

The Talking Leaf

SAIGE FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR: Fredericka Joseph

Greetings! Every morning I can feel the change of temperature with the mornings getting cooler and a need for a light jacket. This time of year is beautiful with the changing of the leaves, the activity of critters gathering acorns and other food supplies they will need for the winter and the briskness of clear air! I hope you and your families are preparing for the winter and staying safe during this time.

We are busy preparing for November's Native American Heritage Month. We have been receiving requests for speakers and agencies are inquiring about the theme. This year our theme is: "Sovereignty is Sacred: Sharing Our Rights and Cultures." Tribal sovereignty is the concept that individual tribal nations, rather than the state or federal government, inherently possess the authority to make decisions regarding anything related to the tribe as a whole or its members.



The Board of Directors is working on several virtual presentations for Native Heritage Month. These include:

- 1) A virtual musical fundraiser. We have invited a professional DJ, Pony Vigil, to host our musical concert. Robin Hairston, SAIGE Board member, whose musical group "Blue Mountain Tribe" will perform along with Wade Hernandez and others;
- 2) Michael McBride, Chair, Indian Law & Gaming Practice Group, Crowe & Dunlevy, will be presenting on the recent Supreme Court decision affecting the Muscogee Creek;
- 3) Our SAIGE Vice Chair, Jay Spaan, will provide a video presentation of the popular Indians 101 course. This presentation will be available as a link for people to view on demand;
- 4) Board member Carl Etsitty will host a STEM Talking Circle with Duane Matt and Marcellus Proctor. They will all share their stories and careers in STEM.

Additionally, we will be holding a fall online auction. You may find the perfect holiday gift for someone there. We will publish a schedule of dates on the website at <https://saige.org>. SAIGE will also be releasing the poster at the beginning of the month of November.

This year has been difficult since COVID-19 started. That is why we created the motto for this year, "Peace, Hope and SAIGE," to remind us that we are in this together as one SAIGE family. Our annual training event is our major yearly fundraiser and because we weren't able to host an event this year we are looking at ways to conduct fundraisers. Like many charities we are reviewing options to raise funds for our organization in the areas

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR: Fredericka Joseph (continued)

of operating costs and program delivery. We have again been accepted as a Charity for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) program. Our CFC number is 26052 and we are listed for donations. We hope you will consider us as you look at possible charities for your payroll deduction donations. We appreciate your financial assistance as we continue to offer education for and awareness of the American Indians and Alaska Natives who work in the Federal family. Our organization is the only resource that does what we do in this area. Our famous Warrior Society and Youth Program are widely known and respected. Without funding these programs could no longer exist. We thank you in advance for your consideration in donating to SAIGE! If you would like to make a direct donation send a message to Treasurer@saige.org and you will receive a secure link for that.

December is when we hold elections. We have several officers and Directors positions that will be available. We are an all- volunteer working board and require attendance at our monthly board meetings as well as engagement in tasks throughout the month. To serve as an Officer you must have already served in a Directors position for at least two years. This is a great opportunity to learn more about SAIGE and become a part of the organization, and we look to our members to bring fresh perspectives and ideas and new energy to the board.

We hope you continue to stay safe and practice social distancing. Thank you for your continued support to SAIGE and being a part of our SAIGE family!

AN UPDATE FROM THE SAIGE WARRIOR SOCIETY Director, Danny Garceau



I hope this newsletter finds you and your family safe and giving thanks for blessings each day. 2020 has been a harder year for most than can be remembered in a while. When we wore the uniform, we faced many challenges and hardships, both us and our families. Now we face new challenges and not only with our families but also with our communities, nation, and the world. The COVID-19 pandemic is real and many of us have personally been

affected by it. A local group I serve with, the Wiikwedong Ogitchidaa Society (Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Veterans Group), has seen two of our leaders/elders make their final journey due to the virus. I also have friends who have had members of their families lose elders or who have been gravely sick for many months. I know some who have gotten the virus and not been sick at all or extraordinarily little. This virus is not fair and does not treat everyone equally, so we must be vigilant, we must remain guarded and do what we can to protect our self, our family, and our communities. I believe we can do this without giving up our freedoms, but we must be smart and responsible with those freedoms given.

