Aanii (hello) SAIGE family,

SAIGE continues to be a very busy organization. In the last six months we have been planning the 2011 and 2012 national training conferences (NTC), held board elections and conducted a variety of membership building activities, including developing MOUs with the National Guard Bureau, USDA, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. We also participated in the AISES and NCAI National Conferences.

In December, SAIGE elected three new board members, Susan Johnson, Pete Molina and Sue Morris. Re-elected to the board were Luke Jones, Brenda Takes Horse, and Officers, Lori Windle, Vice Chair, Fredericka Joseph, Secretary, Shana Barehand, Treasurer and I as your Chairman. Filling out the board are Phil Hamel, Susan Marcus, Jinny Shulenberger, Veronica Vasquez and Kimberly Yellow Robe. Bios of all of your board members and officers can be found on our web site www.saige.org. On a personal note, since the last newsletter, I had the pleasure of attending three different programs sponsored by the Northern Michigan University, Native American Studies Department. The programs were the U.P. Indian Education Conference, The Anishinaabeg and the Border Lecture and the Indigenous Earth Issues Summit. I also attended their Pow Wow “Learning to Walk Together”. Having a university with an active Native American Studies program just down the road is such a blessing. I met and heard some exceptional speakers and will work to get them to present at our SAIGE conference so you too can benefit. On a lighter side, in the last few months I have had the opportunity to play tambourine with Keith Secola and shaker with both Bobby Bullet and Frank Anakwad Montano. I am living “Bimadziwin” -the good life.

In March, I participated in the first NCEPS (National Coalition for Equity in Public Service) Diversity Summit in Washington, DC. This Summit was planned and conducted in close coordination with EEOC and OPM. The summit introduced senior government officials to NCEPS and its member organizations; BIG (Blacks in Government), FAPAC (Federal Asian Pacific American Council), FEW (Federally Employed Women), National IMAGE (National Hispanic Organization) and SAIGE. The subject of diversity in the Federal government, past, present and future was also discussed. I believe this summit will pay big dividends for SAIGE in increased awareness at the senior level along with greater attendance at our NTC through a broader array of federal agencies.

We are two months away from our NTC at the Cherokee Hard Rock Hotel in Tulsa, OK. We have established a substantial early bird discount and I encourage you all to register now. To ensure you are in the Hard Rock and not an overflow hotel, make your hotel reservations without delay. The lower conference room rates are effective for both the weekend before and after the conference. Spread the word, bring your friends and co-workers to this year’s conference, they will never stop thanking you for it. Conference information and registration is available at our web site, www.saige.org. We have a great conference planned at an exciting venue; you do not want to miss this conference. I look forward to seeing you all in Tulsa.
JOIN US IN THE HEART OF INDIAN COUNTRY FOR OUR 2011 NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCE (NTC)

by Fredericka Joseph, NTC 2011 Co-Chair

SAIGE is aggressively working on numerous aspects of our 2011 NTC. This year we will be providing workshops on the topics that you requested through our evaluation process. These workshops are in areas that you don’t typically receive at other conferences and have a strong impact on Indian country. We are working with the Cherokee, Osage, Muscogee Creek, and Comanche tribes, who will have a strong presence at this year’s conference, and who will participate in the Opening and Closing ceremonies and the cultural presentations.

Sue Morris, the Co-Chair, along with the local liaison committee have been working non-stop to ensure that protocols are followed and we are connecting to the right contacts to make this year’s conference a huge success. This year SAIGE has broadened our scope to include topics such as Tribal Consultation, Building Relationships with Native Communities to Increase STEM Exposure, Federal Contracting with Native Businesses, Indian Trust Fundamentals, Veteran’s Preference, How to Make your Agency a Model of Diversity and much more. On Thursday evening we will be hosting a Veteran’s Powwow and Gourd dance, and for the first time, a veterans hiring event. We encourage you to spread the word so we can have a great turn-out. The SAIGE website has activated the applications for the Youth Program in addition to information about the conference scholarship and the award package which is available for you to use.

