Aanii (hello) SAIGE Family,

We are only weeks away from our annual gathering at the 2012 SAIGE National Training Program in Denver, Colorado. It is our 9th annual conference and our 10th Anniversary as an organization. I had the opportunity to preview the Omni Hotel and was very impressed with the rooms, venue space, quality throughout and the overall atmosphere. Our conference planning committee has done an outstanding job putting together an exceptional program. You do not want to miss this training program; it will be one to remember for a long time. If you have not already done so, please register for the Training Program and make your hotel reservations. There are early registration discounts and you will want to ensure you get a room at the Omni before they sell out. You can register for the Training Program at www.saige.org.

In December, SAIGE elected Millie Titla and Becky Lewis to the board. Millie has served SAIGE in the past as both a board member and a Conference Chair. She also has the experience of serving as both the Vice President and President of AIANEA. Becky has experience serving in tribal government as the Vice Chair of the Lac Courte Oreilles Lake Superior Chippewa. Her tribal experience may be a first for our SAIGE Board. Re-elected to the board are Phil Hamel, Sue Marcus, Jinny Shulenburger and Veronica Vasquez. SAIGE is an all volunteer organization and I cannot thank each board member enough for all they do on our behalf. I would also like to extend a special thanks to some of our busy volunteer members who help SAIGE conduct business year round; Elder Les Tate, Youth Track Director JoAnn Brant, Web Master Crystal Wallace and Newsletter Editor Georgia Madrid.

SAIGE has been busy developing relationships and growing our network with both government entities and tribal governments. In February, at the United Tribes of Michigan Winter Session, I addressed the federally recognized tribes of Michigan and introduced them to SAIGE. In March, our Treasurer, Shana Barehand and I attended the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Winter Session in Washington, D.C. While there we signed a formal partnership agreement with NCAI and interacted with many tribal representatives. We also made agency visits to BIE, DHS, DOD, DOJ, DOE, EPA, FLEA, HUD, NCUA, OSM, USDA, USFS, VA, and USDA Graduate School, where in some cases we introduced them to SAIGE and in other cases built on our existing relationship with them. In April, I returned to Washington D.C. and represented SAIGE at the NCEPS (National Coalition for Equity in Public Service) Diversity Summit. I also made more agency visit with the Smithsonian, DOI and CNCP. We will continue to reach out and strengthen our network throughout the year.

I encourage all SAIGE members to ask their fellow government employees (federal, tribal, state or local) to join SAIGE. As our numbers grow, so does our network, which is a benefit to you and all of our membership. I encourage you to let them know about the exceptional Training Program we conduct annually, if they attend they will never stop thanking you.

I want to thank all of you for being part of SAIGE and for your efforts to help us grow. I hope to see you the beginning of June in Denver.

Until then, miigwech (thank you)!
By: Lori Windle and Carl Etsitty, Training Program Co-Chairs

This year’s Training Program will be special for a number of reasons. First, SAIGE will celebrate ten years as an organization, a milestone we are proud of and amazed at – where did the time go? Many of the original members are still active in SAIGE today and we are blessed to have such a vibrant, growing organization that welcomes new people and fresh ideas. This is how we continue to grow and yet remain relevant in an ever changing environment.

Secondly, we are including some of the “Best of SAIGE’ by bringing back favorite speakers such as D.J. Vanas, who was at our very first training in 2004 as our luncheon speaker and has done return engagements over the years. Carrying on a tradition since Tex Hall spoke at our first and second training sessions, and Joe Garcia at subsequent ones, the President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Jefferson Keel, will be informing us of the latest triumphs and concerns of tribal nations and their citizens.

We are also very pleased that Gerard Baker will be coming out of retirement to inspire us with the unique story of his journey as a native person working in the federal government system to effect change. Gerard was our very first Youth Track speaker in 2005. Stephen Pevar will return to do his Treaty Rights and Trust Responsibility workshop and will be signing the fourth edition of his book, *The Rights of Indians and Tribes*, recently updated and released.

