

# 2021 WOMEN ARE SACRED CONFERENCE

"CARRYING OUR MEDICINE AND STRENGTHENING OUR VISION TO END THE VIOLENCE"  
JUNE 8-10, 2021 | VIRTUAL EVENT



CONFERENCE PROGRAM



# WELCOME TO WOMEN ARE SACRED

Dear Relatives,

On behalf of the staff and board of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and all our conference co-sponsors, welcome to the 2021 virtual Women Are Sacred (WAS) Conference! Over the next three days, we will join hands virtually to connect, organize, support and share our experiences, knowledge, wisdom and good medicine with each other. We are so pleased to gather and share this time with you. This year, NIWRC will celebrate our 10th Anniversary, we are grateful for this work and to be in the company of such amazing people across the country. You will hear more about this at WAS and throughout the year.

This year's WAS conference theme is **"Carrying Our Medicine and Strengthening Our Vision to End the Violence."** As we know, carrying our medicine is how Indigenous people have continued to survive. In response to all the challenges we have faced in the past, present and future, this medicine we carry is how we will heal our mind, body, spirit and the land we walk on. The very foundation of the Women Are Sacred Conference is based on the understanding that our strengths, cultural knowledge and traditional practices as Indigenous people continue to play a significant role in the health and well-being of ourselves, families, communities, and Nations.

This year's WAS virtual conference features 32 workshops, 3 opening plenaries and 1 closing plenary session. This year we are also featuring a **Roundtable to Develop Guidance for Indigenous Advocacy Programs to Up-lift Our Spiritually/Culturally-based Resources and Programming.** On Day 1, we invite you to join us in celebrating the new recipient of the **Tillie Black Bear 'Women Are Sacred' Memorial Award.** We are continuing our **WAS Talks** and this year we are introducing a Film Festival. Please check out our conference platform Whova for complete details, then share your WAS experiences on social media using #WAS2021!

The WAS Conference represents the strength and resilience of our people and the tools and knowledge we have to make a difference. It's about our shared vision for the future in ending the violence. With that said, we would like to sincerely thank all our incredible guest speakers, co-sponsors, donors and supporters who are generously giving their energy, knowledge and resources to being a part of WAS this year. We are grateful for your support.

Again, thank you for joining us on this journey together. While we are virtual this year, please join us in making new friends and reconnecting with partners and allies as we walk together in the movement to end violence against Native people.

Enjoy the conference,



Ahéhee',  
*Lucy*  
Lucy Simpson, Esq.  
Diné  
Executive Director



Mvto,  
*Cherrah*  
Cherrah Giles  
Muscogee(Creek)  
Board Chair



**NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS**  
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

## THANK YOU TO OUR WAS CO-SPONSORS

This year's virtual Women Are Sacred Conference could not have been possible without the participation and assistance of so many people. We especially would like to express our deep appreciation particularly to our WAS Co-Sponsors. Their contributions are sincerely appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

Thank you to our WAS Co-Sponsors, whose logos are depicted below:



## THANK YOU TO OUR WAS SUPPORTERS

NIWRC would also like to thank all of our WAS Supporters whose generous financial contributions help to support the continued growth of grassroots advocates working to end the violence in tribal communities at WAS.

ABALONE SUPPORTERS:



CLAY SUPPORTERS:



RIBBON SUPPORTERS:



## 2021 CONFERENCE THEME

In 2020, we developed the conference theme for our in-person Women are Sacred Conference. However, we had to postpone this in-person event and reorganize a virtual conference for 2021. We kept our theme, “Carrying Our Medicine and Strengthening Our Vision to End the Violence.” Carrying our medicine is how we have survived and continue to survive as Indigenous people. It is how we heal our spirit, our body and the land we walk on. It is using traditional knowledge, skills and practices to enhance the health and well-being of ourselves, our families, our communities and our nations. The Women Are Sacred Conference represents the strength and resilience of our people and the tools and knowledge we have to make a difference. It’s about our shared vision for the future in ending the violence.



### Featured Artist for 2021 Women Are Sacred: Hillary Kempenich

*For Our Sisters (Acrylic on Canvas): For Our Sisters is dedicated and inspired by the empowerment of Indigenous sisterhood. We are the living history of this land, of the people, and preserving the culture that colonialism has worked diligently to destroy. Our Indigenous sisters are resilient with grace and beauty, holding onto our cultural identity, beliefs and practices. Through the unity of our cultural practices, prayer, and support as Indigenous people, we establish harmony and prosperity for our communities. Unity and respect plays a vital role in prevention of epidemics such as our lost sisters.*

**About the artist:** Multidisciplinary artist Hillary Kempenich, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, currently resides in Grand Forks, ND. Kempenich is an established studio artist and advocate for the arts, education, social justice, and Native/Indigenous issues. Raised on the Turtle Mountain reservation, Kempenich continues to advocate for better educational and cultural standards for our Native Indigenous people, and for all people, through her artwork in urban and rural communities. Hillary Kempenich is fluent in many mediums with a collaborative style influenced by her independent spirit as a creative woman and her deep connection to her heritage of Ojibwe, Cree, Assiniboine, Dakota, and French-Canadian ancestral roots. Kempenich comes from a family of strong artist abilities, of which are strong influences within her work. While holding on to the ties to the Turtle Mountains, Kempenich works on developing her trades with her own personal style. Learn more at [hillarykempenich.com](http://hillarykempenich.com).



### Virtual Platform

This year's virtual WAS conference is hosted on the Whova event app and platform.

Visit <https://bit.ly/3xnkzLU>.

### Sessions

All sessions will be recorded unless otherwise stated. The event platform will be available for a year after the end of WAS, and you can access these recordings anytime.

### Speakers

Speaker bios are available on the Whova platform and on our website.

Visit [niwrc.org/was](http://niwrc.org/was).

### Safe Room

Some topics or information may result in a trauma response. Should this happen, please know a safe room will be available at all times during our conference. Instructions on how to access it are on Whova.

