



Society of American Indian  
Government Employees

# The Talking Leaf

SAIGE FALL 2017 Newsletter

## Message From the Chair: Fredericka Joseph



### GREETINGS SAIGE MEMBERS:

As we begin to change seasons most of us are enjoying the fall and preparing to change wardrobes, winterizing our vehicles, etc. At SAIGE we are busy preparing for changes such as elections, organizing our planning committees for the National Training Program (NTP) in June, and working on internal documents that oversee our great organization.

Elections are fast approaching. In November we begin to reach out and advertise for nominations for a variety of Board of Director's and Officer positions. To be an officer you would have had to serve a term as a Director and for all other positions be in good standing having your dues paid up for the year. This year we have several vacant board positions and

one officer position that we hope you will consider either self-nominating or if nominated agree to serve. The criteria for running will be forthcoming from our election committee chair in a few weeks. Anyone choosing to participate should check with your supervisor and ethics office to gain approval. All Directors are required to attend monthly conference calls, serve as a committee chair, attend the planning committee meetings, and most importantly attend and help with the NTP.

Our planning committee has begun meeting and we are looking for plenary and workshop speakers. Our 15th annual NTP will be held in Green Bay, WI June 11th-14th, 2018. If you have some time and are interested in serving on the committee please contact Danny Garceau at [danny.garceau@saige.org](mailto:danny.garceau@saige.org) or Lori Windle at [lwindle@saige.org](mailto:lwindle@saige.org). Each year we continue to bring high quality speakers with relevant information and we pride ourselves in continuing to provide the best training topics and presenters that will continue to develop you professionally and personally.

Our Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) Committee has been busy reviewing and modifying our SOPs. This is important as these documents are used whenever a procedural issue arises and revising them to bring these documents current is critical to making the decisions our organization must make to remain objective and fair. Thanks to Lori Windle and her volunteers for meeting and making the necessary modifications

that will continue to improve how SAIGE functions.

Lastly, one of our Founders, Veronica Vasquez, was nominated and accepted the position as CEO and President of National Image, Inc. Veronica was one of the many volunteers who joined Lori on phone calls as SAIGE was being developed. She served as our Marketing Chair and contacted speakers for our Equal Employment Opportunity track. We wish her the best and thank her for all her years of serving SAIGE. She said that she will always look out for SAIGE as she leads National Image, Inc., into the future.

SAIGE will be welcoming one of our former SAIGE Youth participants onto our board in November. I will share more information about this individual in our next newsletter. He will serve as a Youth Liaison sharing initiatives about the youth program and will bring ideas to the board about training opportunities for the youth. We are excited to have one of the youth join us each month as we strive to develop our native youth to be future leaders for our organization.

Until the Spring newsletter I hope you will keep our NTP on your calendar. Keep in mind that we are always looking for our membership to assist on ideas about marketing, web design, and grant development. Please feel free to reach out to me at [fjoseph@saige.org](mailto:fjoseph@saige.org) to discuss further.



## The SAIGE 2017 NTP - FT. MCDOWELL HOSTS THE FEDS

By Maxine Hillary

The Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation sits in some of the hottest, driest parts of the Sonoran Desert with terrain so brutal you wonder how anything can possibly grow there. But it was blooming in June when SAIGE held its annual NTP at the We Ko Pa Resort and Conference Center. I was honored to have been selected to receive the Attendance Award.

As a former Board Member, I've been to several SAIGE conferences over the years. Anchorage, San Diego, Welch, MN—and others. Federal employment is tough and sometimes it's hard to know who to trust. But when I'm at a SAIGE conference, I know I'm among friends—real friends. Colleagues who've known me almost from the beginning of my Federal career with whom I've shared laughs and stories and when I mention the color of a SAIGE T-shirt, they can tell me what conference it was from.

Our yearly gatherings give us a chance to reconnect and receive training in job-related areas. Because our conferences happen at tribally-owned operations, we learn how Federally-funded programs operate in Indian Country. If there was ever a chance to see how the Trust responsibility plays out on the ground, this is it.