In our workshop segments we will be repeating the popular “Indians 101” and “Alaska Natives 101” for those whom this may be their first training with SAIGE or who have limited experience with native peoples. These provide a basic overview that is important for other classes to build on. Within our Indian Country Track this year, we have built a Trust Responsibility layer with graduated classes starting with those and building sequentially in complexity throughout the week, ending with “Beyond Consultation: Writing Agreements with Tribes.”

Fresh faces will include Richard Williams, President of the American Indian College Fund (AICF), a well-known member of the Denver Indian Community; Charles Galbraith, Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Winona LaDuke, founder of two environmental non-profit organizations and a one-time vice-presidential candidate. I have no doubt these folks will give us plenty to think about.

We have been able to increase our workshops in Professional Development open to all attendees, by securing two sequential workshops with DOI (Department of the Interior) University dealing with leadership attributes and challenges for those in management or looking to go into management.

In addition, the Office of Personnel Management has stepped up to provide four workshops outlining the process of obtaining Senior Executive Service standing. This will include strategies, writing those core qualifications you possess, and identifying gaps in your career that you can strive to fill to make yourself more competitive for those positions. Both of these series request that you attend each workshop in the series to completion.

The annual military awards will be incorporated into the Veterans’ Luncheon this year, which we believe is a very good fit. The Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration will be the primary hosts, with assistance by speakers from Social Security and the Department of Homeland Security. There will be a presentation by Veterans’ Green Jobs, a non-profit organization that assist veterans in returning to the civilian workforce by incorporating them into companies and agencies whose missions are conservation and environmentally oriented.

At this point, it looks as though we will have at least three dozen college students for our Youth Track. One of the anticipated events for them will be a tour of the National Renewable Energy Labs (NREL) in Golden, CO. Their route will take them past the giant wind turbines at the National Wind Technology Research Center, part of NREL, only a couple miles from our hotel. JoAnn Brant, Youth Program
Director, has a full agenda planned for the young people, who always bring so much to our training program. With an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, there will be two workshops that give excellent role models for these students and others, and instruct on the number of organizations that will help federal agencies recruit students in these areas.

The Federal Indian Law Immersion course has been expanded to three days this year, to enable U.S. Forest Service and Park Service attendees training specific to their jobs in addition to the first two days of law classes. We are very pleased that Walter Echo-Hawk, Jack Trope and Charles Wilkinson will be instructors this year. There are limited seats in this course due to space constraints, so if this is a strong interest of yours it would be good to register soon.

SAIGE is very happy to include several events this year that will be open to the entire community, including the SAIGE Golf Scramble, Indigenous Film Festival, Career Fair, Veterans’ Track and Community Pow Wow. There are more than 38,000 American Indian or Alaska Native people in the Denver/Boulder area according to the last Census, so we hope to get good community participation. This is a vibrant inter-tribal urban Indian hub due to being a crossroads for many tribes, and due to the policies of relocation in the 1950s. Relocation promised jobs to many on the reservations at the time if they moved to cities such as Denver. There will be a workshop on Urban Indians that will expand on the effect of Relocation on tribal people across the country.

Colorado has only two resident tribes, the Ute Mountain Ute, and the Southern Ute, both of whom will be represented on our agenda. We are fortunate to have Ernest House, Jr. (Ute Mountain Ute), of the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs, to speak to us about current events related to the tribes. As usual we will have numerous workshops pertaining to native culture of the surrounding area. One such workshop will be on the Sand Creek Massacre, which occurred in 1864 and further complicated relations between Anglo and Native residents of Colorado.

As we quickly gear up for this milestone event, we encourage you to look for opportunities to share with your colleagues the benefits of attending the 2012 SAIGE Training Program. Every new person brings new opportunities for learning for us, and expands the base of knowledge and networking that touches so many lives in so many ways. We look forward to seeing you in June!

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Looking Back: SAIGE First National Training Program
Four Directions, One Voice

The first National Training Conference was a two day event held in Ft. Lauderdale, Fl on October 8-9, 2004. The training was held in one large conference room with a total of 73 attendees. Sponsors included Bureau of Land Management, EPA, US Forest Service, NOAA Research, Office of Surface Mining and NIKE USA.

