IV NEWSLETTER

a 501(c)3 educational nonprofit focused on culture, people, and land



Dr. Ren Freeman, photo by Native Women Lead



Riza McClurkin, photo by Riza

New Board Members

Indigenous Vision (IV) is excited to share our newest Board Members; Dr. Ren Freeman and Riza McClurkin. We welcome Dr. Ren Freeman is Eastern Shoshone, a First Nation Cree, with French & Scottish heritage who is an Indigenous 4-fielded Anthropologist and Scientist who was raised on her traditional homelands of the Wand River community in what is now known as Wyoming. Dr. Ren holds a BA in Cross-and Intercultural Communication and Business Administration from the University of Denver, and an MA in Anthropology from the University of Oklahoma. She's taught research design with the use of Indigenous Methodologies & Methods (IRMM), and other courses from an Indigenous perspective. We could not be happier to have such a powerfully connected and loving force on our Board.

Riza McClurkin an Ethnobotanist who graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2019 with a BA in Anthropology and a BA in German Language. They've worked with Rebecca Hawkins at Algonquin Consultants, an Indigenous-run cultural resource management company, since 2020 as both a field worker on cultural

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sites and online digitizing field date and transcribing interviews of Indigenous Elders and respected community members from numerous Tribal Nations. Riza aldo graduated from the University of Montana in 2024 with an MA in Anthropology, specializing in Ethnobotany. It was during this time that Riza met IV Executive Director, Souta Calling Last, and got to work on the trail project that they incorporated into their master thesis. They've also spent three field seasons (2022 - 2024) with the US Forest Service in the Colville National Forest. Currently, Riza has been talking to their local municipal park about helping with their Native plants and pollinator gardens and keeping the creek cleaner and healthier. Riza is a fine match for IV and we're delighted to have this relationship with such a bright mind.

Cultural Humility in Treaty 7, Calgary

IV facilitated the first in-person and first ever, overall cultural humility training in what is now known as Canada this January! We made our way to Treaty 7, in Calgary, Alberta to be exact and was hosted by the wonderful and generous Blackfoot Confederacy where we spent 2 full days with around 17 participants going over the principals and practices of cultural humility.



Group training, photo by Melissa Spence

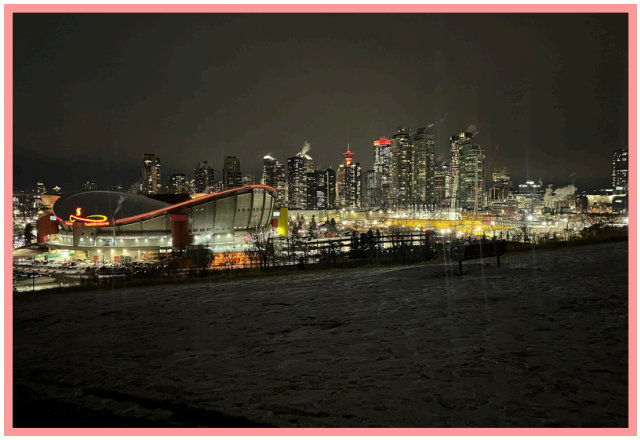
Being that this was the first of it's kind not just for Canada, but for Treaty 7, we decided it would be a great idea to facilitate another training in early 2027!

We want to send a big thank you to everyone who braved the snowy roads and showed up for our training. It was truly an honor to share the space with so many like-minded individuals devoted to their communities and organizations. The training would not have been possible if it weren't for the amazing team at the Blackfoot Confederacy, who so lovingly opened their space to us and made each day comfortable and safe for us to open our minds and share all the ways we're trying to make our spaces better for everyone.



Group training, photo by Souta Calling Last

We were even treated to a person tour of Calgary by one of our participants who not only showed us this amazing view of the skyline on a winter night, but took us down a Bison path trail, more on that in the Blackfoot Place Map sections. It let us use our imaginations and reminded us that the land we stand on holds a very rich and powerful history!



Calgary, photo by Melissa Spence

RES 2026

Believe it or not, prior to 2026, no IV team member has ever been to the Reservation Economic Summit (RES)! Every year since 1986, the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAIED) has been hosting an annual business conference to bring together Indigenous entrepreneurs and business together to share and strengthen our economies.



NCAI President Mark Maccaro, IV ED Souta Calling Last, and AFN National Chief Cindy Woodhouse, photo by Melissa Spence

One of the biggest highlights of the conference was witnessing the signing of the Renewed Declaration of Kinship and Cooperation between the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). And in her true Blackfoot style, Souta Calling Last asked during the Q&A session about how a strategy for Indigenous peoples is needed when conducting business across the US & Canada border and how we as the original people of the land move across it not just physically but financially. This led to Souta becoming a part of the planning committee for that project between our beautiful nations.





Declaration Anouncement, photo by Melissa Spence

The conference itself was a bit overwhelming at first and very well done. Each session we attended was helpful and inspired us to bring our cultural humility teachings to the 2027 space. We also made some incredible connections, met amazing people doing the work for their communities, shopped the market, enjoyed the Indigenously curated food session, hugged and visited with all the familiar faces and like many, took in the incredible evening events. Souta was so impressed with the Leslie Hampton stylings she made the first purchase on Leslie's new line that was featured, along with other stellar Indigenous designers, at the Indigenous Fashion Show on day three hosted at what is now the Vanderpump Hotel. We'll definitely be back to RES!