This conference was no different. The agenda was robust and compelling. We had the benefit of being able to meet with tribal leadership and to see how tribes approach everything from healthcare at local clinics to over-populations of wild horses to how tribal colleges are combining traditional knowledge with western climate change science. There were workshops discussing how to use USA Jobs and how to use laws and policies relating to non-discrimination and how Indian preference can be used in contracting.

The author of *The Rights of Indians and Tribes*, Steven Pevar has attended almost all of the last 14 SAIGE conferences. He challenged the notion that tribal members who work for the Federal government cannot advocate for Indian Country because Federal agencies by law, cannot lobby—he reminded us that advocating for tribal sovereignty is fulfilling a Congressional mandate.

This conference attracted numerous Native American politicians, performers, leaders, and artists, including Chairman of the National Congress of American Indians, Brian Cladoosby, the Honorable Eric Descheenie, Arizona State Senator and leader of the movement to establish the Bears Ears National Monument, and Patricia Michaels from Taos Pueblo whose designs got her on Project Runway.

We enjoyed cultural performances by the Hopi, San Carlos, and White Mountain Apache communities. And we rocked out to Keith Secola performing “Ndn Kars” and several other musical offerings. For me, the best of times was with my sisters. The worst part is knowing that even though when we finally see each other again, we'll pick up where we left off as if a year hasn't gone by, I don't get to see them other times.

When we held our conference in San Diego almost 10 years ago I participated in a documentary Lori Windle did about SAIGE. I remember saying something like, “When you come to a SAIGE conference, you'll be hearing a cultural language all of us understand.” I can still say the same, and I would add that we're getting more fluent all the time.



PHOTO: Welcome from Fort McDowell Yavapai leaders.



PHOTO: Reconnecting with friends. L to R: Maxine Hillary, Veronica Vasquez, Millie Titla, Georgia Madrid and Estelle Bowman. Photo Credit: Duane Matt



PHOTO: Keith Secola, Blue Mountain Tribe, Randy Kemp (flute player) and students at the Award and Partnership recognition event. Photo Credit: Georgia Madrid



## A Message from the Warrior Society Director Danny Garceau

The 2017 Warriors/Veterans Track at the SAIGE NTP was a considerable success. We had approximately 100 attendees for this track alone and fed approximately 175 individuals during the awards luncheon which included the Youth Track who joined the warriors. Dan King was the keynote speaker. His presentation was well received which caused several youths to seek him out after the program to ask him more questions about his service and personal journey. Our luncheon speaker, Michael Anderson, USAF retired Colonel, gave a solid message about natives and service to country. His contributions both in uniform and after are inspiring to all warriors.

It was an honor to present the Piestewas, a gold star family from Arizona, a SAIGE prayer jar for their fallen warrior, Lori Ann Piestewa. Sadly, Terry Piestewa, the family patriarch and Viet Nam Veteran, recently walked on himself and joins Lori at Fiddlers Green, the U.S. military version of Valhalla. Our prayers continue for the Piestewa family.



PHOTO: Fallen Warrior, Lori Ann Piestewa's family receives SAIGE honor. L to R: Carla Piestewa, Lori's daughter, Terry Piestewa, Lori's father, and Priscilla "Percy" Baca, Lori's mother.

Planning has already started for the 2018 Warriors Track at the SAIGE NTP in Green Bay, WI. Several members of the Warrior Society have developed a draft agenda which will include some new presentations, e.g. Traditional Healing for Veterans, Native American Honor Guards and Eagle Staff Teachings. We have the support of several regional native veteran organizations and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) will return in 2018. The Warrior Society has also offered the DOD to present at two of its' conference calls this training year.

The Warrior Society meets via teleconference every month to plan upcoming training, discuss issues related to the military and veterans along with sharing in the camaraderie of serving in uniform. The Warrior Society is always looking to grow with support and membership. Just as with SAIGE, the greater the membership, the greater the network, which benefits the members and organization. To join the SAIGE Warrior Society, you must be a SAIGE member and either currently serving in the military or a veteran. If you want to support or join the Warrior Society, please contact me at [danny.garceau@saige.org](mailto:danny.garceau@saige.org).