### Talking Circles

For this year's WAS conference, we are offering advocate facilitated Talking Circles at the conclusion of each of the first two days. These will be live and they will not be recorded. Your safety and confidentiality are important to us.

### Information Booths

A number of virtual information booths will be available for attendees. More up-to-date information will be on the Whova platform and app.

### Evaluations

Evaluations will take place following each plenary and workshop. Please help us improve our programming and quality of our presentations by taking a few minutes to complete them. In addition, following the WAS conference, you will receive a post WAS evaluation, again this information is important to help us improve the work we do, please take the time to respond to this evaluation.

### Wellness Corner

Conference attendees and speakers are encouraged to visit the WAS Wellness Corner for self-care resources. During lunch or breaks, breathe deep with our Virtual Breathing Sessions to regroup. On the morning of Day 2 and 3, join us for a Virtual Morning Wellness Walk before sessions begin. Visit the Whova conference platform to learn more. Share how you are staying well with NIWRC on social media using #WASWellness21 and #WAS2021!



**STRONGHEARTS**  
Native Helpline

*If you are experiencing sexual or domestic violence please call or text StrongHearts Native Helpline at 1-844-762-8483 or visit **strongheartshelpline.org** then click on the "Chat Now" button at the top of the page.*

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# DAY 1: TUESDAY, JUNE 8

7:00 MDT  
8:00 MDT

**AM Activity (Optional):** Suggested 15 minute activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

10:00 MDT  
11:15 MDT

- **Traditional Opening:** Eileen Hudon, Ogitchidakwe Singers
- **Introductions of Staff, Board, Federal Officials:** Cherrah Giles, NIWRC Board Chairwoman
- **ACYF Remarks:** Commissioner, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Debbie Powell
- **Official Welcoming & Opening Remarks:** Debra Haaland, United States Secretary of Interior
- **Tillie Black Bear Awardee Announcement:** Carmen O'Leary, NIWRC Board Member & Director of Native Women's Society of the Great Plains

11:15 MDT  
11:30 MDT

**Break 15 Minutes:** Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

11:30 MDT  
12:45 MDT

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
<b>Using Indigenous Knowledge for Advocacy</b>	<b>Systems Advocacy in a Coordinated Community Response</b>	<b>Crooked Beads and Other Stories for Decolonization</b>	<b>Higher Risk: LGBTQ2S Youth and Domestic Violence</b>
Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition	Mending the Sacred Hoop	Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence	Tate Topa Consulting, LLC

12:45 MDT  
1:45 MDT

**Lunch**

1:45 MDT  
3:00 MDT

Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8
<b>Decimating the Cradleboard to Prison Cell Pipeline</b>	<b>Institutional Analysis: Addressing Racism &amp; Sexism in U.S. Criminal Legal System Responses to Native Women who Report Rape</b>	<b>How to Use Data that You Already Have?</b>	<b>Combatting Sex Trafficking in and around our Native Communities</b>
American Indian Prison Project & Restoring Justice for Indigenous People	Praxis International, Mending the Sacred Hoop	American Indian Development Associates	TRUST (Tribes United against Sex Trafficking) Task Force

3:00 MDT  
3:15 MDT

**Break 15 minutes:** Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

3:15 MDT  
4:30 MDT

Session 9	Session 10	Session 11	Session 12
<b>What are Human Rights? Women's Rights? Indigenous Rights?</b>	<b>Combatting MMIWG by Reclaiming Native Matrilineal Traditions through Girl-Centered Programming</b>	<b>A Silent Epidemic: Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys</b>	<b>Kapu Aloha "Sacred Love"</b>
Indian Law Resource Center	Kelly Hallman	Tate Topa Consulting, LLC	Pouhana O Na Wahine

5:00 MDT  
6:30 MDT

6:00 MDT  
7:30 MDT

Evening Activity (Optional)		
<b>Talking Circle</b>		
<b>Roundtable to Develop Guidance for Indigenous Advocacy Programs to Up-lift Our Spiritually/Culturallybased Resources and Programming</b> NIWRC, Kerri Colfer	<b>WAS Talks</b> NIWRC, Gwendolyn Packard	<b>Film Festival: Lakota Daughters, with Dr. Kelly Hallman</b> NIWRC

## DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9

**7:00 MDT** AM Activity (Optional): Join Virtual Wellness Walk

**8:00 MDT** Suggested Break 15 Minute Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

**10:00 MDT** • **Welcome Introductions:** Lucy Simpson, NIWRC Executive Director

**11:15 MDT** • **Tribal Strengths and Resilience: Initiatives Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women In Our Communities:** Elsie Boudreau, Malinda Limberhand Harris and Rose Harris

• **Legislative Updates Impacting Indian Nations:** Kerri Colfer, NIWRC, Senior Native Affairs Advisor

**11:15 MDT** Break 15 Minutes: Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

**11:30 MDT**

**11:30 MDT**  
**12:45 MDT**

Session 13	Session 14	Session 15	Session 16
<b>S.O.A.R. Web-Based Database</b>	<b>Human Trafficking in Tribal Gaming-Identify and Respond</b>	<b>VAWA 2013 - Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Youth Session: Growing Roots and Grounding Ourselves in Healthy Relationships</b>
Gray O.A.K., LLC	Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative	National Congress of American Indians	Strong Hearts Native Helpline

**12:45 MDT** Lunch  
**1:45 MDT**

**1:45 MDT**  
**3:00 MDT**

Session 17	Session 18	Session 19	Session 20
<b>Structural Factors Related to Intimate Partner Violence Among Indigenous Women: Findings from the Our Circle Study</b>	<b>Crossroads: The Intersections Child Welfare and Sex Trafficking</b>	<b>Changing How We Work with Youth in Alaska impacted by Gender-based Violence</b>	<b>Confidentiality Between Victim Advocates/ Survivors and the Tribal Justice System: Statutory/Funder Requirements and Best Practices</b>
Johns Hopkins School of Nursing	Christine Stark	Alaska Native Women's Resource Center	Rob Valente, Caroline LaPorte

