



The Talking Leaf

Issue #8

SAIGE Newsletter

July 2013

Message from the Chair, Susan Johnson



Greetings SAIGE Family and Friends!

This issue of the *Talking Leaf* Newsletter is dedicated to the 2013 SAIGE National Training Program (NTP) recently held June 3-7, 2013 at the lovely Northern Quest Resort in Spokane, WA. We hope you enjoy reading various perspectives on the quality of our training and seeing pictures of your friends and colleagues enjoying, learning, reconnecting with friends, and making new ones. Despite the cloud of sequestration and its effects looming over the federal family, I am very happy to report that SAIGE was still able to hold a training program for the benefit of federal, state and tribal employees, and our youth. To me, this training was an unequivocal success and we owe a great deal of gratitude to our talented presenters, volunteers, sponsors, partners, planning committee, SAIGE Board,

and certainly to our loyal training attendees!

This year our NTP survey results indicated the respondents to be highly satisfied with the training SAIGE offered and went on to rank Federal Indian Law, Traditional and Culture Lifeways, and Indigenous Natural Resources as the top three most preferred tracks. This is certainly nice validation for the NTP planners and the SAIGE Board as it remains a central goal of the SAIGE organization to ensure every federal, state, and tribal employee who manages or delivers a program to Indian Country has an opportunity to become more knowledgeable and informed about American Indians and Alaska Natives as governments and communities within the United States. Further, SAIGE believes we can assist the federal, state, and tribal governmental agencies, and their employees to surpass job performance when they have received quality training concerning the aspects of the unique relationship between the federal and tribal governments, and the vast array of laws, rules, and regulations that provide the framework for a positive relationship.

Throughout this newsletter you will see and hear from young people who attended SAIGE NTP's to learn, experience, and network with

governmental agencies interested in recruiting the youth into paid employment. The SAIGE Youth Program offers valuable experiences that broaden the students' horizons and provide long-term support from professionals and peers. We believe that by expanding opportunities for our youth in the public sector, we also bring balance to government services and decisions by having more Native employees in the federal workplace. We firmly believe that Native cultural values and world views enrich governmental decision making and provide fresh perspectives, and that is good for our nation.

The tribal community has long embraced our warriors, and SAIGE is no different. We continue to honor and recognize the American Indian and Alaska Native veterans by supporting a Veterans Track; a one-day program featuring expert presenters who address the topics and issues most valuable and important to military personnel and their families. Please take time to search out pictures of the Veterans Track participants and remember to thank them for their service to our country.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the unparalleled support from the Northern Quest staff and the quality of the facility. We all enjoyed our stay at the NQ property!

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and thank you for your continued support of SAIGE.



2013 National Training Program (NTP): Guiding Our Destiny with Heritage & Traditions

Perspectives from first-time attendees and Youth Track participants

My First SAIGE: Enlightening and Exciting

By Mariel Murray, Program Analyst, Office of Tribal Relations, U.S. Forest Service

When I told my Mom that I had done some tribal beadwork, she couldn't believe it. I could hardly believe it myself, given my notorious lack of arts and crafts skills. Yet this was just one of many fun and informative activities I was lucky to participate in at the June 2013 SAIGE NTP in Spokane, Washington.

Ever since my anthropology studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and exposure to Indigenous peoples throughout the world, I have worked on tribal issues. This desire to become a tribal advocate propelled me to eventually go to law school. While there, I became a student intern at the Forest Service, Office of Tribal Relations in Washington DC, and was luckily converted to full-time staff upon graduation one year ago.



John Herrington, Astronaut, Bea Herbert, and Butch Blazer.

As a relatively new employee, I was therefore very excited to attend my first SAIGE conference. I was humbled to meet incredibly accomplished people, including my great Forest Service counterparts in the field, strong veterans, an impressive astronaut, and young, vivacious Native college students.

Through the cultural workshops, including an enlightening indigenous film festival, I learned a lot about Native culture as well.



Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull, AICF President

Perhaps most exciting of all, I was privileged to attend a Federal Indian Law training taught by notable tribal scholars and advocates Walter Echo-Hawk and

Jack Trope. Mr. Echo-Hawk poignantly explained the philosophical and historical foundation to the current state of Federal Indian law. He also discussed the intersection of international law relative to Federal Indian Law, including how the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples may inspire a positive paradigm shift domestically. Mr. Trope complemented Mr. Echo-Hawk by describing the implications of tribal sovereignty, including questions of tribal jurisdiction. With these normative underpinnings outlined, Mr. Trope then delved into the nuances of specific laws such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act.



Jack Trope, Federal Indian Law Training

Overall, I really enjoyed meeting SAIGE members and guests, and learning all about Federal Indian Law. Who knows, maybe I will even continue my beading next year!

The Synergy at SAIGE

By John T. Autrey, Tribal Relations Specialist, Tongass National Forest

I would like to thank everyone who organized, volunteered, presented, or attended the 10th Annual SAIGE conference and training program. I am most grateful for the opportunity to experience the energy, the synergy, and the very inspirational presentations.

I especially enjoyed meeting all of you, and the sharing of personal experience and dialogue with the students who demonstrated great poise, confidence, and character.



Becky Lewis and Shana Barehand, NTP 2013 Co-chairs.

The Synergy at SAIGE (con't)

The welcoming that I received as I became a SAIGE member and the invitation to participate with the Veterans touched me greatly.

The opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones was priceless. The food was wonderful, and I traveled home with some in my bag feeling very full, blessed, and extremely appreciative of the special attention that the board and the volunteers provided. The attention to small details, the words and the deeds reveal the greater truth; that is the sincerity and power of the SAIGE program. Thank you so much, and be safe out there. I'll plan to see you next year!



Coeur d' Alene Dance Troupe.

Youth Track Perspective: Honoring Our Ancestors with Government Service

By Bethany Hope Henry



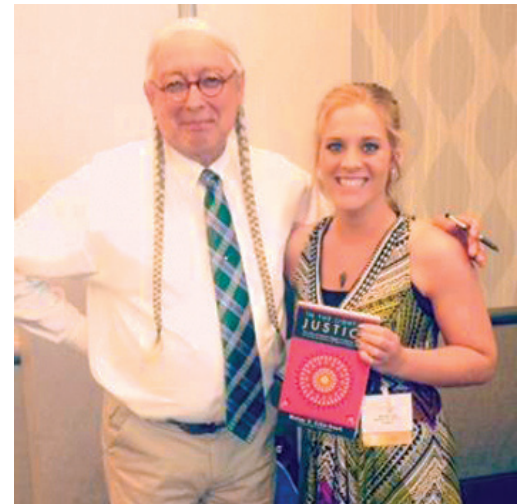
Bethany in her NPS uniform

It is an honor to represent my Cherokee heritage and the National Park Service (NPS) at the SAIGE Youth Program in Spokane, Washington. The SAIGE NTP provided networking opportunities with federal government employees across various regions who enjoy diverse occupations. It was encouraging to see efforts by both federal agencies and tribal communities working together to reach goals toward preserving our shared story. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of training programs that benefit my role as a student employee in the NPS and I look forward to working with my Cherokee community and federal family.

The conference greatly contributed to my personal, educational, and career goals. As Dr. Darryl Tonemah said, "put your yes on the table!" Many nuggets of wisdom encouraged students to consider challenges currently facing our native communities and

how working collaboratively with federal agencies can help alleviate some generational problems, including the low percentage of Indian employees in the NPS (currently 2.4% of 21,486). Through an exercise *Begin with the End in Mind*, students were instructed to write out their vision plan and mission statement to keep us focused on our goals, priorities, and dreams.

A really neat experience at the training was meeting John Herrington, the first Native American Astronaut in Space. Mr. Herrington (Chickasaw) took time to meet with the students and talk to us about continuing our education even to the doctorate level. He said hard work and perseverance are vital in motivation, but it's our heritage and culture that really drive our passion to succeed not only for ourselves but our communities.



Walter Echo-Hawk and Bethany.

