

# Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN



Justice for Missing and Murdered  
Native Women and Girls

OCTOBER 2016



National Indigenous Women's Resource Center  
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# Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN

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**Lucy Simpson**  
**Executive Director**  
**NIWRC**

"It gave my heart strength to see all the families and mothers and children come together in prayer to show our solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and more importantly with Mother Earth. When we arrived at the camps, I was amazed at the sheer number of people. Native people from over 200 different Indian nations. Indigenous people from Mexico and New Zealand. And lots of non-Indians. NIWRC is dedicated to the safety of Native women and sovereignty of Indian Nations and is honored to stand in support of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe."

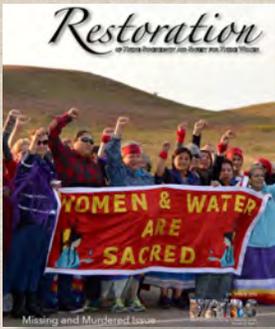


*September 11, 2016, Sacred Stone Camp, Cannon Ball, ND—Sierra Simpson (left) (daughter of Lucy Simpson) and Kenzie Archambeau-Small say #NoDAPL.*



**Jacqueline "Jax" Agtuca**  
**Editor**  
**Restoration**

"The movement for safety of Native women grew out of tribal grassroots advocacy during the late 1970s. Tillie Black Bear, founding grandmother of the battered women's movement and the NIWRC, called it a movement of resistance to violence against Native women linked to the colonization of Indian nations. She experienced the movement from the perspective of a Sicangu woman raised under United States laws that placed her in boarding schools, and outlawed tribal spiritual and cultural practices, and languages. The destructive effect of extractive industries on tribal women and nations is not new. What is new is the breadth of the resistance movement that is nationally and internationally united in defense of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Social change may be slow to rise, but in the face of such potential destruction, all social justice movements are called to stand and raise their voices to Defend the Sacred."



**Cover:** September 22, 2016—Women from tribal coalitions stand united on the front line at the entrance of the Sacred Stone Camp to tell the world “Water & Women Are Sacred.” The coalitions came from across Turtle Island—from the northern region of Alaska, across the United States from California to Maine, and along the southern border of New Mexico and Oklahoma to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. The tribal women’s coalitions organized to increase safety for Native women have member programs representing more than half of all federally recognized Indian Nations. See page 28-29.

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**Instructions on how to use the QR codes in this magazine**

1. Using your smartphone, go to Google Play (for Androids) or App Store (for iPhones).
2. Search for the **QR Bot** app. Download and open on your phone.
3. The QR Bot app will use the camera on your phone to scan the code at right.
4. Open the website link it takes you to!



# A CALL TO ACTION: Support a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls

In reponse to the death of RoyLynn Rides Horse in June at the Crow Reservation, and the murder of Hanna Harris at the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in 2013, the Montana Congressional Delegation called for the passage of a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.

Senator Steve Daines and Senator Jon Tester introduced a Senate resolution calling for the creation of a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution would designate May 5, 2017, the birthday of Hanna Harris, as the National Day of Awareness. Congressman Ryan Zinke introduced a companion bill in the House.

Hanna Harris was 21 years old when she went missing on July 4, 2013. Due to the inadequate response of the justice system, her family and friends searched for Hanna. The community led a march for justice for Hanna and other unresolved murders of American Indian women.

RoyLynn Rides Horse was beaten, burned, and left for dead. RoyLynn walked several miles before collapsing. Concerned about the inadequate response of the justice system to investigate RoyLynn's case, the Crow Tribe also led a march for justice on June 16, 2016. Early Tuesday, the day the resolution was introduced, RoyLynn passed over.

"The harsh reality of our lives as Native women is that we witness our sisters, mothers, daughters, and community members disappear and nothing is done," said Lucy Simpson, Director of NIWRC. "The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center offers our prayers to all of the families of missing Native women and girls."

"Turning our grief to action we strongly support the resolution calling for a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls to help increase awareness and shed light on the countless tragedies involving our Native sisters," said Cherrah Giles, Chair, NIWRC Board of Directors.

We are calling on all those concerned for the safety of Native women to organize at the local, tribal, state, national, and international levels to support the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. Join us to tell Congress *enough is enough*. Now is the time for action!

**Cherrah Giles**, Chairwoman, Board of Directors  
**Lucy Simpson**, Executive Director



**"The harsh reality of our lives as Native women is that we witness our sisters, mothers, daughters, and community members disappear and nothing is done. We strongly support the resolution calling for a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls to help increase awareness and shed light on the countless tragedies involving our Native sisters."**

**-Lucy Simpson, Executive Director, National Indigenous Women's Resource Center**

**"On behalf of the Montana Native Women's Coalition and the Native women we serve, I would like to acknowledge Senators Daines and Tester and Congressman Zinke and their staff for recognizing and finally acknowledging the many, many missing and murdered Native women but in particular Montana's Indian country. Thank you to the Montana delegation for being brave and finally breaking the silence and acknowledging the Native women who are missing and those that have been murdered."**

**-Toni Plummer-Alvernaz, Executive Director, Montana Native Women's Coalition**

# Congressional Resolution to Designate May 5th as a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls



On July 1st, 2016, Senator Steve Daines met with Malinda Harris Limberhand, mother of Hanna Harris, to present a resolution to commemorate Hanna's life.

**"The National Congress of American Indians supports the Montana delegation's efforts to bring attention to those Native women and girls who have been murdered or are missing throughout Indian country. We are hopeful that this awareness day will start a much-needed dialogue on what we can all do collectively to ensure our Native women and girls are afforded the safety that they deserve."  
-National Congress of American Indians**

**T**he Montana Congressional delegation released a press release stating the resolution to create a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls which "seeks to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women whose cases are documented and undocumented in public records and in the media."

U.S. Senators Steve Daines (R-MT) and Jon Tester (D-MT) and U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) introduced a resolution to designate May 5, 2017, as National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. The resolution is supported by a number of other Senators and Representatives.

The resolution was drafted in memory of the birthday of Hanna Harris, a member of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe who was murdered in July 2013. It was introduced on the same day that RoyLynn Rideshorse, a member of the Crow Tribe who was beaten and burned in April and left to die in a field, passed away.

According to a U.S. Department of Justice study, in some tribal communities, American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide was the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women between 10 and 24 years of age and the fifth leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age. "I am heartbroken by the recent murder of RoyLynn Rides Horse. Tragically it's a symptom of the greater epidemic of tribal women who go missing and are murdered at staggering rates," said Daines, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. "We are ringing the alarm to this devastating epidemic."

U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke introduced a companion resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives. "The attack and murder of RoyLynn Rides Horse shook my soul as a husband, father, Montanan, and as someone whose job has been to keep people safe," said Rep. Ryan Zinke. "I offer my deepest condolences to her family and community. My office is working diligently with Crow tribal law enforcement to support the community, but we must do more to raise awareness of the epidemic of murdered and missing women and children in Native communities. I am saddened by the circumstances for this Congressional resolution, but I am proud to help honor RoyLynn, Hanna Harris, and countless others who have tragically lost their lives. Raising awareness will help save lives and prevent another heartbreaking outcome."



"It is critical that we shed more light on the hardships that Native women and their families often face," said Jon Tester, Vice Chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. "But words must be followed up with actions, and I am committed to working with the Montana Congressional delegation and Montana tribes to increase the safety of Native women and ensure they have every opportunity to thrive."

## Why a National Day of Awareness?

"The legacy of genocide is the epidemic of violence we experience from birth to death. For our Native sisters who are missing and murdered, we need every person to take a stand and join our effort calling for justice."

-Cherrah Giles,  
NIWRC Board President



Support a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. Add your organization's name at: <http://bit.ly/2bjDfa1>

In 2005, the national movement for the safety of Native women led the struggle to include in the Violence Against Women Act a separate title for Native women called Safety for Indian Women. One of the findings that justified creation of the title was that during the period of 1979 through 1992, homicide was the third leading cause of death of Indian females aged 15 to 34, and 75 percent were killed by family members or acquaintances. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Justice has found that in some tribal communities, American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average.

"At a recent conference someone asked why is the rate so high? Is it a serial murderer? The disappearance and murder rate of Native women is not new. It began with the colonization of our nations," said Terri Henry, Co-Chair, NCAI Task Force. "It is the result of the public perception that nothing will be done when a Native woman disappears or is murdered. And yes, it is the result of the United States removing the authority of Indian tribes to protect women."

The disappearance and murder of Native women is part of a spectrum of violence experienced from birth to death. The Department of Justice reports the rate of violent victimization among American Indian women is more than double that among all women. The disappearances and murders are the end result of this spectrum of violence.

"In Alaska, we are constantly responding to calls from mothers and the families of women who are missing," said

Tami Jerue, Director, Alaska Native Women's Resource Center. "These fears are well founded in that Alaska Natives are murdered at a higher rate than other people in Alaska." The Department of Justice reports American Indians in Alaska made up about 16% of the state's total resident population and 28% of the murder victims. About 1 in 4 of the murder victims in Alaska from 1976 to 1999 were American Indians. (USDOJ, 2004, p. 13)

## Murder of American Indians

**The following statistics from American Indians and Crime (USDOJ, 2004) provide important information regarding murder of American Indians in the United States.**

- In five states, Alaska (28%), North Carolina (2%), Washington (4%), Minnesota (7%), and Oregon (3%), the proportion of murder victims who were American Indian exceeded their proportion of each state's resident population. (2004, p.14)
- About 1 in 4 of the murder victims in Alaska from 1976 to 1999 were American Indians. Alaska accounted for about 10% of all murdered American Indians and had 4% of the nation's American Indian population. American Indians in Alaska made up about 16% of the state's total resident population and 28% of the murder victims. (2004, p. 13)
- During 1976 to 1999 in most murder cases involving a white or black victim, the offender was the same race as the victim. For example, 86% of white murder victims and 94% of black murder victims were murdered by an offender of their respective race. By comparison, American Indians (58%) were less likely to be murdered by an offender of their own race. In about 32% of the cases, American Indians were murdered by a white offender; 10%, by a black; and in 1%, by an Asian. (2004, p. 14)

# UNITY IN ACTION: 165 Organizations Call for a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls

Over 165 tribal, state, regional, and national organizations have signed on to our call to action in support of missing and murdered Native women and girls," said Lucy Simpson, Director, NIWRC. "We hope the resolution will focus the government's attention on this crisis."

The list of 165 organizations continues to grow as awareness builds on an issue described as an epidemic and a crisis that has long been ignored. "The epidemic of violence we are living is directly connected to abusers walking free without fear of the law, fear of civil liability, or fear of criminal prosecution," said Terri Henry, Secretary of State for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. "It is widespread, but it is not something new."

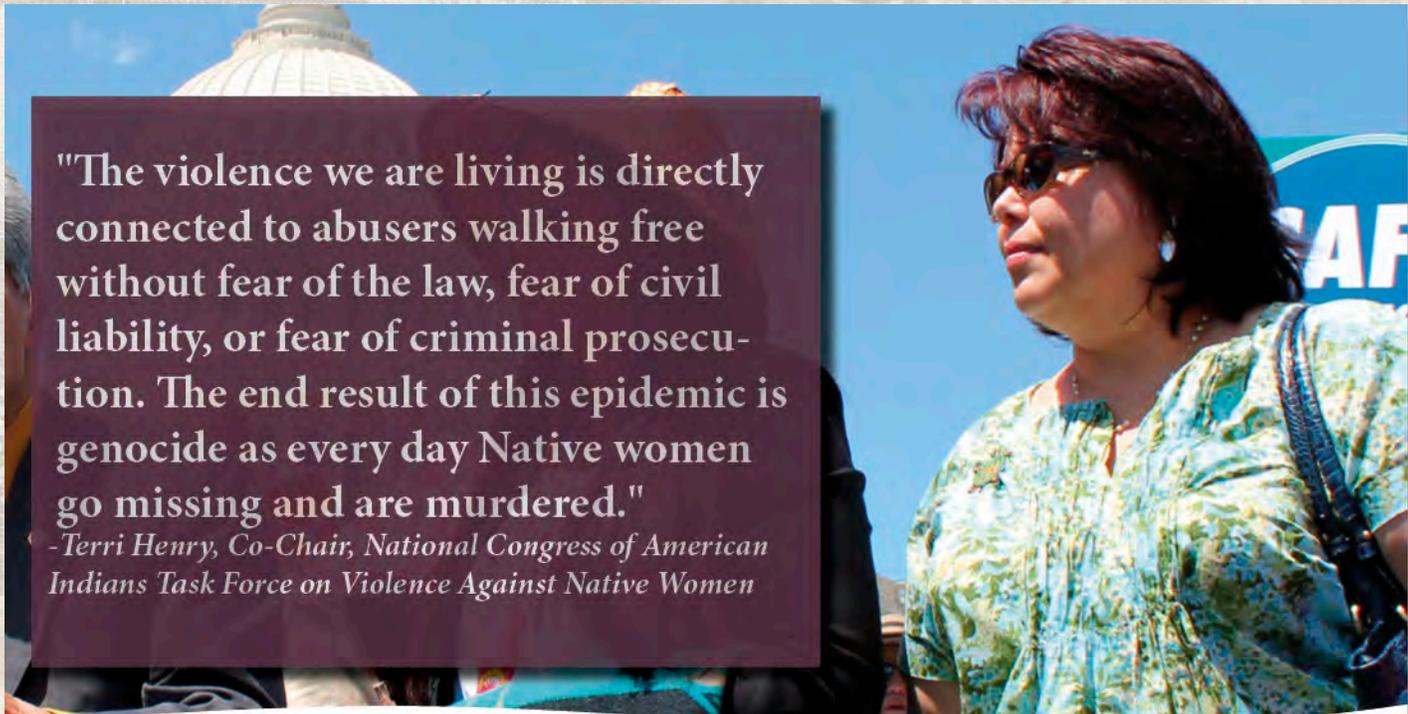
The call for a national day of awareness looks to the lessons learned by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) in building an international movement for justice and accountability for missing and murdered aboriginal women. The NWAC launched a campaign named "Sisters in Spirit" that resulted in increased awareness worldwide and action by the Canadian Parliament to begin a national inquiry into the missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls.