Live Art Vendor Booth, by Souta Calling Last

PFAS Water Settlement

One of the biggest connections the IV team made at RES 2026 was with Seven Star Business Solutions who shared with us the urgent and important information about the Tribal PFAS (per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances) Water Settlement that's been ongoing yet has hardly been shared with Tribal Nations who will benefit from the settlement by receiving funding to rematriate their water systems.



Manny Garcia and Souta Calling Last by Melissa

We connected with Mike Stopp, Manny Garcia, and Edith Baker who enlightened us about the 3m/Dupont PFAS Water Settlement where 14 billion dollars is available for a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Tribal governments to secure funding to address long-standing PFAS contamination in drinking water and surface level water systems. With the deadline of July 1, 2026 quickly approaching, IV decided to collaborate on getting this important information out to any and all Tribal Nations willing to get their water tested and being the process with Seven Star Solutions.

You can listen to a special episode of the IVPodcast where Mike Stopp and Manny Garcia joined us for a one hour discussion about what Tribal Nations need to do and when to ensure that information about the settlement was easily accessible on platforms like Youtube, Spotify, Apple Podcasts and other major streaming platforms.



IVPodcast Cover by Melissa

You can listen to the episode on the IV Youtube channel. Please subscribe, share, and comment so help us grow our views and overall presence.

If you'd like to learn more about the Tribal PFAS Water Settlement you can visit the Seven Stars Business Solutions site.

https://sevenstarbusiness.com/tribalpfas/

Subscribe to the Indigenous Vision YouTube channel!



YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/@indigenousvision

Beaver Lodge Food Forest Update

The Beaver Lodge Food Forest (BLFF) 501(c)(3) is a 24 acre property donate by Phyllis Rodriguez in what is now known as Sullivan Country, New York. This land will be utilized as a land back initiative and a space for Indigenous and an entire community to come together to share resources and ideas. Through Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) we are working to restore our lands' ecosystems and biodiversity; removing invasives, searching and monitoring any harmful contaminants, and find ways to rematriate Indigenous plants and growth.

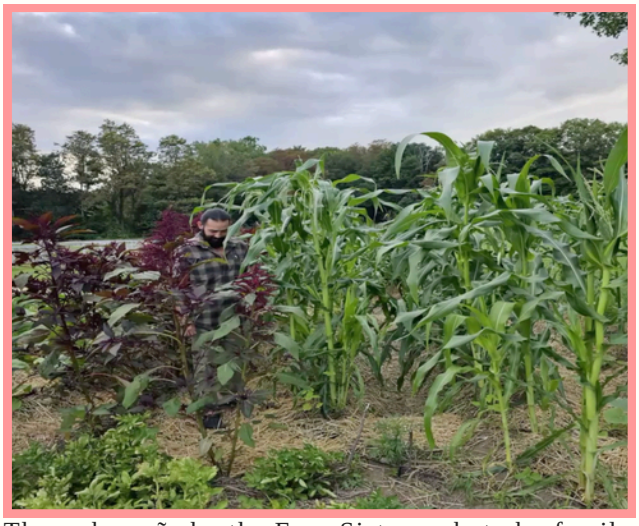
The entire area is covered in vast, temperate forest and delicate ecosystems that are under threat from over development and we offer support as nonprofit protecting waterways and shedding light on possible environmental risk factors. We've been collectively working with other nonprofits monitoring sewage runoff into waterways, collecting water samples and documentation for over a year.

A big part of the BLFF is regrowing our traditional food systems; sunflowers, berries, fungus, beans, corn, squash, and providing access to these types of food that has sustained us for many healthy generations before their deliberate destruction through colonization.



Tobacco garden, photo by Theo

Kenneth Cook aka Thaeaghoweñs Cook, is the BLFF caretaker who is working to replant the traditional foods of his ancestors, the Onondaga, on the southern homelands of his territory where the BLFF is located.



Thaeaghoweñs by the Four Sisters, photo by family

Expect bitternut hickories, blackberries, cyrus berries, pawpaw berries, and any other fruit budding plants to be given the opportunity to safely grown throughout the property.

One of the most exciting harvests we are looking forward to is our own tobacco, one of the traditional medicines for many nations across Great Turtle Island. With over 150 varies around the world, we're proud to have 4 unique varieties that we'll grown to bind our prayers in method that's safe and organic which is hard to come by with so many using pesticides.

Thaeaghoweñs is using the *'Four Sisters'* growing method where corn, beans, squash, sunflower are grown together to enrich and protect each other which is symbolic to how our communities operate. The seed bank is abundant with seeds that have been growing in the area for twelve thousand years with each passing year adding to our stock.