**3:00 MDT** Break 15 Minutes: Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing  
**3:15 MDT**

**3:15 MDT**  
**4:30 MDT**

Session 21	Session 22	Session 23	Session 24
<b>Using Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration to Strengthen Enforcement of Tribal Protection Orders</b>	<b>Four Pillars for a Strong Transitional Housing Program</b>	<b>Understanding the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act: Past, Present and Future</b>	<b>Using Indigenous-Based Program Evaluation and Research Methods</b>
Tribal Law and Policy Institute	Redwind Consulting	NIWRC, Strong Hearts, AKNWRC, NCAI, ACTEV	University of Washington School of Social Work

**5:00 MDT**  
**6:30 MDT**

**6:00 MDT**  
**7:30 MDT**

Evening Activity (Optional)	
<b>Talking Circle</b>	
<b>WAS Talks</b> NIWRC, Gwendolyn Packard	<b>Film Festival: Sisters Rising, with Lisa Brunner</b> NIWRC



## DAY 3: THURSDAY, JUNE 10

**7:00 MDT** **AM Activity (Optional):** Join Virtual Wellness Walk

**8:00 MDT** **Suggested Break 15 Minute Activity** - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

**10:00 MDT** • **Welcome Introductions:** Lucy Simpson, NIWRC Executive Director

**11:15 MDT** • **Introduction Remarks:** Director of Division of Family Violence Prevention and Services FVPSA, Shawndell N. Dawson

• **Implementation of Federal Trust Responsibilities:** OVW, ANA, OVC, BIA, HUD and IHS Federal Agency Panel: Shawndell N. Dawson

**11:15 MDT** **Break 15 Minutes:** Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

**11:30 MDT**

**11:30 MDT**

**12:45 MDT**

Session 25	Session 26	Session 27	Session 28
<b>Part 1 of 2 - National Strategies to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: The Role of Political Clarity</b>  National Indigenous Women's Resource Center	<b>Using Group Activities to Reclaim our Lives through Culture and Healing</b>  Native Women's Society of the Great Plains	<b>Strong Roots: Supporting Staff Through Healing-Centered Workplaces</b>  Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health	<b>Youth Session: Understanding the Effects of Historical Trauma and Creating Healthy Relationships</b>  Center for Native American Youth

**12:45 MDT** **Lunch**

**1:45 MDT**

**1:45 MDT**

**3:00 MDT**

Session 29	Session 30	Session 31	Session 32
<b>Part 2 of 2 - National Strategies to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: Indigenous Worldview and Organization</b>  National Indigenous Women's Resource Center	<b>Helping Men Walk in Balance by Addressing Historical Trauma and Youth Victimization</b>  Wica Agli	<b>Traditional Advocacy and Protecting Our Alaska Native Women</b>  Alaska Native Women's Resource Center	<b>Findings from the National Workgroup on Safe Housing for American Indian/ Alaska Native Survivors of Domestic Violence</b>  NIWRC, NRC DV, Caroline LaPorte

**3:00 MDT** **Break 15 Minutes:** Suggested Activity - Breathe Deep with Virtual Breathing

**3:15 MDT**

**3:15 MDT** **Closing Plenary**

- 4:30 MDT** • **Tillie Black Bear Awardee Remarks:** Connie Brushbreaker, TBD
- **Women Are Sacred Listen and Act:** Nicole Matthews, Natasha Kingbird, Marissa Cummings, Jonel Beauvais
- **Closing Remarks:** Cherrah Giles, NIWRC Board Chairwoman
- **Traditional Closing Ceremony:** Wendy Schlater, NIWRC Board Treasurer and the Bird Singers

**6:00 MDT**

**7:30 MDT**

Evening Activity (Optional)	
<b>Film Festival: Dawland, with Sandy Whitehawk</b> NIWRC	<b>Film Festival: Predator on the Reservation, with Drs. Daniel and Rebecca Crawford Foster</b> NIWRC

## TILLIE BLACK BEAR MEMORIAL AWARD

The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center honors the legacy of **Wa Wokiya Win (Tillie Black Bear)**, Sicangu Lakota, through a bi-annual award presented during its Women Are Sacred Conference to recognize outstanding grassroots advocates and direct service providers that exemplify the teachings and dedication Tillie instilled in restoring safety for Native women.

Our much beloved Tillie, known as the Grandmother of the Movement to End Violence Against Women, played a major leadership role in the work to restore safety for Native women. She believed in the teaching White Buffalo Calf Woman had brought to the Lakota people that even in thought, women are to be respected. Tillie's steadfast leadership was rooted in the clarity of her beliefs and dedication to Native peoples and women. Her work spanned almost four decades until her passing in 2014. Tillie's understanding of social change, organizing, movement building, served her well as a leader, an inspiration, a teacher, and a sister-mother-friend-icon.

This year, NIWRC will announce the new Tillie Black Bear Award recipient virtually during Day 1 at our Opening General Session. During the Closing General Session, the new Awardee will have the opportunity to accept the award and speak with us about their work in the community in ending the violence.

In 2018 Carmen O'Leary was selected as the Tillie Black Bear recipient. Carmen is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. She has worked toward ending violence against Native women professionally and as a volunteer since 1988. Her work began as a shelter Children's Advocate. Years following, she held various other positions. She has served as a co-chair for the South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She also was a consultant for the Center for Offender Management, Mending the Sacred Hoop, National State Courts and Sacred Circle- National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women.

Carmen currently serves as the Director for the Native Women's Society of the Great Plains, a tribal coalition whose membership consists of Native programs providing services across the northern Great Plains to women who experience violence. Carmen is also a board member of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, a national resource center addressing domestic violence and safety for Native Women. Carmen has provided countless hours of training and education to help tribal communities address domestic and sexual violence. She has worked tirelessly to bring awareness to the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.







## HONOR WALL

This year's Honor Wall is devoted to all the people that were nominated for a Tillie Black Bear Award. The pictures and stories in this space, which will be hosted online on the Whova conference platform, pay tribute to amazing Native advocates that inspire our work today. These advocates have paved the way for our Movement to restore safety for all Native women through their leadership, compassion, endeavor, and commitment to Native peoples and Nations to make our shared world a safe, healthy, and just place to live.