"The response of the movement to our call to action in support of Native women and girls is

inspiring," said Cherrah Giles, President, NIWRC Board. "But it is a first step. Much more needs to be done to address the violence and save lives. The national inquiry launched by the Canadian government is one example of what we as indigenous women need here in the United States."

The list of over 165 organizations recognizes the urgency to take action and the reality that every day violence is committed against American Indian and Alaska Native women. Many view violence against Native women not as a single incident but a pattern that occurs as a spectrum over time. Native women who are missing or murdered is one end of the spectrum of violence rooted in the history of violence against Indian nations by the United States.

"Our Native sisters have been educating us for decades, and we now realize as non-Native organizations we must speak out and stand up. We must use our voices to call for action to end the violence," said Rob Valente, Chief Officer for Governmental Affairs, National Domestic Violence Hotline. "The reality of missing Native women and girls is everyone's responsibility. The Hotline is honored to support the resolution."



"The violence we are living is directly connected to abusers walking free without fear of the law, fear of civil liability, or fear of criminal prosecution. The end result of this epidemic is genocide as every day Native women go missing and are murdered."

-Terri Henry, Co-Chair, National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Native Women



Support a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. Add your organization's name at: <http://bit.ly/2bjDfa1>

# Canada's National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls



*Commissioners leading the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (left to right): Chief Commissioner, the Honourable Marion Buller, Provincial Court Judge, British Columbia; Commissioner Michèle Audette, Former President of Québec Native Women's Association, Mani Utenam, Québec; Commissioner Qajaq Robinson, Associate, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Iqaluit, Nunavut; Commissioner Marilyn Poitras, Assistant Professor, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; and Commissioner Brian Eyolfson, Acting Deputy Director, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Legal Services, Couchiching First Nation, Ontario*

**A**s a result of national protest calling for an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women stretching back over many years, the Canadian Parliament has named five commissioners to lead a national inquiry. The commissioners will function independent of the federal government.

"The national inquiry is an important step in our journey to reconciliation with indigenous people in Canada," said Carolyn Bennett, Canadian Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. "For over a decade, the families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls have been demanding action." The inquiry began September 1 and will run until December 31, 2018. The Canadian government has committed \$53.86 million over two years to fund the inquiry. "They left no doubt in our minds about the urgent need to examine the underlying and deep, systemic challenges of this violence, including racism, sexism, and the sustained impact of colonialism," Bennett said.

"The government of Canada is committed to doing better. We will take action together to reach the goal to eliminate, as much as we can, violence against indigenous women and girls," said Jody Wilson-Raybould, Canada's justice minister and attorney general. "We need to identify the causes of these disparities and take action now to end them," she said.

The Commission will be led by Marion Buller, British Columbia's first female First Nations judge. The commissioners will study the roots of the violence against women and girls and patterns that could explain higher rates of violence including historical, social, institutional, and other factors. "The spirits of the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls will be close in our hearts and in our minds as we do our work," Buller said. "The families' and the survivors' losses, pain, strength, and courage will inspire our work."

**Follow @NWAC\_CA and #MMIWG for updates.**

**"Families made it very clear that they wanted answers, that many cases they felt were closed prematurely, that they don't accept the conclusion. They wanted those reopened. We cannot ignore the fact that many family members and survivors of violence do not feel like they were treated respectfully or fairly by the justice system."**

**-Dawn Lavell-Harvard,  
President, Native Women's  
Association of Canada**



**"Our mothers and grandmothers took care of us with compassion and love. Now as grandmothers we must raise our voices to help those missing, to stop the murders of our women, and find justice for those who did not survive. I don't want to see any more women die, to see children watch their mothers killed, to meet our women coming home to our village in body bags."**

**-Lenora "Lynn" Hootch,  
Director, Yup'ik Women's  
Coalition**



**Support a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls. Add your organization's name at: <http://bit.ly/2bjDfa1>**

# Missing and Murdered: Part 1

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article about the missing and murdered Native women in the United States and Canada is published with permission of the author Mary Annette Pember. It appeared originally as a three-part series in *Indian Country Today* and *Rewire*.

**A**lthough Trudi Lee was only 7 when her big sister went missing back in 1971, she wept when she talked about that traumatic event 45 years later. "Sometimes I would catch our mom crying alone," Lee said. "She would never tell me why, but I knew it was over Janice."

Janice was 15 when she went missing near the Yakama reservation in Washington. Although her parents reported her missing to tribal law enforcement, there was never any news of the lively, pretty girl. "Mom died in 2001 without ever knowing what happened," Lee said. "We still think of Janice and would at least like to put her to rest in the family burial plot."

"It happens all the time in Indian country," said Carmen O'Leary, coordinator of the Native Women's Society of the Great Plains in South Dakota, a coalition of Native programs that provide services to women who experience violence. "When Native women go missing, they are very likely to be dead."

Indeed, on some reservations, Native women are murdered at more than 10 times the national average, according to U.S. Associate Attorney General Thomas Perrelli, who presented this gruesome statistic while addressing the Committee on Indian Affairs on Violence Against Women in 2011.

Unlike Canada, where indigenous leaders and advocates have pressured the government to begin to confirm the numbers of missing and murdered indigenous women, the U.S. has done little to address the issue. Although the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) have helped bring attention to this high rate of violence and have begun to address gaps in law enforcement for tribes and federal

authorities, there is no comprehensive data collection system regarding the number of missing and murdered women in Indian country.

Under VAWA 2005, a national study authorized by Congress found that between 1979 and 1992 homicide was the third leading cause of death among Native females aged 15 to 34, and that 75 percent were killed by family members or acquaintances. And that horrific toll might actually be higher. "The number of missing Native women was not addressed in the study," noted Jacqueline Agtuca, lawyer and policy consultant for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC). "Currently, we do not have adequate information on the numbers of missing Native women in the U.S."

The high rates of sexual violence against Native women are inextricably tied to the likelihood of them going missing as violence and murder are closely interconnected. "Tribal leaders, police officers, and prosecutors tell us of an all-too-familiar pattern of escalating violence that goes unaddressed, with beating after beating, each more severe than the last, ultimately leading to death or severe physical injury," Perrelli said in his 2011 speech.

According to advocates like O'Leary, there is little hard data about missing and murdered women, only anecdotes that tell of the pain, loss, and anger of loved ones. "Missing and murdered Native women are a non-story in this country. You really don't hear about them unless you happen to know the family. Officially, these cases seem to get brushed under the rug. No one wants to talk about them," said O'Leary.

Indeed, law enforcement officials

questioned by ICTMN (Indian Country Today Media Network) seemed reluctant to discuss the issue. According to NamUs (National Missing and Unidentified Persons System), there are approximately 40,000 unidentified human remains either in the offices of the nation's medical examiners and coroners or that were buried or cremated before being identified. NamUs, operated by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), is a national repository and resource center for missing persons and unidentified decedent records. It offers a free online search system.

Troy Eid, former U.S. attorney for the state of Colorado, notes that protocols for taking missing person's reports and sharing with other agencies vary widely among tribal law enforcement. "Some offices may simply write down the information or may not record it at all," Eid said.

Eid served on the Indian Law and



# No One Knows How Many Native Women Have Disappeared

Order Commission created under TLOA. After two years of field research, he and fellow commissioners released the report, *A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer*, in 2013. The report describes law enforcement jurisdiction in Indian country as “an indefensible morass of complex, conflicting, and illogical commands,” and blames the U.S. government for creating the situation.

Of the 12 tribal law enforcement agencies contacted for this article about procedures for taking missing persons reports, just three responded: the Navajo Nation of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah; the Barona Band of Mission Indians in California; and the Red Lake Band of Chippewa in Minnesota. All reported that they have designated protocols for taking reports as well as computer terminals that can access the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

As far as tribal law enforcement working with other agencies, federal and local, Eid noted that those relationships also vary widely: “The relationships swing from good to

To help address such issues under the direction of the 2010 TLOA, the DOJ announced the launch of the initial phase of the Tribal Access Program for National Crime Information, TAP, in 2015 in which tribes would be able to both report and access crime information in the federal NCIC database. Ten tribes were selected to participate in the pilot program and were to receive NCIC terminals. DOJ officials did not respond to questions about the number of tribes that currently have access to the NCIC terminals nor to questions regarding funding for future tribal access.

Although the Tulalip Tribe is among the 10 participating in the project, they have yet to receive a NCIC terminal despite offering to pay for it, according to tribal attorney Michelle Demmert. (Note: Since going to print the Tulalip Tribe did receive an NCIC terminal.) “We need full access now to this database. I doubt that any other municipality or state would need to work so hard to justify meeting the needs of the community,” she said.

Native peoples are not the only

ones who are underserved by America’s approach to helping to find and identify missing persons. Reveal, a project with the Center for Investigative Reporting, published an extensive investigation in 2015, “Left for Dead: How America Fails the Missing and Unidentified,” which lays out

refused to provide access to its data on unidentified remains despite requests from Reveal under the Freedom of Information Act.

Clearly, missing persons and unidentified remains are not a top priority for law enforcement. But for Native women, whose numbers may be greater and whose loss may go unreported, the issue reflects a wider systemic failure of the U.S. to meet its trust agreement with tribal nations.

“There is so much fear and distrust of law enforcement among our people that they are often reluctant to report loved ones as missing or to report sexual assault,” noted O’Leary.

This fear adds to the lack of accurate data not only about missing and murdered women but also about those who have been raped. Contacting law enforcement can bring unwanted scrutiny to women who are victims of violent crime.

As an example, O’Leary pointed to the 2015 abduction of Edith Chavez in Minnesota, in which Chavez suspects she was drugged and taken to Williston, North Dakota. She managed to escape and reported the incident to Williston police who refused to take her statement and instead checked her record. The result? They detained and charged her for an unpaid traffic ticket from 2011. According to *The Guardian*, the Williston police department did not respond to requests for comment but instead issued a press release claiming Chavez had smelled of alcohol and had been to a casino. Police later dropped charges against Chavez.

“Native women are not often seen as worthy victims. We have to first prove our innocence, that we weren’t drunk or out partying,” said O’Leary.

According to Laura Madison, who along with Lauren Chief Elk, helped launch the Save Wiyabi Project, “Indigenous women go missing twice: once in real life and a second time in the news.



Supporters on the snow-covered stairs to the Veterans Bridge in Fargo, North Dakota, as they walk in the Sing Our Rivers Red march on Valentine’s Day, 2016. Picture by Mary Annette Pember.

almost nothing, and even to outright hostility.”

how U.S. authorities mishandle these reports. According to the article, the FBI

# Missing and Murdered: Part 2

**M**ost advocates for missing and murdered indigenous women are motivated by the loss of family member or friend as well as ongoing stories of loss in their communities.

When Makoons Miller Tanner works on her volunteer blog, she often thinks of her grandmother, who passed away in the 1940s, long before she was born. "She was in her 20s when she was killed. The authorities declared her death to be the result of her hitting her head on a rock after a seizure. This for a woman with no history of a seizure disorder," Miller Tanner said. "She hit her head on that rock nearly 75 times." Her family still speaks of the hurt and anger over the injustice surrounding her grandmother's death. After hearing the story repeated many times, she grew determined to contribute somehow to helping others find justice for their loved ones.

"Her story has been an inspiration for me to keep going," said Miller Tanner. She began her blog in December 2015 and has completed almost 200 profiles of missing/murdered Native women in the U.S. and Canada. During the course of the work, she has noticed that if Native women have any sort of criminal history, they don't get treated as deserving victims. She also noted a tendency to disregard spates of murders if police determine that they were not the work of a serial killer. "It's like there is less danger to the broader community. It's just Indians drinking and killing each other; it's business as usual," she said.