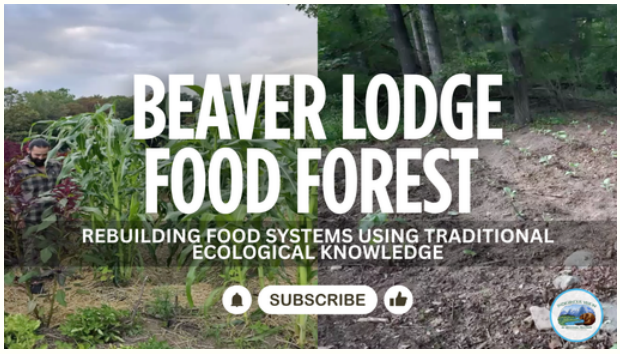
Cooking with fire, photo by Theo

Upcoming plans for the BLFF include constructing a picnic area, nature trail throughout the entire property that will include signs for plant identification and uses with their Indigenous names, Currently there is off grid camping available but we are in need of more compost toilets, shower facilities, and pump house.

We're so grateful to Phyllis for not only donating the land, but to making numerous donations to set us up with storage and cover the cost of permits. If you'd like to support the BLFF in any capacity you can make a tax deductible donation through our site:

DONATE ♥

Please visit the IV Youtube channel to watch the replay of our BLFF presentation, *"Rebuilding Food Systems Using Traditional Ecological Knowledge"* recorded back in April where you can learn directly from Thaeaghoweñs Cook about the property, the work he's done and plans to do, including his collorative work with other organizations.



https://www.youtube.com/@indigenousvision

SUBSCRIBE

Blackfoot Place Map: Bison Path

The first site visit of the year was to an old bison trail going over a hill in the middle of a Calgary neighborhood. After the Cultural Humility training, Scott Calling Last, who attended the training, took Souta and Melissa out to see some of the city. It was an unexpected and hoped-for experience! The bison drive, now called Bison Path Road, is a winding gravel road that breaches the coulee rim and winds down towards the river.



Bison Path Cross Streets by Souta Calling Last

The butterflies experienced from driving the route were either from pure thrill of finding a site like that in the middle of the city, or maybe it was the cautious way the bison navigated land, hills, and obstructions that drove their path to curve gently and driving it at a speed (slightly below alarming the neighborhood, but matching a galloping bison)... or maybe it was energetic remnants that left me wondering if the current residents can still hear distant thunderous rumblings of millions of hooves that beat the path down, or if they've shook off any vibrations as just the daily rumblings of the city they overlook.



Souta and Melissa by Scott Calling Last

Educational Tours

Tours for the public are not offered at Indigenous Vision; instead, we offer community education through presentations held throughout the winter with museums and community groups. Souta does, however, love to take Cultural practitioners, Park Staff, and Educators out on the land. This spring, Souta was honored to bring the Blackfoot Confederacy employees out on a commissioned tour of Hellgate Canyon, or kīyiḱsii siṫo'ḱoo (where we ambush). The group first stopped at the overlook of the Milltown Dam Removal site and to the higher elevation area to overlook the ambush spot. When Jesuit priests came through Hellgate Canyon, they came across the bones of fallen war and hunting parties not permitted through the canyon by the Blackfoot, who had kept warriors there to make sure no one came through. The bones, some of which were knee deep in places, were left in place to show others that they should not pass. The Jesuit priest thought that, "surely, this must be the gates of hell."



Blackfoot Confederacy group overlooking kīyiḱsii siṫo'ḱoo

Two weeks after that, Souta had the honor of taking young members of a Blackfeet Society - the Kanuksumiitaks out to see the pictographs. They graciously helped with the heavy-duty manual labor of gathering the rocks for the cairn and fasting shelter exhibit that will be featured outside the Bear Gulch Visitor Center. The educational cairn and fasting shelter are built in Blackfoot style and in likeness to the thousands of cairns and fasting shelters located throughout the Rocky Mountains and foothills of



Mountain Dream Team! The high-elevation cairn goat: Joe Wagner, the Blackfoot anthropologist; Jaunita Tallman, the environment/symbol/art expert; Sierra Momberg, your favorite ridge rider and storyteller Souta Caliing Last

Montana, Alberta, and Wyoming, and throughout the Rocky Mountains. These helped the heavy shield warriors depicted in pictograph and petroglyph art find their way along trails and find shelter while they were gone for years at a time, trading, visiting, and traveling to assist in their various business-like knowing where the herds of the american prairie were at. The Leave No Trace campaign has extremist hikers and mountaineers (supported by parks and hiking/mountaineering social media platforms) kicking the cairns used by Blackfoot ancestors, rather than the cairns that ruin aquatic habitat. The destruction of cairns is under the guise that there should be “no trace” and that these don’t have any value to modern people, sometimes even misleading hikers into dangerous conditions.

The benefits of cairns include climate and animal management data spanning 20,000+ years, older than the pyramids and the community - the Blackfoot people still hold stories tied to land far beyond the reservation borders.



Blackfeet Kanuksumiitaks cairn help and related to The Heavy Shield Warrior Pictograph art through descendency through blood and societal responsibilities.

White Sulphur Springs

Just a stone's throw from the Bear Gulch Pictograph Center is the Smith River drainage surrounded by the Castle Mountains that is home to the highest density of rock art in Montana. There are dozens of sites, and likely thousands on private lands that have yet to be documented. The area is busy because the rock there is excellent for making tools. At one dig, they found 14,000 pieces of debitage, or flaking and tool-manufacturing waste.