## 2017 MERITORIOUS MILITARY AWARD RECIPIENTS:

Mr. Timothy K. Pyeat, Air Force Special Operations Command U.S. Air Force; SrA Letyraial S. Cunningham, 19th Civil Engineer Squadron U.S. Air Force, SrA Marisela Roman, 660 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron U.S. Air, TSgt Kelvin R. Oxendine 129th Combat Training Squadron, Air National Guard, TSgt Santrea D. Buckner, 1st Combat Communications Squadron U.S. Air Force, TSgt Michael Allen Whitebear Teyah 52d Civil Engineer Squadron U.S. Air Force, TSgt Andrea L. Sanchez, 310th Fighter Squadron U.S. Air Force, SSgt Trisha L. Ross, 185th Security forces Squadron Iowa Air National Guard, SFC Lowell Laudert, 34th Infantry Division (Red Bulls) Minnesota Army National Guard, MSG Richard L. Oxendine, United States Military Academy U.S. Army, LTC Jared L. Ware, United States Military Academy U.S. Army



PHOTO: 2017 Meritorious Military Award winners.

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MD, UNITED STATES  
09.11.2017

Story by Staff Sgt. Alex Montes

70th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Win

A member of the 543rd Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group, Joint Base San Antonio, Francis said she has been passionate about many things in her Air Force career, to include mentoring, resiliency training, suicide prevention, volunteering and mentoring youth, and so on.

"The history of Native Americans serving our country impacted my choice to join, as many Native Americans, not U.S. citizens (at the time) died for our country fighting in wars."

—Tech. Sgt. Frances



PHOTO: Sgt. Frances Dupris. Photo Credit: Staff Sgt. Alex Montes

EDITED HERE. For complete article please go to:

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/247738/native-american-alaskan-native-airman-encourages-inclusion-diversity-through-knowledge>

## SAIGE 2017 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS



PHOTO: SAIGE Leadership Award Winner, Chief Master Sgt. Richard Perrier with Fredericka Joseph, SAIGE Chair.



PHOTO: SAIGE Special Emphasis Program Manager Award Winner, Debbie Rafael, Jesse Brown Veteran's Medical Center, Chicago, IL with Fredericka Joseph



PHOTO: SAIGE Leadership Award Winner, Marcellus Proctor, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, Beltway, MD with Fredericka Joseph



PHOTO: SAIGE General Schedule Grades Award Winner Sergeant First Class Joseph Morgan, New Castle, DE with Fredericka Joseph

## DALLAS PETERMAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP (DPYL) AWARD WINNER



PHOTO: L to R: JoAnn Brant, Youth Director; Anthony Peterman, Dallas' father; Jasmine Jishie (DPYL Winner), Winnie Peterman, Dallas' mother, and family friend.

Jasmine Jishie is the first recipient of the DPYL. She is Navajo, 22 years old and attends Dine College. She is studying Business Administration.

Dallas Peterman participated in the SAIGE NTP from 2012-2016. He was tragically killed in March 2017. This recognition award is to honor his legacy as a young leader and to continue to support young people as they begin their career paths.

The criteria: environmental justice, creativity and innovation, tradition, culture and language.

ALL 2017 SAIGE NTP PHOTOS (except where noted) on pages 2, 3, 4 and youth photo on page 7 are by Clifford Takawana. Please visit [www.saige.org](http://www.saige.org) to view more photos of the NTP.



## SAIGE MEMBER PROFILE: DEBORAH TUCKER SMITH

**D**eborah is a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and a long-time SAIGE member. She was a valuable participant of the SAIGE NTP Program Planning Committee in 2013. She is a Program Specialist, Veterans and Family Member Program; Policy and Planning Directorate; VHA Office of Community Care, US Department of Veterans Affairs in Denver, CO. At the VA's Policy and Planning Directorate, she works as the Subject Matter Expert (SME), for all Native American Veterans questions. Additionally, she works with VA contractors to make sure all the National IHS/THP Reimbursement Agreements are policy driven and correct.