Advocates like Miller Tanner, the Save Wiyabe Project, and the Sing Our Rivers Red (SORR) group, however, are building a wave of resistance to the longstanding indifference surrounding missing and murdered women in their communities. SORR with its symbolic focus on the Red River, which flows north from the U.S. to Canada, has helped unite indigenous peoples from both countries in their common concern over violence against women in their communities.

In 2014, seven bodies of indigenous women were found in the Red River, which flows through Winnipeg. The Red River has become the most recent focal point of the missing and murdered indigenous women issue in Canada. Volunteers have organized to drag the river, hoping to find remains of some of the dozens of women reported missing each year in Canada.

Winnipeg police, however, decline to help these efforts, calling them inefficient allocation of law enforcement resources. With the help of public donations, families, friends, and supporters banded together and dragged the river, desperately hoping to find clues to the whereabouts of loved ones. According to advocates such as Clinton Alexander, director of the Native American Center of Fargo, secluded spots along the river in and around Fargo are known as dangerous places for indigenous women.

Located in east central North Dakota and close to bordering Minnesota, Fargo is a well-

known stopping-off place for Native peoples en route to the various reservations in this vast area. Native people make up a large portion of the homeless population here. "People turn a blind eye to violence that occurs among a population that they see as marginal. There's an attitude that women who are on the streets are 'bad victims' and don't deserve help and support," he said.

Alexander said that systematic and collective racism among the community and law enforcement contributes to Native women's fear of reporting sexual assault. As Jacqueline Agtuca of the National Indigenous Women's Resource and U.S. Associate Attorney General Thomas Perrelli of the Department of Justice have noted, unrecorded sexual violence directly contributes to increased incidents of women going missing.

"We encourage them to report the incidents to police but they say, 'What's the point? Police won't do anything,'" Alexander said. He described a case in which a Native woman in Fargo, North Dakota, flagged down police after her friend was sexually assaulted only to be arrested for public intoxication herself. He also told of going to the emergency room with a Native woman who had been raped. "She didn't want to make a police report, she just wanted to be examined and get Plan B contraception," he recalled.

The police officer at the hospital insisted on being present in the room despite being told the victim didn't want him there and the case

# Sorrow Like a River, Forcing the World to Listen



Supporters in the Sing Our Rivers Red march carry signs as they walk under the Veterans Bridge along the Red River in Fargo, North Dakota. The bridge underpass has been the site of several sexual assaults of indigenous women.

was a "Jane Doe" report. In such reports, victims do not have to agree to immediately press charges against the perpetrator; they can do so at a later date. "The woman was very traumatized by her treatment at the hospital. Law enforcement sent the message that she couldn't be trusted. In the end she chose not to press charges," said Alexander. "Native women are afraid to report rape. They say it's like being victimized all over again."

Cathy, who requested only her first name be used, described how she was raped and sodomized under the Veterans Bridge in Fargo last year. "It was still daylight," she recalled. After 11 years of sobriety, she had relapsed and was drinking with a man whom she thought was her boyfriend. She had passed out under the bridge but woke to find him and another man assaulting her. "I tried to get away but they held

me down. [The 'boyfriend'] said he would tell my family I was working as a prostitute if I called the cops."

She was not but knew police would be unlikely to take her report seriously. "I knew that since I was using, the cops wouldn't do anything, so I didn't report it," she said. "The cops don't have time to listen to you, they say, 'Oh, you're just another drunk Indian, take her to detox,'" she added. Cathy sometimes blames herself for her attack but added, "It shouldn't matter what kind of shape I was in; I didn't deserve that."

Cathy is currently in a nursing home in Duluth recovering from an accident and hopeful she can "get back on track." In the meantime, she said, "I have a hard time sleeping at night; I need to have all the lights on." Advocates such as Alexander and organizers of the SORR project fear that the number of missing, murdered, and

assaulted indigenous women may also be far higher than official data indicate.

Tanya Red Road, program coordinator for the Fargo Native American Center, reported that she receives several calls each week from people seeking information about missing women from all over Indian country. "So many people are searching for missing loved ones," she said. "We take their names and promise to keep an eye out for them."

SORR organizers have created a display of over 1,000 single earrings sent to them by volunteers to honor the missing and murdered. The display, which includes information about the issue both in the U.S. and Canada, is available for display to communities.

Although their numbers were small, local indigenous women and supporters marched in solidarity with their sisters in Winnipeg to bring attention to the unreported violence against indigenous women. During a stop under the Veterans Bridge, elders held a brief ceremony on that icy Valentine's Day. SORR organizer Hannabah Blue said, "We are letting the perpetrators and community know that we are watching."

# Missing and Murdered: Part 3

The “missing white woman syndrome” explains the lack of media attention for missing Native women, according to Makoons Miller Tanner of Duluth. “Pretty, young, middle class white women make good victims versus Native women who may have criminal pasts,” noted Miller Tanner who maintains the Justice for Native Women blog.

In Indian country, cases of the missing and murdered are often not covered by the media. They grow cold and are forgotten.

Sarah Deer, professor of law at William Mitchell College of Law, who has an extensive history of working to end violence against Native women, described the lack of data and attention to missing and murdered Native women as a conspiracy of indifference on the part of the U.S. government and law enforcement. “If we had the funding to search and assess our data, I think we would find that we in the U.S. have absolutely similar numbers to Canada in terms of missing and murdered women,” she said.

According to a 2015 report by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, more than 1,000 indigenous women have gone missing or were murdered between 1980-2012. In 2014, 11 indigenous women



*Tanya Red Road holds a red silhouette during the Sing Our Rivers Red march on Valentine's Day in Fargo, North Dakota, symbolizing an indigenous woman who has been murdered.*

went missing. Advocates claim that the actual number is much higher.

Deer noted that the U.S. and Canada have similar social and economic dynamics affecting indigenous women, such as histories of boarding schools and migration to urban settings. “We share a parallel trauma,” she noted. “Terrible things happen to our women, but it never seems to reach a priority among law enforcement. Our communities must empower themselves at the grassroots level to make change, otherwise it will never happen.”

Change is beginning to come, and as Deer noted, it is at the grassroots level. There are numerous ad hoc

efforts to keep databases of missing and murdered Native women, as well as a growing number of social media sites dedicated to spreading the word about missing girls and women in Indian country. The Save Wiyabi Project (Wiyabi is Assiniboine for women), Justice for Native Women blog, and Sing Our Rivers Red Project (SORR) are examples of such groups.

Lauren Chief Elk and Laura Madison created a map as part of the Save Wiyabi Project to help track missing and murdered women. “This was created by indigenous women for indigenous women, because our governments and media erase the large-scale violence against us,” according

# Conspiracy of Indifference: Press and Police Ignore Violence Against Native Women



Valentine's Day 2016 in Fargo, ND, Native women walk to honor and call for justice for missing and murdered Native women. Picture by Jolene Yazzie.

to a statement explaining the site.

According to Chief Elk, Save Wiyabi has verified 1,050 violent incidents involving indigenous women, those who have disappeared been murdered or assaulted. "We also found that many of the tribal law enforcement agencies

we contacted basically have no established procedures at all for collecting missing persons reports," she said. "There seems to be a cavalier attitude about missing women even among our own people."

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# The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and the following list of 165 organizations support the resolution to create a "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls" as of September 8, 2016

- Advocacy Resource Center (ARC)  
 Alaska Native Women's Resource Center  
 Alternatives to Domestic Violence  
 American Indian Development Associates, LLC  
 Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence  
 Bad River Domestic Abuse Program  
 Battered Women's Justice Project  
 Bergen County Alternatives To Domestic Violence - ADV  
 Beyond Survival  
 Blue Corn Mothers Alliance  
 California Tribal TANF - Amador County  
 California Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 California Consortium for Urban Indian Health  
 California Partnership to End Domestic Violence  
 Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA)  
 Center for Indigenous Health Research CFS/SERV  
 Cherokee Elder Care  
 Choctaw Health Center  
 Clan Star, Inc  
 Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women  
 COALITION TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN  
 Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 Community Against Violence (CAV)  
 Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, Inc.  
 Creative Interventions  
 Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center  
 DC Rape Crisis Center  
 Denver Indian Family Resource Center  
 Don't have one  
 DOVE Center  
 End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin  
 Equay Wiigamig  
 FaithTrust Institute  
 Family Violence Appellate Project  
 Florida Council Against Sexual Violence  
 Fort Mojave Indian Tribe Domestic Violence Program  
 Futures Without Violence  
 Healing Native Hearts Coalition  
 Hecete Band  
 Ho-Chunk Nation Domestic Abuse Division  
 HopeWorks of Howard County, Inc.  
 Hopi Domestic Violence Program  
 Hopi-Tewa Women's Coalition to End Abuse  
 Hui O Na Wahine ma Hawai'i  
 Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 Indian Education Program  
 Indian Health Care Resource Center  
 Indian Health Council  
 Indian Health Service-Blackfeet Community Hospital  
 Indian Law Resource Center  
 Indigenous Roots & Kalpulli Yaocenoxtli  
 Indigenous Women's Justice Institute  
 Integrated Concepts, Inc.  
 Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada  
 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS PROJECT  
 Isleta Behavioral Health Services  
 ITCN Family Violence Prevention Project  
 Jane Doe Inc., the MA Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence  
 Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence  
 Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.  
 La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians  
 Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indian  
 Maniilaq Association  
 Mescalero Violence Against Women  
 Meskwaki Nation Child Support Services  
 Meskwaki Victim Services  
 Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center  
 Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition  
 MN Indigenous Women's Society  
 Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence  
 Morongo Tribal TANF  
 Mothers against meth alliance  
 Muscogee (Creek) Nation Family Violence Prevention Program  
 My Sisters' Place  
 National Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
 National Center for Victims of Crime  
 National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence  
 National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women  
 National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 National Domestic Violence Hotline  
 Native Alliance Against Violence  
 Native Wellness Institute  
 Native Women's Society of the Great Plains  
 NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 nDigiDreams, LLC  
 New Day Shelter  
 New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Centers  
 New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence  
 New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NMCADV)  
 New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.  
 New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 Nooksack DV Program  
 North American Indian Center of Boston, Inc.  
 North Star Group  
 Northern Cheyenne Behavioral Health Programs  
 Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence  
 Northwoods Women, Inc., d.b.a. New Day Shelter  
 Oglala Lakota Nation Victim Services  
 Oglala Sioux Tribe Victim Services  
 Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
 Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
 One Nation Walking Together  
 Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence  
 Organized Village of Kake  
 OST Victim Services  
 Outpatient Clinic Department  
 P&S Legal Advocacy, PLLC  
 PADA  
 Pascua Yaqui Tribe Health Department  
 Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Philadelphia District Attorneys Office  
 Rape Victim Advocates  
 Restoring Ancestral Winds, Inc.  
 Robin Parker Garcia Fine Art  
 Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling  
 Sacred Hoop Coalition  
 Safe Alternatives for Abused Families  
 Schoolcraft College  
 Sego Lily Center for the Abused Deaf  
 Seven Dancers Coalition  
 Sexual Assault and Family Emergencies (SAFE)  
 Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition  
 Strong Hearted Native Women's Coalition, Inc.  
 Talk to a Survivor  
 Tewa Women United  
 Texas Association Against Sexual Assault  
 The Native America Humane Society  
 The Women of Color Network, Inc  
 The Women's Center  
 The Yup'ik Women's Coalition  
 Ticcilli Yahualli  
 Transformative Healing  
 Tribal Health  
 Tulsa Indian Club, inc  
 Turning Point  
 United Houma Nation  
 United South & Eastern Tribes  
 Uniting Three Fires Against Violence  
 University of Maine  
 Virgin Islands Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Council  
 Wabanaki Women's Coalition  
 Wakinyan Media  
 Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV)  
 Washington State Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs  
 WEAVE  
 West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Wica Agli  
 Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
 Wise Women Gathering Place  
 Women Helping Women  
 Women of Color Network  
 Women's Crisis Support Team  
 Women's Resource Center, University of Utah  
 Yakama Nation Victim Resource Program  
 YWCA Missoula  
 YWCA Utah  
 YWCA Yakima

# The United State of Women Summit

The first summit on The United State of Women represented an important moment for women and girls domestically and internationally, as well as for all proponents of gender justice and equality.

Following the summit, The United State of Women remains committed to giving a megaphone to the importance of gender equality and providing a platform for addressing these critical concerns.

The summit agenda was designed to address six key gender equality issues, including economic empowerment, health and wellness, educational opportunity, violence against women, entrepreneurship and innovation, and leadership and civic

engagement. The goal of the summit was to rally together the national movement to celebrate its achievements and determine how it will take action to continue moving forward.

