



Society of American Indian
Government Employees

The Talking Leaf

SAIGE SPRING 2018 Newsletter

Message From the Chair: Fredericka Joseph



Photo: Fredericka Joseph, SAIGE Chair

Many of us have endured winter and are now experiencing Spring with flowering bushes and flowers and the welcome sight of returning birds. Mother Nature is awakening us to freshness and newness of Mother Earth. As we begin our summer plans we hope you include SAIGE on your calendar!

Our yearly National Training Program begins on June 11- 15th in Green Bay, WI at the Oneida Nations tribally owned Radisson Hotel. Registration is currently under way and all the information can be found on our website at www.saige.org. We have lined up native leaders across the nation to come to our training to make various presentations that will educate and enlighten you on the issues throughout Indian country. This

year's theme is: "Sovereignty, Trust, and Resilience." President Jefferson Keel from NCAI, Honorable Keith Harper, U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, and Wayne Ducheneaux, Executive Director, Native Governance Center are just a few of our plenary speakers. Our sessions are also exciting and include Federal Indian Law, Professional Development, EEO Training, Cultural Diversity and Natural Resources.

This year SAIGE welcomed four new Board members, Sadi Ali, Bryan Sappier, Kathleen Bergeron and Tilford Brown. We want to thank our outgoing Board members, Brenda Takes Horse, Herb Webb, and Veronica Vasquez for their dedication and service to SAIGE. Brenda and Herb are still working behind the scenes helping with the upcoming training while Veronica continues to promote SAIGE whenever and wherever she goes.

We added a new volunteer SAIGE Chapter Liaison. This position is needed to help SAIGE establish chapters throughout the country. We are excited and honored to have Coralee Mackay, UT Chapter President join in this capacity. She comes with extensive experience and has conducted training on establishing chapters at our yearly training.

We welcome Brian Barlow, our new Youth Liaison to the Board. He is a member of the Cherokee Nation and

a former SAIGE youth leader. Brian has proven himself as a future leader taking on the Dallas Peterman Leadership Award. He and a team of youth worked together to establish the criteria and application process as well as advertise and select the first recipient for this award given out last year in Scottsdale, AZ. Brian was recognized for his work as the Co-President for the Youth Commission for the National Congress of American Indians. He has been active in several Cherokee Nation programs, including the tribe's Tribal Youth Council and the 2017 Remember the Removal Bike Ride. He was also awarded the Dreamstarter grant in 2017 from Running Strong for American Indian Youth, which he will use by integrating the Cherokee language into the signage at the Walmart in Tahlequah.

This year our attorneys were able to work with the Patent and Trademark Office to trademark our logo. It was something our board has been working on for some time and with the help of Greenberg Traurig, LLP we have now accomplished this goal. We are excited to have made this move.

This has been a great year for SAIGE and we hope we can count on you to continue as a member of this great National organization. We are always looking for volunteers so contact me if you're interested in getting more involved. I hope to see you in June at Green Bay, WI!



2018 NTP Highlights - Why You Should Attend

From Vice Chair Jay Spaan, and the NTP Co-chairs Danny Garceau and Lori Windle

We invite you to join us at the Oneida owned and operated Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Green Bay, WI, June 11-14. The SAIGE theme this year is *Sovereignty, Trust and Resilience*. The plenary speakers and workshops will reflect the theme throughout the training week.

Our NTP this year is packed with a wide variety of speakers, workshops and cultural activities. Speakers include Keith Harper, Karen Diver, Norbert S. Hill, Jefferson Keel, Stephen Pevar, Dean Seneca and Jody TallBear to name just a few. We have 25 workshops to choose from in addition to our plenary and evening sessions. We will have the international and award-winning Menominee Nation music artist Wade Fernandez with us all week, providing both workshops and entertainment. There will also be a variety of talented native craft vendors on site along with our exhibitors.

Green Bay, WI is truly a little-known gem to visit any time of the year but especially comfortable in the month of June. You can expect to see a lot of green, clean air, low humidity and weather in the high 70s. The Radisson has agreed honor our government per diem rates for NTP attendees for three days prior and after our training program, this could come in handy as many of you may want to explore the area.