For many years Deb and her husband Steve have worked with their church in Colorado Springs to deliver much needed supplies for the winter to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in Eagle Butte, SD, a 600-mile one way trip. The reservation includes some of the poorest poverty stricken counties per capita in the United States per U.S. Census: Ziebach County (\$7,463) and Dewey County (\$9,251). This illustrates that both counties' conditions are similar to third world countries.

In the Lakota world you are rich by what you give away and not by what you own. Personnel in the Chief Business Office in Deborah's workplace, many who are Veterans, send items such as blankets and coats from VA Stand-Downs. Also the Denver Indian Center has provided T-shirts and box lunches for kids. They have received washers and dryers, and couches with hide-a-beds for elders with grandkids. Big R (Shipton's) has donated boxes of seeds (including Heirloom) and discounted space heaters. The Colorado communities truly are Standing Together.

The Smiths and their church organization take the donated household items, bedding, clothes and appliances every year to the reservation. They also work to develop ongoing projects. They do this by helping to support and assist participating families with sustainable and profitable cottage skills and by encouraging goals that further the growth of personal abilities towards financial independence. One example is assistance to 'Sewing' classes— by giving donated sewing supplies and sewing machines, and then assisting the community families with the 'Lakota Star Quilts' production, distribution, and marketing.

Winters are long and hard. The families deserve a way to maintain an income and a safe, warm environment to live, gather, play, and grow as a community. If you would like more information about the outreach effort to the Cheyenne River Sioux, please contact Deborah at [SDSmith1957@yahoo.com](mailto:SDSmith1957@yahoo.com).



PHOTO: Deborah Smith

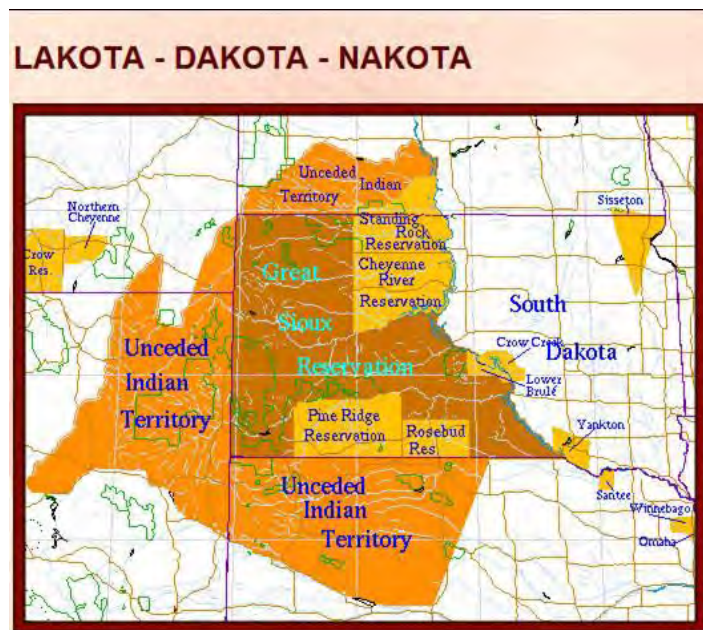


PHOTO: Map of Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

## SAIGE - ESTABLISHING TRIBAL CONNECTIONS

### *American Indian Tourism Conference at the Radisson Green Bay, September 11-15, 2017*



PHOTO: Left to right: Lori Windle and Danny Garceau at the American Indian Tourism Conference.

Co-Chairs of the 2018 SAIGE NTP Planning Committee Danny Garceau and Lori Windle represented SAIGE at the American Indian Tourism Conference. SAIGE was a sponsor of the event and Danny and Lori were there to observe a similar native event being conducted at the site of the 2018 NTP as well as to physically see the meeting space, and establish a new network to potentially provide support and assets for SAIGE.

