



## AWARDS BANQUET

Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center

Wednesday, May 3, 2023



### Outstanding Participants

Elleh Driscoll (Sac and Fox Nation of the Mississippi) - Grand Forks, North Dakota

Jessica Pamonicutt (Menominee) - Stickney, Illinois

Manfred Lee Fast Horse III (Rosebud Sioux Tribe) - Rosebud, South Dakota

### Outstanding Employer

Sicangu Co—7th Gen Youth Program, Mission, South Dakota

### Alice Bigpond Roach Memorial Scholarship

*Melodi Serna (Turtle Mountain Chippewa/Oneida) - Park City, Illinois*

Alice served as the Chairperson of the National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference (NINAETC) held in San Diego, California in 1992. The Participant Awards Luncheon exists today due to Alice's tenacity during a NINAETC Planning Committee meeting for the 1989 NINAETC in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Alice felt that our work in the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration centered on building a strong Native American workforce and we should recognize the individuals in our programs. After a healthy debate, the Committee agreed to incorporate the Participant Recognition.

### Howard Yackus Memorial Scholarship

*Brynne Larvie (Rosebud Sioux Tribe) - Parmalee, South Dakota*

Howard was an active supporter in the early years of the Southern California Indian Center, Inc., then known as the Orange County Indian Center (OCIC). Howard was always at fund raising events to support cultural activities like the Annual OCIC Powwow. After OCIC incorporated and captured its first Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) grant, Mr. Yackus was tasked by the OCIC Board to manage the new grant and became the director of the OCIC Manpower Development Program. Howard Yackus served his people all his adult life in both work and play. He was a role model to many and mentored numerous young Indian people and remained active all his life. Howard left us too soon and tragically. On Sunday August 31st, 1986 while attending a Pow-wow at the Barona Indian Reservation, Howard returned home to Cerritos to golf with plans to return to the Pow-wow that evening. That day was the day that Howard and his new family were lost to us as an Aeromexico jet crashed into his home.



### Federal Agency Awards

U.S. Department of Labor and  
the U.S. Department of the Interior

### Outstanding Grantees

*The Chief's Award*





## WIOA Section 166 Outstanding Participant

Nominated by the

*American Indian Council*

### *Elleh Driscoll*



***Elleh Driscoll*** is from the Meskwaki and Winnebago Nation. Since 2016 as a high school student, Elleh was introduced to the American Indian Council, when support began while away from her family to attend college. Elleh's first degree completion is an Associate of Fine Arts with the Institute of American Indian Affairs in Sante Fe, New Mexico. She transferred to the University of Iowa to complete undergraduate study in psychology to help the mental disparities taking place in Indian communities across Indian Country with graduation in 2020. Elleh was accepted for graduate study with the Indians in Psychology Doctoral Education program at the University of North Dakota.

The American Indian Council followed Elleh throughout her educational journey which included program support to allow her to focus on her career plan when faced with financial hardship. Elleh is a person of caliber and integrity, and is demonstrated in her college career as a student leader, and relevant work experiences associated with Indigenous psychology and how Indigenous clinicians connect to one another.



## WIOA Section 166 Outstanding Participant

Nominated by the  
*California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc.*

### *Jessica Pamonicutt*



**Jessica Pamonicutt** is an enrolled member of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. Her ndian Name is Oneyaw Neskehsak (Bright Eyes). Jessica is the Executive Chef & Owner of Ketapanen Kitchen, Chicago's first and only Native American Pop-Up Kitchen & Catering Company, and in the process of launching Chicago's first Native American Food Truck. She is a classically trained Chef, trained at Le Cordon Bleu School of Culinary Arts. Her vision is to bring Indigenous Cuisine to the forefront of Chicago's culinary scene and serve healthy food. .

On her website at <https://www.ketapanenkitchen.com/> :

- ◆ My Pop-Up Kitchen and Food Truck are the realizations of a dream for me. In an industry that has been predominantly male-led, I am currently the only Native American Woman Executive Chef in the Midwest and 1 of 7 across the country.
- ◆ I cook with Love. I put prayers, good thoughts, and good feelings into every dish I prepare. It was from my mother's teachings and philosophies that Ketapanen Kitchen was born. Ketapanen is an expression of Love in the Menominee language. "Ketapanen Kitchen: Where Food Is Love..."



