



*Native
Nonprofit
Wisdom*

Intro

2 Organized over the course of Spring 2022 through a partnership between Kalliopeia Foundation and Hopa Mountain, the Native Nonprofit Peer Learning Series offered a space to highlight the wisdom of Kalliopeia's Native nonprofit partners, and for Native nonprofits to connect and be in community.

We have prepared a collection of quotes from peer learning session speakers. We hope that in doing so, we honor those who generously shared their knowledge, and inspire other Native-led nonprofits in their work and leadership. Each series of quotes has been curated in response to the following questions, which represent themes that speakers explored:

How does the knowledge we inherit from our ancestors inform our work in Native-led nonprofits?

What are our roles and responsibilities—to Earth and to each other—as Native-led nonprofits?

How can we create a culture of care within our organizations?

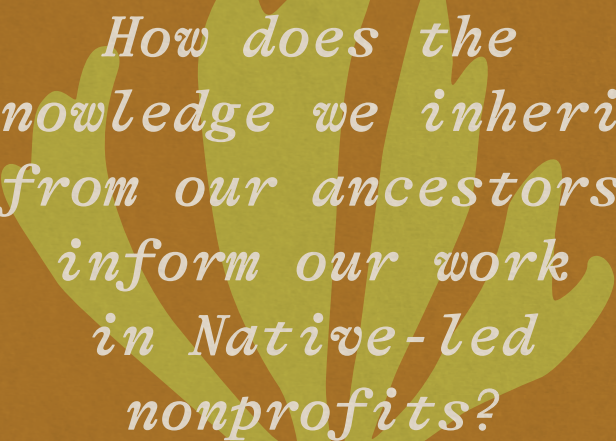
By grouping together speaker quotes in response to these questions, we hope to offer you a way to ground in the guidance of our community of Native leaders. We invite you to turn to this booklet whenever you are holding a question about what to do or where to go as a nonprofit organization, or when you are simply seeking inspiration and insight.

Please note that these quotes have been excerpted from longer discussions and edited for clarity.

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*How does the
knowledge we inherit
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in Native-led
nonprofits?*





“...Close your eyes and think deeply about why, as many Natives believe, why you chose your family, your Tribal Nation, your parents. Why you brought your spirit, why you came [to] this time in history, knowing on a soul level, that all the things we’re experiencing—COVID, capitalism, attacks on our traditional beliefs—why you [still] believe, on a soul level, that experiencing those [struggles] were going to be part of your journey, your life, and your spirit. This was intended and you knew it before you came. Your siblings were chosen by you. You knew much of what you would live.

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What might that mean? What might that mean you brought? What might that mean you care about? **If you are grounded, even for one second, in your identity from your spirit to now, you experienced just an inkling of no time.**”

– BEVERLY BUSHYHEAD



“When we tell our stories, it helps other people to situate themselves in a pathway of possibility. We have this oral tradition not because our ancestors lacked the ability to write. We have this oral tradition because our ancestors understood that the entire

power of the universe could be contained in one well-told story. And the sound, vibration, and frequency of the telling actually changes the structure of our being when we're taking those words in.

Being able to understand the power of our oral traditions, the power of our stories, not only helps our people to be strong, but also helps to ensure the continuity and vitality of our culture and our peoples in our communities.“

– SHERRI MITCHELL



“We need to find out where our homelands are. How did they behave? How do they act? We can't act like a Tribe that's next door. A Diné can't act like a Hopi because they're two different philosophies, two different histories. A Cheyenne can't act like a Crow. You know?

Years ago we all had grandmothers. I had a grandmother say, 'Hey, don't act like that. You're acting like a Karuk person,' although we're part-Karuk. So we have certain ways, certain behaviors that we must follow. And if they're different from other people, that's fine. We're different. It's within our DNA. We all have that leadership, that hope and optimism,

that traditional [knowledge], that positive energy that comes from DNA.

Getting in touch with our basic inner core of beliefs and understandings is critical in this time of grief, in this time of absence of those traditional leaders that we depended on. They're no longer there. It's up to us to step forward with some ideas, some concepts of behaviors and how to act. It's in all of our DNA. We know it's there. And [so the question is] how do we get in touch with that? How do we become Cheyenne again? How do we become Lakota? How do we become Diné in its truest form? We need to understand our stories, our legends. It's realized in annual ceremonies, how we do ceremonies, how we dance, how we act, and it's there.