“Prior to May 2000, the concept of a national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native federal employees was only a wish mentioned among friends at a local meeting. It was only when several people from the four directions began putting their minds together as one that the idea became a concept, then a movement, and finally a functioning organization.” Les Tate
“The Federal Government Could Learn A Lot From a State that Gets How to Work with Tribes”


John McCoy, a Tulalip tribal citizen, who is a State House Representative and this Bill’s primary sponsor, said, “With this passage, I hope that a stronger relationship develops between the state and tribes. As we know, the education on tribal issues is continuous.”

This new law essentially prescribes four requirements for each State agency, Department, Office, and Office of Statewide Elected Officials: Tribal Training, Collaboration/Consultation with Tribes, Meeting with Tribes, and Reporting to the Tribes. Many of the new Law’s obligations are similar to those mentioned in the President’s Executive Order 13175 regarding Tribal consultation. The difference is, Washington, by law, imposes these requirements for each of the States’ Departments.

This law was also enacted in the spirit of the 1989 Centennial Accord, an agreement between the Tribes and the State, which is intended to ultimately improve the services delivered to the citizens by the parties through an improved relationship between their sovereign governments. The Accord illustrates the early commitment by the parties to implement the government-to-government relationship. This relationship respects the sovereign status of the parties, enhances and improves communications between them, and facilitates the resolution of issues.

The Accord states, “This Accord is intended to build confidence among the parties in the government-to-government relationship by outlining the process for implementing the policy. Not only is this process intended to implement the relationship, but also it is intended to institutionalize it within the organizations represented by the parties. The parties will continue to strive for complete institutionalization of the government-to-government relationship by seeking an accord among all the tribes and all elements of state government.”

Washington State truly understands that creating an institutional change will enable the State and Tribes to work together better in a broad and beneficial manner. This begs the question, “Wouldn’t this work for the Federal government?” SAIGE believes it would. In 2008, SAIGE made specific recommendations to the Obama Administration that mirror the Washington State law, and then some. SAIGE also believes that by ensuring the federal government has its equitable share of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) career senior leaders and by implementing its suggestions, the relationship between the government and tribes will no longer be reactive and adversarial, but will be one of proactive inclusion, cooperation and equity. This will save enormous resources for both sovereign governments.

The SAIGE recommendations were conveyed to the Administration during the transition period and then again through two letters to the President. The recommendations are as follows:

1. A Senior Tribal Advisor at Each Agency. A Senior Tribal Advisor should be in the Secretary’s office where they can serve as the central point of contact for the Tribes and to coordinate an agency Tribal working group that will assure that responses are appropriate, consistent and timely.

2. Tribal Training for All Federal Employees Will Give the Federal Government the Essential Education Regarding How to Work with Tribes. The four hour “Working Effectively with Tribal Governments” training course has proven effective. This training was originally developed in 1997 within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Indian Law Practice Group, in conjunction with the American Indian Environmental Office. The components of the training were: Historical Perspective of Indian Law, Indian Law and Policy, Cultural Considerations and its Applications to the EPA. An updated, interagency version, is now available at www.golearn.gov.

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3. Tribal Offices Must be Staffed with People Who Have Intimate Knowledge Of and In Working with the Indian Community. Staff must have considerable interaction with Indian communities and tribal government as well as the knowledge of the laws, court cases and policies that impact tribes. It is the federal government’s job as trustee to ensure that tribes are not harmed but effectively included, so each tribal office needs to know how to appropriately include the appropriate tribal people. Tribal governments need continued, consistent, and sincere efforts to achieve and maintain a productive nation-to-nation relationship.

4. Tribal Offices or Tribal Liaisons Should Have a Strategic Plan. Each agency’s tribal office should have a plan to quantify the results of their work with tribes so that tribes can see what that agency has accomplished. These results, for example, might show an increase in the amount of resources added to a tribal program, an increase in the amount of dollars granted to tribes, increases in American Indians hired at the agency and/or the number of FTEs working on Tribal issues, or an increased number of federal program authorities delegated to tribes.