Events and gatherings have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have missed conferences, pow wows, weddings, funerals, community and family gatherings. SAIGE had to cancel its NTP this year which included our Warrior/Veteran Day. We postponed our SAIGE Meritorious Military Awards program for 2020 but will broaden the

period for the 2021 Awards to include those who may have been submitted in 2020. All the cancellations do not mean we have been idle. The SAIGE board continues to meet and plan for future events, both virtual and in person events for 2021. The Warrior Society has not met as frequently this past six months, but we have had a few meetings and are ramping up for the 2021 year.

SAIGE was invited by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to participate in a conference call with the Secretary of Defense, Dr. Mark Esper. Our Chair asked me to participate and represent SAIGE on that call. There were approximately 18 diversity groups on the call, and it lasted for approximately one hour. Secretary Esper opened with comments and said the right things in the status and direction the Department of Defense is taking in strengthening their diversity along with ensuring equal treatment for all. He then took questions and comments. Only a handful of groups were able to give their input before the hour was up and SAIGE was not one of the

Continued on page 3

AN UPDATE FROM THE SAIGE WARRIOR SOCIETY

groups called upon to comment. I immediately sent a message to the Office of the Secretary of Defense addressing our concerns and not being able to give our comments to the Secretary. I received an apology and was told there would be a follow up call and that we would get our chance. The very next week a call was scheduled but Secretary Esper was not available so the Secretary of the Air Force, Barbara Barrett filled his role on the call. SAIGE was the first to be called upon and I expressed our concerns as American Indian and Alaska Native service men and veterans. The concerns I expressed were that when the military, like our main society, talks or addresses diversity it does not include American Indians or Alaska Natives. We are left out of the discussion, out of the educational curriculum and in most cases left out of the reports and presentations. I told her that American Indians and Alaska Natives are not ghosts, we are not just the

people misrepresented in our history books, in Hollywood, novels and as mascots. I told her we are here, and we are not going away. I told her that Native Americans and Alaska Natives serve at the highest propensity of any population group. I told her that we are proud, but humble. That we do not expect to be treated as special, just equal, and not forgotten. I expressed that diversity means diversity of all peoples, all cultures not just some. I told her we need be included in the curriculum in military education. We need to be included in polls and reports when talking about diversity. I believe my comments were well received and hope the seed of change was planted. One of the other groups called upon on the second call was the Native American Veterans Association. They echoed my comments and said the biggest complaint they hear from veterans is that as Native Americans they were never recognized while in uniform. They were recognized by their tribes

when they returned home, but not by the military while in uniform. Other diversity groups were always being recognized but not Native Americans. They too wanted the military to make efforts to change this.

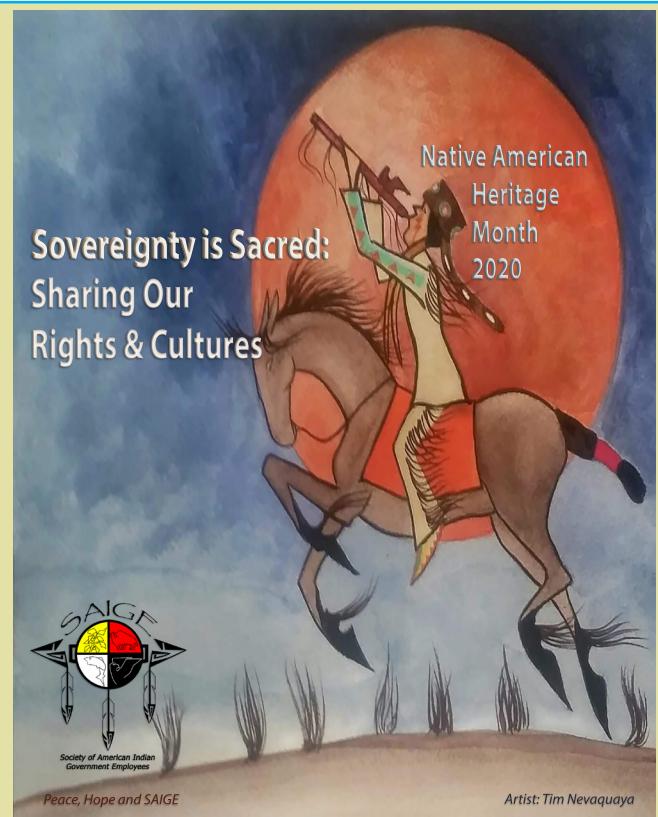
Veterans Day is coming up and like so many other gatherings this year some ceremonies may be cancelled or held virtually. I ask that each of you, if involved in a ceremony, be safe, be smart. If you do not participate, then have your own ceremony. Lay your offering down, pray and give thanks for our brothers and sisters who have worn the uniform and served. Remember do not wait for Veterans Day or a holiday to call another veteran. Some of them need that call, they need that camaraderie, they need to feel that connection with others that in some way share and understand what it means to be a veteran.