We are who we are, and we carry ourselves in a certain way, and that's leadership. It shapes our Tribal Nations' sovereign identity. If we lose it, our Tribes lose sovereignty. It falls apart. It is that glue that holds us together, how we act, how we behave, how we demonstrate leadership.”

– CHRIS PETERS





“I grew up and worked in all kinds of nonprofits and [the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust] has taken off in ways that I could not even imagine. There has been an outpouring of people that want to help folks in their territory to really build relationships. And I think that that’s what Shuumi¹ is—it’s a gift that goes both ways. Some people create relationships because they can only give financial resources, but we also ask people to begin this relationship [with us] to come out to the land, to help us to work the land when we have work days, to figure out other ways of building relationships. *Are you involved in a community organization? Can you bring us to speak at that organization? Can you have conversations with your families around Thanksgiving dinner and offer this idea of giving Shuumi? Can you create fundraisers?*”

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Shuumi is a way for us to really engage in that work all across this territory to figure out how we begin to build these [diversity of] relationships. How do we think about this again in abundance? And I say that from the way that my ancestors created songs. [I had a conversation] with a nephew of mine when we were

¹ In the Chochochenyo language of the Ohlone, “shuumi” means gift. As Sogorea Te’ Land Trust write, “the Shuumi Land Tax is an invitation to support the vital work of the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust, a small step towards acknowledging the history of genocide on this land and contributing to its healing.”

coming back from Santa Cruz one summer and I was running around doing an event in Santa Cruz and then back to another event in Oakland and then back to somewhere else— it was one of those days! He's a singer, and he said, 'Auntie,' he said, 'You know, these songs that we sing in our territory are different from other places. Other places, their songs sometimes are about, 'We're so pitiful, please help us, we are having a hard time.' And our songs are always about, 'Thank you for so much. There is so much to be thankful for and we are blessed to be in this particular territory where our weather is so nice and there is [enough] food [to] take care of everybody.'

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[After that conversation] I started looking at my territory through a different lens. [...] What is going on when there are so many people without a home, when there are so many people without food, when there is this place where hunger and homelessness didn't exist a few hundred years ago? **How do we bring that abundance that our ancestors prayed into this land back? And that's what Shuumi is about, it's about [creating] this abundance together so that we're all going down the same path."**

– CORINNA GOULD





“Our bodies are the landscape. And there’s a thousand different ways that we can express it that have nothing to do with philanthropy. It has to do with how we take our bodies back. How we take our land back. [...] **How we fish, how we hunt, how we eat, how we pray, how we sing, how we mark our bodies—I think that’s land back.**”

– TIA OROS PETERS



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“I think one of the greatest things that I ever heard was that we don’t owe a debt to our ancestors. **We owe our respect to our ancestors. The debt that we owe is to our future generations.** And so what we need to be paying forward is preparing them for a way of living that is not steeped in suffering. How do we move ourselves and our people out of suffering so that those who come before us actually are living the dream that our ancestors had for us? Because our ancestors didn’t dream for us to live in suffering.

Our ancestors fought and survived for us. They dreamed us into being so that we could live in a way that was better than what they were experiencing. And for that I owe them my deep honor and respect and gratitude. And then I owe a debt to those who are coming after me to move things forward on behalf of

those ancestors who strived for me so that I can strive for those who are coming after me. And give them an even better way of life and a better experience than what I've been experiencing.”

– SHERRI MITCHELL



11 “Ka'nisténhsera, the word for mother in our language, means ‘she's the law, this is it and she's everywhere.’ When you think about Mother Nature and Mother Universe, she is everywhere—from our Mother Earth to our Grandmother Moon to the Feminine Waters to the Primordial Waters that our babies are born in. In the Haudenosaunee way, everything goes back to the mother.