*We are the United State of Women.*

*And when we do better, everyone does better.*

*You with us? Then listen up and join #StateofWomen.*

## Tribal Women Represent at Summit

More than sixty tribal participants attended the summit from across the United States, including the lower forty-eight and Alaska. Honorable Chief Lynn Malerba, Mohegan Tribe, provided one of the opening Ignite plenaries on tribal sovereignty during a second-day event focused on violence against women. Tribal speakers for the Criminal Justice Reform in American Indian Nations and Alaska Native Villages included Honorable Melissa L. Pope, Chief Judge, Nottawaseppi Band of Huron Indians; Mary Kathryn Nagle, Partner, Pipestem Law; Tami Jerue, Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center; and Michelle Demmert, Chief Judge, Tlingit-Haida Court.

Tribal speakers for the Protections for the Next Generation of Native Youth included Honorable Theresa Pouley, Judge, Colville Tribal Court and Commissioner, Indian Law and Order Commission; Cherrah Giles, Board President of NIWRC and former Secretary, Dept. of Community and

Human Services, Muscogee Creek Nation; and Nicole Matthews, Executive Director of the Minnesta Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition.

Tribal speakers for the Indigenous Lifeways: A Key to Personal Economy and Safety included Deborah Parker,



Former Vice Chair, Tulalip Tribe; and Victoria Hykes Steere, Professor, Alaska Pacific University.

During the closing panel, Honorable Abby Abinanti, Chief Judge, Yurok Tribe, Co-Chair California Tribal Court/State Court Forum and Board President, Tribal Law and Policy Institute, shared her thoughts on the importance of culture and legal reforms to enhance safety for Native women. On Tuesday evening, *Sliver of a Full Moon* was performed at the National Museum of the American Indian as the key cultural component of the summit events.

For more information on the summit, visit:

**[theunitedstateofwomen.org](http://theunitedstateofwomen.org)**

## WATCH:

The #UnitedStateofNativeWomen PSA!

**<https://youtu.be/0HrMMIMqBKO>**



# Update on Struggle to Create a Dedicated Tribal Victims of Crime Act Program

**T**he Crime Victims Fund (CVF) pays for itself by collecting criminal fines, forfeited appearance bonds, penalties, special assessments, gifts, and donations. Currently, every state in the country has access to a set-aside fund from the CVF, but unfortunately these state funds reach Native American communities at a very low rate, despite significant need in these areas. According to the U.S. Justice Department, between 2010–2014, programs serving Native American survivors of violent crime received less than 0.5% of the CVF annually.

## The SURVIVE Act

Indian tribes and advocates have asked for a permanent fix to this disparity for more than a decade. In June 2015, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, held a Senate hearing on the importance of creating a tribal set-aside fund for survivors of violence in tribal communities. Working with Vice-Chairman Jon Tester (D-MT) and a bipartisan group of Senators on the Indian Affairs Committee, Barrasso also introduced the SURVIVE Act, which would also address the needs of Native American victims in tribal communities. That bill was reported out of the Indian Affairs Committee in July 2015 with unanimous bipartisan support. The SURVIVE Act would direct 5% of the overall disbursements from the CVF to tribal governments for the purposes of meeting the needs of crime victims on tribal lands.

## Amendment to FY 2017 Appropriations Bills

Currently, less than 5 cents per \$100 from the CVF goes to tribal programs, despite Congress tripling expenditures from that

Fund over the past two years. Fortunately both the Senate and House appropriations bills for 2017 contained a tribal amendment to address this disparity. The amendments were adopted by both the Senate and House with bipartisan support.

Senator Jon Tester introduced an amendment to create a 5% tribal allocation from the CVF for tribal governments, which would be just over \$145 million of the nearly \$3 billion disbursed from the Fund. These resources will be accessed and administered by tribal governments. “Survivors of violent crimes do not receive the resources they need to fully recover from traumatic cases, especially in rural communities,” Tester said. “These additional funds will help prosecute violent criminals, ensure that survivors are receiving the support they need, and make our communities a safer place to raise a family.” Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) both spoke in favor of Senator Tester’s amendment, which was adopted by the Appropriations Committee by voice vote with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Similarly, Representative Mike Honda (D-CA) worked with Representative Tom Cole (R-OK) to pass an amendment to the House Commerce, Justice, and Science (CJS) appropriations bill for FY 2017 directing 5% of the Crime Victims Fund to tribal governments. “I want to thank my colleagues, especially Mr. Cole, for supporting this amendment and for supporting our Native American families,” said Rep. Honda. “The history of our nation is littered with a disgusting litany of abuse and injustice perpetrated by our government on Native

Americans. Thankfully, we have begun to do better. We have begun making changes that recognize the challenges faced in Native communities, and potential solutions to them. Today, we have taken a first step toward one of those solutions.”

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN), and Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV) all spoke in strong support of the Honda amendment. Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), and 31 other members of House of Representatives signed a letter requesting the members of the CJS Subcommittee address the longstanding disparities which leave tribal victims of crime without equal access to the assistance received by other victims in our country. The letter stated, “Since federally recognized tribes are autonomous sovereign governments, they should be able to access the CVF and protect victims of crime as can states and territories. We urge you to include language in the CJS appropriations bill to allow federally recognized tribal governments to receive direct CVF disbursements and fully support efforts to implement SDVCJ.”

Since the passage of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in 1984, the federal government has provided significant support to crime victim services programs across the country. Unfortunately, as is too often the case, Indian country has largely been left out of this effort. Crime victims on tribal lands still struggle to access even the most basic services. Over the past two years, Congress has more than tripled outlays from the CVF, which reflects Congress’s commitment to provide services to victims of crime. Unfortunately, tribes do not

have the same access to the CVF as state and territorial governments, and none of these increases have been directed to tribal governments.

### Understanding the Crime Victims Fund

Congress created the CVF in 1984 based on the idea that money the government collects from criminals should be used to help those victimized by crime. Unfortunately, in 1984, policymakers were not thinking about the need to create a separate formula funding stream for Indian tribes, which is now recognized as the best way to support tribal governments and tribal programs. The inclusion of a tribal program under the CVF as within the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act as well as the Violence Against Women Act is long overdue given major progress in tribal and federal relations since 1984.

Despite significant increases in collections, Congress has imposed a cap on how much is available from the CVF for crime victim services and compensation for the past 15 years. In recent years, distributions from the CVF have been about \$700 million. Collections, however, reached as

high as \$2.8 billion in 2013, leaving a balance in the fund of over \$13 billion. There has been considerable pressure on Congress to make more of this money available for crime victims, and Congress significantly increased the distributions for FY 2015 to \$2.3 billion and increased them again to \$2.6 billion for FY 2016.

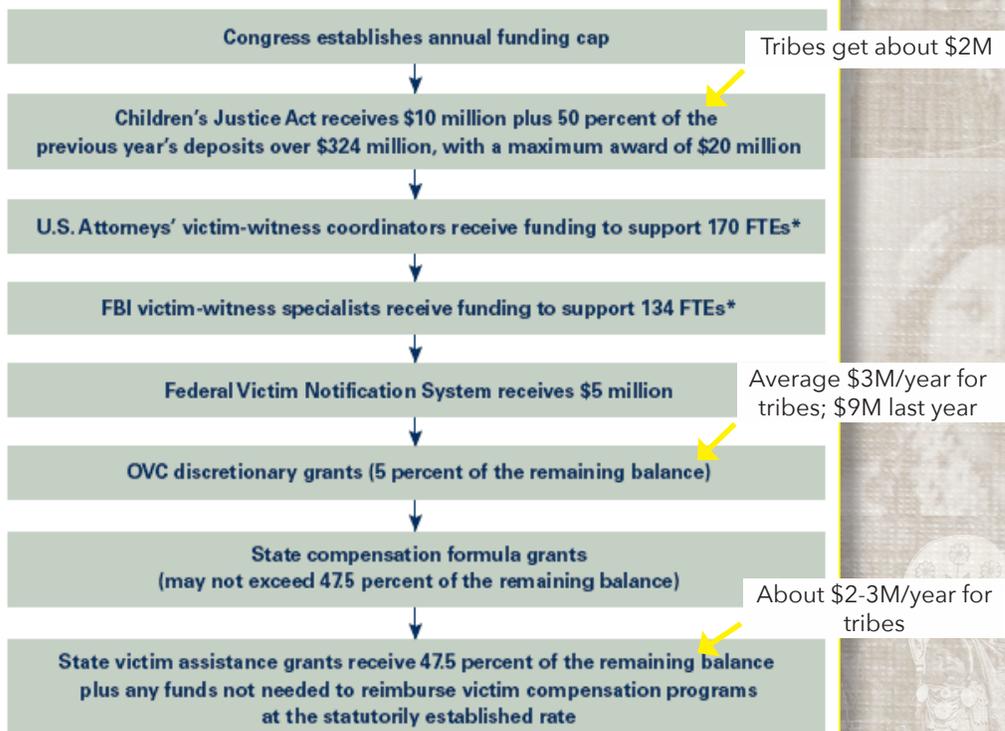
Unlike state and territorial governments, who receive an annual formula distribution from the CVF, Indian tribes are only able to access CVF funds via pass-through grants from the states or by competing for very limited resources administered by the Department of Justice. According to DOJ, from 2010–2014, state governments passed through 0.5% of available funds to programs serving tribal victims—less than \$2.5 million annually nationwide. This leaves a significant unmet need in most tribal communities. In 2013—the year with the highest number of state subgrants to date—more than 60% of states with Indian tribes did not make any subgrants. Of the 16 states that did pass through money to tribal victim service programs, all but one passed through less than 5% of the states’ available VOCA funds.

## Crime Victims Fund Summary of Tribal Issues

- In FY15 and FY16, Congress significantly increased disbursements from the Crime Victims Fund (CVF), which is the nation’s primary funding source for crime victim services programs and compensation.
- Despite more than tripling disbursements to \$2.6 billion, Indian tribes, who experience the highest crime victimization rates in the country, continue to be left out of the programs funded by the CVF.
- A growing number of organizations and groups have recognized the need to increase the access of Indian tribes to the lifesaving VOCA funds including the:
  - The bipartisan group of Senators who co-sponsored the SURVIVE Act
  - The bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives who supported inclusion of a tribal allocation in the FY 2017 CJS appropriations bills
  - National Task Force

**For more information, please contact NCAI Senior Policy Advisor Virginia Davis at [VDavis@NCAI.org](mailto:VDavis@NCAI.org)**

**Figure 2. Crime Victims Fund Allocation Process**



\*Full-time employees.

# United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Selects Terri Henry

**T**erri Henry, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Secretary of State and Chairwoman of the Indian Law Resource Center Board of Directors, is one of 16 experts tapped to serve on the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. She will begin her three-year term on January 1, 2017.

"Terri is an excellent choice to serve in this important role," said Robert T. Coulter, Executive Director of the Center. "She has dedicated her career and life to advancing the human rights of indigenous peoples and to achieving justice for indigenous women at every level—domestically, regionally, and internationally."

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is an advisory body to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The 16-member Forum provides expert advice and information on indigenous issues concerning economic and social development, human rights, culture, the environment, education, and health. With more than 25 years of legal and practical experience in the fields of indigenous affairs and human rights, Ms. Henry is a recognized leader among her colleagues and peers.

Ms. Henry was elected to three consecutive terms on the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Tribal Council, including a two-year term as Chairwoman, making her the first woman to ever sit on the Tri-Council of the Cherokee Nations. She was honored by the United South and Eastern

Tribes for her work to pass the historic tribal criminal jurisdiction provisions in the Violence Against Women Act of 2013. Ms. Henry has served on the Board of Directors of the Indian Law Resource Center for seven years.

"Terri, is a founding member of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and served as the first chair of our board of directors," said Lucy Simpson, Director of NIWRC. "I first worked with Terri in 2008 to draft an amicus brief in support of Jessica Gonzales in her case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Over the years, Terri has provided leadership and sisterhood. She is an excellent selection."

Ms. Henry is an internationally recognized expert on combating violence against indigenous women. In 2011, she was part of the Permanent Forum's Expert Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women, and was instrumental in bringing the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women to the Qualla Boundary, the territory of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. As a result of the visit, the Rapporteur's report makes concrete recommendations

regarding the necessity of



local indigenous juridical systems in combating violence against indigenous women that continue to be referenced and cited by indigenous advocates and UN independent experts.

Ms. Henry is a founding member and the Co-Chair of the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Women. In that role, she has helped submit a number of joint written statements to the UN Human Rights Council and its special procedures, including the Special Rapporteurs on the rights of indigenous peoples and on violence against women, the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and practice, and the Universal Periodic Review of the United States, as well as the Commission on the Status of Women. Ms. Henry also participated as a delegate to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014.

# Yup'ik Women's Coalition Launches the Justice Now! Campaign to End Rape: Hopi-Tewa Women's Coalition Shares Lessons in Creation of a SART



September 2, 2016, Anchorage, Alaska—(left to right) Lynn Hootch, Dorma Sahneyah, and Carey Onsaie dialogue during the planning session of the Yup'ik Women's Coalition to map a campaign to end sexual assault in the Yup'ik region.