2020 Native American Heritage Month Theme: Sovereignty is Sacred: Sharing Our Rights and Cultures

SAIGE is planning several virtual activities for you to celebrate Native American Heritage Month, including an auction, musical concert, panels and presentations, some featuring SAIGE Youth.

Please review the schedule of events in the next two pages. The webinar links will be posted on the website and via the listserve.

About the Poster Artist: Timothy Tate NEVAQUAYA is a Comanche and Chickasaw/Choctaw artist, veteran, and minister from Apache, Oklahoma





SAIGE 2020 Native American Heritage Month Activities

Sovereignty is Sacred: Sharing Our Rights and Cultures

Links to access events will be posted on <https://saige.org>

All events are free- All times listed are Eastern Standard Time

November 12, 2020

6:15 – 10:00 PM Friends of SAIGE Virtual Concert

Keith Secola (Minnesota Ojibwe, Arizona based, seven-time Native American Music Award winner to include Artist of the Year, Best Producer and inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2011), **Blue Mountain Tribe** (Two-time Native American Music Award winner, California based), **Waawiyeaa** (a new Anishinaabe Indigenous Folk Rock band, Michigan based), **Randy Kemp** (Choctaw, Euchee and Muscogee Creek artist and flutist, Arizona based), **Don Chapman** (Connecticut Mohegan Americana Minstrel, Virginia based), **Wade Fernandez** (Menominee, multiple music award winner including Native American Music Artist of the Year, Wisconsin based) and **Jetty Rae** (Karuk ancestry, Folk Singer Songwriter from Michigan, based in Nashville). Join us for an exciting evening of native music!



November 17, 2020

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Alex D. Tremble
Strategic Networking in the Government

Government employees know that having a strong, powerful, and influential network can mean the difference between having an influential coalition supporting their program, and that same program withering away from a lack of support. But, unfortunately, that's not all. They also know that a strong network can mean the difference between being offered their dream job, and continuing to remain invisible when upward opportunities arise. Although they know how essential networking is, many of them don't have strong networks because they think that 1) they don't know how to network, or 2) they don't have the time to network, or 3) they can't network without losing their values. This presentation will show participants how to: Create a networking strategy- Identify who should be within their strategic network - Build and maintain strong relationships with key individuals

Alex D. Tremble is an award-winning speaker, author, and leadership expert who has over 10 years of experience coaching and advising some of our nation's most senior level government leaders. Specifically, Alex teaches government employees how to use strategic networking and political savvy techniques to increase their influence and gain career advancement. Alex has authored two best-selling books ([Reaching Senior Leadership](#) and [The GPS Guide to Success](#)), an online networking course ([Strategic Networking for Public Sector Professionals](#)), and is simply a lot of fun to be around =-). You can find more information about him at [AlexTremble.com](#)

12:25 – 1:30 PM STEM Talking Circle

A Discussion featuring Native American professionals

Carl Etsitty, USDA APHIS

Marcellus Proctor, NASA

Duane Matt, DOI Indian Affairs, Indian Energy and Economic Development

November 18, 2020

12:30 – 2:00 PM Webinar: Tribal Sovereignty: Understanding the Impact of the Supreme Court's Decision in McGirt v. Oklahoma

