for meals. Youth program attendees participate in leadership training and team building activities and hear from Indian Country's best



Youth track participants at the 2015 conference in Minnesota.

inspirational speakers. The youth also participate in the larger training program allowing them to network and develop mentorship opportunities. They also participate in the career fair and learn about different Federal careers.

This year's program in Tulsa, OK will be another exciting training opportunity for the students. Per Joann Brant, Youth Track Director, the highlights will include a lead project development workshop by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). She said that the CIA workshops



Wes Wilson, former Youth Track participant, now guest speaker

are always rated number one among the students. Wes Wilson, former Youth track participant, and now with the Indian Health Service will provide an informative and intense session on "Domestic Violence" which is an area of concern among American Indian students. The students will also hear from Alex Tremble author of the bestselling book *The GPS Guide to Success*. The students will also be entertained by Keith Secola.

### FUN FACTS ABOUT TULSA AND OKLAHOMA

"Take me back to Tulsa"..."I've never been to heaven but I've been to Oklahoma." Or is it twenty-four hours to Tulsa? Welcome back and for those of you who have never been here welcome. Here are a few fun facts about Tulsa and Oklahoma.

The state's name is derived from the Choctaw words Okla and humma - meaning red people. Choctaw Chief Allen Wright suggested the name during treaty negotiations in which he envisioned an all Indian state.

In 1826 after a violent protest, the Osage Tribe ceded the area around Tulsa to the US Government who then gave it to exiled Cherokee and Creeks. Tulsa was originally part of Indian Territory and settled by the Lochapoka (Turtle Clan) Muscogee Creek Tribe. The Locapokas renamed their new settlement Tulasi meaning "old town", the same word from which Tallahassee, FL takes its name. The location of this new settlement is near present day 18th & Cheyenne and under an oak tree they relit their ceremonial fire. The site is now called Creek Council Oak.

Depending on where you are in Tulsa, you can be in Muscogee Creek, Cherokee or Osage Nation country.

In 2010 Oklahoma had the second largest Native American population behind California. With the highest concentration in the Tulsa metropolitan area.

39 Tribes have tribal headquarters in Oklahoma.

The Port of Catoosa, near Tulsa is the nation's largest inland port.

Per square mile Oklahoma has more tornadoes than any other state.

In Tulsa You may not open a bottle of soda in without a licensed engineer.

The Yield sign was invented by a retired Tulsa police captain. The sign was first used in Tulsa to control traffic.

## SAIGE PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS AND 2016 NTP SPONSORS

GEICO is one of SAIGE's longest running corporate partners. SAIGE chose to partner with GEICO for several reasons including the quality and track record of their company. GEICO has been in business for over 75 years and has a 97% customer satisfaction rate. By teaming with GEICO, SAIGE has been able to keep our training program cost down. What some SAIGE members may not know is that GEICO will provide SAIGE with additional support for each quote a SAIGE member requests. Every 90 days a SAIGE member can and is encouraged to contact GEICO and ask for an auto insurance quote. Most quotes take only 15 minutes and it helps the SAIGE organization with additional support from GEICO. In addition, every 90 days you have the opportunity to save money by lowering your insurance cost. Situations change and so do insurance programs, do yourself and SAIGE a favor, mark your calendar every 90 days to get your free quote at [www.geico.com/fed/saige](http://www.geico.com/fed/saige) or call 1-800-368-2734 and mention you're a SAIGE member.



**BlueCross  
BlueShield**

Federal Employee Program.



SAIGE would like to say "Thank You to Marcellus Proctor, Lifetime member, for sponsoring travel for a student to the National Training Program."

**New Readjustment Counseling Therapist Joins Peninsula Vet Center located in Menlo Park, CA**



Annamae Taubeneck

Effective October 5, 2015, **Annamae Taubeneck** joined the Veteran Affairs Peninsula Vet Center as a Readjustment Counseling Therapist, a permanent, full-time position. At the Vet Center, Annamae serves on a multidisciplinary team providing a broad range of counseling: bereavement, individual and group for PTSD, moral injury, spiritual injury, psychosocial, substance abuse, as well crisis interventions, stabilization, and follow-up. She welcomes home war Veterans with honor by providing readjustment counseling in a caring manner and assisting them and their family members toward a successful post-war adjustment.

Annamae joined the Peninsula Vet Center having most recently served two years as the Native American Chaplain for Veteran Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS). There, she provided specialized spiritual care for American Indian Veterans and those Veterans seeking “Native American” spirituality. She managed the

VA’s American Veterans Culture Center and all its programs including Talking Circles, Drumming Circles, and the Red Road American Indian Recovery Community. She provided traditional teachings, storytelling, cultural traditions, prayers and ceremonies.