For those of you who are in the law profession, Walter Echo Hawk, Attorney, Tribal Judge and Author and Susan Johnson, Tribal Relations Program Manager, USDA Forest Service and SAIGE BOD member, have been working hard to offer a two day Federal Indian Law Immersion Course. Walter, Stephan Pevar, and Jack Trope will be the instructors for this course. The course will offer continuing credit hours for lawyers who attend. The cost of the Immersion course will be separate from the conference registration fee. Please check the SAIGE website for updates.

You can now register online at the SAIGE website, so don’t wait. The early bird registration fee is $500 until May 6th and then it will be $600. If your agency would like to sponsor or purchase a booth please contact Jinny Shulenberger at (704) 638-3406 or via email at jinny.shulenberger@va.gov. The booth fee is $1500 for this year only and will be first come first serve while space is available.

Finally I would like to thank the planning committee and the board members for stepping up and assisting in planning this year’s conference. As volunteers it can be time consuming and everyone had to arrange their schedules for conference calls and completing the invitational and confirmation letters to all presenters and invited guests. Thanks in advance for your attendance to this year’s conference, you definitely won’t be disappointed! On behalf of the 2011 SAIGE Planning Committee, Sue and I have been honored to serve as Co-Chairs and we look forward to meeting all of you at the conference June 13-17, 2011. See you in Tulsa!

A FEW TULSA FACTS ...

Tallasi (Old Town – Creek Language), Oklahoma (Red People – Choctaw Language)

French traders and plains-culture Osage tribes occupied the region now surrounding Tulsa when the U.S. purchased the land from France as part of the Louisiana Purchase 1803. Soon the U.S. Government sought to remove the communities of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) from their lands in southeastern U.S. to Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma. In 1826, the Osages ceded their land in the Tulsa area to the U.S. government, which in turn gave it to the exiled Creeks and Cherokees. Lochapoka Band of Creek Tribes by way of the Trail of Tears first settled Tulsa. Their journey ended beneath the branches of an oak tree, now called the Council Oak Tree, located...
Dana Nez is Diné and grew up on the Tohatchi, NM/Chuska Mountains. She is currently attending New Mexico State University, majoring in Geology. She heard about SAIGE through her mother, Angela Barney-Nez.

What was the highlight for you at the SAIGE youth track?
I enjoyed the leadership training given by James Anderson. He taught me that ENTHUSIASM is vital. He also said I am like a champion barbecue sauce; with the right ingredients and painstaking effort, I will be delicious. Just kidding. He meant that I could be a prize winner, a great success.

What did you take away from the youth track?
The idea that I deserve good opportunities and that those opportunities are mine for the taking.

Would you recommend to other students, why?
It is so important to establish good contacts. The SAIGE conference is a great place to do that.

Have you worked for the Federal government?
Yes. What agency and what did you do? Social Security Administration, Area Director’s Office, Silver Spring, MD

Favorite book?
All of the Harry Potter novels.

Future career?
I would like to work as an Environmental Consultant on behalf of Native tribes.

Hero?
My paternal grandmother Helen Francis inspired me to overcome fear. As a young girl herding her goats, she fought off a hungry mountain lion from getting her two newborn kids (baby goats). She defended them throughout the night until the mountain lion left them at daybreak.

Words to live by?
My father likes to say, “Begin with the end in mind”. My mother likes to say, “Whatever your past, your future is spotless”. I like to say, “You can’t win if you don’t play”.

Community involvement and why is it important to you?
I participate with the Native American Business Student Association (NABSA) chapter at New Mexico State. We do community service from time to time at the school and within the Las Cruces community. Last Saturday, we volunteered at the Gospel Mission soup kitchen. It is a great feeling working together to help someone else. Giving back is very fulfilling. We had a great time doing it.

If I could improve the world, I would?
I would create better infrastructure for Native communities across the country. Many go without basic services like electricity and running water. More jobs in Native America would help as well.