Hopi-Tewa Women's Coalition to End Abuse is a tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalition that provides education, technical assistance, and training to the community and organizations who provide direct services to victims/survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

P.O. Box 239  
Second Mesa, AZ 86043  
(928) 737-9000

@hopitewawomenscoalition

September 1, 2016, Anchorage, Alaska—The Yup'ik Women's Coalition (YWC) gathered tribal leaders, administrators, and longtime advocates to map the Justice Now! campaign to end sexual abuse in the Yup'ik region. The women were joined by representatives from the Hopi-Tewa Women's Coalition to End Abuse (HTWC), Executive Director Carey Onsaie, and Board President Dorma Sahneyah.

"We welcome you to Alaska," said Lenora Hootch, Director, YWC. "We know the campaign has to come from our villages. We have seen over the years programs that are not based on our traditional ways do not work in our villages. It is always so hard to try to make outside campaigns and curriculum fit our villages. And it never works. So we are very excited to have the Hopi-Tewa Women's Coalition share their lessons as a coalition and as a tribe. We have so many similarities."

The YWC extended an invitation to the HTWC to attend its planning session in Anchorage. "We are also excited to join

you and share our experience in developing the Native Hopi Health Care Center SANE unit," expressed Dorma Sahneyah. "Exchanges like this are critically important given the stark lack of indigenous-based sexual assault programs and SANE units within tribal nations." The two-day planning session was designed to facilitate an exchange of information and lessons between the HTWC and the YWC as indigenous peoples.

"The system is failing us and we cannot wait for it to be fixed while women and children suffer. When we know there are young



September 1, 2016, Anchorage, Alaska—Stella Fancy Boy, President, Native Village of Bill Moore's Slough (left), and Joann Horn, Director Emmonak Women's Shelter (right) help to plan the first sexual assault awareness conference for April 2017.



girls going to one man's house, we have to confront the man and not be afraid," said Lenora Hootch, Director, Yupik Women's Coalition. "We need to say to him if you are gathering young girls in your home and if there is anything you are doing to harm them sexually I am going to report you. And then that man is aware that we are watching him. People know who we are in our villages and we know who the perpetrators are in our villages. We have our grandchildren playing on the roads so we have to protect them. We have to watch over our children, our daughters, and our granddaughters and grandsons."

# New Alaska Native Women's Resource Center

**O**n September 9, 2016, through work with the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) and many sister organizations, Tamra "Tami" Truett Jerue officially began as the Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.

Since 2011, the NIWRC has worked closely with a group of longtime village-based Alaska Native advocates to address the unique challenges Alaska tribes face in responding to violence against women, including active participation in the annual government-to-government consultation mandated by the Violence Against Women Act 2005.

This partnership has focused on discussing current services, injustices, and recommendations for addressing Alaska tribal governments' needs and advocating for increased victim safety and abuser / offender accountability. In the spring of 2013, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), U.S. Dept. of Justice, released their Technical Assistance (TA) Program solicitation, which included the following purpose

area that OVW was interested in funding: "Develop and implement culturally specific training and technical assistance addressing the unique challenges that Alaska Native villages experience when addressing and responding to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking."

As a result of more than 15 years of advocacy by Alaska Native advocates and tribes for the need for technical assistance and training that was designed by and for Alaska Natives addressing violence against women, OVW included this purpose area in their TA

solicitation. Since OVW opened its doors in 1995—OVW's TA has primarily focused on national tribal TA, excluding the needs of tribes in any one state or region. Alaska tribes and advocates changed the way that OVW and the federal government conducts business so that it now implements finding #6 of Section 901 of Title IX. Safety for Indian Women: "the unique legal relationship of the United States to Indian tribes creates a federal trust responsibility to assist tribal governments in safeguarding the lives of Indian women.



In October 2013, a technical assistance grant from the OVW to NIWRC was awarded to develop the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center and develop and provide technical assistance and training to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native tribal governments addressing violence against women.

**Contact Tami Truett Jerue and the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center by email at [tami.jerue@aknwrc.org](mailto:tami.jerue@aknwrc.org) or call 907-328-9399.**

# National Native Helpline Is Moving Ahead NIWRC Now Hiring for the New StrongHearts Native Helpline in Austin, TX!

**T**he National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) in partnership with the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH) is excited to announce that the StrongHearts Native Helpline, to be staffed by Native advocates, is scheduled to launch on January 4, 2017. The goal of the StrongHearts Native Helpline is to ensure that Native victims of domestic violence can access safety in a culturally relevant manner and eventually live their lives free of abuse.

"Native women need a Native hotline because their lives and pathways to safety are rooted in their tribal nations," said Leanne Guy, Executive Director of the Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition. "Each tribe has a specific response system and knowledge of this system is essential in order to assist a caller."

The StrongHearts Native Helpline will provide confidential, cost-free crisis intervention information, safety planning, culturally appropriate support, and referral services to Native victims of domestic violence calling its toll-free number. NIWRC has focused development of information and referral resources in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska. Outreach to the Southwest (AZ, NM, UT, NV) and Alaska has been initiated and is ongoing.

"Native women seeking safety from abuse need the services of a national hotline that is designed and staffed with Native advocates to serve Native women within their tribal nations," said Dorma Sahneyah, NIWRC Director of Training and Technical Assistance.

As a result of an unexpected acceleration of our development timeline, NIWRC has agreed to house StrongHearts in Austin, Texas, with the National Domestic Violence Hotline, to allow StrongHearts staff to receive direct support and mentoring from the NDVH. This is important in building a strong base aimed at enhancing



services and outreach to tribal communities and Alaska Native Villages.

NIWRC is seeking applicants for the following positions:

**StrongHearts Advocate**  
**StrongHearts Assistant Director**  
**StrongHearts Communications Manager**  
**StrongHearts Data Specialist**  
**StrongHearts IT Coordinator**

The job announcements for the positions and application form are available at [NIWRC.org](http://NIWRC.org). To submit your application electronically you must first download the PDF. New hires are expected to live in Austin, Texas, for the initial startup time frame, then relocate to the soon-to-be permanent Helpline office in Tulsa, Oklahoma. If you have questions about the positions, please contact Tang Cheam, Director of Technology, at [tcheam@niwrc.org](mailto:tcheam@niwrc.org)

Please support the StrongHearts Native Hotline and share this information with your networks and communities!

**EXPLORE ONLINE:**  
StrongHearts Native Helpline Job positions  
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# Amicus Brief to Support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe



**A**s this edition of *Restoration* goes to print, the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) is preparing to file an amicus brief in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST). The brief will support the tribe in its fight to stop a pipeline that threatens their water, sacred sites, and ultimately, the health and welfare of their entire nation. "We are asking all organizations who joined us in signing onto the Dollar General and past amicus briefs to join us now," said Lucy Simpson, Director, NIWRC.

## Background on the Legal Case

The SRST filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in relation to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). The litigation involves two broad issues surrounding the proposed construction of a major crude-oil pipeline that passes through the tribe's ancestral lands. First, the pipeline would pass under the Missouri River (at Lake Oahe) just a half a mile upstream of the tribe's reservation boundary, where a spill would be culturally and economically catastrophic. Second, the pipeline would pass through areas of great cultural significance, such as sacred sites and burial grounds that federal law seeks to protect. You can read more about the lawsuit at <http://earthjustice.org/features/faq-standing-rock-litigation>.

SRST filed a motion for preliminary injunction in the United States District Court, District of Columbia. On September 9, 2016, the federal judge presiding over the case denied SRST's motion. As a result, the pipeline company (Energy Transfer Partners) is free to continue to construct on—and destroy—the tribe's sacred sites east and west of the Missouri River. SRST has filed an appeal to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, and after SRST files its brief on the merits, NIWRC will file an amicus brief in support.

"Regardless of the court's decision today, we are winning the spiritual battle. We must continue

to have faith and believe in the strength of our prayers and not do anything in violence. We must believe in the Creator and good things will come. We will continue to stand united and peaceful in our opposition to the pipeline."

—Chairman Dave Archambault II, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

## What Will NIWRC's Amicus Brief Say?

There is a recognized and documented correlation between an increase in extractive industries and an increase in violence against Native women. Data gathered in the Bakken oil boom in North Dakota and Montana, as well as data from various extractive industries in other indigenous territories (such as Canada), show that an increase in extractive industries coincides with an increase in crimes against Native women and children such as rape, assault, domestic violence, murder, and sex trafficking. The current oil extraction activities in North Dakota—at present levels—have already created a crisis. Native women and children—and the nations that seek to protect them—suffer the most.

As sovereign nations, the tribes in North Dakota have an inherent right to protect their women and children from anyone or anything that threatens to bring crime onto tribal lands. But when Native nations are excluded from the federal consultation process, they lose any and all meaningful opportunity to consult on the harmful effects a pipeline will have on their land, water, and ultimately—the lives of their citizens. Congress created the §106 consultation process to honor and respect the sovereign government-to-government relationship between the United States and Native nations. As trustee to Native nations, the federal government has a duty and an obligation to fully engage Native nations in the §106 consultation process and consider all concerns Native nations voice—including, and not limited to, the increased violence and assaults their women and children will face if the federal government issues the permits necessary to allow this pipeline to cross the Missouri River.

The amicus brief in support of the SRST is part of the NIWRC's VAWA Sovereignty Initiative Project. It will be coauthored by Mary Kathryn Nagle and Sarah Deer, and filed by Pipestem Law P.C.

# President Obama Supports Formation of North American Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls

**O**n June 29, 2016, President Obama traveled to Ottawa for the North American Leaders' Summit (NALS) to meet with the President of Mexico and the Canadian Prime Minister to discuss a variety of topics impacting our shared borders. Among the many commitments announced at the NALS was a tri-lateral commitment to address the high levels of violence against indigenous women and girls that exist across North America.

All three countries agreed that the high levels of violence endured by indigenous women and girls across the continent warrants increased attention and coordination, resulting in the formation of the new North American Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls (the Working Group). Across Canada, the United States, and Mexico, indigenous women and girls face alarmingly high levels of violence and often lack access to justice, health care, and social services.

A new report from the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institute of Justice (NIJ), which was released in May 2016, found that more than 84% of Alaska Native and American Indian women had experienced some form of violence in their lifetimes. According to the researchers, of those women, 66% experienced psychological violence, 56% experienced sexual violence, 55% experienced physical violence from an intimate partner, and 49% experienced stalking.

The data in the NIJ study also show interracial violence is unacceptably common against American Indian women. The NIJ report found that, among the women who reported experiencing violence in their lifetimes, 97% of victims experienced violence by a perpetrator who was not American Indian or Alaska Native.

## **Coordination Is Needed to Address Challenges of Violence Across Borders**

Regional coordination on the challenges presented by the incidence of this violence across borders comes at a pivotal time. According to reports by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, indigenous women and girls face greater risks of violence and homicide.



*June 29, 2016, Ottawa, Canada—U.S. President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, and President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico participate in a working lunch during the North American Leaders' Summit at the National Gallery of Canada.*

In recognition of this situation, the Trudeau government, in partnership with First Nations advocates, has officially launched a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Likewise, in Mexico, lethal violence against indigenous women and girls is a serious problem.

As this edition of *Restoration* goes to print, the Working Group plans to meet for the first time in October in Washington, D.C. Government officials from Mexico and Canada will join the U.S. government to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and improve cross-border coordination in preventing and responding to violence against indigenous women and girls.

## **Preparation Underway for First Working Group Meeting**

In preparation for the launch of this Working Group, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) invited tribal leaders to provide input on key considerations regarding violence against Alaska Native and American Indian women and girls relevant to the objectives of the Working Group. The DOJ Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) hosted listening sessions with officials of federally recognized Indian tribes to discuss challenges presented by the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada borders in preventing and responding to this violence.

## Update from the 40th United National Indian Tribal Youth Conference in Oklahoma City

**N**ativeLove continues to listen to the voices of youth to hear what NativeLove means to them, how it can inform our work as advocates and activists, and how to maintain a positive approach in often very difficult conversations by/for youth. As NativeLove takes aim to galvanize a peer-to-peer healthy relationships delivery, we joined in the 40th United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) Conference in Oklahoma City, OK, this past July.

UNITY is the largest tribal youth conference in the country with over 1,700 youth in attendance. Out of dozens of workshops, NativeLove offered four discussions purposefully woven into the UNITY mission to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian and Alaska Native youth and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement. This is what NativeLove is all about!

On July 25th, we introduced the first NativeLove Youth Ambassador event, with Kristen Butcher presenting a youth-designed, interactive circle-style, relationship-building, and problem-solving workshop. This workshop gave youth a space to share their experiences, where they come from, and their greatest challenges in their home communities. They found more similarities than differences, and many offered support to each other as the conversations grew more intimate and sometimes challenging. While the NativeLove team were present in each "circle time" to ensure safety and support, we gave youth the space to lead these conversations. Topics around the circle included domestic violence, parental neglect, trafficking, gangs, bullying, rape, homelessness, feeling alone, and how the epidemic of Murdered and Missing Indian Women and Girls directly affects them.