For my personal education and career pursuits, I most enjoyed the workshops by Walter Echo-Hawk on Federal Indian Law. Echo-Hawk was thought-provoking and inspirational as he explained complex issues facing the Federal Government and American Indian communities today. One of the topics concerning federal agencies is the U.N. Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous People passed by President Obama in 2010. This policy fundamentally alters the way the government works collaboratively with Native American tribes. With this new legislation, tribes are distinguished as sovereign political entities with inherent human rights that pre-exist the United States. In a long history of Federal Indian Law marching through periods of treaties, termination policy, removal acts, and forced assimilation, the U.N. Declaration speaks conversantly to our Federal Trust Relationship, Tribal Sovereignty, and Self-Determination that we promise to uphold in the National Park Service.

Youth Track Perspective: My Experience at SAIGE: Thankful!

By Julian Guerrero Jr.

If I had to come up with a one-word summary of my experience at SAIGE, it would be “thankful.” My involvement at this conference was truly educational and inspirational. I am grateful for being able to hear several life lessons from speakers such as: Arthur “Butch” Blazer, Roylene Rides at the Door, John Herrington, and Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull. Each of their stories were real, being they journeyed along a path not knowing where it would take them. Our student speakers Dr. Darryl Tonemah and Solo Greene shared words of empowerment to have goals and expand our strengths to best complete those goals. All of the lectures at SAIGE had a common denominator, helping Indian Country takes many shapes and forms, from becoming a clinical psychologist to flying in space!

There was not a dull moment with the Youth Track; even when there was “downtime” there were plenty of other students to meet and engage with. My roommate was Martin Manuel of the Hopi Nation, and I loved his story. He is attending Arizona State University to attain a BS in Mechanical Engineering, and he wants to bring better energy technologies to his hometown. We talked about how to incorporate new and better energy technology and infrastructure for all reservations throughout Indian Country. Of course, we are all in our preliminary years when compared to having a professional career, but the greatest gift I took from the conference was networking with the other youth professionals; people like Ernest Weston Jr., Dwight Carlston, Chad Martinez, Sid-knee Miller, Julia Sewell, and countless other acquaintances. I shared my story with them, and together we shared common visions of empowerment and future building initiatives that we want to bring to Indian Country.

I am on a 5-year track for my BA in Public Administration with a Masters in Public Administration. I plan on obtaining my PhD researching Tribal-State Consultation Policy, with an emphasis on advocating the development of robust Federal-Indian Consultation Policy. Much of my research interests include collaborative public management, intergovernmental relations, tribal governance, and indigenous politics.

The biggest take-away from being involved with the Youth Track was definitely the stories and getting the opportunity to share each other’s dreams and goals. Each step we take in the name of Indian Country improves the representation of all native people across the country; making sure we engage in the right manners to Reclaim, Redefine, and Remain. I look forward to working with my new-found friends and together building a prosperous future for the next generation of native youth and for that I am very THANKFUL. Ura!



Julian (front row, second to left) with Youth Track participants.



Youth Track speaking and networking at the conference.

Anjelica Sanchez Gallegos - Carol Jorgensen Scholarship for Environmental Stewardship



Angelica

Anjelica is from the Jicarilla Apache Nation (Tinde people - White Clan) and Santa Ana Pueblo (Tamaya). She is a student, artist, writer and visionary. She is a student at the College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado at Denver, where she maintains a 3.9 GPA.

In her application, Anjelica provided the following: “I was warmed by the sun, rocked by the winds and sheltered by the trees,” proclaimed Goyaate (Geromino).” Her ambition as a Sustainable Architect is to serve the environmental and structural needs of the Native community. This goal includes creation of Native communities that are in a healthy and interdependent relationship with current land and water holdings through use of solar, wind, or minimal standard energy sources. Her view is that environmental stewardship should be coupled with sustainable architecture. Green architecture exhibits direct and indirect stewardship of land and water-based environmental systems. An example of this is the Tsigo Bugeh Billage of Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo; tribal housing designed in Pueblo form with attached units divided around two plazas, one oriented to the solstice and the other to the equinox, as the original Pueblo was built centuries ago. By maintaining traditional views of the environment and concurrently using ecological building design methods to safeguard the wellbeing of Indian Nations and our physical home is her goal. This is essential for the successful bridging of both an ancient and alive People into a new era; for the continuance of being “warmed by the sun, rocked by the winds and sheltered by the trees.”