Anything else you would like to share?
I really enjoy seeing new places and meeting new people. Every chance I get to experience something new, like the SAIGE conference last summer, I find new opportunities and wonderful people who believe in Native youth and that is a great inspiration.

Bryan Manycattle is Navajo from Cortez Colorado. He is currently attending Diné College, a Tribal College & University in Arizona. He is majoring in Political Science. He heard about the youth track through his scholarship office.

What was the highlight for you at the SAIGE youth track?
Meeting new people and the education I received from the many different people and presenters at each conference.

What did you take away from the youth track?
The new education and involvement with govern-
WHAT IS THE YOUTH TRACK?

As part of its annual conferences, SAIGE offers a Youth track for Native American students, ages 18-25. The program is designed to provide students an opportunity to learn about careers within the federal government, to participate in professional and personal development workshops and training, and to network with Native American professionals.

Federal agency representatives attending the conference have the opportunity to meet the students, participate as exhibitors, and promote career opportunities within their respective agencies.

The deadline for this year’s conference scholarship is April 15, 2011.

A complete application is available at SAIGE website: www.saige.org. under Youth Track. Contact: JoAnn Brant, Youth Track Coordinator, (202) 564-0375, Brant.joann@epa.gov

Sponsorships always needed!

Would you recommend to other students, why?

Government is not always complicated and boring, but exciting and you give back excellent service to your country.

Have you worked for the Federal government? What agency and what did you do?

I am a current intern with the Dept of Justice on the RECA program, helping clients receive their compensation for their involvement in uranium industry.

Favorite book? True Compass, memoir of Sen. Ted Kennedy

Future career? Federal Government

Hero? My grandparents

Words to live by? “A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on.” (John F. Kennedy)

Community involvement and why is it important to you?

Traditional events and ceremonies are my backbone and culture, every weekend I help my community to preserve my culture and language to the younger generation.

If I could improve the world, I would?

Teach the young generation the language they have to preserve our heritage and our way of life.

Continued from page 3 - Youth Track Student Participants 2010

ment and service.

UNM STUDENT RECEIVES SAIGE SCHOLARSHIP

Cherie DeVore-Bitahey is the first recipient of the SAIGE Carol Jorgensen Memorial Scholarship for Environmental Stewardship. Cherie is Diné and grew up in Crownpoint, NM, Eastern Navajo Nation.

Cherie heard about the SAIGE scholarship opportunity because it was well circulated and announced at the UNM campus especially through the American Indian Student Services.

She said she was extremely grateful for the award and that it will help her continue her education at the University of New Mexico (UNM). She is a full-time student, but also has full-time commitments to her family of four. “It’s not always easy to juggle work, family, and school but I truly value my education and this scholarship will afford me the opportunity to continue with my educational pursuits.”

What is your major and what interested you to pursue this degree/career?

My major at UNM is Environmental Science with a minor in Native American Studies. My interest in the geosciences is rooted in the increasing demand for Navajo tribal members that have knowledge of our water, land, traditional herbs and plants, as they are our most precious commodities. I have found that bridging science with my traditional Navajo knowledge of the natural world is most effective in making a difference in my tribal community. I am also a firm believer in doing things you love to do, and I love what I do.

What is your community involvement and why is it important to you?

I have experience in the areas of community organizing, advocacy, research, and public relations. In my home community of Crownpoint, NM, I am an observer and listener. I participate in cultural and traditional activities, including in the past, horsemanship, and traditional food preparation. With this experience, I realize that learning is always geared toward understanding and applying what is useful and beneficial to the whole community. Conditioned by many generations of native people in the mindset of sacrifice, it is service

Favorite book?

True Compass, memoir of Sen. Ted Kennedy

Future career?

Federal Government

Hero?

My grandparents

Words to live by?

“A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on.” (John F. Kennedy)

Community involvement and why is it important to you?

Traditional events and ceremonies are my backbone and culture, every weekend I help my community to preserve my culture and language to the younger generation.

If I could improve the world, I would?