### Tribal Youth Speak About Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

In small breakout sessions, youth shared



July 25, 2016, Oklahoma City, OK—NativeLove Youth Ambassador Kristen Butcher with a youth circle group during the 2015 UNITY Conference.

struggles within their own families regarding missing mothers, sisters, and friends. Up to five missing/murdered victimizations occurred in just one family—of which two have yet to be found. Every youth present directly or indirectly experienced domestic violence. This world is one that advocates rarely catch a glimpse of in their efforts to end the youth's pain and silence, to unload the burden. We continue to learn to do the work on their terms. The NativeLove project lets youth write the rules. One guiding principle, acknowledging the conflicting advocacy within their reality: No matter how much they share, many youth simply do not expect "change." Nearly two-thirds of just one of the eight circles responded they did not have a single adult they trusted to seek support during crisis.

What we know is that for generations, communities have pulled together in prayer, conducting ground searches for missing relatives, using social media for calls to action, and asking for investigations, justice, and policy amendments. Youth live in a world where the struggle is to keep hope and heal, but often turn to self-medicating and salvation in gangs and numbness—an easy option, a space where their peers often are. As witness to the disappearance of Two-Spirit/Native LGBTQ relatives, sisters, aunts,

grandmothers, mothers, daughters, and friends, youth see that justice often does not come. We want to change that. And we want to partner with the youth to make change and opportunity, merging unified fronts with every tribe, tribal community, organization, program, project, and schools offering support to youth.

Our greatest takeaway from out UNITY

experience—whether it be

Boys to Men with Ryan Redcorn presenting on Engaging Men and Boys to End Violence, or our Peer-to-Peer workshop with the NativeLove Youth Ambassador—is that finding time for laughter and creating space for a good time is important between tough talks.

At the closing of one of our workshops, a youth stood up and reminded his peers about the importance of wellness, to remember we have medicines to heal ourselves, that indigenous ways are our lifeways. He spoke to the group as a true leader and everyone listened. We listened. Youth are at the forefront of our purpose always and in all ways. Give the gift of your time. To hold a NativeLove event in your community or receive assistance in preparing for a youth event with NativeLove support, please email the NativeLove team at [nativelove@niwrc.org](mailto:nativelove@niwrc.org)!



July 2016, Oklahoma City, OK—Ryan Redcorn presents during NativeLove's Engaging Men and Boys to End Violence workshop at the 40th UNITY Conference.

# The Impact of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women on Native Youth: Tribal Youth Share Concerns About Missing Mothers, Sisters, and Friends



July 2016, Oklahoma City, OK—NIWRC NativeLove team (left to right): Rebecca Balog, Princella Redcorn, and Rose Quilt joined by Ryan Redcorn, NativeLove Youth Ambassador Kristen Butcher, and her mother Faith Morreo.

In 2014, the United Nations requested a national public inquiry into the high number of missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) after the murder of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine. The Canadian National Inquiry was never conducted. As indigenous people, the community steps in to serve the family and conduct searches. One community member, Bernie Williams, founding mother of the Sacred Circle Women's Center in Vancouver, Canada (who has survived the loss of her mother and two sisters to the MMIW epidemic), was asked why hundreds of missing and murdered Native women do not find justice. She replied, "[Indian women] don't matter. They don't matter at all. They are just 'another Indian.' They always say 'the only good Indian is a dead Indian,' and that still exists."

Trafficked girls are a significant part of Williams' work as a first responder, service provider, and prevention advocate against the MMIW epidemic. More than 40% of Native youth experience two or more acts of violence by the age of 18.<sup>1</sup> Teen dating violence rate among high school students in Alaska's Native communities was 13.3%, compared to the national average of 9.8%.<sup>2</sup> Even with these statistics, we hear voices in the field speaking to racial stigma, "Indigenous women go missing twice: Once in real life

and a second time in the news."<sup>3</sup> Justice for murdered and missing girls is an epidemic of third-world proportions in first-world countries like the United States and Canada. Yet, it is drastically underreported and has become the norm among non-indigenous people. For example, Daniel, a former white supremacist, admits to preying on Indian people, including shooting, stabbing, and beating. "I had 13 charges, six convictions, and have assaulted hundreds of Native people. I got away with most of my crimes; I never had a day in jail. Our society in general does not value Native people; it is ingrained in us. That is the society we live in."<sup>4</sup> In his rehabilitation, he actively is unlearning what society has taught him.

Although tragic events occur across age, tribe, region, urban/reserve, sobriety, or ability, there is increased risk for youth who leave the reserve in hopes for a better life in the urban community. Estimates show that more than 440 children have been impacted by the disappearance or murder of their mothers.<sup>5</sup> Very little is known about what happens to these children following the loss of their mothers. Hopes and dreams for young Natives are often met with homelessness, limited opportunities, sexual assault, addiction, and the dangers that often lead to victimization. "Crystal" and "Chanel" are two young Native women living on the street near the Sacred Women's Circle Center. They have no home, are addicted to drugs, and live in constant fear. They work in prostitution, as an escort and a client "spotter." The only safe space for them is the sidewalk outside the Center. They know the risks, but as one of them shared, "We don't have any other options; we are afraid everyday. My other friend has been missing since last week. We have limited options. We are living to survive."<sup>6</sup> Native youth are often simply surviving.

<sup>1</sup> Finkelhor, D., Turner, H., Ormrod, R., Hamby, S., & Kracke, K. (2009). Children's exposure to violence: A comprehensive national survey (Bulletin). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/227744.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> CDC. "Youth Online High School YRBS." Available here.

<sup>3</sup> Pember, M. (2016). Missing and murdered: No one knows how many Native women have disappeared. Retrieved from [http://www.salon.com/2014/02/14/the\\_missing\\_women\\_you\\_dont\\_hear\\_about\\_how\\_the\\_media\\_fails\\_indigenous\\_communities/](http://www.salon.com/2014/02/14/the_missing_women_you_dont_hear_about_how_the_media_fails_indigenous_communities/)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> National Women's Association of Canada. (2010). Fact sheet: Missing and murdered. Aboriginal women and girls. Retrieved from <https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2010-Fact-Sheet-Ontario-MMAWG.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Viceland. (2016). WOMAN Profiles: Bernie Williams - Canada: The Missing First Nations. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihif4JrFzEg>

# Tribal Coalitions Support the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Tribe: Women and Water Are Sacred



**S**eptember 21, as the sun set on the Sacred Stone Camp, Native women from tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions across the United States raised their voices and banner chanting, "Women and Water Are Sacred!" This show of solidarity joined tribal, national, and international efforts to stop violence against women and the perpetration of violence against the Earth by the extractive industries. Tribal coalitions traveled from the four corners of Turtle Island to attend the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center's Leadership Institute in Bismarck, ND, to discuss the efforts to increase the safety of Native women, including discussion on the impact of the extractive industries on the safety of Native women. Directly after close of business, a caravan of tribal coalition women traveled to the protection site and the Sacred Stone Camp.

Upon arrival, Carmen O'Leary, Sadie Young Bird, Linda Thompson, and Sandra Bercier led the march

on the front lines with other coalitions walking behind them. Traditional Chief Arvol Looking Horse and Paula Looking Horse greeted the Women and Water Are Sacred procession with prayers and gratitude and reinforced the importance of the merged movements, specifically that violence against women and the Earth have the same effect on tribal nations and require our prayers, policy building, and advocacy for continued protection.

Women and girls are key stakeholders to tribal communities and are the continuation of our nations. At a camp debrief, the tribal coalitions reflected on other environmental impacts across tribal communities such as the Michigan Enbridge Line 5 in the Great Lakes Region, the Fracking Oil Pipeline in New Mexico, the Apache Oak Flats mining, and the Oil Trains of Washington State to name only a few.

As a powerful reminder to all nations, Jana Pfeiffer from the Coalition to Stop Violence Against

Native Women stated, "Water can give life and this poisoned water can take all life away," linking colonized tracks left by extractive industries to gain money through the endangerment of others.

The OYW Leadership Institute was originally scheduled in the Northeastern corner of the country, but last-minute barriers prevented the group from meeting there. As a show of solidarity to the Three Affiliated Tribes Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program (formerly the Ft. Berthold program), NIWRC relocated the meeting to North Dakota to bring cross-coalition and regional support to North Dakota tribes. During the session Extractive Industry Impact and Violence Against Native Women the tribal coalitions heard from Carmen O'Leary, Linda Thompson and Sadie Young Bird about the impact of the oil boom on the area and lives of Native women.

Since the Bakken oil boom, starting in 2009, a mass influx of unanticipated problems, including

**“Women are the first environment. We are an embodiment of our Mother Earth. From the bodies of women flows the relationship of the generations both to society and the natural world. With our bodies we nourish, sustain, and create connected relationships and interdependence. In this way the Earth is our mother, our ancestors said. In this way, we as women are Earth. –Katsi Cook**

a drastic increase of sexual assault and domestic violence, sex and labor trafficking, and missing and murdered women, have been a direct outcome of the extractive industry. The need for direct services has exploded since the oil industry hit the region, and basic infrastructure, including the capacity of police, hospitals, and schools, has been severely impacted. “A lot of our roads were still gravel before the Bakken oil boom. New roads popped up overnight. Most of our local police grew up here, they know every road. As crisis calls and 911 calls came in, we couldn’t find survivors in imminent danger. New roads popped up that fast. It took hours to find them.”

The oil employees were paid by the quota; trucks drove faster, hauling more oil to make more money. “Overnight fatal car accidents became overwhelming for local hospitals, over 200 people died on the roads due to oil trucks,” shared coalition staff. The region has seen the immediate translation of the impact extraction of natural

resource has on violence against women. “It wasn’t just the massive increase of car accidents, there were many more DV/SA calls. What surprised us was the severe variety of the violence, the different methods of sexual assault, different levels of crime, so much more addiction to a wider variety of substances we weren’t prepared for. How do you prepare for that?”

To compound the many issues North Dakota tribes already face, the Dakota Access Pipeline—the “black snake”—owned by Energy Transfer Partners, is overturning sacred gravesites, treaty lands, and rooting through the Cannonball River without consultation with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. The camp has remained peaceful, although Energy Transfer Partners hired private security companies, which has resulted in attacks against peaceful protestors with dogs and pepper spray. In early September, a joint statement was released by the Department of Justice, Department of the Interior, and the Department of the Army requesting

Energy Transfer Partners to halt construction.

**Statement of Solidarity We Know, Women and Water Are Sacred**

A solidarity letter signed by almost 100 organizations was presented to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman, David Archambault II, through the camp director. The NIWRC, tribal coalitions, national domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions programs, and allied organizations across Turtle Island signed the letter. After the march into camp, the Sacred Stone Camp Drum sang a song to honor the women for their visit. In turn, the VAW group presented the satin banner as a gift to the camp through Paula Looking Horse as one of the women at the forefront of the encampment, Camp Unci (Grandmother). She gave honor and sisterhood to the group with thanks and prayer for the women’s group visit.



(On left) “I would like to say blessings and greetings to you my relatives. The White Buffalo Calf Woman was the sacred woman that brought the sacred pipe to this country. Today we are standing here protecting the water of life, the first medicine. We are thankful and have been doing ceremonies to pray for the health and well-being of all the women. We are glad you heard the call we sent out and came. We are the voice for Mother Earth. Water is life. I say to you women and all the nations here thank you.” –Traditional Chief Arvol Looking Horse. (Middle) “Violence against women is not traditional and water is carried by women to ceremony in a sacred way.” –Linda Thompson, Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition. (On right) “The linear age of man is coming to an end, and the circular movement of women is in motion, it is our responsibility to protect life, and all of that life begins with water in the womb of women.” – Paula Looking Horse

# October 2016

# International Update

By Jana L. Walker, Christopher Foley, and Karla General,  
Attorneys, Indian Law Resource Center



July 11, 2016, Geneva, Switzerland—Heather Whiteman Runs Him (NARF), EMRIP Member Chief Wilton Littlechild, and Karla General (ILRC) attend the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Photo by Heather Whiteman Runs Him.

## Implementing decisions of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

At the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, more than 150 indigenous nations and Native women's and tribal organizations secured commitments from the UN and its member states to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The World Conference Outcome Document includes decisions by the UN to intensify efforts to address violence against indigenous women, to consider a body to implement and monitor the UN Declaration, and to create new rules for indigenous governments to participate in UN processes. Work to realize these important commitments is ongoing.