Wisconsin is Indian Country. Wisconsin has 11 Federally recognized tribes; our host the Oneida Nation

along with the Menominee Nation, the Ho Chunk Nation, the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans, the Forest County Potawatomi, the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Sokaogon (Mole Lake) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the St. Croix Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. In addition, neighboring states Michigan and Minnesota also have 11 federally recognized tribes each. June is when summer events begin and there is a good chance that you could catch a tribal event either the weekend before or after the NTP.

Green Bay also offers a zoo, family amusement park, museums, tours, great food, shopping and of course it is the home of the Green Bay Packers. Lambeau Field offers stadium tours, the Green Bay Packer Hall of Fame, eateries and shopping every day of the week. Green Bay is also a wonderful place to golf. If you want to expand your exploring while in Wisconsin, Door County Peninsula, Bayfield Peninsula (along with the Apostle Islands including historic Madeline Island) and Milwaukee are just a few choices that are worth an extra day or two.

Our hotel is just across the road from the airport with free shuttle. If you choose to do explore Green Bay, the airport does offer a full range of rental car options. If you have not done so yet, please make your hotel reservations by May 18 and register for the training by May 25. Go to www.saige.org for the registration details and conference agenda.

Due to the hard work yearlong of our planning committee, the SAIGE NTP always gets great reviews and approvals as one of the top government training programs. We all know that it is the best place for professional and cultural development along with networking opportunities. We look forward to seeing you there!

GUEST SPEAKERS:



Photo: Keith Harper, Partner, Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton, former US Representative, UN Human Rights Council



Photo: Karen Diver, College of St. Scholastica, Native American Affairs

Theme: Sovereignty, Trust and Resilience

GUEST SPEAKERS:



Photo: Norbert Hill, Jr, Retired Director of Education for the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin

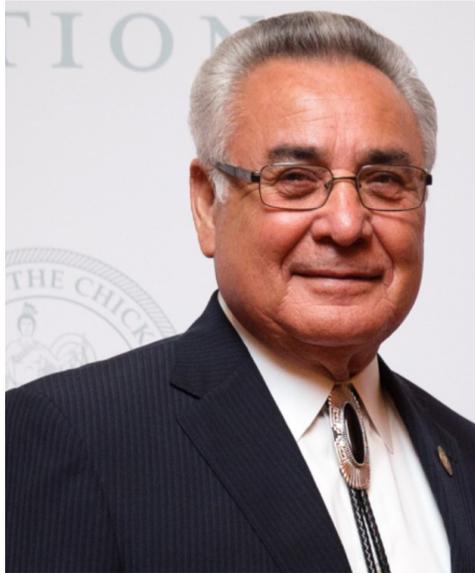


Photo: Jefferson Keel, President, National Congress of American Indians



Photo: Jody L. TallBear, Esq, Attorney/Policy Advisor

A Message from the Warrior Society Director



Photo: Danny Garceau, Warrior Society Director

The Warrior Society is celebrating its fourth year anniversary within SAIGE. Our numbers continue to grow along with increased attendance at our Warriors Track during the NTP. This year's Warrior track will include Veteran Program updates, a Veteran Agency Roundtable, Tribal Service Officer presentation, Eagle Staff Teachings, Responsibilities of Native Honor Guards, Networking and our Awards Luncheon. We will also have veteran information tables about programs and benefits.

Congratulations go out to this year's SAIGE Military Meritorious Awards winners. The award winners are TSgt Wendell Bond /USAF, TSgt Frances Dupris /USAF, A1C Sharel Jones /USAF, Lt Col Larissa Lanigar/ USAF, TSgt Ragina Mailcoat /USAF, 1st Lt Haida Stareagle /USAF, SSgt Deedrah Seth/AWC USAF, SMSgt Nicholas Sinnott /USAF, CW4 (ret) William White /Army National Guard and CPO Sheldon Williams/USCG. These award winners were chosen as the top ten from the many high quality nomination packets that we received. Each award winner is invited and encouraged to attend the SAIGE NTP and Awards Luncheon.