Michael McBride and Jay Spaan, SAIGE Vice-Chair

On July 9, the U.S. Supreme Court released its decision in the *McGirt v. Oklahoma*. This holding in this case is the most significant sovereignty decision in Oklahoma history—declaring that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation lands, reserved since the 19th century, remain a Native American reservation and are thus considered "Indian country" for the purposes of the Major Crimes Act. While the decision is limited by its terms, it has much broader state and tribal sovereignty implications. SAIGE invites you to join us as we discuss what this decision means for Tribal sovereignty and how it affects the government to government relationships between Tribal Nations, States, and the Federal government.



Mike McBride is a director of Crowe & Dunlevy and chairs the firm's Indian Law & Gaming practice group out of the Tulsa office. He is a former general counsel to the Osage and Comanche Nations and Attorney General for the Seminole Nation and the Sac & Fox Nation. He served as a tribal Supreme Court justice and as a special district judge for 17 years while practicing law full time. Mike is a fourth generation Oklahoman and grew up in and around Bartlesville and Fairfax among the Osage, Cherokee, Creek, Delaware and many other tribal citizens. To register for this webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9pY7qOGgTe-qQfjPkjPpw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

November 19, 2020

SAIGE Youth Program

2:00 - 3:00 PM Native Youth Advocacy and the power of the internet

SAIGE Student Leaders

3:10 - 4:00 PM It Takes A Village-Native Youth Advocacy Panel

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN INDIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
Presents:

IT TAKES A VILLAGE
NATIVE YOUTH ADVOCACY PANEL



CHEROKEE

BRIAN BARLOW
Society of American Indian
Government Employees (SAIGE)
MODERATOR



PAWNEE

SARAH ECHO HAWK
American Indian Science &
Engineering Society (AISES)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



SAN CARLOS APACHE

MARY KIM TITLA
United National Indian
Tribal Youth (UNITY)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



COEUR D'ALENE

NIKKI PITRE
Center for Native
American Youth (CNAY)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SAVE THE DATE!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19th, 2020

12:00 PM PT | 1:00 PM MT | 2:00 PM CT | 3:00 PM ET

HOSTED ON ZOOM



**FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT JOANN
MSJOANN1616@AOL.COM**

SAIGE YOUTH TRACK PROGRAM UPDATE



SAIGE STUDENT LEADERS

The SAIGE Youth Program has provided participating students with development training and networking opportunities during the National Training Program held each year. The participants are driven students with leadership experience and goals. The Youth Track is an integral part of the organization, and its success is reliant upon the dedicated student leadership cadre. This year, the Student Leaders, along with JoAnn Brant and Elaine Robles worked to nominate Indigenous students and prior SAIGE Program participants to become a part of the Student Leaders Council and help with the planning process for future SAIGE Training Program and initiatives.

Our current Student Leaders Council for 2020/2021 include: Henry Birk Albert – Henry is Koyukon Athabascan and citizen of the Native Village of Ruby, AK. He is 21 years old and a Senior at Wells College in NY. Birk grew up in a wilderness village of 150 residences along the Yukon River and the Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge, and was sent to New York at age 12 to live with an uncle and continue pursuing educational opportunities. He will be the first to earn a college degree in his family and is planning on earning his Masters' degree in History at a graduate school with Native curriculum, community, in a semi-urban setting. Birk has grown up rich in cultural treasure and wilds of Alaska, yet he knows how it is to grow up in a log home without running water, heated only by sweat and wood. Along with having served in various positions in national Native Youth organizations, his hope is that his future career and experience will have an impact on children like those in Ruby who do not have the advantages found in the opportunities experienced in upstate New York.