5. Each Agency Should Have a Plan to Survey its Own Programs, Rules and Regulation for Tribal Inclusion. Agencies, particularly those with programs and program funding should commit to reviewing its rules, policies and programs to evaluate which rules, policies and programs must be amended to appropriately and directly include tribes. Agencies should develop guidance for this review. This guidance should also include a plan of how the agency can fix the rule, policy or program, and at what threshold they will initiate consultation.

6. An Indian Law Practitioner in Every Agency’s Office of General Counsel. SAIGE recognizes that each rule, policy or guidance has to go through the Department’s General Counsel’s office. Indian law practitioners can ensure that tribes are legally and appropriately included in that agency’s rule, policy, and guidance. This person can also assist the agency in appropriately consulting with tribes.

7. Each Agency Should Make Tribes Aware of its Agency’s Rules Calendar. This will ensure that tribal governments will know which rules are being developed in the agency for the year and thus determine for which rules they want to be consulted.

8. An Executive Order Establishing an AI/AN Employment Program and an Equitable Share for American Indian/Alaska Native Organizations. Most agencies regularly support minority organizations that assist them in recruiting and working within those communities. Because the Federal government, due to the trust responsibility, has a unique relationship with and a higher duty to AI/ANs, we believe organizations such as SAIGE should also receive their fair share of agency support, which has not been the case in the past. SAIGE is the only national organization of its kind. While all other ethnic groups including women have an employment program, the AI/ANs only have a program at the will of each agency. This means the AI/AN group is often shared with unrelated groups and is filled by someone who is unfamiliar with the AI/AN community. This often makes for an ineffective effort in the AI/AN community.

9. Take Down Offensive Material from Federal Buildings. For the past eight years, SAIGE has requested the General Services Administration remove the Mural entitled “The Dangers of the Mail” from the EPA Ariel Rios building. This mural depicts Plains Indian warriors scalpng naked Anglo women in an erotic fashion. This is insulting to tribal officials who are there on business and offensive to native employees as well as many visitors. You may see the images and history of SAIGE’s involvement in working to get them removed on our website at: http://www.saige.org/epamural/epamural.htm

10. Each Agency Should Support Inter-Tribal Organizations. Each federal agency should support inter-tribal organizations such as Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indian (ATNI), Great Plains Tribal Chairman’s Association, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) to name a few. Agencies can support these organizations by having a regular presence at their meetings, providing informational booths staffed with knowledgeable individuals at their conferences, and through regular sponsorship support. These tribal consortia are vital to Indian country because not every tribe has the funds to hire their own attorneys and lobbyists to advocate for their needs, but they can participate in these organizations for their common goals. Additionally, these organizations will help Agencies stay informed of issues important to tribes and their citizens.

Let’s take the “Tribal Ten” and make them an accomplishment of this decade!
Outreach in Indian Country

Promoting Careers in Intelligence

Mr. Joe Eckerberg (Niigaanakwad – Leading Cloud) an enrolled member of the Keeweenaw Bay Indian Community, staff director of the Middle East North Africa Analysis Office and chair of Defense Intelligence Agency’s (DIA) 1st Nations Program Council travelled to Haskell Indian Nations University April 3-6 to attend their 2012 career fair. The visit was part of the council’s outreach program into Indian Country. In addition to presenting students access to job opportunities DIA wants to ensure that tribal university & community college faculty and students are aware of the variety of career programs that DIA offers. Many are unfamiliar with DIA and even most of those who are do not know that the agency has internships, co-op opportunities and competitive programs that could provide tuition assistance for a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree from the National Intelligence University and a unique opportunity the Financial Management Leadership Program. Additional information on jobs and student opportunities is available at the agency’s website DIA.mil under the career tab.