The Warrior Society conducts a voluntary teleconference meeting the last Monday of each month. It provides an opportunity for the membership to help plan the Warriors Track as well as share information and network. 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. Please contact me at danny.garceau@saige.org.

YOUTH TRACK: An Integral Part of the SAIGE NTP

Each year, SAIGE sponsors a Native Youth Track as part of its NTP. Youth track attendees are selected by a competitive process and receive full funding to the NTP.



Photo: Brian Barlow, Youth Liaison, SAIGE Board of Directors

The Youth Track is designed to provide Native American students an opportunity to learn about careers within the Federal Government, to meet American Indian and Alaska Native federal employees, and to gain first hand experience in understanding the positive role that Native employees can play in enabling their respective agencies to better fulfill the federal trust responsibility and honor the unique federal-tribal relationship.

At the opening ceremonies, Joann Brant, SAIGE Youth Program Director, EPA will have all the Youth Program participants introduce themselves. At the closing plenary, the students will give presentations on what they have learned from the NTP, their major takeaways and how they plan to contribute to their communities.

A product of the SAIGE Track is Brian Barlow. He was selected to serve as the Youth Liaison on the SAIGE Board of Directors. He was recently featured in Native News Online - <http://nativenewsonline.net/currents/chokeee-nation-citizen-brian-barlow-encourages-youth-to-get-involved/>

You can learn more about the youth track at <https://saige.org/youth/>

SAIGE Achievement Awards and Partnership Recognition

On Wednesday evening, SAIGE will honor winners of the Achievement Awards, and recognize sponsors and partners for their support of SAIGE.

The purpose of the Achievement Awards is to recognize agencies and individuals (civilian or military) for their personal commitment and professional initiatives in promoting the mission of SAIGE and in advancing opportunities for American Indians/Alaska Natives in the government workforce.

Entertainment will be provided by Menominee musical artist, Wade Fernandez.



Photo: Wade Fernandez, Menominee Musical Artist

Carol Jorgensen Environmental Stewardship Scholarship 2017 Awardees - In their Own Words

Xavier E. Lovato - Cochiti and Santo Domingo Pueblo

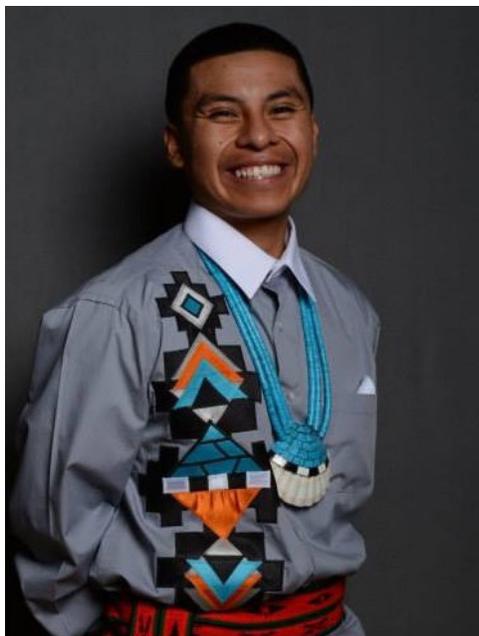


Photo: Xavier E. Lovato

By representing my Pueblo tribes, I continue to journey through my educational career by gaining leadership, independence, and responsibility along the way. The reason I chose to study Wildlife Science was because I was first inspired by going to the Jemez Mountains near Cochiti Pueblo as a young boy. I was able to fish, hunt, and explore Mother Nature's creation among our ancestral domains. Our land is important to us from a Native American perspective because without it we have nothing. This led me to seek a future career working with wildlife, young native youth, and protecting our ancestral domains.

After my experience with the Tribal Youth Conservation Corps in high school, I became a college student at New Mexico State University (NMSU). As I was continuing my education at NMSU, I began to network with professionals and students to learn which programs work with wildlife. The solution of finding a program was to join one called "Natural Resources Career Tracks Program or NRCT." This program has helped by giving me the opportunity to become a student ambassador for NRCT. I network with other students to help build their career track and build resumes.