Walking in their footsteps, we find comfort, strength, resilience, healing, and hope. The stories remind us that we are indeed the living legacy of these women as we continue to carry out the teachings that Women Are Sacred.

## YOUTH SESSIONS

Due to the pandemic, this year's Women are Sacred conference is virtual. As a result, the full Youth Track is not possible. However, two unique sessions are being offered this year specifically for young adults, ages 16 to 24 years old: Growing Roots and Grounding Ourselves in Healthy Relationships presented by Keioshia Peter with the StrongHearts Native Help Line; and Understanding the Effects of Historical Trauma and Creating Healthy Relationships by Dr. Billie Jo Kipp with Aspen Institute. Both Keioshia (Dine) and Dr. Kipp (Blackfeet) bring their heart-felt dedication and years of experience in working with youth to create a safe space to work with our young relatives. We encourage our young relatives, who are attendees to explore the full WAS agenda to find additional sessions that support their journey.

## WAS TALKS

In 2018, we launched a new initiative for Women are Sacred: WAS Talks! For WAS 2021 we are continuing this initiative. WAS Talks provides a unique forum for victim/survivors, advocates, researchers, community/family members, writers, poets, actors, artists, philosophers, community leaders, politicians and tribal leaders to make a statement, voice your concerns, express your creativity through poetry or staged reading, talk about the future or direction of our movement, the role of advocacy, VAWA reauthorization, historical trauma, domestic violence practices, sexual violence, Missing and Murdered, sex trafficking, EVERYTHING!!! WAS Talks will be recorded prior to WAS. WAS Talks is inspired by the national TED Talks. Our stories hold power in shining light on the issues of violence in our communities. It's time to talk! Please check the Whova App for more information.



## FILM FESTIVAL

This year at WAS we are organizing a film festival. We will be introducing a new film each evening during WAS. For the first night we will introduce **Lakota Daughters**, with Dr. Kelly Hallman and her work with girls, on night two, we will highlight **Sisters Rising**, with Lisa Brunner and on the third night we will show both **Predator on the Reservation** with Drs. Daniel and Rebecca Crawford Foster, and **Dawnland**, with Sandy Whitehawk. After each showing there will be time for discussion. Since this is a virtual event, these films can be downloaded at any time for your viewing convenience.





## ROUNDTABLE TO DEVELOP GUIDANCE FOR INDIGENOUS ADVOCACY PROGRAMS TO UP-LIFT OUR SPIRITUALLY/CULTURALLY-BASED RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

Facilitator: Kerri Colfer, NIWRC Senior Native Affairs Advisor

This roundtable discussion with indigenous survivors and advocates will inform NIWRC's development of a toolkit/training for program development and working with American Indian/Alaska Native victims and survivors of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. The conversation will be pivotal in the development of culturally appropriate and trauma informed guidance based in indigenous world views, teachings, and beliefs. Conversations will be facilitated by NIWRC staff working on the creation of toolkit/trainings.



## SESSION DESCRIPTIONS - DAY 1

**11:30-12:45 MDT**

### **Session 1: Using Indigenous Knowledge for Advocacy**

Presenters: Guadalupe Lopez and Linda Thompson

This workshop will introduce an Indigenous approach to Focusing Oriented Therapy (a body-centered and person-centered approach to healing). It is geared toward frontline work, to help them work with complex trauma without experiencing burnout. No clinical or background is necessary to utilize this approach. Topics include: Clearing and creating a protected land-based space for hearing and sharing trauma; Protecting your center to be able to hear trauma without being traumatized by it and how to set down lived, vicarious/secondary and intergenerational trauma.

### **Session 2: Systems Advocacy in a Coordinated Community Response**

Presenters: Tina Olson and Katherine Eagle

Participants in this session will explore existing practices, relationships, an organizing in a Coordinated Community Response to Violence Against Women. A CCR works to create institutional change through systems advocacy. This requires not only understanding how institutions work and how they must be consistent with holding offenders accountable while creating safety for women. Challenging institutions to change must be done in a positive fashion that encourages continued participation in a CCR without losing our vision of accountability to survivors. Either we have achieved some measure of our goals and have shifted priorities to other specific strategies that enhance the goals already accomplished, OR...we have become complacent, overwhelmed with the minutia of providing services for survivors and act in concert with institutions of oppression. What are the strengths and lessons learned from advocacy? Have DV and SA programs become too institutionalized? What do successful systems change strategies look like? This workshop will focus on where our movement is going, where and who is the leadership, what is our model for leadership, and last but certainly not least, a dialogue on collective strategies that engage our community on organizing for “real social justice and social change.”

### **Session 3: Crooked Beads and Other Stories for Decolonization**

Presenter: Tai Simpson

Crooked Beads is a workshop that explores traditional and contemporary Indigenous storytelling as a practice of healing and community building. The workshop is geared toward advocates and healers in our communities to rejuvenate the practice when it comes to connecting with victims of violence. Additionally, how we tell and amplify our story through the lens of our “old ways” helps to decolonize advocacy work. Current western models of advocacy and crisis response have proven damaging to community building and healing. The workshop will allow time for participants to share their story, engage in group discussion, ask hard questions, and learn subsequent calls to action. The Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence has incorporated the practice of storytelling as healing which Tai explores and identifies best practices.

### **Session 4: Higher Risk: LGBTQ2S Youth and Domestic Violence**

Presenter: Lenny Hayes

Traditionally within indigenous societies, people identifying as beyond the binary roles of male and female were honored for their unique knowledge, gifts and roles. However, today the marginalization ostracism of LGBTQ and 2 Spirit people put them at higher risks for violence – including domestic violence. Support and accessible and appropriate resources are often minimal or non-existent. This

session examines: How do we address heterosexism? What are Native, LGBTQ2S youth experiencing? How do we provide effective, respectful advocacy?

