

The Bush Foundation - Native Nations Rebuilders

Cohort 2 – December 2010

(See listing by [Native nation](#))

Twyla B. Baker-Demaray (Three Affiliated Tribes-Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation) is the project director of the National Resource Center on Native American Aging for the Center for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Grand Forks, North Dakota. In that role, she conducted the nation's largest health and wellness needs assessment for Native seniors. Her other professional and volunteer work has focused on similar issues of Native American health and aging. Baker-Demaray is a Sequoyah Fellow of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), and served for two years on the organization's executive board. She also chairs the board of the Northstar Council, a Native nonprofit she founded with others to support urban Natives in the northern Red River Valley. UND granted her a BS in environmental geology and technology, an MS in education general studies with a focus in research methodologies; she is currently pursuing her doctorate degree in research methodologies.

Justin Beaulieu (Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians) is a husband and father of two, and descendent of the Eagle Clan. He is the director of operations for the Boys and Girls Club of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Previously he was a gaming executive and held positions focused on youth services, including work to raise awareness of youth homelessness. He hopes to “provide youth with opportunities to better themselves through leadership development and community connection that will strengthen the future for the community.” Beaulieu is an avid hunter, trapper and fisherman. A high school honor graduate, Beaulieu holds an AA from Central Lakes College (Brainerd) and a BA in business and marketing from the College of St. Scholastica (Duluth).

Sharon Bellcourt (White Earth Band of Ojibwe) is currently the self-governance coordinator and special projects coordinator for White Earth Reservation Tribal Council. She has experience working in accounting, marketing, business development and federal government contracting, including time at the Minnesota District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration, which received the coveted Al Gore Hammer Award. She is working toward a business administration degree at the Minnesota School of Business (Minneapolis). Bellcourt recently moved back home to White Earth to satisfy a long-awaited dream of working for the good of White Earth Reservation and her people. She has great interest in business and economic development, and a passion for service work that aids in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

Frances Big Crow (Oglala Sioux) is the program director of the Oglala Sioux Tribe Child Care and Development Program and held a previous position with the Tribe focused on youth. As a volunteer, Big Crow works with the SueAnn Center/Boys and Girls Club on the Pine Ridge Reservation, which is dedicated to building a drug- and alcohol-free community for the benefit of youth. While living in California, she served on the school board of Sherman Indian high School. Big Crow holds a degree in business administration from the National College of Business (Rapid City, South Dakota), as well as a BA in social work from Chadron State College in Nebraska. She is currently training to become a pilot with the hope that in the future she could serve the Flight for Life program.

Lori Brown (Spirit Lake Nation) is the director of operations at tribally owned Sioux Manufacturing Corporation, where she also serves as treasurer of the board of directors. For six years, Brown chaired the Tribe's education committee, which runs a scholarship program, and also was a member of the Helen Ernest Scholarship Committee that granted aid to college students. Previously, she served as general manager of the Spirit Lake Casino and Resort, the first enrolled member of the Tribe to serve in that capacity; in 2008, she was honored by Great Plains Indian Gaming as casino management of the year. As a member of the TrainND Advisory Board, she represents the northeast region of the state and the Spirit Lake Nation. Brown holds a BS in business administration from Moorhead State University.

Ruth Buffalo Zarazua (Three Affiliated Tribes-Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation) works at United Tribes Technical College as director of the Strengthening Lifestyles Wellness Program, which teaches holistic approaches to wellness programming to students from elementary school through college. At the College, she has also assisted in coaching the men's and women's basketball teams and coordinates or teaches several other wellness-related activities such as the Thunderbird Half Marathon, tai chi and first aid/CPR. In 2010, ND Business Watch named her as a "40 under 40 leader." Buffalo Zarazua holds a BS in criminal justice from Huron University in South Dakota) and a master's in management from the University of Mary (Bismarck). In addition to her enrollment at Three Affiliated Tribes, Buffalo Zarazua is Chirichua Apache.

Susan Connor (Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa) currently works for the Fond du Lac Reservation as the employee assistance and employee relations coordinator. In this role, she develops and conducts new training initiatives to enhance management and supervisory skills and seeks creative ways to foster a dynamic learning environment and promote high-quality training. Connor is certified in anger management, workplace conflict and mediation. She holds a BA (summa cum laude) in organizational behavior from the College of St. Scholastica (Duluth), is certified by North Central University as a minister in the Assemblies of God Church and in her spare time appears as Joy the Clown. Connor is a member of Minnesota Employee Assistance Professionals and Counselors, Employee Assistance Professional Association, Professional Women's Association and the Society for Human Resource Management.

Rebecca Crooks (Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community) works in tribal administration with the Tribal Business Council and also serves on the Tribe's education commission. In 2008, she was elected a gaming commissioner. Active in her community, she works on the annual Young Native Pride Performance and is part of the Dakota Women's Plume Society. One of her initial projects for her tribe was working with eleven tribes located in Minnesota for the dedication of the Minnesota Tribal Nation Plaza just outside the newly constructed football stadium on the University of Minnesota campus. Crooks holds a BA in political science from the University of Arizona (Tucson). She is married and the mother of two young daughters.