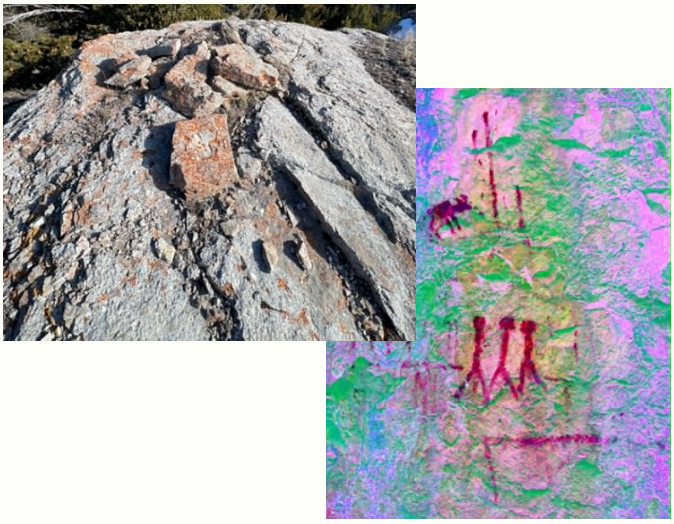


Turtle Effigy near pictographs

The turtle is often not associated with the Blackfeet because of a translation error by George Bird Grinell, who said the Blackfeet have a strong aversion to it. However, the turtle, or spoopi, is a highly revered animal, one that sometimes appears in creation stories and is generally regarded as a symbol of long life. The symbol is so sacred and revered that, depending on gender, when children are born, they are given an amulet made of buckskin and quillwork or beadwork in the shape of a salamander or turtle, containing their umbilical cord and other items for good luck and protection throughout life.

According to the Cultural Resources Mitigation Report for the Sheep Creek Quarry area, radiocarbon dating and obsidian hydration analysis from sites show continuous occupation from around 5000 years ago to 300 years ago.

There is good reason for continuous use; the area is also home to active hot springs.And as Morris Little Wolf (Pikaani) told Souta in the interview (that the late Harley Bastien was working to get a part two



Cairn overlooking Bison and Napi Pictographs

scheduled!) the Nitsitapi (Blackfoot Confederacy-Real People) survived both ice ages by going to our places that have hot springs (referring to Yellowstone); there, the animals never left, and springs were still active." The area is associated with the Crow and Blackfeet. But according to Crow historian Joe Medicine Crow, the Crow originated in the Fort Berthold/Spirit Lake area. With instructions from First Maker, two brothers were given a seed, one tobacco and the other corn. Today, these people are the Crow and the Mandan-Hidatsa. Following First Maker's instructions to find where they grow and live, the Mandan stayed close to their original location, while the Crow wandered for some time, even into and around Canada, before settling in the 1650s in the area where they are now. Therefore, according to Crow Elder Joe Medicine Crow's account on the timing of the Crow migration, anything older than the 1600s in the White Sulphur Springs and Castle Mountain area should be associated with the Blackfoot people.

Souta was honored to attend the We Recover Together: the Third Annual Wellness Gathering in Kamiah, ID, held by Janet Blackeagle. Souta attended the event as a backup MMIW panelist (just in case an invited panelist is a no-show), and primarily to visit Heart of the Monster, the creation story location of the Niimiipoo, or Nez Perce People.



Marissa of Native Women Wellness Movement LLC leading breath work at Nez Perce/Niimiipoo Creation Story Site: Heart of the Monster

Souta met Janet at the 2023 MMIW Retreat in Washington, and talking about the land and creation stories came easy for the two. Janet shared many stories about how the Blackfeet people and the Niimiipoo are related. In our last phone call, she shared that the Blackfeet are specifically named in their creation story and that they would stand tall and strong and live in the direction the coyote threw the monster's feet- towards the Chief Mountain direction. Centering stories, sites, and artifacts around the creation story areas I've decided is the ethical way to honor the original instructions. It is an injustice to have sites lost or given to the people of the closest reservation.



Feeling expansion at the creation site: Souta, Recovery and Wellness Event Organizer: Janet Blackeagle and Althea Walker, Land/People Rematriation-Nez Perce/Gila River Tribal member and Soutas old co-worker from Arizona - Small World!

Many tribes have migrated, or have been forcibly relocated and strategically removed from their original territories. This protocol ensures that ethics are guided by instructions from Napi, Coyote, First Maker, etc., and that the values associated with those instructions suggest that the land, water, and animals are alive, with names and purposes, as our creation stories suggest. I believe it is in our best interest to adhere to these original instructions to maintain the protocols that are known to generate balance..and maybe even a little luck and magic back to the people.

Women in Ranching

In March Souta attended The Confluence at the Paicines Ranch in California. The rolling green hills on the way to the ranch was a welcome site after a cold but snowless winter in Montana. It is the traditional territory of the Muwekma Ohlone, Palenos, and Verona people. I always wonder where the people are and how they're doing. California travel always saddens me because of the heavy push for bounty hunting California natives to make way for the gold rush and settlement. Despite systemic eras of disenfranchisement, the lineage of the Verona Band of Alameda County and other Bay Area lineages endured. Today, the present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe represents over 500 enrolled members who actively maintain their heritage, cultural sites (such as the Ohlone Indian Cemetery in Fremont), and are still fighting for federal recognition. I arrived late on the first day and checked myself into the conference at the activity barn where I picked up a ranch map, room assignments, and my name tag.