**1:45-3:00 MDT**

### **Session 5: Decimating the Cradleboard to Prison Cell Pipeline**

Presenters: Stephanie Autumn and Morning Star Gali

Historically, Native women have been the target of colonial violence and genocide which continues to permeate U.S. societal systems culminating in state and federal policies creating the cradle board to prison cell pipeline for Native people. In the past ten years Native women and girls represent the highest rising population in state and federal prisons and are being disproportionately detained in urban and rural areas across the county. This workshop will examine the intersection of inter-generational trauma, substance abuse, incarceration, family disintegration, and the linkages between incarceration and MMIW victims. Each speaker will also share community based research and organizing strategies to respond to the critical service/resource gaps and the every present critical need to create pathways for healing, transformation, and empowerment for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated Native women and girls.

### **Session 6: Institutional Analysis: Addressing Racism and Sexism in U.S. Criminal Legal System Responses to Native Women who Report Rape**

Presenters: Katherine Eagle, Tina Olson and Maren Woods

In the U.S., Native women are over three times more likely to be raped than women of other races. The examination of rape of Native women has primarily been limited to Indian Country and women living on reservation land. In 2007, Mending the Sacred Hoop (MSH) partnered with local agencies and organizations to take an up-close look at the criminal legal response to rape of Native women in Duluth, MN—an off-reservation urban community. Led by and grounded in the lived experiences of Native women and advocates, the project engaged systems in a process to increase transparency and accountability for inadequate responses to Native women who reported rape. Using the Praxis Institutional Analysis (or Safety and Accountability Audit), the project illuminated significant gaps in the system's response to Native women who were sexually assaulted and led to extensive recommendations for change. MSH has recently revisited the original project and used the same process to determine the long-term impact and outcomes. In this workshop, MSH and Praxis International will share what they have learned about the sustainability of system reform efforts, successes and challenges in utilizing the Praxis Institutional Analysis as an interdisciplinary problem-solving tool, highlights of how MSH has infused Indigenous cultural practices and traditions into the process, considerations for tailoring this process to examine institutional racism, and how you might apply the methodology to solving problems in your community's response to sexual assault and domestic violence.

### **Session 7: How to Use Data that You Already Have?**

Presenter: Ada Pecos Melton

Research and data collection are the foundation for creating programs and services needed in the community. Data collected from your program or project can also be used for a variety of reasons; to design programs, improve or increase services provided, develop education and community awareness of issues and show gaps for needed services. This workshop will provide strategies and examples of how data that is already collected and held within your programs can be used in a good way to convince skeptical or uninformed people about needed services, give you a baseline to track the progress of your programs and provide guidance to focus on specific issues.



## **Session 8: Combatting Sex Trafficking in and around our Native Communities**

Presenter: Brian Pottratz and Molly Berhow

Tribes United Against Sex Trafficking (TRUST) investigates crimes of sex trafficking and exploitation on Tribal lands and partners with Minnesota's 11 federally recognized tribes. Trafficking and exploitation in and around Minnesota's Native American communities is a complex and pervasive problem. This 75-min presentation will give a foundational overview of the dynamics and scope of trafficking and exploitation. It will connect the foundational overview of trafficking and how it applies to our Native communities, and what can be done to identify potential trafficking?

**3:15-4:30 MDT**

## **Session 9: What are Human Rights? Women's Rights? Indigenous Rights? How international law addresses gender based violence**

Presenter: Christopher Foley

This workshop will look at how International law addresses gender-based violence and how indigenous women have used international advocacy in their work to end violence against women. This session will offer an overview of the human rights systems of the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS), both of which are relevant to indigenous peoples in the United States. The session will review the international legal framework applicable to domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence committed against indigenous women. It will include some discussion of relevant human rights treaties and we will look closely at the two key human rights instruments that are specific to indigenous peoples—the UN and American Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Both Declarations create legal standards and obligations that countries must observe in their dealings with indigenous peoples. The rights affirmed in these Declarations include the right of self-determination, rights to lands and resources, the right of indigenous women and children to be protected against violence, and many others. Finally, the session will share information about some of the recent work Native women, tribes, and organizations have done using the international human rights system to advance indigenous women's rights and offer information about how you can get involved in these efforts.

## **Session 10: Combatting MMIWG by Reclaiming Native Matrilineal Traditions through Girl-centered Programming**

Presenter: Kelly Hallman, Lisa Polen, Aimee Pond, Kellee Brewer

This session will highlight a recent initiative in Indian Country, the Indigenous Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Network (IMAGEN). IMAGEN uses a girl-centered approach to strengthen social support for Native girls by reclaiming matrilineal traditions. It does so by establishing neighborhood-level "Girl Societies" that meet weekly and use existing local places (community halls, etc.) that the community agrees to maintain as safe and visibly sign-posted as a safe space for girls. The approach could help fight MMIWG by providing stronger protective social connections for girls to other females who can provide a safe sounding board for them, and who will know if a girl becomes missing and what to do about it. Session participants will return to their communities equipped to: (1) describe the rationale for and steps involved in initiating a local girl-centered program, (2) report on the adaptation and use of the girl-centered approach in tribal and urban Indian communities to date, and (3) carry out a group activity with their community members using a freely available participatory tool that we will demonstrate and provide to attendees.

## **Session 11: A Silent Epidemic: Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys**

Presenter: Lenny Hayes

Often men are the neglected victim of all forms of sexual violence including being abused as a boy. It is frightening to realize how widespread sexual abuse and violence is in our society and yet how strong the denial of it is. The presenter will discuss the impact of sexual abuse and domestic violence against men and boys. The presenter will discuss the mental health issues as well as define the issues that prevents the individual from having healthy relationships. Educational Objectives: 1. To educate participants about the impact of sexual/domestic violence against men and boys. 2. To educate participants about the mental health issues that impacts boys and men who experience sexual violence. 3. To educate participants that healing is possible through presenters own personal story of child sexual abuse.