Cherilyn Davies (White Earth Band of Ojibwe) was born and raised in Minneapolis by her mother, but has close family ties on the Leech Lake Ojibwe Reservation, which she considers her home. Through her work at Infinite Campus, she manages a Bureau of Indian Education program across 23 states that enables her to work directly with end users of technology in the schools where the student population is primarily Native American. Davies has worked on voter education and registration efforts as a volunteer, and strives to assist the unemployed and underemployed in finding opportunities that encourage their further development. Davies served as a sergeant in the Minnesota Army National Guard and deployed to Bosnia with the 34th Infantry Division. She holds a BS in computer information science and is working toward a master's in information technology leadership, both at the College of St. Scholastica (Duluth).

Joseph Dudley III (Yankton Sioux Tribe) works as the physical therapy director at Avera St. Luke's Hospital in Aberdeen where he trains professional and student athletes as well as youth sport participants. In this role he also focuses on geriatric fitness. Dudley's involvement in the Aberdeen community includes service on the board of the Aberdeen Area Diversity Committee and completion of the Leadership Aberdeen Program. Previously he provided professional services for the Keya Program, a South Dakota Urban Indian Health diabetes prevention and wellness program. Currently he sits on the board of South Dakota Urban Indian Health. Dudley has a BS from Northern State University (Aberdeen, South Dakota) in health, physical education and recreation. In addition to his enrollment in the Yankton Sioux Tribe, Dudley is a descendent of the Mackinaw Chippewa.

Anita Fineday (White Earth Band of Ojibwe) is chief judge of the White Earth Tribal Nation and previously associate judge for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. She holds a BA in English from Indiana University at Bloomington, a JD from the University of Colorado Law School (Boulder) and a master of public administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government (as a 1997 Bush Leadership Fellow). In addition to being the first Native American woman to argue in the Minnesota Supreme Court, Fineday has led significant expansion of the jurisdiction of the White Earth Tribal Court, which now hears both criminal and civil cases. She serves as board chair of the Regional Native Public Defense Corporation and as board secretary of Anishinabe Legal Services. In addition to mentoring young Indian women in northern Minnesota, Fineday is a marathon runner and founding member of Native Thunder Distance Runners, an Indian running organization.

Benny Janis (Lower Brule Sioux Tribe) has lived on the Lower Brule Reservation his entire life. A father of seven, he directs the Tribe's Department of Wildlife, Fish and Recreation, which not only manages the Tribe's natural resources but works in cooperation with other government agencies outside the reservation. In addition to completing police academy training, Dudley received a BA in business administration from Dakota Wesleyan University (Mitchell, South Dakota). He has served his community as a firefighter, basketball coach, high school and college board president and as a gaming commissioner. He enjoys upland bird hunting, golf and rodeo roping.

Phillip Sam (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe) grew up in Milaca, Minnesota, and is branch director of the Boys and Girls Club of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. He recently completed the Community Leadership Program sponsored by the Blandin Foundation, began a term on the Mille Lacs Area Human Rights Commission and recruited Native youth to participate in the Minnesota Indian Youth Freedom Movement. In 2011 he will graduate with a BA in business management from St. Cloud State University. A high school letterman in both football and golf, Sam enjoys fishing, hunting and boating.

Lisa Schrader-Dillon (Oglala Sioux Tribe) is health administrator for the Oglala Sioux Tribe, where her responsibility includes oversight of the Indian Health Service contract and establishing partnerships with community, state and national entities to address the health disparities of Native people. Schrader-Dillon established the first community-based tribal research review board on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The board monitors, evaluates and provides oversight to the 27 research studies being conducted on the Pine Ridge reservation. Schrader-Dillon's BS is in psychology and guidance from Chadron State College in Nebraska; she also holds a masters in social work from the University of Utah (Salt Lake City). She and her husband have a blended family of eight children and two grandchildren.

Veronica Veaux (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe) is the registrar at Leech Lake Tribal College and played a critical role in the College's recent accreditation process. She also helped organize the Bemidji Local Indian Council. Veaux holds a BS in business administration with emphases in management and small business management/entrepreneurship from Bemidji State University, where she was named Outstanding Student of the Year in 2008. In 2009, she was named a Minnesota TRIO Achiever (TRIO is a set of federally funded college opportunity programs that motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree). A mother of three, Veaux is currently studying for an MBA with an emphasis in American Indian entrepreneurship at Gonzaga University.

Rebuilders Listed by Native Nation

**Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior
Chippewa**
[Susan Connor](#)

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
[Veronica Veaux](#)

Lower Brule Sioux Tribe
[Benny Janis](#)

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
[Phillip Sam](#)

Oglala Sioux
[Frances Big Crow](#)
[Lisa Schrader-Dillon](#)
[Nick Tilsen](#)

Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
[Justin Beaulieu](#)

**Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux
Community**
[Rebecca Crooks](#)

Spirit Lake Nation
[Lori Brown](#)

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
[Cheryl Ann Kary](#)

**Three Affiliated Tribes-Mandan, Hidatsa,
Arikara Nation**
[Twyla B. Baker-Demaray](#)
[Ruth Buffalo Zarazua](#)

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
[Terri Martin-Parisien](#)
[Anna \(Sarcia\) Ross](#)

White Earth Band of Ojibwe
[Sharon Bellcourt](#)
[Cherilyn Davies](#)
[Anita Fineday](#)

Yankton Sioux Tribe
[Joseph Dudley III](#)