



National Indigenous Women's Resource Center

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November 8, 2018

NIWRC Congratulates Native Women Candidates

Lame Deer, MT- The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) congratulates the Native American Women candidates who won their Congressional and State elections on this past November 6th election!

Two Native Women are making history with their wins by being the first Native American women elected to Congress:

- Sharice Davids (Ho-Chunk Nation): elected to United States House of Representatives (KS-3rd District). Davids is also the first openly LGBTQ woman Congresswoman from Kansas.
- Deb Haaland (Pueblo of Laguna): elected to the United States House of Representatives (NM-1st District).

We also wish to congratulate Peggy Flanagan (White Earth Band of Ojibwe) elected to become the Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota and Ruth Buffalo (Hidatsa/Mandan/Chiricahua Apache) elected to North Dakota State House of Representatives of District 27 in Fargo, as well as the many other Native women elected to state positions.

As these Native women Congressional representatives get ready to head to Washington, D.C. or begin work in their state, they inspire a new generation of Native women and girls to become leaders in government and change-makers in their communities. Just as important, these women are also in a position to bring awareness to violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and families, a population that is all too often invisible to most of the American public.

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) face disproportionate and alarming rates of domestic and sexual violence each day. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) through the USDOJ released a study in May 2016 that highlighted statistical information on violence against AI/AN individuals.¹ This study found American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced severe rates of violence in their lifetimes, including:

56.1% who have experienced sexual violence; 55.5% who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner; 48.4% who have experienced stalking; and 66.4% who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner.ⁱⁱ

“The majority of American Indian and Alaska Native victims have experienced violence at the hands of at least one interracial perpetrator in their lifetime — 97 percent of female victims and 90 percent of male victims.”ⁱⁱⁱ These are not just statistics. These numbers represent the lived experiences of many Native women.

The NIWRC is a non-partisan organization- committed to ending all forms of gender-based violence against American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Indigenous peoples. We remain dedicated to restoring safety to Native women by upholding the sovereignty of Indian and Alaska Native tribes.

NIWRC would also like to congratulate the brave Native Women candidates who ran and lost in their local, state and tribal elections. As more Native women run meaningful and visible campaigns, aspiring to take on leadership roles within tribal, state and the federal government, we come closer to recognizing our individual sovereign and inalienable right to respect, equality, and safety.

The NIWRC will continue to call for bipartisan efforts to implement policy provisions that support sovereignty and therefore safety for Native women. As a non-partisan organization, we remain committed to working with both sides of the aisle and each administration in furthering both the sovereignty of our tribal nations and the safety and security of Indigenous women, as the two are undistinguishably tethered.

About the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center

The National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center, Inc. (NIWRC) is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to restoring the sovereignty of Native nations and safeguarding Native women and their children. The NIWRC supports culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy and provides national leadership to ending gender-based violence in indigenous communities through the development of educational materials and programs, direct technical assistance and the development of local and national policy that builds the capacity of Indigenous communities and strengthens the exercise of tribal sovereignty. www.niwrc.org

ⁱ DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, NAT’L INST. OF JUSTICE, VIOLENCE AGAINST AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN AND MEN: 2010 FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL INTIMATE PARTNER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SURVEY 26 (May 2016), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249736.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ *Id.*

ⁱⁱⁱ *Id.*