## **Session 12: Kapu Aloha “Sacred Love”**

Presenters: Rosemond Loke Pettigrew, Nanifaye Paglinawan, Dolly Tatofi and Dayna Schultz

This purpose of this workshop is to share and discuss the cultural perspective of Native Hawaiians' value in the relationship of God, Creator, higher power and the connection between natural elements such as the sky, land, ocean, and the people as one entity of body, mind and spirit. This perspective and our sense of self and culture has been negatively impacted and changed due to Western Contact and is seen in the rates of domestic violence and related disparities. This workshop will explore the concept of Kapu Aloha and the essence of Sacred Love that guide Kanaka Oihi (Native Hawaiians) to heal and rise from trauma and violence, including domestic violence. Recent Native Hawaiian organizing efforts over our protection of sacred lands including the development of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea is an example of our exercise of our Kapu Aloha. We will discuss other areas in Hawaii that Native Hawaiians are standing together to protect against further trauma. Lastly, we will explore the importance of healing victims of domestic violence, our land and people through prayer, support and understanding from Akua (God) and our ancestors.

**6:00-7:30 MDT**

## **Roundtable to Develop Guidance for Indigenous Advocacy Programs to Up-lift Our Spiritually/Culturally-based Resources and Programming**

Facilitator: Kerri Colfer, NIWRC Senior Native Affairs Advisor

This roundtable discussion with indigenous survivors and advocates will inform NIWRC's development of a toolkit/training for program development and working with American Indian/Alaska Native victims and survivors of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. The conversation will be pivotal in the development of culturally appropriate and trauma informed guidance based in Indigenous world views, teachings, and beliefs. Conversations will be facilitated by NIWRC staff working on the creation of toolkit/trainings.

## SESSION DESCRIPTIONS - DAY 2

**10:00-11:15 MDT**

### **General Session: Tribal Strengths and Resilience: Initiatives Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women and In Our Communities**

Presenters: Elsie Boudreau, Rose Harris and Malinda Harris

Native women survivors, their families and advocates have been on the frontlines advocating for an end to domestic and sexual violence and violence against women at the tribal, state, national and international levels. The understanding that this violence is connected to the colonization of Indian tribal governments and Indigenous peoples by other governments is key to de-colonizing solutions that prioritizes local, Native responses. Because of their leadership, we have seen changes in laws and policies and cultural shifts. Much more work must be done, and we must continue to center and focus attention on their voices and the needs of sovereign Indigenous nations to protect Native women.

### **General Session: Legislative Updates Impacting Indian Country**

Presenter: NIWRC Policy Team

This session will provide updated information on the historic number of pending legislation addressing domestic violence and violence against Native women.

**11:30-12:45 MDT**

### **Session 13: S.O.A.R. Web-Based Database**

Presenters: Dr. Diane Gout and Morgan Hawes

This workshop introduces the web-based version of the S.O.A.R. (Services, Outcomes, Analysis and Resources) database. The database was developed with the input of over two dozen tribal domestic violence and sexual assault programs. It supports programs in collecting the information needed to not only accurately provide required data for federal reporting (i.e. FVPSA, OVW, and OVC), but can also serve as a case management tool and be utilized to assist with evaluations and assessments at both the program and community levels.

### **Session 14: Human Trafficking in Tribal Gaming-Identify and Respond**

Presenter: Jeri Moomaw

Sex and labor trafficking happen in many places, including Tribal casinos and hotels. This workshop will help you look at the issue from a new view and Increased awareness and understanding of human trafficking that happens in gaming and hotels. You will learn from a facilitator that has lived experience and possesses insight from many lenses as well as experience developing casino human trafficking programs. You will gain skills and techniques to recognize trafficking activities, such as buyers, traffickers and potential victims and respond within the framework of a formal response protocol. Tools include examples of project needs, recommendations, response protocol and casino policies.



## **Session 15: VAWA 2013 - Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction**

Presenters: Esther Labrado and Kelly Stoner

This session will provide an overview of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA 2013) and provide a detailed examination of the issues tribes need to address if they are interested in exercising the Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction (SDVCJ) provisions under VAWA 2013. The session will also discuss the SDVCJ: Five-Year Report, which summarizes the exercise of tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians in tribal courts since enactment of VAWA 2013. This examination of the tribes' early exercise of SDVCJ suggests that VAWA 2013 has been a success. As Congress intended, the law has equipped tribes with the much-needed authority to combat the high rates of domestic violence against Native women, while protecting non-Indians' rights in impartial, tribal forums. This report also describes how tribes and victims have benefitted from the new law and also highlight gaps that remain and recommendations for next steps. Discussion includes the assistance, guidance and benefits from the Intertribal Technical Assistance Working Group (ITWG) on VAWA SDVCJ. The session provides an overview of tribal protection orders, how to craft tribal protection orders, what language must be included in a tribal protection order, and how to meet the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) full faith and credit provision. We will also discuss how to enforce tribal protection orders through: criminal prosecution, criminal contempt, and civil contempt. Enforcing tribal protection order under the VAWA SDVCJ will also be addressed.

## **Session 16: Youth Session - Growing Roots and Grounding Ourselves in Healthy Relationships**

Presenter: Keioshiah Peter

The workshop will focus on building the participant's knowledge in body sovereignty, communication, consent, establishing boundaries while reflecting on how our relationship to the land can help us to build connections. Come learn with us as we explore the land as the basis of building relationships, healthy relationships, and make a zine to share with our family, friends, and community.

**1:45-3:00 MDT**

## **Session 17: Structural factors related to intimate partner violence among Indigenous Women: Findings from the Our Circle Study**

Presenters: Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell and Emily Loerzel, MSW

This presentation discusses the findings of interviewing and working with Native American survivors of IPV, and the use of findings in the developing of culturally-adapted assessment tools and interventions for Native women experiencing IPV.

## **Session 18: Crossroads: The Intersections Child Welfare and Sex Trafficking**

Presenter: Chris Stark

This presentation will discuss the historical and contemporary intersections of child welfare and sex and labor trafficking of Native youth in the United States. The presentation includes how Native advocates and allies can disrupt the contemporary abuse of Native children, families, and communities where child welfare and trafficking intersect.