## P.L. 102-477 Outstanding Participant

Nominated by the  
*Rosebud Sioux Tribe—Rosebud SD*

### ***Manfred Lee Fast Horse III***



***Manfred Lee Fast Horse III***, a Rosebud Sioux, made life choices to experience a hard life of alcohol, drugs and incarceration at different times. The last time in jail, he decided he didn't want to live that lifestyle anymore. This new path has not been easy, it has been hard for him to consider giving up and return to that lifestyle.

Manfred is thankful for a network of support to stand by his side to turn his life around and to give him the chance to prove that he is a better person than before. He is thankful to have an opportunity to gain work skills when no one else would due to a reputation and past – “rough around the edges”. A community member writes “since his return from prison, I have seen Manny do nothing but great things. I have seen him go to the lowest point in his life to an incredible person again.”.

Manfred is now married, has a driver's license, has a permanent job with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe's water and sewage department, and has custody of his youngest son.



## Alice Bigpond Roach Memorial Scholarship

Nominated by the

*California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc.*



### ***Melodi Serna***

***Melodi Serna*** (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and Oneida) found a niche' as the Executive Director of the American Indian Center (AIC) of Chicago. She has demonstrated leadership and dedication from the moment she took on the role of Executive Director. As one of the most depended on Native organizations in Illinois, she oversees multiple Native American programs that assist seniors, Veterans, youth programs as well as multiple families in need of social services.

She has applied for and received grants that have assisted the Native community and provides support for under served people. Melodi has been always been proactive with any open Center positions by keeping open communication with CIMC-CBO for qualified candidates.

In addition to keeping the doors between organizations open, she has been an advocate for CBO to be included in the State of Illinois' plan of expanding hiring practices toward giving Native American applicants priority. She has also advocated for CIMC-CBO to be an advisory organization for other local Native American service entities.

The AIC Board Chair commends Melodi's contribution to the American Indian Center while serving for nine months as the Interim Executive Director, "under Melodi's leadership, the organization has now regained its financial stability, has hired professional consultants to guide AIC and its leadership towards a path of success and transparency, and has re-opened our facility bringing back much-needed community social and cultural gatherings. The weight of leadership in this role is immense and I am confident that Melodi will continue to lead our organization with professionalism and resiliency."





## Howard Yackus Memorial Scholarship

Nominated by the  
*Rosebud Sioux Tribe*

### Brynne Larvie

**Brynne Larvie**, Rosebud Sioux, is from the Parmalee Community on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe reservation in South Dakota. She cares where she is from and devotes most of her time and effort making people happy. She does her hardest to do the right thing and give back to her people.



Last May 2022, Brynne received a Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems with a minor in Computer Science from Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD. Brynne is currently obtaining an undergraduate interdisciplinary degree from South Dakota State University in Brookings SD which will lead her to a Master's degree in Computer Science. She is a first-generation college student and the first in her family to graduate from college. Growing up on a small reservation with very little to do, she always had a vision/dream to go to college and return to help her community and reservation in the best way possible. The Howard Yackus Memorial scholarship allows Brynne to continue on a path to support her community.



## ***Outstanding Employer***

***Nominated by the***

***Rosebud Sioux Tribe—Rosebud, SD***

## ***Sicangu Co—7th Gen Youth Program***

### **About Sičanġu Co and the 7Gen Vision**

As the economic engine of the Sičanġu Lakota nation, Sičanġu Co's purpose is to improve the financial and social well-being of our tribal relatives. We are guided and inspired by the 7Gen Vision, which imagines the type of world we'd like to see our descendants living in 175 years from now. We ask, How do we live today to create a healthy, just, abundant world for our grandchildren?

Grounded in our ancestral and cultural wisdom, with a deep understanding of the profound challenges faced by our people, Sičanġu Co is working towards Wicozani, or “the good way of life” for the Sičanġu Oyate – holistic health, economic self-sufficiency, cultural revitalization, sustainable housing, food sovereignty, climate resilience, and shared, lasting prosperity.