Teach the young generation the language they have to preserve our heritage and our way of life.
to community that produces an extraordinary level of integrity and reciprocity, which is are the values I wish for myself and my children.

Who is your role model?
Inspired by many strong women and seventh generation thinking, family and community have continually proven to be the merits and my motivation behind acquiring higher education. I was raised by a hardworking single mother and older sisters. My mother’s work ethic and daily struggles continue to serve as an inspiration for me to strive for a meaningful career and to be the first in my family to receive a Bachelors degree. My maternal and paternal grandmothers are also great role models.

Words to live by?
The quality of one’s thoughts determines the quality of one’s life so we are responsible for making what we have of our world, no matter what we are given. Because life is an ongoing process, one must continue to practice nitsaahekees (right thinking) in order to live a life characterized by balance and Hozho (harmony). This includes tolerance, dialogue, respect, and most importantly, humility.

2011 Carol Jorgensen Memorial Scholarship for Environmental Stewardship

The scholarship provides $1,000 to a full time student pursuing an undergraduate degree in an environmental stewardship discipline, including environmental studies, the natural sciences, public policy, natural resource management, and related disciplines.

SAIGE established this award to honor the memory and legacy of Carol Jorgensen who dedicated a lifetime of service to her family, community, country, and Mother Earth. Carol was Tlingit from the Yandestake Village in southeast Alaska and was part of the Eagle/Killer Whale Fin House of Klukwan. She served many years in public service, most recently as Director of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), American Indian Environmental Office.


Continued from page 4- Cherie Devore-Bitahey

TULSA FACTS - continued from page 2.
on the east side of the Arkansas River at 18th & Cheyenne. They called their settlement “Tallasi”, meaning “old town” in their native language. Interestingly “Tulsa” is the same word from which Tallahassee, Fl takes its name.

Most of modern day Tulsa is located in the Muscogee Creek Nation, with parts in the Cherokee Nation and Osage Nation. In the early 20th century, Tulsa’s, Greenwood District was home to what was called the “Black Wall Street.” It was one of the most prosperous Black communities in the U.S. In 1921, it was the site of the Tulsa Race Riot, one of the largest and most destructive acts of racial violence in the history of the U.S.

The Tulsa Port of Catoosa, at the head of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, is the inland river port in the U.S. with access to international waterways.

There are 38 federally recognized Indian Tribes within Oklahoma and 1 that filed for federal recognition.

The original inhabitants of the area that is now Oklahoma include:

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<th>Plains Apache</th>
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<th>Caddo</th>
<th>Comanche</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kiowa</td>
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Indian tribes relocated into Oklahoma by the U.S. Government:

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FEATURED SES LEADER: HANKIE ORTIZ, Esq.

by Shana Barehand

Hankie Ortiz is the Director of the Office of Tribal Self Governance (OTSG) for the Indian Health Service (IHS)/Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She has spent her entire career as a public servant who remains close to her community and serves as a role model for our youth. Hankie Ortiz, born Hankie Alyce Marie Poafpybitty, is a citizen of the Kiowa Nation of Oklahoma, and is also Caddo and Comanche.

Hankie is the oldest of five children. She was raised by her mother among the Caddo people in Binger, Oklahoma. Her mother taught her to work hard, to be honest and to be strong. Being the oldest child required her to take on a lot of responsibility at a very young age but it taught her to problem solve, meet challenges, and appreciate her family and her culture.

As a young girl she recalls her grandmother stressing to her that the world was changing and that she needed an education to take care of herself and her Indian people. Her Aunt also played an important role in her life by encouraging her to participate in summer leadership programs and by helping her to secure internships that opened her eyes to the idea that her efforts and an education could have a positive impact not only within Indian country but also at the national level.

She graduated as the valedictorian of her high school class and attended the University of Oklahoma, where she received a B.A. in Psychology. Realizing the power of the law and its ability to affect change, Hankie pursued her graduate studies at the University of Montana’s Indian Legal Program. While in law school, she served as the President of the Native American Law Students Association.