We Haudenosaunee women adhere to principles of peace, power, justice and rules of conduct of the matrilineal order, a natural law that binds our Onkwehonwe societies. We declare—without asking permission from any paternal order—that the imposed Christian Doctrine of Discovery² and its illegitimate assumption of authority over our Indigenous lands, resources and peoples is hereby repudiated wielding no power

² The Doctrine of Discovery was a decree from the Catholic Church that Christian colonizers used to justify the exploitation of Indigenous lands and the erasure of Native identities.

over sovereign matrilineal peoples. We matrons of the Haudenosaunee Nations and territories gathered August 29th, 2010, in Akwesasne to reassert the principles of primordial Mother Law within Haudenosaunee territory.

We recognize what our women have suffered through since the imposed Doctrine of Discovery. At this time of family disintegration with patterns of abuse and anguish in so many homes, the mother-child connection represents the highest potential for social change throughout our kinship networks and communities. The good health of our mothers and their infants are the foundation of our sovereignty. [...] Mother Law is natural law, that is supervised by a higher order inherent in a uterine line that is free and clear from any superior man, lord or man's law. We hereby restore the matrilineal authority that is continuous in a sisterhood of clanship that derives from our celestial mother, Sky Woman, and our intimate connection to the land. We proclaim Mother Law that is inherent in the natural human pattern of life's blood flow."

- LOUISE HERNE (Mommabear)





“I have existed here in this soil long before I walked on it. And I existed in that soil as the dream of my ancestors. And so if we are the dream of our ancestors, and we have the responsibility of dreaming the next generation into being then what dream do we want to carry forward with us? [I want to] ask you all to hold a dream with me of something that is better for those who are following us. How do we step into that and breathe life into that? And what do we need to do in regard to protection of Mother Earth and regeneration of our systems in order to provide them the opportunity to not just survive, but to have an opportunity to have a full, thriving life?”

– SHERRI MITCHELL



“In your work, especially emerging work, there will be some hard times. Know that it will build your muscle. It will strengthen you. As Indigenous organizations, we’re not resourced the same way as other organizations are. Sometimes, we may have to scrap around for every single thing. **But not everybody has their ancestors behind them like we do.**”

– TIA OROS PETERS



*What are our roles
and responsibilities—
to Earth and to each
other—as Native-led
nonprofits?*



“We need to free ourselves of linear time. **Our primary responsibility as Tribal folks is to heal and renew the Earth.** That’s what we’re put for here. That’s our purpose in life and that’s why we’re doing it. We are [doing it], and we’ve been doing it, for a long time. And we’ve lived in our homelands [...] in harmony for many, many years.”

– CHRIS PETERS



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“What can we share that [can] help emerging nonprofits grow and strengthen and build and find their own way? What have we learned along the way that have helped us survive, thrive, evolve, do some things?

Maybe [our resonance is because] we did some things a little differently. Maybe it’s because we’re wired differently. Maybe it’s because we [came] out of [the] grassroots. Maybe it’s because we grew out of campfires. Maybe it’s because we grew out of kitchen table conversations with soup and bread. That’s where the Seventh Generation Fund comes from.

Because of that [...] **our organizational DNA is from our peoples.** And our pathway has always been like that, too. It makes sense that [we begin by reflecting on the] deepest wound we’re all in right

now. How do we feel with that wound? How can the experiences, the knowledge, the wisdom, the learning, the hard things, the things we fell and skinned our knees on—how can we put those together and make an offering to all of you to help you grow and build? And help us continue to do what we're here to do, which is to support our people, [inspire] self-determination, sovereignty, re-Indigenization, and build hope? That's the only reason we are here. That is the only reason we have survived for 45 years. Our organization supports the optimism of our people.”

– TIA OROS PETERS



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“All of the rights that we claim to stand on are built on a foundation of corresponding responsibilities. We can't claim a right to something without taking responsibility for creating a world in which that right has the opportunity to live. What we build is built upon the foundation of this understanding of our interconnectedness, our interdependency, and the fact that all of the rights that we claim are balanced by a set of corresponding responsibilities. We're not just claiming rights in a vacuum.”

– SHERRI MITCHELL



“What is your relationship to the land and the waters that you now live on? What is then your responsibility if you’re going to make this your home?” How do we create this together for the next seven generations? Sogorea Te’ Land Trust is about trying to figure out that idea of rematriation, about how we go backwards to our original teachings in order to go forwards again.”

– CORINNA GOULD



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“We need to reinstate hope. We need to reinstate optimism, leadership back into our communities and back into our organizations and how to do it.