As a writer/artist you can see Anjelica’s work at www.nativemax.com. SAIGE is pleased to assist Anjelica Gallegos in her educational pursuits through the SAIGE Jorgensen Scholarship and look forward to seeing her environmentally friendly buildings on native lands in the future.

Dr. Margaret Hiza Redsteer (Crow) - Leadership GS 11-15

Dr. Hiza Redsteer, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, exemplifies the SAIGE goal of nurturing future generations of Native leaders. She once said, “...

If Indian people are engaged in earth science work, it can empower communities to think and act for themselves, to address the land use and natural resources issues that challenge all of us.” She has designed a USGS research project focused on the earth science needs of the Navajo Nation, her home for 10 years.



Dr. Margaret Hiza presenting a talk at NOAA Boulder.

Nancy Berryhill (Cherokee) - Leadership SES

Nancy is the Regional Commissioner for the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) Chicago Region. In her work, she ensures tribes are included, as she states, “The SSA benefit programs touch the lives of nearly every individual. The Chicago Region serves the members of the twenty-eight Indian Reservations through a network of 222 field offices located in the six states of IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, and WI. Our highly dedicated employees are here to assist you and members of your tribes on matters related to Social Security. A close relationship between Social Security offices and tribal leaders is the most effective means to serve the public.”



Fred Clark (Citizen Potawatomi Nation) - Agency Support, Forest Service

Fred is the National Director of the Office of Tribal Relations, Forest Service, in Washington, DC. His office works closely on the Interagency Coordination and Collaboration for the Protection of Indian Sacred Sites. He also oversees the Forest Service newsletter that conveys news that is important to the tribes and their citizens.

Kristi Woodard (Colville) - American Indian/Alaskan (AI/AN) Native Committee Member

When SAIGE put out the call for 2013 conference planning volunteers, Kristi was the first to volunteer. She skillfully took charge of the Wellness Track. Kristi works for the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, and has been key in developing a strategy for outreach and education plans for AI/AN communities.

2013 DoD SAIGE Meritorious Awards



The following individuals received the 2013 awards:

U.S. Air Force: Major Maureen A. Trujillo

U.S. Air Force: Mr. Leland Livingston

U.S. Coast Guard: Lieutenant Ronney Wright

U.S. Coast Guard: Mr. Joseph Ruybe

Defense Information Systems Agency: Mr. Walter B. Harris

The Keynote Speaker was RADM Daniel A. Neptun from the U.S. Coast Guard.

SAIGE Warrior Society Update

by Danny Garceau

The newly formed SAIGE Warrior Society has been busy. In the last six months the Warrior Society planned and conducted the Veterans Track at the SAIGE NTP in Spokane, WA which included participation from the Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Defense, United States Coast Guard, American Legion, and local tribes. Some of the highlights of the Veterans Track included a luncheon with guest speaker RADM Neptun from the USCG, a successful DoD Skype session from the Pentagon and the DoD Awards program. This year was the first time the Colors for the SAIGE NTP were posted and retrieved from our very own SAIGE Warrior Society. The inaugural SAIGE Color Guard was made up of Mary Culley - Army Veteran, Pat Boyles - Army Veteran, Brian Sappier - Coast Guard Veteran and SAIGE Warrior Singer, Tilford Brown - Marine Veteran. The Warrior Society's primary mission is to support SAIGE, and serve as a resource and provide camaraderie for SAIGE members who are either in the military or are veterans. The Warrior Society is made up of SAIGE members in good standing who are either currently in the military or are veterans. For information on joining the Warrior Society please contact Danny Garceau, danjeau@msn.com



Danny with Keynote Speaker RADM Daniel A Neptun.