Annamae joined the VA after serving as a Clinical Interfaith Chaplain and certified ACPE Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisory Candidate for Stanford Hospital & Clinics. There, she provided interfaith spiritual care and pastoral counseling to patients and their loved ones, as well as providing oversight for the training, credentialing, counseling and spiritual care of chaplain residents and interns.

Annamae is an enrolled band member of the Mohawks of Kahnawake, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy), an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and a certified Clinical Chaplain with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. She graduated from the University of New York, Board of Regents, with a Bachelor in Science and from San Francisco Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree.

She is a Veteran of both the Royal Canadian Navy and the United States Army, where she served as a UH-1H (Huey) and UH-60 (Blackhawk) crew chief, was deployed to Kuwait and Bosnia, and received numerous ribbons and medals. She is a member of SAIGE, including SAIGE’s Warrior Society, and a lifetime member of Disabled American Veterans. She is an active volunteer member in the Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, as a Squadron Chaplain (CAPT) for the Jon E. Kramer Composite Squadron 10 in Palo Alto, CA.

**Bob Rabin Receives EEO/Diversity Exemplary Award from NOAA Research for his outreach efforts with Tribal Colleges and Universities**



Bob Rabin

Read More at: <https://blog.nssl.noaa.gov/nsslnews/?s=Bob+Rabin>

**Kathleen Bergeron, SAIGE Board Member, Receives Leadership Award from United Houma Nation of Louisiana**



L to R: United Houma Nation Principal Chief Thomas Dardar Jr., Kathleen Bergeron and Vice-Principal Chief Adam Creppel.

## Talking Leaf Newsletter

### A Note from the Editor:

As a member of SAIGE, I know there are a lot of news items that can be shared, e.g. member profiles, outreach activities, recognitions, training events, agency highlights, new Native hires, job opportunities. What is happening in your Region? The *Talking Leaf* is your publication. It is published twice a year. I welcome your stories, suggestions, and ideas. You can email me at: georgia.madrid@noaa.gov. I look forward to hearing from you.  
Sincerely, Georgia Madrid

### SAIGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Contact board at:  
chair@saige.org

#### OFFICER POSITIONS

- **Chair:** Fredericka Joseph (Kaw Nation)
- **Vice Chair:** Bryan Sappier (Tobique Indian Nation from New Brunswick, Canada)
- **Secretary:** Lori Windle (White Earth Chippewa)
- **Treasurer:** Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)

#### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- Kathleen Bergeron (United Houma Nation)
- Teresa Estoril (Cherokee)
- Dan Garceau (Lake Superior Chippewa)
- Phil Hamel (Mohawk ancestry)
- Duane Matt (Confederated Salish Kootenai)
- Jay Spaan (Cherokee Nation)
- Brenda Takes Horse (Dena'ina Athabascan)
- Veronica Vasquez (Chumash)
- Herb Webb (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)

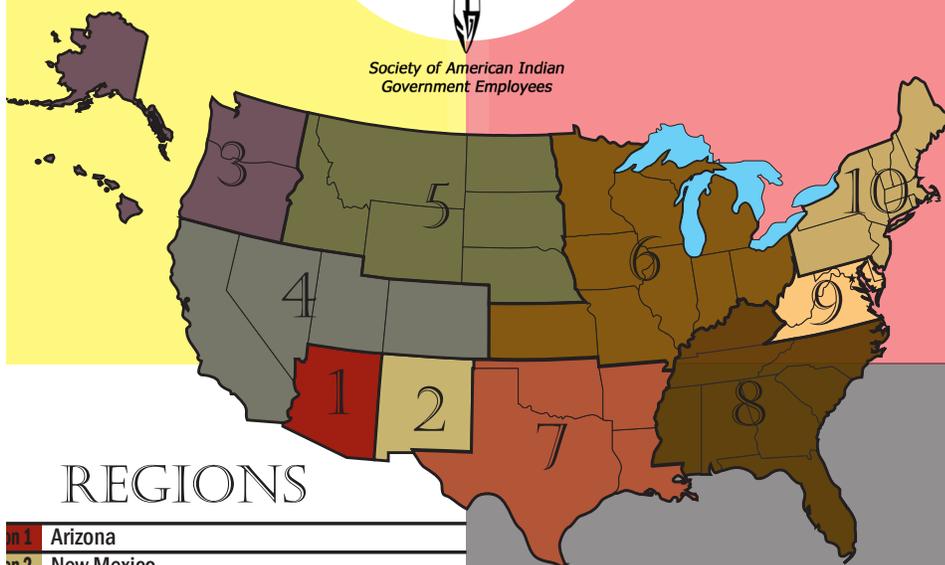
## About SAIGE

The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) is the first national non-profit organization representing American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Federal, Tribal, State and local government employees. Formed in 2002, SAIGE provides a forum on the issues, challenges and opportunities of American Indian Tribal Nations and the government workforce, and to foster a professional network among AI/AN government employees.

JOIN THE SAIGE NETWORK  
www.saige.org



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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