The next morning I was up early putting the finishing touches on my presentation titled, "Identifying & Mitigating Urban, Industrial, & Agricultural Water Pollution." The presentation featured common contaminants, and Indigenous Vision work on "Evaluating Native Communities Vulnerability to Climate-Driven Stressors by Tracking Heavy Metals, Pharmaceuticals, Flame Retardants, Chronic Wasting Disease and SARS-COV-2 in Aquatic Food Webs and Food Security Quality Assurance Project" prepared by Souta Calling Last.

The upcoming publication, “First Detection of PFAS in American Mink Fecal Matter Considerations for using Conservation Detection Dog-Handler Teams Recommended next steps for further Validation (Calling Last et al) , and the Chronic Wasting Disease Spillover Preparedness and Response: Charting an Uncertain Future done in collaboration with the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy.



Cyanobacteria - Harmful to humans, dogs and livestock

Clean water and healthy soil form the foundation of health, supporting Indigenous cultures, community vitality, livestock well-being, wildlife, and ecosystem balance, with cumulative quality determining whether the future is sustainable. Some key threats to soil and water quality include: toxic plants, soil-borne pathogens, disease, agricultural chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers), industrial pollutants, heavy metals, and PFOS. The women were particularly interested in the Blackfoot place map- what's in the water. Still-image comparisons of hard rock mines, oil and gas wells, and frack wells are associated with the range and concentration of chronic wasting disease in the United States. Many women were concerned about oil spills and water quality on their ranches and how these could affect animal health and the ability of animals and humans to eat from the land.

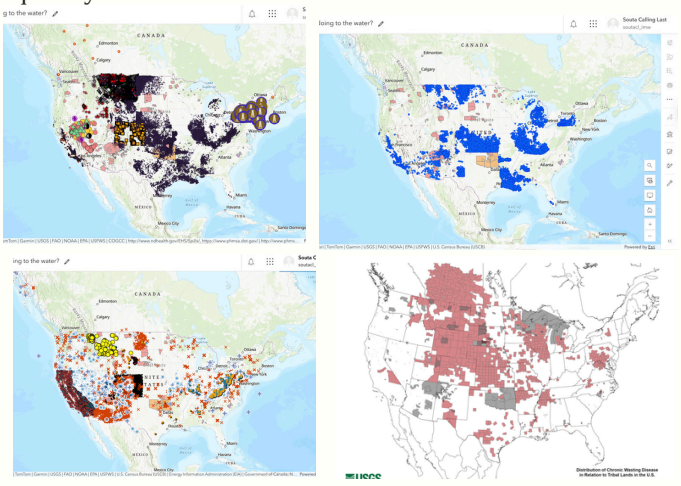
I recommended some books that I’ve read throughout my cleanup career and education, including: “Soil, Water Pollution and Mitigation Strategies, “How to Make a Greywater Reed Bed,” and “Plants that Hyperaccumulate Heavy Metals.”



Milltown Dam Removal and Contaminant Clean up

The short notes on the last one were about my time decommissioning the Milltown Dam while sampling ground and surface water for contamination, and reducing the superfund level of contamination through a series of wetland cells.

During this job, I noticed that the wetland cells were stocked with edible or medicinal native plants, often picked to treat ailments. The plants are so effective at taking up and binding heavy metals that they must be disposed of in approved superfund landfills. Easy mitigation strategies to save water and improve its quality on your land include: managing grazing practices and water access without bank breakdown; installing swales and ponds; using biofiltration; installing limestone channels; and conducting regular water testing for nitrates, sulfates, and total dissolved solids. Macroinvertebrate investigations and managing riparian area soil and water to optimize biological activity. Macroinvertebrates can indicate water quality, and the presence of sensitive benthic macroinvertebrates suggests good water quality.



Distribution of Oil Wells, Fracking Wells, Hard Rock Mines and Chronic Wasting Disease

Indigenous Vision is currently seeking unrestricted grants to complete two small and one large water remediation projects this year: the first project is a small-stream riparian buffer reinforcement to reduce livestock waste running downstream from a neighbor and moving wildlife out, and the second is a small lake revitalization project where drought and cattle have alkalized and dried a water source. The latter project may be the more expensive of the two, since drought has nearly dried the lake, and it still has no protection from cattle. Funds would be used to purchase native riparian plants, bank/lake-bottom remediation materials, aerators, landowner water-sampling equipment, SME contracting expenses, travel to the worksite, 1-2 water trucks to recharge the lake, and construct water-access infrastructure for livestock to protect new plants and reinforced banks.



Livestock Bank and Riparian Area Protected Access

Thunderbird Thottle

IV's MMIW Director, Melissa Spence made her way down to our initial homebase, Phoenix, Arizona, home of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Salt River, and Yavapai-Apache, during the weekend of April 11th to take part and document the Thunderbird Throttle. This very special event happens during Arizona Bike week and is the only "Native American Ride" during the entire week! It's a charity motorcycle ride for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) and this year it all went down on Saturday, April 11th in Chandler, Arizona.

Leading up to the big event, we interviewed one of the main organizers, Elisia Manuel, who shared with us her own journey as a nonprofit, Three Precious Miracles, and what led her to organizing a full day of culture, honoring loved ones, and celebrating community.