Hope and leadership is rooted within the traditional customs of our people, whether it be Cheyenne, Lakota, Diné [...] Hope is rooted there. Leadership is rooted there. None of these [concepts of hope and leadership] are the same [across cultures]. All of them are individual. But we need to look to those concepts of hope and leadership [and bring them] back in our tradition, our individual families, and our Native Nations.

Hope leadership [is] rooted within the customs in our belief systems. If we haven’t put that as a priority in our work, we need to back up a little bit, and say, hey,

what does our tradition say about what we're doing? It has been passed from generation to generation to generation, that leadership, that concept, that philosophy of hope and leadership since the creation of time, since the Nathi-kan time, since when there was no time at all.

Our family members provided a role model and mentorship for each of us. So we have some understanding of what hope, and leadership is. And if we don't, we need to engage within our families, again. We need to engage with traditional people. **We need to figure out what the totality of Native knowledge says to us about leadership, and the specific roles and responsibilities that we all have.**"

- CHRIS PETERS



"Organizations need to operate with a truthfulness in their dealings, and a sense of responsibility for all their actions, not just with Tribes, but with the whole world.

And so in evaluating such things, we find it easier in organizations to turn the lens outward and assess how integrity and honesty and inclusion are being practiced with those being served. But it's really important to augment that distancing tendency by focusing on inward practices [as well]. And I mean inward in terms

of our coworkers, our staff and colleagues, but also [inward in terms of] ourselves [so] that it comes down to us and that moment in no time where we agreed who we were going to be, how we were going to live.”

– BEVERLY BUSHYHEAD



“We’re earth healing people, earth renewing people. And to the belief that the world is alive, she has rights. Our belief systems and our ceremonies are geared around a concept of everlasting life. That if we do ceremonies, live in a good relationship with all that is alive around us, we will live forever and forever and forever.

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If we violate natural systems, natural order, if we violate Indian law [...] it will come back on us. [Many] years ago, non-Native peoples began to drift away from that concept and look at the earth as something that they could dominate, control. And it has brought on a history of relationships to the earth that has caused destruction beyond human comprehension. Some people say within 10 years³ we’re going to begin to overshoot environmental systems, and systems

³ The most recent IPCC report warns that we need to make drastic transformations to our energy and economic systems within this decade if we are to stave off the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

will begin to fail. And once one system fails, others will follow shortly. How do we survive what's coming? How do we survive the change in climate? How do we survive the change in heat when our relatives here around me, the redwood trees, are going to be impacted in the worst possible way? They've existed here for thousands and thousands of years. There's no place to migrate for these trees. Their movement is too slow, and this is the only place that they can live now.

20 So we begin to see systems change. And with Indigenous peoples, we are generally the first to notice that. We live closest to the earth. We depend upon that relationship for our own survival. We understand things are moving, moving up in altitude, moving north in climate and moving away from us. Indigenous peoples have an opportunity to understand who we are as a people [in terms of] identity and belief systems, to understand that responsibility to take care of things. **How do we heal the river? How do we bring the water spirit back to life? How do we become native to a land, re-Indigenizing, the exercise of our sovereignty, again, over major chunks of land?** The sovereignty of self-governance and self-relationship to lands will teach people better to understand where they're living and how to live there, and that there is a process of reciprocity and respect for all living things. Not only Native peoples understand that, but we have a responsibility to share it with non-Native peoples.

Humankind has violated a natural law and it is coming back on people. It's coming back on people hard and we will soon experience that more blatantly than we have ever in the past, so we don't have much time. We urge people to listen to what Native peoples, wisdom keepers are saying, to take the necessary steps to bring about real change in how people live, where we understand there is a relationship that everything is alive again, to see things flourish again, to create an environment that is lush and rich. We have that opportunity that's before us not only to sustain, but to thrive again. We can do it."

- CHRIS PETERS



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"All of us here, all of us in our work [experience] the great pressure of negative things that come and sometimes threaten to destroy everything. **Along with that, sometimes is an opening, a refreshing, an opportunity to build, to strengthen, to rebuild even in the face of all the loss that we've experienced, not just these last two, three years but in [the last] 530 years.** Those are really the bones, the sinew, the blood, the memories of the Seventh Generation Fund over 45 years."