This included having a promotional table at the exhibit hall, attending some beneficial workshops, interacting with attendees, and being introduced to fresh ideas. They discovered that there were many similarities in the way SAIGE and AITC conducts its training and conferences. Danny was able to attend several sessions that provided opportunities to learn more about fund raising, veterans' activities and professional outreach. Many new contacts were made that will assist and improve our future events for SAIGE members, including potential native owned facilities to host our NTP.

Lori said, "Participating in this conference introduced SAIGE to a new network which helps us get our name promoted in Indian Country. The hotel itself, owned by the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, is in a beautiful location and there is plenty of room and amenities for all of our anticipated activities next June."

### *AISES 40<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Conference in Denver, CO, September 21-23, 2017*

At the AISES conference in Denver, CO, there was a steady group of AISES attendees stopping by the SAIGE exhibit booth. SAIGE members Georgia Madrid, Elaine Robles and Duane Matt staffed the booth and promoted SAIGE Carol Jorgensen scholarship and Youth Track information were distributed to many students who were eager to learn more about SAIGE.



PHOTO: L to R: Georgia Madrid, NOAA and Elaine Robles, EPA at the AISES conference.



PHOTO: Duane Matt tries out the NOAA Science on a Sphere Explorer at the AISES conference.



## SAIGE - ESTABLISHING TRIBAL CONNECTIONS

### National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Convention in Milwaukee, WI, October 15-19, 2017

Danny Garceau represented SAIGE at NCAI. As part of the Memorandum of Understanding between SAIGE and NCAI, SAIGE received a free registration and was able to provide advertising at the convention. This year SAIGE had its Save the Date flyer put into all the NCAI conference bags. It was an excellent way to introduce tribal government employees and other NCAI participants to the benefits of becoming SAIGE members and attending the NTP. Danny talked about the 2018 NTP to many who stopped by the booth. He also had Native American Heritage Month posters available at the table along with other outreach materials. Board members Duane Matt and Jay Spaan, and Carl Etsitty, lifetime SAIGE member were also in attendance with their respective agencies. They were also available to help staff the SAIGE booth as well as promote the SAIGE mission and NTP to tribal government attendees.



PHOTO: L to R: Carl Etsitty, USDA/APHIS, Danny Garceau, SAIGE Warrior Society Director and Duane Matt, SAIGE BOD Member, at NCAI.

Danny attended the Veterans Committee Sub Group meetings, and on Wednesday afternoon spoke with the NCAI Youth Group about SAIGE. Brian Barlow, a SAIGE Student Leader, invited him as NCAI Youth Commission Co-President. Danny's SAIGE pitch followed a presentation by the actor Adam Beach, who shook his hand and thanked him for allowing him to speak first.

Danny had valuable conversations with former - and new- President of NCAI, Jefferson Keel, about maintaining and expanding the relationship built between the two organizations since 2004. Danny was also able to make contact with many individuals who will help make the 2018 program in Green Bay a success, from veterans' organizations to tribal officials, musicians, performers and others with unique abilities and connections. Per Danny, it was a truly a beneficial conference to help promote SAIGE in tribal circles and in building tribal membership.



PHOTO: Youth track participants with NCAI President Brian Cladoosby, center, at SAIGE NTP in Scottsdale, AZ.

## SAIGE - IN THE REGIONS

### SAIGE Shines at Diversity Day



PHOTO: Left to right: Jennifer Cantrel, Chapter Vice-President, IRS; Kay Jeffries, Chapter Secretary, IRS; Darcie Tone-Pah-Hote, Chapter Treasurer, USDA; Pam Riley, Chapter President, IRS retired. Photo by William Cantrel, IRS.

**T**he Kansas City Chapter of SAIGE created an eye-catching display in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) building on Sept 21, 2017.

Diversity Day allows all Employee Groups and Resources at the IRS Campus to create a display and greet visitors from 10 am to 7 pm in the main traffic area of the campus. Chapter members handed out magnets with the chapter email address as well as the SAIGE CFC number, while answering questions about SAIGE and activities in the Native American community in general. Among the notable visitors were several IRS directors. One was especially interested in the Chapter's upcoming Native American Month programming including a Lunch and Learn session on tracing your Native American Ancestors, to be hosted in November at the IRS building.