You can listen to the interview here:



Over 100 riders and community members came together to support the families directly impacted by the ongoing MMIP crisis. What makes this ride so incredible is that the entire day is dedicated to bringing attention to our loved ones, and invites anyone to take part and enjoy the cultural celebrations by the communities who are still living on this beautiful land.



Moose Riders by Melissa

The day started off early at the first stop on the journey, Indian Motorcycle of Chandler where we checked in and received one of the coolest goodie bags that included a commemorative t-shirt and several other bike and MMIP related items. Break was served buffet style and things got underway with a dance-off to lift up the spirits of everyone in attendance.



Thunderbird Throttle First Stop by Melissa

The day was scheduled to have 3 stops along the official route and at the start/first stop, everyone gathered to fill their stomachs, hearts, and minds with some local culture from the Ovan-hill Creations dance group (Hopi) followed by speakers and another cultural blessing from the Cha'Be'Tu Apache Crown Dancers & Sweetheart Dancers. There was also an honor song from Lowie Leonard and by 10:00 the group was officially on their way across the desert city to the second official stop at the Salt River, just below the sacred Red Mountain.



Water Blessing Dancers by Melissa

As we gathered at the Tonto Basin Water Recreation Area, the scene was as stunning as ever. The power from the Red Mountain and Salt River made this portion of the day extra beautiful. There we were treated to another blessing, this time from Hoop Dancers, Vanessa and Rolania Morgan. Bowie Leonard then led us through a water blessing and a story was told about the significance of the Red Mountain along with a song to honor it.

From there we made our way to the third and final stop at Casino Arizona who are very committed to showing up for the MMIP community in a big way! We were blown away by how amazing of a space they created for all of us to take in lunch, settle in and hydrate as the day was very warm, and watch a very special performance from local Deer Dancers.



Hoop Dancers and Red Mountain by Melissa

Although it wasn't planned, many of the riders were invited to take part in the funeral procession for Passion Schure; a young Indigenous woman from the Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community who was reported missing on March 26, 2026. Tragically, her body was found in a Scottsdale canal system several days later. It was extremely surreal to be in a community with so many families living through their darkest days and have the family and community of Passion Schurz grieving in real time. We rode through the procession through the streets of Scottsdale to the Salt River funeral home and paid respects on behalf of IV.



MMIP bike along the Salt River, by Melissa

Check out the Indigenous Vision youtube channel to watch an extended video from the Thunderbird Throttle. Thanks to Elisai and everyone else who made this year's event unforgettable and uplifting.

Professional Coaching by Souta and Melissa

At the end of January the IV team, (Souta & Melissa) enrolled in the Positive Psychology Coaching and Diversity Institute's (PPCaDI) Positively Diverse Leadership Coach Training Certification that's designed for coaches and leaders who *"aspire to create lasting impacts-helping individuals discover greater belonging, meaning, and growth while guiding organizations toward more inclusive, collaborative cultures."*

We found the values and the positive psychology methodology that PPCaDI uses in their training to align with our vision and mission at IV. Our official cohort began on January 28th and is nearing the 6 month completion this July 16th. What makes this coaching style a fit for IV is the positive psychology angle; rather than solely focusing on diagnosing and treating mental illness, it explores our innate strengths and builds them up to meet life's challenges and obstacles. Positive psychology complements not just traditional psychology (and definitely does not replace it), but also our work in Cultural Humility.

Through the guidance of our amazing and knowledgeable coaching mentors (Chelsey, Kiki, Terri, and Estafania) and cohort peers, we've begun coaching professionally using the PPCaDI methods and are committed to using these important and life shifting skills within our communities on various levels (professionally and personally).

We bring our unique perspectives and lived experiences as Indigenous women to the coaching space and want to uplift our young relatives (and anyone else) so they can make the healthy choices that make life worth living.

PPCaDI
Positive Psychology Coaching and Diversity Institute

https://www.ppcadi.com/

As cycle breakers ourselves, we're already sharing new ways of approaching *"the hard"* in life and are truly utilizing our strengths to cultivate happiness, courage, meaningfulness, and goal achievement without discounting the real life trauma we've survived or slipping into toxic positively.

To be fully accredited coaches by the International Coaching Federation (ICF), Souta and Melissa require 500 coaching hours before we can take our final exam and become certified. We are currently on the pathway towards our Level 2 PCC certification.

Professional Coaching with Souta Calling Last:



Professional Coaching with Melissa Spence:



Trading at the Rio: Capitol Summit

Thank you to the fabulous women, especially Vernelle Frank, of Native Women Lead for inviting us to take part in Trading At The Rio: 2026 Growth Capital Summit in Albuquerque April 22-23. We were given the honor of presenting our Cultural Humility program as a special 1-hour session with attendees on the afternoon of April 23rd.

This conference is hosted by Native Women Lead and The Future is Indigenous Women to bring together entrepreneurs, leaders, and changemakers for connection, growth, and opportunity. It was a jam-packed 3 days featuring incredible Indigenous Women who shared and shifted our collective power forward. We were even treated to a wonderful evening of music from Fawn and Tia Wood.



Tia & Fawn Wood, by Melissa

One of the highlights from the conference was seeing the Native Women Lead, Matriarch Council be honored and recognized with shawls and gifts for their dedication to the work needed to mentor and guide new generations. Dr. Ren was one of the Matriarchs honored and it was inspiring to see her in action as the radiant and genius leader she is.

