

2011 Native Philanthropy Institute Recap

“Weaving Leadership, Indigenous People and Resources”

Native Americans in Philanthropy (NAP) successfully concluded its 6th Annual Native Philanthropy Institute (NPI) on April 4-5, 2011 at the remarkable Tulalip Resort & Casino located in Tulalip, WA. The NPI engaged more than 145 national participants from Native communities, Tribal giving programs, Native and non-Native nonprofits, foundations and philanthropic associations for dialogue, interaction and co-learning centered on the conference theme of *Weaving Leadership, Indigenous People and Resources*. Additionally, on April 6th a group of 23 participants connected more closely with local nonprofits as part of the Seattle Urban Indian Site Tour.

The NPI began the morning of Monday, April 4th with a traditional Tulalip blessing from an elder and was followed by a captivating welcome from Tulalip Tribal Chairman Mel Sheldon, Jr. Keynote speaker Billy Frank, Jr. (Nisqually) addressed the audience and shared his wealth of knowledge having advocated for human rights for all, particularly the Indian people of western Washington State as the chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission for the last 30 years. The majority of respondents in a post-NPI web evaluation ranked Mr. Frank Jr.’s keynote address as their favorite session overall.

Afterward, two subsequent morning plenary sessions were held and designed to draw upon a shared belief that is NAP’s organizational vision of healthy and sustainable communities enhanced by the Native spirit of generosity. The first plenary was an overview of NAP’s vision for our communities as told by leaders from a Tribal community, Native nonprofit, Tribal giving program and Philanthropy. The panelists were asked to respond to the following three questions based on their perspective:

1. *What is the role that your perspective plays toward the vision of Native Americans in Philanthropy?*
2. *How do you or would you weave leadership, indigenous people and resources into your work with Native communities?*
3. *What do you see as potential collaborative opportunities to engage organizations and individuals of the three other perspectives?*

The presenters were (Tribal Community) Leonard Forsman, Suquamish Foundation President and Suquamish Tribal Chair; (Native Nonprofit) Pamala Silas, Executive Director of AISES; (Tribal Giving) Shelley Butler-Allen, Director and Co-Partner of Program/Educational Services at Cherokee Nation Foundation; and (Philanthropy) Carol Lewis, President & CEO of Philanthropy Northwest; and was facilitated by Ron Rowell, CEO of Common Counsel Foundation and Chair of Native Americans in Philanthropy.

The second plenary session was a presentation on the work of the Northwest Area Foundation (NWAFF) and Foundation for Community Vitality where they co-sponsored two foundation-led round table convenings in Montana during 2010 to enhance Native American grantmaking. Discussions of common values and goals among the 25 foundations and 15 Native organizations participating resulted in a proposed set of guiding principles. Participants also identified a 2030

Vision illustrating pathways and outcomes for grantmaking and Native American self-determined development.

Tony Genia, NWAFF Senior Program Officer and Martin Jennings, NWAFF Program Officer discussed Native grantmaking principles, provided a detailed explanation of the various pathways within the 2030 Vision illustration and divulged next steps for continued funder dialogue. They concluded with these points to consider:

- Build on shared values and common goals;
- The 2030 Vision is a unifying tool for connecting with foundations;
- We can expand and strengthen the circle to create a Movement among funders; Native people have inherent assets of value to share; and
- We can improve the effectiveness of grants made to Indian Country!

For a PDF version of the NWAFF presentation please [click here](#).

At lunch on Monday a video interview was shown of Brian Cladoosy, Swinomish Tribal Chairman. Chairman Cladoosy was one of the twelve tribal leaders selected to meet with U.S. President Barack Obama at a tribal leaders' summit in December 2010. He shared his experience from this meeting as well as invaluable insights into Native leadership as a long-time leader within his community.

To view Chairman Cladoosy's interview please [click here](#)

The concurrent sessions were set up in 3 separate tracks: Leadership, Strategic Grantmaking and Organizational Capacity Building. Below are the reports for each session.

Leadership

The Leadership track sessions were setup as peacemaking circles and co-facilitated by Ron Tso, Lummi CEDAR Project Chair and Lummi Nation Chief of Police and Shasta Cano-Martin, Lummi CEDAR Project Executive Director.

The Emerging Leaders Circle session explored challenges that new and up and coming leaders face as they learn and make their way to leadership roles in the non-profit sector and/or Native philanthropy. All participants had the opportunity to share their story and 85% of survey respondents rated the overall quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

The Established Leaders Circle Leadership session explored ways to promote and share successes and failures with the next generation. Additionally, through continued passion and resiliency for the work how do established leaders retain a reciprocal relationship about it with the next generation of leaders? An interesting note is that some participants had difficulty in describing themselves as either an established or emerging leader and time was made for the group to talk about this. Overall, 86% of survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