The display included examples of loom work, Peyote stitch beads, hand-made moccasins, and a complete beaded buckskin dress with bone choker and breast-plate, most made by SAIGE members. Visitors were impressed by the weight of the bone and bead breast-plate. We also displayed photographs taken at Pow Wows that members had attended.

The Kansas City, Missouri metro area has a census of 20,000 people identifying as Native American /Alaskan Native. We were able to share with IRS leaders that the percentage of employees in the IRS does not reflect those numbers and that we would really like to see more recruitment aimed at that community. We also stressed the role that SAIGE plays to encourage pride in Native ancestry. This is an important mission as we live in Missouri, a state that enforced laws through the mid-twentieth century that made it illegal for Native Americans to live inside the state borders. "This is something I didn't know and I was born and raised in Missouri!" was the response of one IRS Director as well as many other visitors.

We recruited new SAIGE members and more than two dozen people asked to be added to the interested parties email list to receive news and updates on the Chapter's activities and SAIGE in general. All were invited to a future follow-up evening with desserts and the movie, "Smoke Signals". We look forward eagerly to next year's Diversity Day!



## Tribal Colleges & Universities Science Day at NOAA with SAIGE support

NOAA Boulder hosted a TCU Science Day on September 20, 2017 in conjunction with the AISES National Conference in Denver, CO September 21-23, 2017. The Science Day was an opportunity to share NOAA science, learn from TCUs about their STEM programs and open a dialogue on ways to expand opportunities for TCU students. The coordinator of the event was Georgia Madrid, SAIGE Lifetime Member and Talking Leaf Editor. SAIGE was a sponsor of the luncheon. SAIGE Carol Jorgensen Scholarship and 2018 NTP conference handouts were placed in all the student and faculty bags. Georgia also gave a presentation on the SAIGE organization during the luncheon.

Read TCU Article by Annie Reiser: <http://www.boulder.noaa.gov/news-100517>



PHOTO: TCU students and faculty, speakers and planning committee members at the NOAA TCU Science Day. Photo Credit: Albert Romero



PHOTO: Speakers at NOAA TCU Science Day: Kendra Teague, Dan Wildcat, Alana Gross, Hannah Smith, Anita Lake, James Rattling Leaf, Sr. and Michael Waasegiizhig Price. Photo credit: Albert Romero



PHOTO: Haskell students in the front of the NOAA building in Boulder, CO. Photo credit: Albert Romero

## Talking Leaf Newsletter

### A Note from the Editor:

Talking Leaf is a quarterly newsletter of SAIGE. SAIGE welcome your stories, suggestions, and ideas. You can email me at: [georgia.madrid@noaa.gov](mailto: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](http://www.saige.org)

## SAIGE Board of Directors

Contact board at:  
[chair@saige.org](mailto:chair@saige.org)

### OFFICER POSITIONS

- **Chair:** Fredericka Joseph (Kaw Nation)
- **Vice Chair:** Lori Windle (White Earth Chippewa)
- **Secretary:** Phil Hamel (Mohawk ancestry)
- **Treasurer:** Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)

### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- Teresa Estoril (Cherokee)
- Danny Garceau (Lake Superior Chippewa)
- Daniel Holt
- Sue Marcus
- Duane Matt (Confederated Salish Kootenai)
- Jay Spaan (Cherokee Nation)
- Brenda Takes Horse (Kenaitze)
- Veronica Vasquez (Chumash)
- Herb Webb (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)



PHOTO. SAIGE Board Members at 2017 SAIGE NTP in Scottsdale, AZ.  
Front Row L to R: Sue Marcus, Veronica Vasquez, Sue Morris, Fredericka Joseph, Daniel Holt.  
Back Row L to R: Jay Spaan, Lori Windle, Teresa Estoril, Duane Matt, Phil Hamel, Danny Garceau.  
Not pictured: Brenda Takes Horse and Herb Webb

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2017 PARTNERS

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