- TIA OROS PETERS



*How can we create
a culture of
care within our
organizations?*



“How do we create resilience within our organizations, but also create a culture of care and a container for holding the people who are part of the work that we’re doing? I think this is critically important information for all of us because we all have some form of challenge that we’re facing in the work that we’re doing. We’re oftentimes meeting a need that’s risen up within the community, and where that need intersects with some of the resources for resolving that need there’s often points of tension. We carry a lot of points of tension with us from our own histories, our families and communities which is something we are constantly navigating as we do the work we are doing.

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So when we talk about a culture of care, I think one of the most important things that we need to address at the very beginning is, **how do we put the culture into the culture of care?** What is the culture that we’re trying to infuse into this resiliency plan that we’re developing for our organization?

[One of the ways we can do that is through] kinship—recognizing that we’re all interconnected, especially when we’re working within our own territories. We have to make sure that we’re thinking about that kinship, thinking about those kinship networks both in the immediacy and as they begin to fan out in the work that we’re doing.

Looking at this value of enough, we have two words in our language connected to this. One of them is mama bezu. The other one is ala bezu. Mama bezu is I have enough, right? You ask somebody individually, do they have enough? Do they have enough safety, sense of belonging? Do they have enough dignity? Do they have enough food? Do they have enough care? All of those things. Ala bezu is everybody has enough. **And so what we know to be true within this is that I can't possibly have enough if somebody else does not have enough because my sense of enough is tied to the well-being of all others.** Recognizing that interrelatedness, interconnectedness, but also interdependency [is critical to recognizing] that our sense of being okay in the world is tied to that sense of being okay for all others.”

– SHERRI MITCHELL



“...Because we come from the Kaianere’kó:wa, the Great Law of Peace, we are always looking [for] healthier ways to best serve the greater good of everyone including ourselves, our community, our partnerships—and then maybe the world!

One of the things that we did to achieve this functionality within our team [was to truly] examine our strengths, our weaknesses, our opportunities, and our threats. We looked [at these questions as a team] and then [took the space to] figure it out personally, too. [By] identifying our personal baggage spaces, we got to see on paper where we could shift when the time is right.

[Through this process, we came to create] our Women's Agreement [that we sought to] model after the corn, beans and squash because the three sisters grow together, not apart.

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We step in to support one another when needed, [also knowing] it's okay to establish healthy boundaries and to share space.

We try to encompass the 'I am now' presence [as well] by meeting one another in our shared spaces. Sometimes we have to step into one another's role when needed if things are too triggering, so if someone needs to take some time, that's okay, others can fill in those spaces.

One of my sisters considers our Women's Agreement and our sisterhood, our team to be her medicine cabinet. *We're a medicine garden for one another.*"

-FALLAN JACOBS



“We don’t sign a contract [to take care of each other]—it’s just a mutual understanding of how we conduct ourselves around each other [...] based on the reciprocity of the corn, beans and squash. **We either create shade for each other, stand up with each other, or cover the land with each other.**”

– LOUISE HERNE (Mommabear)



“Where our eyes go is where we tend to go. And so when we’re thinking about what we want to create in regards to a culture of care within our groups and our organizations, even our personal relationships, we have to think about what narrative we are creating, and it begins with the shifting of our eyes. Think about where you’re going to put your focus. Think about what it is that you’re going to choose to look at. **What are you going to breathe life into?**”

–SHERRI MITCHELL



“There’s always been hope. I’ve heard it be called love. Self-determination. Joy. Hope for the next generations. We have to give them hope. [...] Everything that’s happening, the revitalization of cultures, and communities, and thinking, and systems, and practices, and ceremony and relationships—that’s all hope. [...]

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Hope transcends every song that was sung a thousand years ago and what’s going to be sung in a thousand years. The community partners that we work with, they’re everything that’s going to make the world a better place. They exist in that first thought when an Indigenous person imagines, what can I do for my people? What can I do for my family? What can I do in this moment that makes the world just a little bit better? [...] I completely believe that we’re part of the largest movement for good, and the longest movement for good on the face of the planet, the Indigenous peoples movement, 530 years old, over 500 million people, and it’s all for good. “

-TIA OROS PETERS



About

Chris Peters (Puhlik-lah/Karuk) has more than 50 years of experience in grassroots community organizing. He was first employed with Seventh Generation Fund (*7genfund.org*) in 1989 as a Senior Program Officer. He later became the Executive Director in 1990, and subsequently, in 1999, he was appointed as SGF's President and CEO. For over 31 years he has served the organization and remains its President. His work is especially focused on climate change, sacred sites protection, and the renaissance of sacred knowledge and Earth Renewal ceremonies of Northern California Tribal Peoples.