## **Session 19: Changing How We Work with Youth in Alaska impacted by Gender-based Violence**

Presenter: Janelle Chapin

Alaska Native Women's Resource Center is working with youth in a strength-based approach. We believe that cultural knowledge weaved into prevention work is the answer to healing future generations and helping our tribes heal. This is done by talking about inter-generational trauma and current issues our tribes are facing. Letting youth become the guides in their own story and helping to heal the hurts of the past. Beyond the hurt to help guide the change for the future. As many indigenous values state our Youth are the Future. As our future we have to heal the past and believe in future. Learn how we are developing our work with collaboration of youth throughout Alaska based on pilot curriculum engagement process that began in 2013.

## **Session 20: Confidentiality Between Victim Advocates /Survivors and the Tribal Justice System: Statutory/Funder Requirements and Best Practices**

Presenters: Rob Valente and Caroline LaPorte

When we work with survivors, they trust us to keep their communications and location confidential. That is the cornerstone of our work. To assure survivors that we can communicate with them safely and supportively, we must show them that we are able to listen carefully, that in spite of their past experiences with untrustworthy people, we will strive to maintain their trust, and that whatever they say to us will remain confidential. Confidential communications will help survivors heal, find safety and stability, obtain justice, and receive help in a spiritually and culturally supportive way. Keeping survivors' communications confidential will help us be the best advocates we can be.

At the end of this workshop, victim advocate participants will:

- Understand more about the basic legal framework governing confidentiality when providing victim services
- Learn about best practices to protect the confidentiality of victims who use program's resources
- Understand need for good record-keeping processes and internal policies protecting victim confidentiality
- Learn more about if, when and how a victim services program may release victim information with the victim's consent

### **3:15-4:30 MDT**

## **Session 21: Using Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration to Strengthen Enforcement of Tribal Protection Orders**

Presenters: Kelly Gaines-Stoner and Michelle Rivard Parks

National data underscores the epidemic of native victims being traumatized by domestic violence and sexual assault. Tribally issued protection order are a critical means for proving safety and justice in Indian country. However, for tribal protection orders to be effective in promoting victim safety, cross-jurisdictional enforcement is necessary. Unfortunately, cross-jurisdictional enforcement of protection orders has been a long-standing concern for tribes. This presentation will delve into the issue of cross-jurisdiction enforcement of tribal protection orders.

## **Session 22: Four Pillars for a Strong Transitional Housing Program**

Presenters: Victoria Ybanez

Tribal Transitional Housing provides victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking a holistic, victim-centered approach to providing transitional housing services that move survivors into permanent housing. Programs have four cornerstones to what it provides. Successful transitional housing programs provide a wide range of optional services that reflect the unique needs of victims and promote victim choice and autonomy. This includes housing assistance, economic advocacy, activities that provide support with strengthening the household in the aftermath of violence, and cultural specific trauma informed/historical trauma informed options for healing. This session will define what transitional housing is and discuss the four pillars of a strong transitional housing response.

## **Session 23: Understanding the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act: Past, Present and Future**

Presenters: Paula Julian, Lori Jump, Tami Truett Jerue, Kelbie Kennedy, Dawn Stover and Germaine Lucero

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) became law 35 years ago providing critical funds to support domestic violence shelter and supportive services. This marked a historic shift in the way our country and the federal government recognized their responsibility to respond to domestic violence and support victims with safe shelter and supportive services. The time and effort of survivors, advocates and their allies to educate society is no small task, with each reauthorization of the law ensuring that changes are made that are responsive to our increased understanding of barriers facing Native victims. This session will provide an overview of the law and the historic changes we've seen particularly in the last 5 years due to tribal advocacy, including increased resources for tribes, and the creation of the StrongHearts Native Helpline and the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center, and discuss what survivors and tribes need into the future.

## **Session 24: Using Indigenous-based Program Evaluation and Research Methods**

Presenter: Val Kalei Kanuha

This session will discuss the strengths and challenges of using indigenous methods, principles, values and approaches to research and evaluation among native and indigenous projects, specifically focused on gender-based violence from an intersectional, multi-issue/multi-identity perspective.



## SESSION DESCRIPTIONS - DAY 3

### 10:00-11:15 MDT

#### **General Session: Implementation of the Federal Trust Responsibility**

Presenters: Shawndell Dawson, Sherriann Moore, Heidi Frechette, I.H.S., ANA, BIA

This panel will address how the federal government is carrying out the federal trust responsibility to assist Indian tribes in safeguarding the lives of Indian women against domestic and sexual violence. Specifically, the offices of FVPSA, OVW, BIA, HUD, I.H.S. and ANA will provide highlights of their administration of tribal funding and TA resources and federal coordination. Thirty-five years ago in 1984, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act became law. Twenty-five years ago, in 1994, the Violence Against Women Act became law. Both became laws because survivors and advocates educated lawmakers at the local, tribal, state and the federal levels that governments had a responsibility to protect victims of domestic violence. Passage of these laws marked a shift in our nation's history in the way our country and the federal government recognized their responsibility to respond to domestic violence and support victims.

### 11:30-12:45 MDT

#### **Session 25: Part 1 of 2 - National Strategies to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: The Role of Political Clarity**

Presenters: Paula Julian, Rose Quilt, Kerri Colfer and Amy Sparck

The current crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) is not new. It is a continuation of the violent colonization of Indigenous nations by the United States ingrained in current federal laws and policies dating back to the 1800s. This political reality leaves Native women as a population unprotected and vulnerable to a spectrum of violence by abusers and predators. This workshop is part 1 of a 2-part interactive series to discuss the development of a national framework and 5-point action plan for addressing the crisis of MMIW based on a political organizing approach. The session will provide public awareness materials to support developing MMIW response efforts, including NIWRC's Restoration Magazine.