After law school she began to fulfill her vision to serve the Indian community. She began working at the Native American Rights Fund where she represented tribes and individual Indians in various legal matters. She continued her legal career in the DHHS Office of General Counsel, Public Health Division, where she used her strong Indian Law background to widen the scope at which her office operated. Later, she managed the Division of Regulatory Affairs and served as the Deputy Director for the IHS Office of Management Services, where she used her tribal and legal expertise to influence national decision-making and policy.

In her current position, she has the primary responsibility for the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (Public Law 93-638) as it pertain to health related activities affecting the Tribal Self-Governance Program. This includes advocacy on behalf of American Indians and Alaska Natives on the development and implementation of the federal self-governance policy. There are currently 332 Federally-recognized self-governance Tribes operating 102 funding agreements and 78 compacts. Hankie works with these tribes, not only to negotiate agreements but also to provide technical assistance. She also provides skilled legal and policy guidance to the Director and senior staff, and has primary responsibility for tribal consultation with Office of Direct Service and Contracting Tribes.

Her favorite part of the job is supervising a dedicated, hard working staff to help Tribes and tribal organizations express their Tribal sovereignty and successfully assume responsibility for their health programs through a government-to-government process. Hankie enjoys working with Federal and Tribal staff, attorneys and consultants. From Alaska to Florida, and many places in between, she has met with many fellow public servants. Together they have come to a better understanding about the unique health care challenges that they and their constituents face. She appreciates the determination and commitment these folks demonstrate to overcome adversities in meeting the health needs of American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Hankie is a proud mother, dedicated wife and a community activist who volunteers her time to support the progress of the tribal legal community. She was a founding member, Treasurer and President-Elect of the Native American Bar Association of Washington D.C. and a founding board member of the California Indian Legal Association. She was asked by the Governor of Maryland to serve on the Maryland Commission of Indian Affairs where she served as the Vice-Chairman. She was the Co-Chair of the Inaugural Washington D.C. Indian Law Conference and selected to serve as an Americans for Indian Opportunity Ambassador. Her recent accomplishments include three National Director’s Awards for her outstanding performance, dedication and commitment to the mission of the IHS.
SAIGE Members at American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) and National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Conferences in Albuquerque, NM

Georgia Madrid, NOAA and Carl Etsitty, USDA staff the SAIGE booth at the AISES conference in November 2010. In addition, SAIGE members participated in the AISES/Government Relations Council meeting. SAIGE has an MOU with AISES. Photo Credit: Jason Edwards.

Susan Johnson, USFS Tribal Liaison, and Charles Wilkinson, author at NCAI. Susan is working on a Federal Indian Law Immersion Course at NTC this year. She is also a SAIGE BOD member. Photo Credit: Jason Edwards.

Don Chapman, Dept. of Commerce, Senior Advisor on Native American Affairs, performs at NCAI. Don will be conducting a workshop at this year’s SAIGE NTC. Photo Credit: Jason Edwards.

Lori Windle, SAIGE Vice Chair, Carl Etsitty, and Maria Montour, USGS at NCAI. They are also members of the Colorado Front Range SAIGE Chapter. Maria will be participating in a workshop, “Engaging Native Americans in STEM to Build a Competitive Federal Workforce” at this year’s NTC. Photo Credit: Jason Edwards.
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.

SAIGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Contact board at:
chair@saige.org

OFFICER POSITIONS

• Chair: Danny Garceau (Lake Superior Chippewa ancestry) - danjeau@msn.com
• 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)
• Miguel “Luke” Jones (Pamunkey, Chickahominy, Cherokee ancestry)
• Sue Marcus
• Pedro Molina (Yaqui Nation)
• Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)
• Jinny Shulenberger (Echota Cherokee of Alabama/Creek)
• Brenda Takes Horse (Kenaitze)
• Veronica Vasquez (Chumash)
• Kimberly Yellow Robe (Rosebud Sioux)

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.

SAIGE is on facebook!

BECOME A MEMBER!
www.saige.org

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