Chris is also the owner and Principal Consultant for Red Deer Consulting; an independent firm that provides identity based cultural advising, mentoring and capacity building services for tribal communities. Chris serves as the Indigenous Peoples' Task Force Chair, and as a Board member of the Parliament for the World's Religions. He has also earned a BS degree from the University of California at Davis in Native American Studies, and a MA degree in Counseling Psychology from Stanford University.



Tia Oros Peters has been active in community organizing, advocacy, and nonprofit development for over three decades. She is CEO of the Seventh Generation Fund

(*7genfund.org*) for Indigenous Peoples, which supports community-generated cultural revitalization, movement building, and Re-Indigenization strategies.

Tia is a recognized expert on the protection of Water as a sacred element for Indigenous Peoples' cultural and spiritual sustainability, and on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a standard setting tool for Native Peoples' organizing, empowerment, and self-determination. Through her water advocacy at the United Nations and national and regional organizing, she coined and defined the term "Aquicide" to describe the killing of the waters around the globe.

A member of Neighborhood Funder's Group and Aspen Institute's Philanthropy Forward 2019-2020 cohort focused on grassroots power building for social justice, Tia serves on the boards of directors of Proteus Fund; Tools and Tiaras; Grantmakers for Girls of Color Advisory Committee, and as President of Red Deer Center for Indigenous Thinking, Creating, and Being. Tia is also known as Méešaatsq̄hě'e—a name given by Chief Phillip Whiteman of the Northern Cheyenne Nation. She earned a BA in Law & Society and an MFA in Creative Writing.



Beverly Bushyhead (she/her), is the Director of Programs at Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute. She is an enrolled citizen of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (Big Cove Community) and grew up with her Nation on their original lands in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. Beverly (*beverlybushyhead.wixsite.com/mysite*) is a restorative practitioner, trans-

formative leader, and strengths-based community builder focused on the intersection of cultural trauma response. Beverly was recruited to co-lead and guide the Minnesota response to the toppling of the Christopher Columbus statue at the Minnesota State Capitol and support those historically devalued by the statue. The State Capitol is the house for all Minnesotans, where we all belong.

Beverly shares original curricula through cohort designed learning, workshop facilitation and web-based radio/podcast. Beverly follows curiosity, activating empathy and asks illuminating questions to build greater understanding and connection. Ms. Bushyhead is a committed nonprofit educator. She facilitates governance clarity and practices, nonprofit skills development, program team alignment and nonprofit business model recentering.

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Beverly is a systems thinker gifted at creating innovations that inspire action toward social justice with over 25 years' experience, and currently serves as Co-Chair of the Family Tree Clinic. Beverly earned a degree in psychology at Augsburg College and two masters degrees in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management at Hamline University. She lives in St. Paul, Minnesota near the sacred sites Makapaha and Wakan Tipi.



Sherri Mitchell, Weh'na Ha'mu Kwasset, was born and raised on the Penobscot Indian Reservation. She received her Juris Doctorate and a certificate in Indigenous People's Law and Policy from the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law. Sherri is an alumna of the American Indian

Ambassador program, and the Udall Native American Congressional Internship program. She received the Mahoney Dunn International Human Rights and Humanitarian Award, for research into Human Rights violations against Indigenous Peoples and the spirit of Maine award for excellence in the field of International human rights. Sherri was a longtime advisor to the American Indian Institute's Healing the Future Program and currently serves as an advisor to the Indigenous Elders and Medicine People's Council of North and South America. She is the Founding Director of the Land Peace Foundation (landpeacefoundation.org), an organization dedicated to the global protection of Indigenous rights and the preservation of the Indigenous way of life. Prior to forming the Land Peace Foundation, Sherri served as a law clerk to the Solicitor of the United States Department of Interior; as an Associate with Fredericks, Peebles and Morgan Law Firm; a civil rights educator for the Maine Attorney General's Office; and as the Staff Attorney for the Native American Unit of Pine Tree Legal. Sherri is a contributing author in seven anthologies and three books of poetry, and is the author of the award-winning book *Sacred Instructions; Indigenous Wisdom for Living Spirit-Based Change*. In the past year, she has contributed to two books on climate change, *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* and *Resetting Our Future: Empowering Climate Action in the United States*. Sherri is also part of the development team for the United States' ACE National Framework, a comprehensive climate change plan for the United States.