The SAIGE Warrior Society is offering its sage digital pattern four-color SAIGE logo baseball cap. This is a high-quality one size fits most (Velcro adjusted) cap. The recommended donation for one of these caps is \$20, includes shipping and handling. Any profits will go into a fund to help purchase gear for the SAIGE Warrior Society Honor Guard. Please contact danjeau@msn.com if you have questions or to arrange to obtain a ball cap. The ball cap sold out in less than one hour at the 2013 NTP.

2013 NTP Presentations Available On-Line

If you were unable to attend the NTP, you can view presentations on the SAIGE website at: <http://saige.org/past-training-programs/2013-training-program-presentations/>

All 2013 NTP photos taken by Jeff Barehand.

SAIGE MEMBER PROFILE: *D.J. Lente Watts, Veterans Health Administration (VHA)*

Sharing Opportunities with Denver Indian Community to Thrive and Not Just Survive

By Georgia Madrid, NOAA OAR

D.J. is a Program Analyst supporting the Purchased Care Program of the VHA Chief Business Office (CBO) in Denver, CO. She is also the American Indian Program Manager for VHA, and a member of the SAIGE Colorado Front Range (CFR) chapter. She is Laguna Pueblo, born and raised in Gallup, N.M.

D.J. started her career with the military, U.S. Air Force. She was delayed enlisted in 1979 and entered active duty in March 1980. She retired July 2002 from the Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO. "I traveled the world in the military, met a lot of interesting and good people, and thoroughly enjoyed it. After retiring, I worked for a government contractor in Colorado Springs. I got married, moved to Littleton, and then after four years of commuting, decided to come back to the government side of the house." At the VHA, she enjoys her work because she is able to indirectly support Veterans. "The better our programs, said D.J., the better the care is for our Veterans."

According to D.J., she focuses on three areas as the American Indian Program Manager, "The first is to improve the recruitment and retention of American Indians in the Federal workforce. The Denver Indian Center (DIC) career fair was an eye opener for me because not many of the attendees knew about job resources like USA Jobs; the second is to educate the Federal workforce on American Indian issues, concerns and history. Little of the truth is known about American Indians and the more I learn, the more I want to share with not only my co-workers but anyone who is interested and will listen; and the third is to inform American Indians about Federal opportunities, benefits and services which I am passionate about. American Indians are significantly underrepresented in different Federal agencies."

D.J. said it is important to reach out to the Indian community. "I believe we need to invest in our community in order for our community to thrive and not just survive."

D.J. has taken the lead in developing a partnership with the DIC and CFR. For her, it is an opportunity to share



D.J. (right) talks to a job seeker at the Denver Indian Center job fair.

her story, mentor and encourage others to accomplish their goals. "We all have a story to tell and much to learn from each other when we are willing to listen and learn," she said, "I look back at times and realize that my grandma was wise counsel. In addition to her, I wished I would have had a mentor outside of the house to guide me through life's questions and challenges."

Becoming a member of SAIGE also proved to be one of D.J.'s best decisions. She shared, "Through the annual NTP, I have learned valuable information on American Indians that I would not have learned otherwise. One of the more important things I get to do during the NTP is to mentor and informally guide the students.

They are our future and I am happy to see how motivated they are to do better and to seek more of everything." She said networking through SAIGE has allowed her to make new friends and contacts throughout all agencies. But above all, D.J. believes in the mission of SAIGE. "I hope that it will continue to grow, not only in numbers but also in unity and strength to accomplish the mission."

D.J.'s hobbies include fishing, boating and reading. She travels to NM and KY as often as she can to see family. She explained, "When I retire...my hobby will be traveling to see the rest of the world. HA...big dream!"



D.J. (third from left) with other members of the 2013 NTP planning committee.

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



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

SAIGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Contact board at:
chair@saige.org

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- **Vice Chair:** Fredericka Joseph (Kaw Nation)
- **Secretary:** Lori Windle (White Earth Chippewa)
- **Treasurer:** Jinny Shulenberg (Echota Cherokee of Alabama/Creek)

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- Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)
- Brenda Takes Horse (Kenaitze)
- Millie Titla (San Carlos Apache)
- Veronica Vasquez (Chumash)
- Karen Wilde (Muscogee Creek)

Society of American Indian Government Employees

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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.
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