Vernelle Chase, Acting CEO, Native Women Lead, introduced us all to their staff and board as the event flowed from inspiring stories or resilience from the Fireside Chat portion of the day, to the incredible entertainment that wrapped up the night!


Matriarch Council Honoring by Melissa

IV is incredibly grateful for having an organization like NWL to promote financial wellbeing through events and retreats that strengthen the sisterhood between Indigenous women from all Nations.

With gratitude, Indigenous Vision!


Vernelle Chase & Dr Ren, by Melissa

NATIVE WOMEN LEAD

https://www.nativewomenlead.org

National Day for MMIW

Since 2017, May 5th is recognized as National Day for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIWR & MMIWG2S) across the U.S. and Canada (Red Dress Day). This day was chosen in response to the murder of Hanna Harris of the Northern Cheyenne Nation. Her family reported her missing on July 5th in 2013 and a few days later her body was discovered. To honor Hanna and the thousands of other missing and murdered Indigenous women and relatives, we wear red on May 5th to honor and raise awareness about the ongoing killings and abductions Indigenous women, girls, 2Spirit and our boys and men face.



Deanne BlackCrow (Her 38 Roses) and Elder Jay

This reality has created a powerful and loving community of advocates who work together year round to bring healing to families, survivors, and continually grow the networks needed to prevent any more of our relatives from meeting a violent death. Our MMIWarriors Program was designed to combat this crisis by providing free self defense training and retreats for anyone needing a space where no explanations are needed for the burnout and heavy work we carry.





This year we once again teamed up with our fellow sister organizations, Her 38 Roses and Fifth Sun Project here in Las Vegas where MMIW Director, Melissa Spence and community came together to honor the memory of loved ones in the Southern Paiute territory. Together we organized an event at Floyd Lamb Park, where in previous years, a memorial tree was planted to honor Debra BlackCrow, the late mother of Her 38 Roses founder, Deanna BlackCrow along with the family of Shi Yazhi (Raishawn Josiah Denetclarence) who was murdered on February 7th, 2026.



Round Dance by Melissa

The 5th annual MMIW Prayer Walk was held on Sunday, May 3rd and featured a tribute to Jingle & Shawl Dance by members of the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, resources and craft vendors, food by IV and Yaqui Zen, and an exciting raffle & 50/50!

Leading up to the event, the local Indigcrafts crew held two Ribbon Skirt making craft events for anyone wanting to wear their custom skirt to the Prayer Walk.

Despite the nature of why we gather, we always make MMIW events full of life and great memories that grow our community and promote solidarity among non-Indigenous attendees. Thank you to everyone who came together to make the event a total success and safe space for Shi's family and everyone else who is missing a relative.



Las Vegas Paiute Ribe Dancers by Melissa

MMIWarriors Retreat

IV is excited to announce our annual MMIWarriors Retreat! Thanks to the generous support from the Fund for Nonviolence, we're once again heading to the beautiful shores of Flathead Lake on the weekend of October 3rd to bask in rest, community, sisterhood, self defense, and connection. We've got another packed weekend of events for our attendees that starts off with the setting up of our 2027 Dream Tipi! This is a good way to break the ice and learn the skill of setting up a tipi on the Land. This year we're focusing on the rest and relaxation angle of our retreat and have invited Elders to share stories about the land we're on, encourage connection with the water through kayaking, or spending time in our wellness room to meditate or decompress.



Additionally, we're inviting back the wonderful ladies of SBG (Straight Blast Gym) out of Missoula who will guide us through a self defense, situational awareness, and empowerment session during the first half of the day.

Everyone who registers for our retreat receives a welcome goodie bag, will have all their meals and lodging taken care of, and will automatically be entered into our door prize raffle that features several gorgeous Indigenous arts and crafts creations that we were able to scoop up at various events from talented vendors.

Our annual retreat is designed for anyone working or advocating in the MMIW/MMIP space and anyone who needs a breather doing the heavy work we carry as Indigenous women. This is a loving and judgement-free space where there is no expectation to explain those big feelings that come with working and living within MMIW/MMIP. As an extra special treat this year, we're offering Power Portraits at the Dream Tipi to cultivate self confidence and empowerment. Being strong and beautiful is who we are and we want everyone to know about it!

If you'd like to support our MMIWarriors Retreat please make a tax deductible donation:



Healthy Relationship Workshops

At the beginning of the year, MMIW Director Melissa Spence, in collaboration with Her 39 Roses, Fifth Sun Project, and Innovation Behavioral Health Solutions, facilitated workshops to support and encourage healthy relationships. These free workshops presented educational material on detecting “red flags” or warning signs of unhealthy or unsafe relationships to build awareness through culture, safety, and support.



Together we honored our strengths and shared the ways we are protecting our spirits. Due to the sensitive nature of our gatherings, documentation for this newsletter was limited. These sessions were held during the holiday session and Valentines Day originally intended to be a Circle of Sisterhood for DV survivors and grew into a space of healing and learning.

At the end of each event we provided everyone with a guided meditation that focused on reclaiming power by connecting with ancestors, and by using affirmations around self love and boundary setting.