NRCT provided my first summer internship working with the Forest service by protecting and surveying endangered species of Chiricahua Leopard frogs, Mexican Spotted Owls, and Gila trout. The Forest Service helped build my career track by allowing me to communicate with professionals, work on projects with different agencies, and gain hands-on experience in the field. Adding to my experience with wildlife science, I recently completed the Summer Research Opportunities Program at Purdue University. I did research with PHD candidates on studying the endangered species of Indiana Bats.

My project at Purdue University was to compare the social behavior of atypical roosts and natural roosts because these endangered bats adapted to living underneath a road bridge making it a suitable habitat for them to survive. This opportunity was competitive and to be accepted was a valuable learning experience, to be able to work with Bats for the first time and learning a new experience by identifying, capturing, and measuring Indiana Bats.

Caressa Nguyen of the Lone Band of Miwok Indians is pursuing a degree in Environmental and Sustainability studies focused on Food Systems and Economics.



Photo: Caressa Nguyen

Miwok is located in the Sierra Nevada foothills of California. The Miwok have put a lot of resources into the language revitalization program, but are missing the

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Carol Jorgensen Awardee - Caressa Nguyen (con't)

application aspect-- speaking with our relatives (plants, animals, each other to some degree) because in order to do so, we must restore the ecology of the land. I seek to obtain the tools necessary to do this through my education by focusing my efforts on what may assist me in the protection and restoration of my homelands.

Currently, I am an intern with the Intertribal Agriculture Council and Natural Resource Conservation Service. Through this internship, I act as a liaison between the NRCS and local tribes. As the NRCS has a responsibility to tribes, I work with local tribes to find out how the NRCS can assist tribes in their agricultural efforts. My current project is assisting in the establishment of the Wilton Rancheria's native plant garden.

This school year, my goal is to complete a study abroad program that will offer me a holistic understanding of the globalized food system and the politics of food, water, and energy. The opportunity to study abroad will support my efforts in reclaiming my peoples traditional food system, 10-fold, and hopefully, 7 generation-fold. My Miwok people are learning to adapt while reclaiming our traditional food systems. However, my people are not traditional farmers and our diets have changed. I believe that learning about agroecology and adaptations to climate change in comparable environments will teach me about how my Miwok people can to adapt our food systems to our current/future circumstances.

SAIGE PARTNER: Department of Defense: Recognizing the Contributions of American Indians and Alaska Natives

Through service and sacrifice, generations of American Indians and Alaska Natives have demonstrated valor, loyalty and remarkable leadership in defense of our nation. American Indians and Alaska Natives are integral to our national defense and the continued growth and development of the United States.

Patriots of the highest caliber, American Indians and Alaska Natives have courageously served the United States around the world, with some making the ultimate sacrifice. For example, during the attack on Paco Railroad Station in 1945, Medal of Honor recipient John Reese, Jr. bravely drew enemy fire to himself. Reese was killed while providing covering fire for his companion. Specialist Lori Piestewa was serving in the United States Army when she deployed to Iraq in 2003. Weeks later, Piestewa was killed and became the first American Indian woman to die in combat on foreign soil.

Today, one out of approximately every 100 members of the Defense Department's total force identifies as American Indian or Alaska Native—with upwards of 21,000 American Indians and Alaska Natives serving in the United States military and almost 7,000 working in the Defense Department's civilian sector.

Key to advancement is education—the foundation for professional growth and future success. While American Indians and Alaska Natives have experienced educational progress over time, research demonstrates there is room for growth. According to a report by ACT, *The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2015: American Indian*

Students, among student racial and ethnic groups, American Indian students rank second lowest in college readiness—a measurement of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks achievement in the areas of English, reading, math, and science.

Vital to the success of future generations is pursuance of higher education, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. A highly educated and diverse populous leads to economic growth and enhances national security.

Public service is a noble undertaking and government employees are incredibly valuable resources for those considering entry into government service. Raising awareness of public service career opportunities is fundamental to the growth of American Indians and Alaska Natives across the federal workforce.