## Creating a new status in the United Nations

On March 7, 2016, the President of the General Assembly launched a three-month consultation process with indigenous peoples and member states on how to meet the call of the Outcome Document to "enable the participation of

indigenous representatives and institutions [governments]" at the UN. Consultations were held May 11, May 18, and June 30, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and the UN also received proposals electronically. On July 8, 2016, the President's four appointed advisers published a compilation of views and related addendum outlining how to enable such participation. The process to enable the participation of indigenous governments is suspended now until the incoming president, Amb. Peter Thomson (Fiji), decides how to resolve the matter. His term begins on September 13, 2016. For more information, visit: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/participation-of-indigenous-peoples-at-the-united-nations.html>

## Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Securing an implementing and monitoring body for the UN Declaration

The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples met for its ninth session on July 11-15, 2016,



June 13, 2016, Human Rights Council (Geneva)—Jana Walker delivering a joint statement to the Human Rights Council 32nd Session on violence against indigenous women and its root causes.





June 14, 2016, Human Rights Council 32nd Session (Geneva)—Christopher Foley (ILRC) attending Canada's side event on violence against indigenous women at the Human Rights Council 32nd Session. Photo by Jana Walker.

in Geneva, Switzerland. The session included a discussion of the report of the April 2016 expert workshop, which proposes recommendations to “more effectively promote respect for the UN Declaration by better assisting member states to monitor, evaluate, and improve achievement of the ends of the Declaration” consistent with the World Conference Outcome Document. The Indian Law Resource Center, National Congress of American Indians, and Native American Rights Fund participated in the session to advocate for an effective body capable of implementing, promoting, and monitoring states’ compliance with the UN Declaration and ability to respond to serious violations of human rights, especially violence against indigenous women and children.

“An independent international expert body capable of fact-finding and responding

to serious situations of human rights violations is crucial for achieving the ends of the Declaration,” said Center attorney Karla General. “The body absolutely must be able to gather information, and to issue reports and make recommendations to countries and others regarding the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly violence against indigenous women and children. We are optimistic that the Council will take this opportunity to strengthen the Expert Mechanism and enable it to protect and advance indigenous peoples’ rights.” A resolution on the mandate and structure of the implementing and monitoring body will be negotiated and considered during the Human Rights Council’s 33rd session.

## Human Rights Council

On June 13-July 1, 2016, the Human Rights Council held its 32nd session in Geneva. The Indian Law Resource Center participated in the session and joined with the Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians, National Congress of American Indians, and Native American Rights Fund to submit two written statements and deliver an oral statement. These statements informed the Council about the epidemic of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and barriers in United States law contributing to this human rights crisis, and urged the UN and states to take strong actions on this issue. The written statements were also supported by the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center, Clan Star, Inc., National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center, and Strong Hearted Native Women’s Coalition, Inc.

During the session, the Council held its annual full-day discussion on women’s rights, which for the first time included a panel on violence against indigenous women and its root causes. The Council also adopted its annual resolution on accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women, which also for the very first time included a focus on violence against indigenous women and girls and references to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. Among other things, the resolution calls for states to take actions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, including indigenous women and girls. The UN Working Group on discrimination against women in law and practice presented a report to the Council on its 2015 mission to the United States, which recommends, among other things, that the United States should “[e]mpower Native American tribes to ensure justice in their communities through the exercise of full criminal jurisdiction within their lands” and “[i]mplement fully the VAWA 2013.”

“While we are very pleased that the Council has devoted such serious attention to the global epidemic of violence against indigenous women during this session,



Armstrong Wiggins, Director, Indian Law Resource Center’s Washington, D.C. Office

we call on the Council to not only maintain this focus, but also to be looking at concrete actions it can take to address these violations of human rights,” said Jana Walker, senior attorney at the Center. “More study and dialogue is always needed, but we also need decisions and actions to prevent and end the violence.”

Additional information on the Human Rights Council’s 32nd session, including copies of oral and written statements and the above resolution and reports, is available at:

<http://indianlaw.org/safewomen/center-calls-un-human-rights-council-take-action-end-violence-against-indigenous-women>.

### **Organization of American States—Adoption of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

On June 15, 2016, after nearly 30 years of advocacy and negotiation, the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during its 46th session.

“This is a profound moment in the history of the indigenous rights movement,” said Armstrong Wiggins, director of the Indian Law Resource Center’s Washington, D.C. office. “The American Declaration, as a human rights instrument, is a living instrument that will be interpreted in accordance with indigenous peoples’ present-day conditions, in order to better protect their human rights.”

The OAS is a regional intergovernmental organization of 35 member countries of the Americas, including the United States. The American Declaration offers specific protection for indigenous peoples in North America, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Article VII of the Declaration addresses Gender Equality, and includes the commitment that “States shall adopt the necessary measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination, particularly against indigenous women and children.”

### **Looking Ahead**

#### **Human Rights Council**

On September 13-30, 2016, the Human Rights Council’s 33rd session will take place in Geneva. The Council is expected to consider a resolution deciding on the mandate and structure of the implementing and monitoring body. During its annual half-day discussion on indigenous peoples and in response to advocacy by indigenous women’s organizations, the Council decided to accept the Outcome Document’s invitation to consider the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls by holding a significant panel discussion on the topic. The Council also will consider the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



June 15, 2016, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—OAS General Assembly prepares to adopt the American Declaration.

## UN General Assembly

The General Assembly will consider follow-up to the Outcome Document of the World Conference and has committed to adopt a resolution on the issue of participation of indigenous governing institutions at the UN during its 71st session, which runs from September 13, 2016 until September 2017. The General Assembly will also convene a high-level event to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration to be held in 2017.

## Third Committee

The General Assembly allocates agenda items relating to social, human rights, indigenous issues, and humanitarian issues to the Third Committee. On October 17, 2016, the Third Committee will hold an interactive dialogue and general discussion on rights of indigenous peoples and follow-up to the Outcome Document of the World Conference.

## Commission on the Status of Women

At the end of the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission approved a resolution acknowledging its intention to address the issue of the empowerment of indigenous women as a focus area in 2017 as called for by the World Conference Outcome Document. The 61st session of the Commission will be held at UN headquarters in New York City on March 13-24, 2017.

## UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The Permanent Forum, an advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council, will hold its 16th session, including a discussion of the empowerment of indigenous women, at UN headquarters in New York City on April 24-May 5, 2017.



Above: Member country flags at Palais des Nations, Geneva.  
Below: UN Offices, Geneva, Switzerland—Photos by Jana Walker.



# Congratulations Justice Anne McKeig First Native Jurist Minnesota's Supreme Court



**O**n Thursday September 15, 2016, Anne McKeig became the first Native American to serve on the Minnesota Supreme Court. "Today is an historic day, not only for myself and for my family, but for all Native people," Justice McKeig said. "I grew up in rural Minnesota in challenging circumstances surrounded by poverty. The lessons I learned as a young woman from Federal Dam planted in me a strong desire to make a difference for my community. My passion for public service comes from seeing the enormous need matched against the limited resources on the reservation."

Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton appointed Justice McKeig to the Supreme Court in June. "Judge Anne McKeig has served the people of Minnesota admirably throughout her distinguished career, including as Presiding Judge of the Family Court in Minnesota's Fourth Judicial District," said Governor Dayton. "Judge McKeig has worked honorably to ensure justice for some of Minnesota's most vulnerable people, with her strong dedication to Indian child welfare and her work leading the Fourth District Family Court.

Justice McKeig is a member of National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Family Violence

and Domestic Relations Committee, a lead judge for Hennepin County's Family Court Enhancement Project, faculty member of the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence, and a nationally known speaker on Indian Child Welfare issues.

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"To Governor Dayton, Chi-Miigwetch for having faith in a young woman from Federal Dam, born, raised and Minnesota educated," McKeig said in her remarks. "You have made history in allowing me to be the first Native American woman appointed to the state's highest court—in all of the United States. I am prepared with the love and support of my community to demonstrate that your decision was one of great vision and wisdom not because you chose me but because you appreciate the role that Native nations have played in the history of our great state. By this appointment, you have built an historic bridge."

# Congressional Briefing: Findings from the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

**O**n June 16, 2016, a briefing was held at the Capitol Visitor's Center in Washington DC on "Violence Against American Indian Women and VAWA 2013 Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction and Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men: Findings from the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey" by the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Indian Law Resource Center and the National Congress of American Indians.

On May 5, 2016, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) published its latest research report examining the prevalence of intimate partner and sexual violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men. Using a nationally representative sample from the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual

Violence Survey, the report provides estimates of sexual violence, physical violence by intimate partners, stalking, and psychological aggression by intimate partners. It also provides estimates of interracial and intraracial victimization and briefly examines the impact of violence on the victims. VAWA 2013 authorizes Indian tribes to exercise special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction within Indian country over certain non-Indian defendants. This report increases awareness about American Indian victimization to inform policies and practices surrounding implementation of VAWA 2013 special domestic violence jurisdiction over non-Indians. In addition, the report highlights a critical need for further measures to intensify and strengthen the response to violence against American Indian women, and particularly Alaska Native women.

## Key findings from the report:

More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime. This includes:

- 1% who have experienced sexual violence
- 5% who have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner
- 90% of women who have experienced sexual violence by an interracial intimate partner perpetrator

*\*Briefing Resource page will be out soon including full video, photos and press release.*



(Picture above) Group photo after the briefing. From left to right: Theresa Sheldon (Councilwoman, Tulalip Tribes), Cherrah Giles (NIWRC Board Chair), Deborah Parker (NIWRC Board Member), Leanne Guy (NIWRC Board Secretary), Wendy Schlater (NIWRC Board Treasurer), Carmen O'Leary (NIWRC Board Vice Chair) and Dr. Andre B. Rosay (Director, UAA Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage).



Dr. Andre B. Rosay (Director UAA Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage) and assistant pose after the briefing.



Terri Henry (Co-Chair, National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Native Women) talks with a participant after the briefing.

# A Movement for Safety: Art & Culture

**T**he role of art and culture is essential to building the national movement for safety of Native women. Since 2013, the national movement has witnessed the tremendous impact of grassroots theater through the national readings of *Sliver of a Full Moon*. Across Turtle Island, the public has learned the story and importance of the VAWA 2013 amendment restoring domestic violence criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians to Indian tribes.

**"As Native people, our stories teach us who we are. They feed us. They heal us. And they inspire us. For many of our tribal communities, life's most important lessons are taught in the stories we pass from generation to generation. As Native people, we have been telling stories for thousands of years,"** said **Mary Kathryn Nagle, *Sliver of a Full Moon* playwright. "It's time to take these stories out into the world. Although it's important to share our stories within our own communities, we can no longer afford to keep our stories to ourselves."**

In February 2013, the national movement for the safety of Native women engaged in a heated struggle to reauthorize VAWA 2013 to include the now historic amendment to federal law recognizing the inherent sovereignty of American Indian tribes to prosecute non-Natives who come onto tribal lands and commit acts of domestic violence against Native women. The opposition to this amendment in 2012 did not understand that the amendment was a life-or-death issue for Native women abused by non-Native men on tribal lands. *Sliver of a Full Moon* was the solution to educating the opposition and the public on the lifesaving significance of the amendment.

In writing *Sliver of a Full Moon*, the playwright interviewed Native women of the movement who suffered violence at the hands of non-Native abusers.



"The women I interviewed were not only survivors. These women were warriors," said Mary Kathryn Nagle. "They didn't just survive the violence that was inflicted upon them—they took their experiences, their stories of survival, and organized at the grassroots level to change the law at the national level."

## ***Sliver of a Full Moon* and Alaska Native Women**

But the reauthorization of VAWA in 2013 is not the end of the struggle to restore legal authority, criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians, to Indian tribes to protect women. The VAWA 2013 reauthorization was, as the title describes, only a sliver of a full moon. While today some Indian tribes are saving lives by prosecuting non-Natives abusing Native women under the amendment, many others cannot. The amendment falls short of reaching a large percentage of Indian tribes. VAWA 2013 specifically excludes Alaska Native Villages (except one) under the amendment by its reference to "Indian country." It also does not address many Indian tribes under specific state-tribal land settlement claims legislation, and other crimes remain unaddressed, such as rape by a person not covered under the amendment.

# Why *Sliver of a Full Moon* Is Important to Alaska Native Women

**F**airbanks, Alaska, Wednesday, October 19th,  
Doors open at 6:30 PM

*Sliver of a Full Moon* depicts the struggles facing Native women in Alaska. “We have worked over the months to include the voices of Alaska Native women in the play and we are so excited it will be performed in Fairbanks on October 19th,” said Tami Truett Jerue, Director, Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center.

*Sliver of a Full Moon* exposes the inherent inequities in a legal system that affords all tribes, except those in Alaska, criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators of violence against Native women. The play originally documented the grassroots movement leading up to the enactment of VAWA 2013 and was recently revised to focus more directly on the ongoing struggles of Alaska Native women. Through its focus on the stories of Alaska Native women, *Sliver of a Full Moon* exposes inequalities in the law and educates audiences about the need for reform.

## Struggle to Repeal VAWA 2013 Exclusion of Alaska Native Villages

“I remember in March 2013 when I first heard VAWA 2013 was passed, we were really happy, but when we understood that it excluded the tribes in Alaska, I was really confused,” said Lenora Hootch, Director, Yup’ik Women’s Coalition. “I said, ‘Why are they excluding the 229 tribes in Alaska? That’s not fair. We’re natives like they are out in the lower forty-eight. How are we different from them? I was really angry. I was really upset. I said I need to call people and try to get a better understanding of why.’”