Feel free to listen to these guided meditations produced by Melissa on the IV Soundcloud page:



https://soundcloud.com/indigenousvision

IVMedia, Podcasting and Music

Episode 166 was recently released to all major streaming platforms! If you’re new to our podcast, there’s plenty of episodes to catch up on. What humbly began in a small kitchen in Phoenix, Arizona in late 2018, has grown into one of our favorite “to do” as a nonprofit. Getting to share all of our events, adventures on the land through various territories, and overall life experiences (both good and bad) and Indigenous women, is one of our highlights.



We love having guests, promoting our events, having those tough and needed conversations around the challenges we face, and reading back the comments from our listeners! What truly thrills us is when we actually get to meet listeners out in the real world. Thank you to anyone who has ever opened up their time for our podcast. We are currently adding episodes to the IV Youtube channel to make it even easier for those who want to access our show.



Keep your ears close to the IV Soundcloud page where our latest playlist, curated by the "music lady" Melissa Spence, is there to accompany you while driving along the powwow trail or taking a breather from life. Our IVMusic episodes showcase some of the brightest Indigenous music makers from across Great Turtle Island, don't forget to like, share, follow, comment, or subscribe wherever it is you're listening from.

https://soundcloud.com/indigenousvision

Cultural Humility Workplace Training

The next Cultural Humility Workplace Training facilitated by IV starts virtually on zoom, October 13, 2026. As is customary with our virtual "training of trainer" sessions, we meet every Tuesday & Wednesday starting at 8:00 am PDT from October 13th to October 21st.



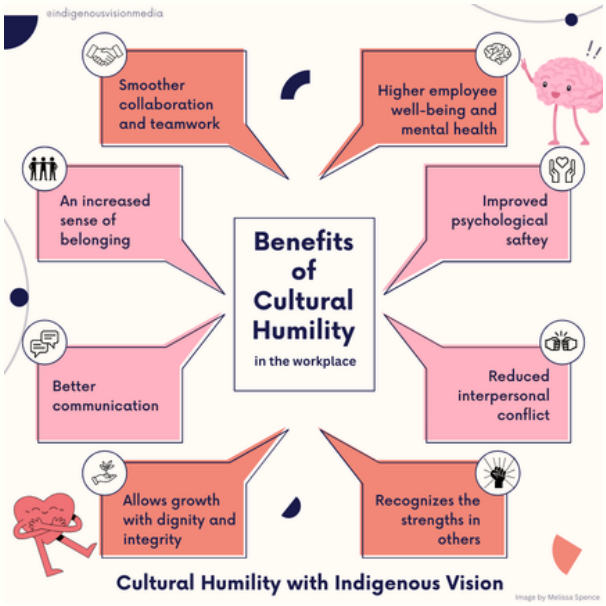
Our training is 10-hours in total, with participants receiving a certificate of completion, all material needed to continue facilitating the curriculum including guides, powerpoint presentation, and access to a network of over 400 other facilitators who have been trained under IV or, cultural humility founder, Dr. Melanie Tervalon. Along with Dr. Jann Murray-Garcia, Tervalon and contributing authors of the material; Ellen Morrison, LCSW and Veronica Keiffer-Lewis, Ed. D, have created a framework that has transformed cross-cultural education.

http://bit.ly/48gNXHL

If you want to create positive and impactful organizational change within your workplace, we highly recommend you register with a colleague and begin the practice of cultural humility. We will serve as a guide through the material and prepare you with the language and tools to implement the basic principles of cultural humility:

- **Critical Self-Reflection and Lifelong Learning**
- **Recognition and Mitigation of Inherent Power Imbalances**
- **Mutually Beneficial Non-Paternalistic Relationships**
- **Institutional Accountability**

Please note that this is a workplace training on culture and humility, not a training on Indigenous cultural teachings.



Congratulations to the May 2026 cohort who completed all 10 hours of our virtual training! If you'd like to know more about our trainings and our facilitators, please visit the registration link or visit our site: **indigenousvision.org/culturalhumility**

October 2026 schedule live on Zoom:

- Tuesday Oct. 13, 8:00 am – 10:30 am PDT
- Wednesday Oct. 14, 8:00 am – 10:30 am PDT
- Tuesday Oct. 20, 8:00 am – 10:30 am PDT
- Wednesday Oct. 21, 8:00 am – 10:30 am PDT

Spring Quarter Donations: $1,235.00!

General Donations

Gary McDuffy
Prairie Wolfe
Christian Pletta
Mary Ann George
Laura Evilsizer
Celina Gray

Beaver Lodge Food Forest

Dominick DiFabio



Annual Fundraiser:Dream Tipi Raffle $600!



If you haven't heard on the most recent podcast or post, the **Dream Tipi Raffle** has been extended to **June 2027**. This raffle supports the IV Cultural Conservation Program. This program includes The Blackfoot Place Map, The Beaver Lodge Food Forest, The Educational Exhibits at Bear Gulch Visitor Center, and Cultural/Environmental Remediation projects with private landowners. So far, we've raised $500! Winner will receive a Lethbridge Cust. Canv. Tipi/liner set, poles, pegs/pins, and the complete interior furnishings seen above. Thank you to the individuals who love beautiful land, abundant in cultural keystone species, and a place for us to bloom, too.

Enter here to win!
1 for $50
3 for $100

Thank you to **Lethbridge Custom Canvas** for donating the liner and door in support of the programs!