Positioned to serve as role models and mentors for today's youth, leaders in the respective American Indian and Alaska Native communities have the power to act as critical change agents in the development and preparation of the next generation of American Indian and Alaska Native leaders.

Through a combination of distinct talents, unique perspectives and resilient spirits, American Indians and Alaska Natives share a robust and impressive history of military and civilian leadership. The Defense Department recognizes the vast contributions of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the nation, along with the value of their rich legacy—woven deeply throughout the fabric of the United States.

SAIGE at Bureau of Printing and Engraving Women’s History Month Program

SAIGE was invited to participate in a Women’s History Month event hosted by the Bureau of Printing and Engraving on March 15, 2018. Chairman Fredericka Joseph and Board Member Sue Marcus staffed the SAIGE table at the Joint Agency Executive Mentoring session. The session featured a panel of Senior Executive Service representatives including: Jovita Carranza, Treasurer of the United States, Rebecca Dye, Commissioner, Federal Maritime Commission, Anita Blair, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, Kathleen McGettigan, Acting Director of the Office of Personnel Management, Leslye Fraser, President of the African American Federal Executive Association, Inc, Paige Atkins, President, Executive Women in Government. Mariam Harvey, Director of Treasury’s Office of Civil Rights and Diversity moderated the panel. Freddie and Sue shared information about the SAIGE mission and goals, and the unique role we serve, encouraging all to join us as members, and to attend the NTP.

Utah Chapter Member Volunteers for VITA

Sharon Charlie (Navajo), IRS employee and SAIGE member again spent many hours volunteering her time for The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. This year, Sharon recorded her volunteer hours as: 156 hours on and off IRS campus. She prepared and filed over 92 Federal and State returns for the 2018 tax filing season. She also performed quality review on 116 Federal and State returns prepared by other VITA volunteers ensuring accuracy and compliance for the taxpayers.



Photo: Sharon Charlie

About the VITA program: The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$54,000 or less, persons with disabilities and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals. The IRS-certified volunteers receive training on the latest in tax law changes and are often individuals associated with non-profit organizations. For more information on VITA, go to irs.gov.

VA Office of Tribal Government Relations Newsletter - March/April 2018 - [Read Here](#)

Silent Auction 2018 – Your opportunity to help Native Students!

The SAIGE Silent Auction is held each year to raise funds for the Carol Jorgensen Scholarship Fund. Since 2013, SAIGE has awarded over \$10,000 in scholarships to native students with the money raised from the silent auctions. We encourage you to consider donating to the silent auction. Think of Native-related items you would want to give a friend. Examples: Native made items: Jewelry, beaded items, crafts of your tribe; Artwork, pottery, musical instruments (like flutes); Clothing (shawl, regalia); Children’s goods (toys, clothing); and Native fun

SAIGE reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for our silent auction. Please contact Susan Marcus, smarcus@saige.org.

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EFT FAQ

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- Payments process quicker which means you get your money faster.
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Talking Leaf Newsletter

Talking Leaf is issued twice a year - Spring and Fall. SAIGE welcomes your stories, suggestions, and ideas. Please email: georgia.madrid@noaa.gov.

SAIGE Board of Directors

Contact board at:
chair@saige.org

OFFICER POSITIONS

- **Chair:** Fredericka Joseph (Kaw Nation)
- **Vice Chair:** Jay Spaan (Cherokee Nation)
- **Secretary:** Phil Hamel (Mohawk ancestry)
- **Treasurer:** Sue Morris (Comanche Nation of Oklahoma)

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- Sadi Ali (First Nations Mi'kmaq)
- Kathleen Bergeron (United Houma Nation)
- Tilford Brown (Dine')
- Teresa Estoril (Cherokee)
- Danny Garceau (Anishinaabe)
- Daniel Holt, Jr.
- Sue Marcus
- Duane Matt (Confederated Salish Kootenai)
- Bryan Sappier (Tobique Indian Nation - Canada)
- Lori Windle (White Earth Chippewa)

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



PHOTO. Past SAIGE Board Members at the 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



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