#### **Session 26: Using Group Activities to Reclaim our Lives through Culture and Healing**

Presenters: Amanda Takes War Bonnett and Carmen O'Leary

From a traditional and cultural perspective group work has always had a place in traditional Native life. When doing group work for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors, cultural activities and crafts are help reinforce cultural concepts that have always assisted women in finding some identity and connection to their culture. Women can gain healing, strengthen identity, wisdom and philosophy using culturally specific knowledge through fun and challenging activities. These cultural concepts can empowered women and promote healing. This workshop will provide facilitation skills and activities.

#### **Session 27: Strong Roots: Supporting Staff Through Healing-Centered Workplaces**

Presenters: Christina Love and Gabriela Zapata-Alma

We have a growing understanding that problems related to substance use (including addiction) are best understood as health conditions that are often deeply linked with collective and individual trauma. Yet we are still unsure as to how we can best integrate this new understanding into our

policies and practices, while also protecting the well-being of other staff, clients, and the overall organization. This workshop will support participants in considering how their organizations can move away from punitive practices and embrace healing-centered approaches to create an organizational culture that is central to fostering healing and growth.

### **Session 28: Youth Session – Understanding the Effects of Historical Trauma and Creating Healthy Relationships**

Presenter: Billie Jo Kipp

This session will explore youth perceptions about relationships, including CBPR data collected on a northern plains tribe. Additionally, this session will present the effects of historical trauma and oppression on today's relationships and the disruption that oppressive violence had on ancestral relationships. Finally, youth will learn communication and boundaries to support healthy relationships.

**1:45-3:00 MDT**

### **Session 29: Part 2 of 2 - National Strategies Addressing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: Indigenous Worldview and Organization**

Presenters: Paula Julian, Rose M. Quilt, Kerri Colfer, Malinda Harris, Patricia Whitefoot, Leanne Guy and Amy Sparck

This workshop is part 2 of a 2-part interactive series that will continue our discussion about the development of a national framework and 5-point plan of action for addressing the crisis of MMIW in tribal communities. Changes in laws, policies, and social norms over the past 35 years have been rooted in Indigenous worldviews and organizations. The session will focus on the political action planning and combined organization necessary to achieve the social changes to not only address MMIW but to build the groundswell required to enhance the safety of Native women. The NIWRC's policy team will facilitate discussion on:

- the importance of indigenous worldviews to center responses around the needs of Indian women and tribal governments to end these abductions and murders;
- grassroots organizing efforts to restore tribal sovereignty and end abductions and murders of Indian women reflected in the unprecedented number of pending federal and state legislation and overdue attention by law and policymakers; and
- organizing strategies holding tribal, local, state, and federal governments accountable.

### **Session 30: Helping Men Walk in Balance by Addressing Historical Trauma and Youth Victimization**

Presenters: Jeremy NeVilles-Sorell and Greg Grey Cloud

Our communities cannot be healthy until we address the impact of historical and intergenerational trauma. Native men have long histories of being victims of colonization, boarding schools, racism that we internalize and then perpetrate the same learned violence onto our families. However, many victim services providers do not have the capacity to respond to the unique types of victimization and trauma that native men experience. This workshop will also review the historical traumas experienced by native men, the normal reactions to trauma by men of color, and will present strategies to enhance healing and supportive services for men of color.

**Session 31: Traditional Advocacy and Protecting Our Alaska Native Women**

Presenters: Tami Truett Jerue and Elsie Boudreau

Native victims of domestic violence and sexual assault face additional barriers to safety based on jurisdictional confusion, lack of tribal resources, isolation, lack of law enforcement and lack of culturally sensitive services. These barriers are reflected in federal and state laws and policies. Our tribes are empowering themselves and protecting our women by creating a network of advocates who operate based on traditional values of helping each other. Learn how Alaska Native Women's Resource Center is working with our partners both tribal, local and state to enhance these natural systems of support to encourage safety.

**Session 32: Findings from the National Workgroup on Safe Housing for American Indian/Alaska Native Survivors of Domestic Violence**

Presenters: Gwen Packard and Caroline LaPorte

This workshop will report out the findings from the National Workgroup on Safe Housing for American Indian/Alaska Native Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Abuse. It will examine the trifecta--domestic violence, housing/shelter and homelessness. A copy of the report will be available, however, this is the beginning of our work in responding to homelessness, domestic violence and housing/shelter and following this presentation there will be ample time for Q & A and discussion.

**3:15-4:30 MDT**

**Closing General Session:**

**Remarks by Tillie Black Bear Awardee**

**Women Are Sacred: Listen and Act**

Presenters: Nicole Matthews, Jonel Beauvais, Marissa Cummings, Natasha Kingbird

Indigenous women were instrumental in creating this movement to end violence against women. Just as indigenous societies traditionally relied upon the strengths, expertise, voices and leadership of women, the foundation and heart of the movement to end violence against indigenous women rests upon the strengths, expertise, voices and leadership of indigenous women survivors and grassroots advocates. The work to end violence against Native women and their children, and other community members, is much more than reactive responses like provision of resources, services etc. Advocacy is about proactive social change, reclaiming relationships as Relatives and indigenous values and life ways. This session is a call to think critically about how decisions and actions impact the safety and integrity of indigenous women. It is a call to renew and recenter the leadership of survivors and advocates, Native women, and honor the sacredness of women in all aspects of our work and lives.

**Closing Remarks:** Cherrah Giles, NIWRC Board Chairwoman

**Traditional Closing Ceremony:** Wendy Schlater, NIWRC Board Treasurer and the Bird Singers



# C E R T I F I C A T E OF ATTENDANCE

*This certifies that*

*Attended the Women Are Sacred Conference  
held on June 8-10, 2021  
hosted by the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center  
616 Lane Deer Ave. Lane Deer, Montana 59043*



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INDIGENOUS**  
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER









# JOIN THE MOVEMENT ONLINE

FULL CONFERENCE DETAILS AND INFORMATION AT [NIWRC.ORG/WAS](https://niwrc.org/was).

#WAS2021 #WASWELLNESS21



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