Mr. Eckerberg believes a career in intelligence at DIA or one of the other agencies within the U.S. Intelligence Community is ideal for Native Americans. He points out some data points in support of this belief. First, is the high per capita rate of military service amongst Native Americans. Second, is the sad fact that many Native Americans suffer from medical afflictions which preclude military service. Lastly, is that the silent warrior nature of the intelligence professional is an ideal substitute for military service. He points out “where else can someone on a daily basis engage in work that protects our nation and people from potential enemies? The last line of U.S. Army’s Intelligence Creed is the silent warrior of the Army Team – by extension I believe all intelligence professionals are silent warriors for America. What a great way to serve!”

A career in the intelligence service will not isolate someone from Indian Country, Eckerberg assures. Like DIA’s 1st Nation Council most government agencies possess affinity groups thru their Equal Opportunity Offices that afford a voice for their members within the agencies and afford members a chance to stay involved in their communities. Additionally, non-government professional associations such as the SAIGE provide additional networking as well as an annual training venue. Mr. Eckerberg is a two time recipient of SAIGE’s Achievement Award for his work in DIA’s 1st Nations Council.

Colorado Front Range (CFR) Chapter

The CFR SAIGE Chapter have been meeting on a monthly basis, planning for the SAIGE National Training Program, and participating in local community activities.

In November, CFR members participated in the Adams 12 Five Star Career Fair, Denver Indian Center job fair in March and the Boulder Valley School District American Indian Youth Leadership Institute in Boulder, CO in January. Information on SAIGE, Federal career opportunities and the SAIGE Youth Track were provided to attendees at these conferences.

Several CFR members are also a part of the planning committee for the Pathways to Respecting American Indian Civil Rights conference that will be held in Denver, CO on August 8 to 9, 2012. The conference promotes the training, education, and sharing of information between American Indians on and off-reservation with various federal, state, and local agencies, community organizations, educators, health care providers, and more.

There are currently 29 members in the CFR from various Federal agencies. The CFR President is Carl Etsitty, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. Carl currently

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works with the USDA as a biotechnologist in their Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). He was recently selected for the position of Tribal Liaison. Carl is a SAIGE founding member.

If you are located in the Colorado Front Range Area, please email Carl at carl.etsitty@aphis.usda.gov if you are interested in becoming a member and to learn more about our chapter activities.

**NOAA/Northwest Indian College Career Fair and Training Symposium**

Shana Barehand, Tribal Liaison, Washington Department of Revenue, represented SAIGE at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Northwest Indian College (NWIC) 3rd Annual Career Fair and Training Symposium in April. She staffed an exhibit booth and was a panelist on the *Effective Steps to Securing Permanent Employment* session. The workshop provided NWIC students with valuable and creative job search skills, resume writing techniques, and interviewing skills.

NOAA and NWIC have partnered and collaborated on environmental issues for several years, and the career fair and training symposium was developed to expose students to NOAA careers and the skills needed. This year, the US Fish and Wildlife Service became a major sponsor and 31 exhibitors participated. Georgia Madrid, SAIGE member and NOAA/OAR employee, was a member of the conference planning committee.

**Congratulations to Susan Johnson, SAIGE Board Member**

Susan, a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of North Dakota, received the Veterans Greens Jobs distinguished service award. Susan will be incorporating the Veterans Green Jobs into the SAIGE Annual National Training Program this year in Denver. She is the U.S. Forest Service regional tribal relations program manager. Read the full editorial at: [http://buffalosfire.com/u-s-forest-service-regional-tribal-relations-program-manager-presented-with-distinguished-service-award/](http://buffalosfire.com/u-s-forest-service-regional-tribal-relations-program-manager-presented-with-distinguished-service-award/)

**NCEPS Upcoming Training Events**

Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC)
April 30-May 4, 2012, Atlanta, GA
www.fapac.org

Federally Employed Women (FEW)
July 15-20, Detroit, MI
www.few.org

Blacks In Government (BIG)
August 13-16, 2012, Detroit, MI
www.bignet.org

National Image, Inc -
September 9-14, 2012, Los Angeles, CA
http://national-image.org/
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) - 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)

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.

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