Triston Black – Triston is of the Kinya'aánii, (Towering House Clan) Born for Tó'dich'iinii, (Bitter Water Clan) including his maternal lineage being Bit'ahnii, (Folded Within Arms Clan) and his paternal lineage comes from the Tłízíłání. (Many Goats Clan). He has attended Diné College, receiving a A.A. & B.A. in Diné Studies in 2019 and 2020 and is currently enrolled in the Navajo Cultural Arts Program empathizing in Navajo moccasin making. Triston is recently serving as a Tribal Organizer for Arizona, registering people to vote and educating on their right to vote. He has been appointed by the Navajo Nation to serve on the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council. Triston's academic goals and aspirations are to continue helping at home to apply for a graduate program. His professional goal is to become an elected Navajo leader, using the teachings from his mentors, instructors, and family. Triston believes that in order to remain grounded in Navajo society, someone must learn these practices so future generations have living-resources to turn to in times of traditional learning. Triston never stops learning and is always eager to learn from others, even if that means sitting down and sharing a Navajo meal together.

Jordyn Galvan – Jordyn is a member of the Mescalero Apache Tribe of Texas. Jordan attended the 2018 SAIGE National Training Program. She is active with Indigenous youth, as well as action in community re-burial ceremonies. Jordyn is affiliated with STAND, a Student-led movement to end mass atrocities, based in Washington, DC that focuses on Human Rights issues, Global campaigning, the Fragility Act and Missing & murdered Indigenous women in Canada.

Brian Barlow – Brian hails from Tahlequah, OK and is the son of Thomas and Bridget Barlow. He is a Citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Brian is a 2016 graduate of George Washington University in Washington, DC. The first time he had participated in the SAIGE Youth Track was at the 2013 SAIGE National Training Program in Spokane, Washington, and has remained involved ever since. Brian is a 2012 Gates Millennium Scholar, a 2015 PPIA Alumnus, a 2015 Udall Honorable Mention, and served as both the Secretary (2014-16) and Male Co-President (2016-18) for the National Congress of American Indians Youth Commission. He is currently employed at the Native American Support Center at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, where he serves as the Academic Intervention Specialist.

Rosemary Reano is from the Pueblos of Santo Domingo and San Felipe. Since 2014, Rosemary has been employed with the Santo Domingo Tribe and currently serves as Program Manager for the Employment & Training Office Program, providing oversight to the planning and implementation of the Native American workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grant. She has assisted Tribal Members in developing individual Employment Plans, teaching the community about employability and resume writing, and has restored the Kewa Reaching Unity through Harmony Youth Council which was dormant

SAIGE YOUTH TRACK PROGRAM UPDATE

since 2010. She is working towards pursuing a degree in Native American Studies at the University of New Mexico. She gave birth to her second child on September 18, 2020. Now is busy with two boys Matthew and Jacoby.

Jared Ivins-Massey – Jared is an enrolled member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe of Northeastern Arizona. Nationally, Jared has served in various capacities in his efforts to bring awareness to Indigenous issues across the U.S. He has served as Co-President of the United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) organization, and two terms as the Male Co-President on the National Congress of American Indians Youth Commission. Locally, he is a founding member of the White Mountain Apache Tribal Youth Council on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Jared has served on various committees, including former President Obama's White House Tribal Youth Gathering Steering Committee. He currently sits on the Board of Directors of SAIGE, and is employed as the Social Media Specialist/Program Assistant with the UNITY in Mesa, AZ.

Much appreciation to all of the work and participation through the years from Nya Beasley, SAIGE Student Leader, who has made the difficult decision to step down due to workload and commitments

SAIGE MENTORING PROGRAM

This year, SAIGE has introduced a new program for Student Leaders and SAIGE Training Program participants. The Mentoring Program will provide Student Leaders with the opportunity to be matched up with a mentor that will come from SAIGE Board members, and other government professionals who are interested in providing guidance, leadership support and a listening ear. The Mentoring Program will include individual and group training sessions as well as regular connection, networking and meetings between the participating mentee and their mentor. The purpose of the program will be to foster an environment of trust, growth, professional development and personal goal attainment. We are looking forward to rolling out the program and excited to see the benefits of our efforts in developing future leaders.