The Emerging and Established Leaders Engage in an Intergenerational Leadership Exchange session was a peacemaking circle for both emerging and established leaders intended to foster intergenerational partnerships and pursue collective leadership. Emerging leaders were asked the question ‘what kind of information, direction and experience would you like to gain from an established leader?’ Established leaders were asked the question of ‘what kinds of thoughts or direction would you give to an emerging leader?’ Some respondents offered insight into each question because they identify themselves in both positions of leadership. Overall, 100% of the survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

Strategic Grantmaking

The Strategic Grantmaking track began with dialogue from Elected and Traditional Tribal Leaders and Philanthropy. Leonard Forsman and Shelley Hanson, former Director of the Spirit Mountain Community Foundation shared their stories and talked about the need for greater investment into Native non-profits and Tribal giving programs. Overall, 84% of survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

The next Strategic Grantmaking session focused on How to Transition from the Nice/Needy to Strategic Funding. Lili Liu, Program Officer at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation facilitated a deeper philosophical discussion of ‘how can we all be better at our charitable giving?’ and included presentations by Ken Gordon, Executive Director of Potlatch Fund; Michael Roberts, President of First Nations Development Institute; and Tony Genia. Each presenter brought a varied perspective to the discussion, which allowed the audience to see it from many different angles. Overall, 95% of survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

The final Strategic Grantmaking session was a Skill-Building Session on Strategic Grantmaking and addressed the question of ‘why be strategic?’ Ken Gordon and Lili Liu shared insights into the work they have done or are currently doing and how others can be more strategic in how they fund Indian Country. Following valuable presentations there was sufficient time for audience interaction. This helped to further the conversation and deepen participant engagement as the group was able tackle this question from several different viewpoints. Overall, 100% of the survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

Organizational Capacity Building

The Organizational Capacity Building track started with a story circle led by four artists whose lives and work provide rich and varied experience crossing borders. It featured Johnpaul Jones, architect; Tia Oros Peters writer; Roger Fernandes storyteller; and Tommer Peterson artist and arts administrator. These presenters shared their experience of successes and challenges they have faced in moving across borders of culture, economy, power, politics, language race, ethnicity, and a host of other real and imagined lines.

There was enthusiastic participation from several attendees and a number who listened and did not contribute. This was an exploratory session without a linear goal. Overall 90% of survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*. One comment received was “there was an abundance of material! It provided me a perspective to better inform our work with local tribes as well as a framework to speak with my board, donors and staff..”

The next Organizational Capacity Building session was another story circle led by Carmen Fourd, Native Youth Leadership Alliance and David Tobacco, two emerging leaders who shared their stories activism as LGBTQ youth. This session continued a discussion begun at the 2010 NPI in Denver, CO. It was introduced by Karen Zelermyer, Executive Director of Funders for LGBTQ Issues, an affinity group of the Council on Foundations. The importance of this discussion is to look at ways that philanthropy can support at the intersections of identity, i.e., Native Americans, youth, and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or two-spirit. The latter is both an issue and an identity. It is also very often invisible. It is in everyone's interest to intercede to prevent violence and suicide among Native youth. Making LGBTQTS issues and people visible is one way to do so.

Those attending in the talking circle expressed support for the youth having spoken out. The session closed with Mr. Rowell and Ms. Zelermyer reminding the youth that they are not alone and that living as an LGBTQTS individual becomes easier over time. Overall, 100% of survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

The final Organizational Capacity Building session focused on how to effectively evaluate and communicate a program's outcomes and impact to outside entities through the lens of children and family programs. Nichole Maher, Executive Director of NAYA Family Center-Portland and Roxanne Roos-Finney, Program Manager at WA State Department of Social and Health Services shared their experience in how to assess community development. Methods on how to collect data and effectively report organizational stories to funders along with intentional interaction with the audience led to a great listening and learning session for everyone. Overall, 100% of the survey respondents rated the quality of the content to be *good* or *very satisfying*.

NAP Awards Dinner

A sociable evening reception and silent auction followed a break in the schedule. A variety of beautiful art pieces were donated by the conference vendors and a few attendees toward the silent auction. NAP successfully raised approximately \$1,795 for the NAP Awards Endowment. Shortly after the silent auction attendees were invited to a gala with dinner, NAP Annual Awards Presentation and live entertainment.

Two annual awards were presented at dinner. They were the Louis T. Delgado Distinguished Grantmaker Award and the Flying Eagle Woman Award for Community Based Philanthropy. Several well-deserving nominations were received for each award and an ad hoc committee evaluated them on a given set of criteria. The recipients of each award are given a plaque, small gift and NAP donates \$500 on their behalf to a charity of their choosing.

The Louis T. Delgado Distinguished Grantmaker Award was established in recognition of the tenacity and power that Mr. Delgado has brought to the field of philanthropy and his commitment to bridging knowledge between philanthropy and Native communities. Jo-Anne Stately, Director of Grantmaking and Special Projects at The Minneapolis Foundation, was recognized for this significant award. Ms. Stately is a former board chair of NAP and has been engaged in Native philanthropy for many years. When asked of her nominator to describe why they chose to nominate Ms. Stately they stated, "Jo-Anne is a dedicated and committed woman who has been an influential presence in philanthropy... She has become an 'elder' of Native

philanthropy and has been a pioneering Native presence in the foundation world. Through her constant diligence and dedication to educating and changing foundation agendas, she has helped to bring a Native presence to the region's philanthropy where there was none.”