Exclusion of Alaska Native Villages created an outcry across Alaska Native Villages and Indian tribes within the lower forty-eight states. During the 2013 and 2014 VAWA consultations held by the Department of Justice,



Alaska Native leaders presented oral statements and others submitted written testimony calling for its repeal. This tribal call to action was strengthened by support from numerous national non-tribal organizations, the White House, and the U.S. Department of Justice. This groundswell led, in part, to the Alaska Congressional delegation’s successful efforts toward repealing Section 910. Following the repeal of Section 910, Senator Murkowski stated: “Alaska tribes asked me to repeal Section 910 of VAWA and I heard them loud and clear.”

Repeal of Section 910 was a necessary step to provide Alaska Native Villages the authority to enhance their response to violence against Native women who

**“There is more work to do. We’ll just keep going forward, taking different avenues to be recognized as Indian country for Alaska because it’s needed. Every community, every village in Alaska is not the same. We are all very different and unique. And our tradition and culture and our language differ, and yet we’re still the same people.” –Nettie Warbelow, Native Village of Tetlin**

suffer the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence in the nation. However, as most supporters of the repeal acknowledge, additional reforms are required to increase safety for Alaska Native women and hold offenders accountable. While the Alaska exemption was repealed, VAWA 2013 tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians extends to only crimes committed in “Indian country.” The Indian country requirement effectively denies 228 of 229 federally recognized Alaska tribes of the new protections afforded other Indian tribes because of the Supreme Court’s holding in *Alaska v. Native Village of Venetie*.

### **Looking to the Future**

“*Sliver of a Full Moon* is an important part of our ongoing advocacy efforts to restore tribal sovereignty in Alaska and ensure safety for Alaska Native women,” said Jerue. “The play highlights the challenges Alaska Native women face everyday in their villages and

in hub-cities. These challenges are evident in the high rates of violence, the reports of missing Alaska Native women, and sadly the murders of our women.” Sponsors of the Fairbanks performance of *Sliver of a Full Moon* hope the play will bring light to the dangers facing Alaska Native women and the need for both increased services and local authority of villages to protect women.

Although Alaska Natives represent only 15.2% of the state population, they comprise nearly 50% of domestic violence victims, and 61% of sexual assault victims. Like their Native sisters in the lower forty-eight states, Alaska Native women in their villages and across the state experience violence at epidemic rates. Alaska Native Villages, hindered by a jurisdictional maze similar to the one that confronts Indian tribes elsewhere in the United States, face additional barriers resulting from federal law and Supreme Court rulings specific to Alaska.

**Learn more about *Sliver of a Full Moon* at [www.sliverofafullmoon.org](http://www.sliverofafullmoon.org)**

***Sliver of a Full Moon* has been performed at the**

- **Women Are Sacred Conference in Albuquerque, NM (2013)**
- **NCAI in Tulsa, OK (2013)**
- **NCAI in D.C. (2014)**
- **New York City at the United Nations (2014)**
- **Yale Law School (2015)**
- **Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (2015)**
- **Harvard University (2015)**
- **Three Affiliated Tribes (2016)**
- **IAIA (2016)**
- **NYU Law School (2016)**
- **Stanford Law School (2016)**

**Thank you to the following from whom we have received donations thus far for Fairbanks performance of *Sliver of a Full Moon*:**

**Akiak Native Community  
Anvik Tribal Council  
Asa'carsarmiut Tribal Council  
Emmonak Corporation  
Fairbanks Native Association  
Native Village of Afognak  
Village of Nunam Iqua  
Sealaska Corporation  
Shoreline Tender Service  
Tanana Chiefs Conference  
Yupiit of Andreafski**

**SAVE  
THE DATE**



**Wednesday, October 19th, 2016  
David Salmon Tribal Hall  
Fairbanks, Alaska**

*(Preceding the AFN 2016 Annual Convention)*  
**For more details contact:  
tami.jerue@aknwrc.org**



**Alaska Native Women's  
Resource Center**



**INDIAN LAW  
RESOURCE CENTER**

**UNITY MEETING:**

*address violence against Alaska Native women*

**9:00am-1:00pm**

- inform tribal leaders about important legislative developments & priorities concerning domestic & sexual violence;
- provide information about organizing efforts of tribes & advocates at the local, regional, national & international levels to address the safety of Alaska Native women; and
- engage Alaska tribal leadership & allies in discussing life-saving reforms in laws & policies.

**SLIVER OF A FULL MOON:**

*a play addressing violence against Alaska Native women*

**(Dependent on funding)**

The play highlights the challenges Alaska Native women face evident in the high rates of domestic & sexual violence & exposes the inherent inequities in a legal system that affords all tribes, except those in Alaska, criminal jurisdiction over non-Native perpetrators of violence against Native women.

It documents the grassroots movement leading up to the enactment of VAWA 2013 & has been revised to focus more directly on the ongoing struggles of Native women in Alaska.

Written & Directed by **Mary Kathryn Nagle**  
(Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)

**Doors open  
6:00 pm**

**6:30-8:30 pm**

**To donate/support  
this play go to:  
<https://goo.gl/dpnCrl>**

## Welcome Wanette Lee, Native Hawaiian NIWRC's New Native Hawaiian Board Member



**W**anette Lee currently works as a certified substance abuse counselor for Ka Hale Pomaika'i, Molokai's premier Recovery Community Organization. She provides both group and individual counseling for those with substance use disorders. She has a vast amount of clinical and cultural experience in the field. She has also been a longtime advocate—both in paid and volunteer positions—assisting victims of domestic violence. Born and raised on Molokai, she is a mother of seven, a grandmother, and the full-time care provider for her mother in Kaunakakai. In her free time, Wanette enjoys being with family, participating in her church, and especially likes outdoor paniolo activities. Wanette is a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse and is a recovering addict for 13 years. She works with individuals who are incarcerated or put into the Molokai/ Maui Drug Court two-year program, which includes Family Court Drug Court. Wanette was also the supervisor of Hale Hoomalu Women's and Children's Shelter in Molokai and continues to advocate as a relief worker at the shelter. Wanette also works with the mentally challenged community as a night shift caregiver and responsible adult at the Molokai residential facility. Wanette's volunteer experience includes: 1) Hui Malama O Moomomi, a group of people that takes care of the resources located on west end of Molokai; 2) I Ola Ka Piko, a group formed by women/mothers to address concerns and find healing for children and the community; 3) Molokai Meth Task Force member; 4) Molokai High School Rodeo treasurer; 5) and creating and building from ground up a 21-day youth program based on Hawaiian cultural values, as well as Ho'oponopono (family resolution), that teaches kids to be healers. The program was founded by her brother Wayde Lee who now runs the program in Waianae, Oahu, working with teens who are high risk for incarceration and are referred to the program by the judiciary system.



### Keep up to date with the NIWRC e-newsletter

*Beyond the Shelter Doors*  
**Advocate!**

**T**he National Indigenous Women's Resource Center are proud to announce our partnership with the National Domestic Violence Hotline, in development of the new StrongHearts Native Helpline! The goal of the StrongHearts Native Helpline is to ensure that Native victims of domestic violence can access safety in a culturally relevant manner and eventually live their lives free of abuse. We are currently hiring six fulltime positions to staff the helpline. Be sure to apply or share these job announcements with those interested!

The 2016 Fall edition of *Advocate! Beyond the Shelter Doors* newsletter includes: fall awareness months coming up, the FVPSA Tribal Peer to Peer meeting, guest contributor Gretchen Carroll on her sexual assault activism, the United State of Native Women PSA campaign, updates from the congressional briefing on the findings from the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey and a personal essay from NIWRC's Secretary Diane Spotted Elk and her experience camping at the Sacred Stone Camp. Get involved by signing your organization up with the NIWRC letter "Standing in Solidarity with Standing Rock" and by signing your organization up to support a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls.



## Task Force on Violence Against Native Women

Sunday, Oct. 9, 2016

9 AM – 12 Noon

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9:00 a.m. **Opening & Introductions**

NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women Co-Chairs:

*Juana Majel-Dixon*, Pauma Band of Mission Indians

*Terri Henry*, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

9:10 a.m. **Department of Justice Updates**

*Gena Tyner-Dawson*, Office of Justice Programs

*Lorraine Edmo*, Office on Violence Against Women

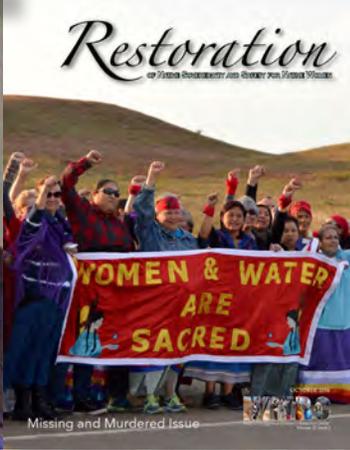
9:30 a.m. **Policy & Litigation Updates**

- **Victims of Crime Act funding**
- **Appropriations**
- **Violence Against Women Act**
- **Tribal Law and Order Act Reauthorization**
- **Discussion of reforms to law enforcement funding**
- **International Advocacy - *Jana Walker, Indian Law Resource Center***
- **Family Violence Prevention and Services Act**
- **VAWA Sovereignty Initiative – *Mary Kathryn Nagle, Pipestem Law***

10:30 a.m. **Regional Updates**

11:00 a.m. **New Business:**

- **NCAI Transition Memo**
- **Resolutions**
- **Annual DOJ Consultation – Dec. 6, 2016**
- **Future of the Task Force**



# Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN

Subscriptions Now Available!

[restoration.niwrc.org](http://restoration.niwrc.org)  
\$30 Individual / \$100 Institutional



## RESTORATION OF SOVEREIGNTY & SAFETY MAGAZINE, 2003-2016

Thirteen years ago during the reauthorization process of the Violence Against Women Act, several national organizations came together to take a stand for the safety of Native women: Sacred Circle National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women, Clan Star, Inc., the National Congress of American Indians, and the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence. It was recognized that to fully participate in the national movement to create the changes needed to increase safety for Native women, broad communication was essential. The *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety* magazine emerged to fulfill this task.

The *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety* magazine is a publication dedicated to informing tribal leadership and communities of emerging issues impacting the safety of American Indian and Alaska Native women. The name of the magazine, *Restoration of Sovereignty & Safety*, reflects the grassroots strategy of the Task Force that by strengthening the sovereignty of Indian nations to hold perpetrators accountable the safety of Native women will be restored. The magazine is a joint project of the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Women and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center. It is produced and made available during national NCAI conventions and the annual USDOJ Tribal Consultation on VAWA.

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 Rose Quilt, National Indigenous Women's Resource Center  
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## Restoration

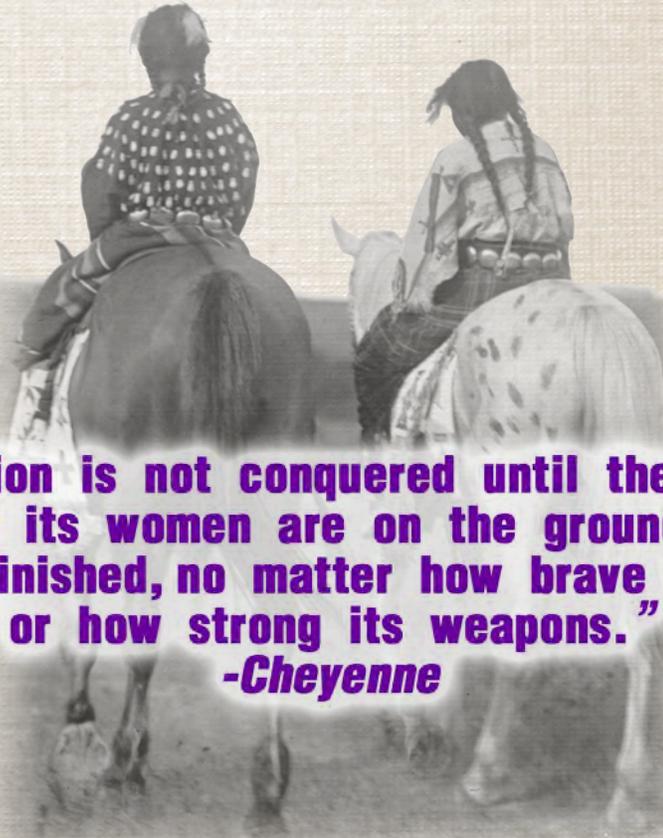
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# Restoration

OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND SAFETY FOR NATIVE WOMEN



**“A Nation is not conquered until the hearts  
of its women are on the ground.  
Then it is finished, no matter how brave its warriors  
or how strong its weapons.”  
-Cheyenne**

*Violence Against Women Is Not Our Tradition*



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