PARTICIPATION IN COVID19 PANEL

In September, the American Indian/Alaskan Native Special Emphasis Program at the Environmental Protection Agency in Denver, CO held a special virtual event entitled, 'Impacts of COVID19 on Indigenous Communities.'

The panel was facilitated by AI/AN Co-Manager, Elaine Robles and included:

Gregory Phillips, member of the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa. He served in the U.S. Navy as well as U.S. Air National Guard, retiring with 22 years of service and with the title rank of Master Sergeant. Greg has worked with Tribes for over 30 years as a Federal employee with the EPA, National Park Service, and currently with the Department of Energy.

Shelly Deadwater – Citizen of the Cherokee Nation and graduate of Northeastern State University, where she works as Director of the Native American Support Center. Shelly is an active Board Member of the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education.

Jared Ivins-Massey – SAIGE Youth Track Leader and member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe of Northeastern AZ. David Nelson, Tribal Environmental Director and Tribal Emergency Response Coordinator for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, as well as Kimberly Varilek, member of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Attorney, and currently on Detail as Region 8 Tribal Affairs Branch Chief and Senior Tribal Advisor, participated by phone.

Discussion was engaging and informative on topics involving tribal response to COVID19 and maintaining safety and sense of community. Jared did an excellent job with providing insight into what he and his community has faced, the challenges and successes that have been experienced. He addressed the reintroduction of ceremony with safety modification as well as the sense of community that has had to adapt to both its boundaries, as well as flexibility and reach. Brian Barlow recommended his manager, Shelly Deadwater as panel participant who provided great perspective on how COVID19 has impacted community, the impact of the loss of elders and how the virus has impacted University students. The event was highly successful and the EPA Region 8 Office is grateful for the participation of our SAIGE Student Leaders.



FLTCIP 3.0: Comprehensive Coverage with Added Premium Stability

In today's world, planning is essential. People are living longer and need a long-range care plan that can sustain them throughout their lifetime.

Long term care can be expensive. And the need for long term care can happen at any time, not just in your later years. The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) can help.

FLTCIP 3.0, the current plan available to new applicants, offers comprehensive coverage, including a stay-at-home benefit and home care provided by friends and family*, with added premium stability.

FLTCIP 3.0 offers a unique premium stabilization feature that is designed to reduce the potential need for large future premium increases. Under certain conditions, this amount may be used to offset an enrollee's future premium payments or provide a refund of premium death benefit.

FLTCIP 3.0 benefits also include:

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The FLTCIP is available to eligible federal and U.S. Postal Service employees and annuitants, active and retired uniformed service members, and certain qualified relatives.

With benefits designed specifically for the federal family, the FLTCIP can help protect your savings and assets in the event you or your loved ones ever need long term care. Developed to provide solutions for a range of financial situations, this employer-sponsored program provides valuable coverage for more than 267,000 enrollees.

The FLTCIP is a medically underwritten benefit, so it's important to apply when you are in good health to avoid the risk that a future illness or condition may prevent you from obtaining coverage later. Certain medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, will prevent some people from being approved for coverage.

Start planning today

Visit LTCFEDS.com to learn more about the FLTCIP's comprehensive benefits and features.

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program is sponsored by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, insured by John Hancock Life & Health Insurance Company, under a group long term care insurance policy, and administered by Long Term Care Partners, LLC.

*Informal care provided by friends and family members is covered, as long as the caregiver isn't your spouse or domestic partner and doesn't live in your home at the time you become eligible for benefits. Benefits for covered care provided by family members is limited to 500 days.



The **Federal** Long Term Care Insurance Program™

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

- Sadé Heart of the Hawk Ali (First Nations Mi'kmaq)
- Tilford Brown (Diné)
- Carl Etsitty (Diné (Navajo) Nation)
- Danny Garceau (Anishinaabe)
- Robin Hairston (Chirichua Nde)
- Roberta Lewis (Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma)
- James Pete (Anishinaabe)
- Georgeie Reynolds
- Robert Russell (Echota Cherokee Tribe of Alabama)
- 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.

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www.saige.org

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