The Flying Eagle Woman Award for Community Based Philanthropy is given to an Indigenous person(s) who clearly demonstrates they are guided by Indigenous thinking and philosophy including a holistic and community centered approach to living and giving. It was initiated in response to the loss of (O’Peqyaw-Metamoh) Ingrid Washinawatok El-Issa, former NAP Board Chair and internationally known humanitarian who worked to further Indigenous peoples’ rights, Indigenous women’s issues, sovereignty, human rights throughout the world. This year Iris Friday and Claudia Kauffman were recognized for their work as Native Action Network. They are described as being “profoundly generous with their time, creativity and whatever resources they can offer. As leaders, they humbly and beautifully articulate the vision of a united Native community in the Pacific Northwest region by nurturing women leaders and promoting civic engagement.”

The first day came to an end with an enjoyable performance by the Native comedic group *1491s*. A series of skits, videos and spoken word were used to entertain the audience and challenge their mindset about Native people through the use of Indian humor.

NAP Annual Business Meeting

Tuesday, April 5th started with the NAP Annual Business Meeting. The full board of directors and Ms. Hare [presented an overview](#) of the current work of NAP and its future direction. Official business brought before the general membership was a slate of nominees for three NAP board director positions. Ron Rowell and Dawn Spears, New England Foundation for the Arts were elected to their second terms and Dana Arviso, Potlatch Fund to her first term. Lori Pourier, First Peoples Fund, was acknowledged for her tremendous contributions to Native philanthropy and was presented with a thank you gift for her long-standing board service. Ms. Pourier was not eligible for continued board participation according to board terms laid out in the [NAP bylaws](#). Board terms are three years in length and members can serve no more than two terms.

After the business meeting each board member gathered individuals from their respective region for [Regional Action Network](#) (RAN) conversations. This was an opportunity for participants to network and discuss a set of regional reality questions. Full group sharing provided key insights into each region and opportunities for continued dialogue as the RAN becomes further developed.

Tabletop discussions concluded the morning session. Participants talked about topics such as SWOT analysis, corporate giving, Philanthropy Northwest Conference session brainstorming and several others.

NAP Research Plenary Panel

The final plenary session was a presentation of groundbreaking and updated research from NAP. [Changing the Native Philanthropic Landscape: A Study on Mainstream Philanthropic Board Participation](#) was presented by Daniel Lemm, Director of Programs & Finance at NAP

and Susan Jenkins, Executive Director of Cherokee Preservation Foundation and NAP Board Director. This study was conducted to gain a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities in creating pathways for Native American participation on mainstream foundation boards and supporting their efforts once they achieve that goal.

Another report presented was a partnership of NAP and the Foundation Center entitled [Foundation Funding for Native American Issues and Peoples](#). Reina Mukai, Research Associate at the Foundation Center provided the [trends in foundation giving](#) benefiting Native Americans and Louis Delgado, Board Director Emeritus of NAP gave a call to action regarding the need for more funding to benefit Native Americans. As of 2009, the research shows that 0.3% of mainstream foundation giving goes to benefit Native communities. In addition, whereas from 2008-09 total foundation giving fell 14.1% during the same period grants benefiting Native Americans fell a disproportional 30.8%. After their presentation a lively and lengthy Q&A session with the audience sparked more topics for future discussion. A copy of the report can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The 2011 NPI came to a close with a performance by Red Eagle Soaring Native Youth Theatre. The youth did an incredible job of simultaneously interweaving local stories that left hardly a dry eye in the place. It was a way to remind ourselves that the issues we are working to resolve today are going to impact future generations and the need to weave leadership, indigenous people and resources into our everyday work.

Seattle Urban Indian Site Tour

On April 6th, NAP partnered with Potlatch Fund for a funders-only Seattle Urban Indian Site Tour. A shuttle from the Tulalip Resort brought 23 attendees to three locations throughout the Seattle area which were the Daybreak Star Cultural Center, Chief Seattle Club and Duwamish Longhouse. This was an amazing opportunity for funders to experience several notable local nonprofit organizations first-hand and hear their intimate stories of community rootedness. A special lunch was had at the Chief Seattle Club where participants had the privilege to break bread with members of the club.

2012 Native Philanthropy Institute

Next year's NPI is tentatively scheduled to be April 26-28, 2012 in downtown Los Angeles, CA and will precede the Council on Foundations annual conference. During the 2012 NPI a third cohort of the NAP leadership program called the Circle of Leaders Academy will be launched. NAP is excited to bring together the next generation of Native philanthropic professionals with the current leaders on a national scale!

Native Americans in Philanthropy's Board and Staff would like to give a big [THANK YOU](#) to the members, sponsors, planning committee, partners and allies for helping to ensure the 2011 Native Philanthropy Institute was a wonderful success!