Wakerahkáltste **Louise McDonald Herne** is a condoled Bear Clan Mother for the Mohawk Nation Council. She is a trusted advisor for families and community youth working closely with them in their homes and schools. She bestows traditional names in the longhouse and provides spiritual counsel for all those seeking support.

Through her work as a matrilineal leader and as a mother, she is a founding member of *Konón:kwe Council*, a circle of Mohawk women working to reconstruct the power of their origins through education, empowerment and trauma-informed approaches. Louise champions the philosophy of Ka'nisténhsera, *Mother Law*—a natural law that binds Onkwehón:we, or Indigenous kinship society. She is the lead conductor of the Moon Lodge Society, convening women and girls on a monthly basis in line with the full moon cycle. Wakerahkáltste is the principal organizer and leader of *Oheró:kon*, a traditional Rites of Passage ceremony for Mohawk youth (*oherokon.org*). Since 2005, she has guided hundreds of community families and volunteers through self-reflection and Ratinonhsón:ni cultural instruction and ceremony.

Wakerahkáltste presented at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and lectures regularly at universities throughout Canada and the United States on Ratinonhsón:ni philosophies and self-determination in regards to women. Wakerahkáltste has been the Distinguished Scholar in Indigenous Learning at McMaster University Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning and received an

honorary PhD from SUNY Canton. Her most recent work includes a feature in the award winning documentary film, *Without a Whisper: Konnon:kwe*, about the Ratinohsón:ni women's influence on the women's rights movement.



Teiohontáthe “**Fallan Jacobs**” of the kenien'kehà:ka Bear Clan is a mother of four children, and has worked closely with the community of Ahkwesáhsne on economic development, labor market information studies and small business support as a fierce defender of sovereignty and human rights.

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Fallan spent twelve years in successful court battle against the Canadian Border Services Agency precipitated by an egregious harassment at the border where she was subjected to unprotected uranium exposure resulting in the loss of her baby. The agency was found guilty of sex discrimination by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, the Federal Courts and the Federal Appeal Courts of Canada.

Fallan continues to work with Indigenous youth and families to rekindle, restore and enhance their sense of cultural identity with land-based teachings and community connections across the province of Ontario. Fallan has moved into domestic violence education and is now working for her home community of Ahkwesáhsne thru the lakionhnehkwen (*oherokon.org*), an umbrella of beautiful women delivering preventative services to youth and their families.



Corrina Gould (Lisjan Ohlone) is the Tribal Chair for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation, and was born and raised in Oakland, CA, the village of Huichin. A mother of three and grandmother of five, Corrina is the Co-Founder and Lead Organizer for Indian People Organizing for Change, a small Native-run organization that works on issue related to Indigenous people and sponsored annual Shellmound Peace Walks from 2005 to 2009. These walks brought about education and awareness of the desecration of sacred sites in the greater Bay Area. As a Tribal leader, she has continued to fight for the protection of the Shellmounds, uphold her Nation's inherent right to sovereignty, and stand in solidarity with her Indigenous relatives to protect our sacred waters, mountains, and lands all over the world.

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Corinna's life's work led to the creation of Sogorea Te' Land Trust (sogoreate-landtrust.org), a women-led organization within the urban setting of her ancestral territory of the Bay Area. Sogorea Te' Land Trust works to return Indigenous land to Indigenous people. Based on an understanding that Oakland is home to many peoples that have been oppressed and marginalized, Sogorea Te' works to create a thriving community that lives in relation to the land. Through the practices of rematriation, cultural revitalization, and land restoration, the Land Trust calls on Native and non-Native peoples to heal and transform legacies of colonization, genocide, and to do the work our ancestors and future generations are calling us to do.



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