



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23



NATIVE FORWARD
SCHOLARS FUND

cover scholar:

› **KAMELLA BIRD-ROMERO, OHKAY OWINGEH PUEBLO**
Graduate Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing & Poetry
Institute of American Indian Arts

CORE VALUES

Excellence
Impact
Respect
Empowerment
It's Personal

A portrait of Johnny Buck, a man with dark hair pulled back, wearing a plaid shirt and a beaded necklace. The image is overlaid with a blue tint.

Johnny
Buck

› **CONFEDERATED
TRIBES AND BANDS
OF THE YAKAMA
NATION**

GRADUATE

Master of Science
Human-Centered
Design & Engineering

**University of
Washington**

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MISSION

We provide financial support for American Indians and Alaska Natives seeking higher education and support them in obtaining undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. We partner with Tribes, the federal government, foundations, corporations, and individuals to ensure the growth and sustainability of scholarships.

VISION

Building on a 50-year legacy, Native Forward will continue to be the premier national resource in funding and empowering the next generation of Native leaders across all sectors, by meeting the unmet need of every Native student.



Angelique Albert

› **CONFEDERATED
SALISH &
KOOTENAI
TRIBES**

Native Forward
Scholars Fund,
Chief Executive
Officer

XEST SXLXALT (Good Day!)

At Native Forward Scholars Fund, we are proud to have supported students from over 500 Tribes in all 50 states. Our scholars and alumni are the inspiration and motivation for the work that we do every day. Their accomplishments are an indicator of our success as an organization, and I could not be prouder of all they have achieved. They are our legacy.

We don't just give out scholarships, we break down systemic barriers to higher education. This organization is built to empower Native students as leaders by equipping them with what they need to succeed in higher education and providing culturally relevant resources for generations to come.

Access to higher education by investing in student scholarships has intergenerational effects that contribute to greater economic mobility, self-determination, and Tribal sovereignty for scholars and Tribal communities. Although we are the largest direct provider of scholarships to Native American students, we are currently only able to fund 18 percent of all our applicants annually. Our work at Native Forward will not be complete until we are able to create opportunities, empower, and provide financial support to every Native student in this country wanting to pursue higher education.

Thank you for being a part of our journey in breaking barriers and empowering Native scholars!

LemImtš (Thank You!)

“My goal is to make bear tracks in both worlds, by taking the knowledge and wisdom I gain from a Western education and bridging it with Indigenous traditional knowledge, combining both to help Indigenous peoples

– Cheyne Littlesun

Northern Cheyenne Tribe and a descendant of the Crow Nation
University of Washington

INTRODUCTION

The following impact report covers program activities for the period of July 1, 2022, through July 1, 2023. Our goal is to maintain effective communication with current fellows and to provide relevant and efficient services as part of the overall administration of scholarships for the benefit of the American Indian community.

A portrait of Savanna Romero, a young woman with long dark hair, smiling. The image is overlaid with a purple gradient.

**Savanna
Romero**

› **EASTERN
SHOSHONE TRIBE**

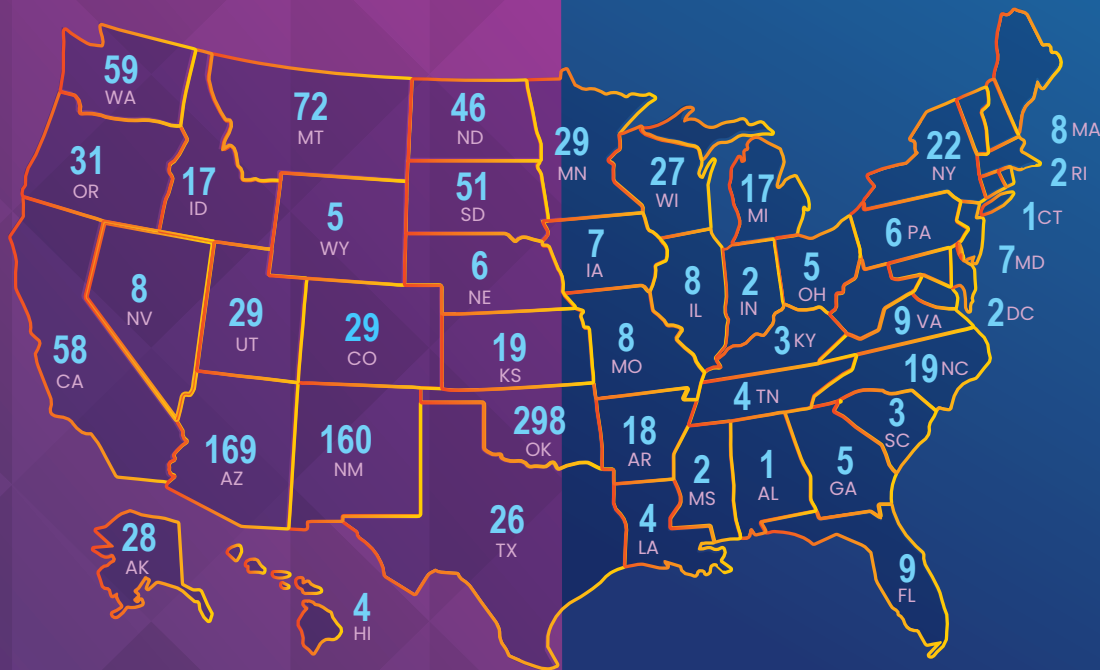
Master of Fine Arts
Creative Writing/
Fiction

**Institute of
American Indian Arts**

COMMUNITY IMPACT

48 States Impacted

includes Washington, D.C.



TOP HOME STATES BY NUMBER OF AWARDEES

Oklahoma	Montana	South Dakota	Colorado
Arizona	Washington	North Dakota	Minnesota
New Mexico	California	Oregon	Utah

1,343
Native Scholars
EMPOWERED WITH
SCHOLARSHIPS

\$11,093,570
Total Funding
AWARDED

\$54,531
HIGHEST
SINGLE AWARD
TO A SCHOLAR

\$25,591
AVERAGE
UNMET
NEED

\$8,278
AVERAGE
AWARD
AMOUNT



Krystalynn
Nasisaq J.
Scott

› YAKUTAT TLINGIT
TRIBE, NATIVE
VILLAGE OF PORT
GRAHAM, AKIACHAK
TRIBAL COMMUNITY

Juris Doctorate

Lewis & Clark
Law School

AT A GLANCE

“I hope to serve as an engineer, with a healthy balance of traditional and modern innovation, to find better ways to bring solar power and clean water systems to my Hopi people.

– Wayne Tewania Taylor IV

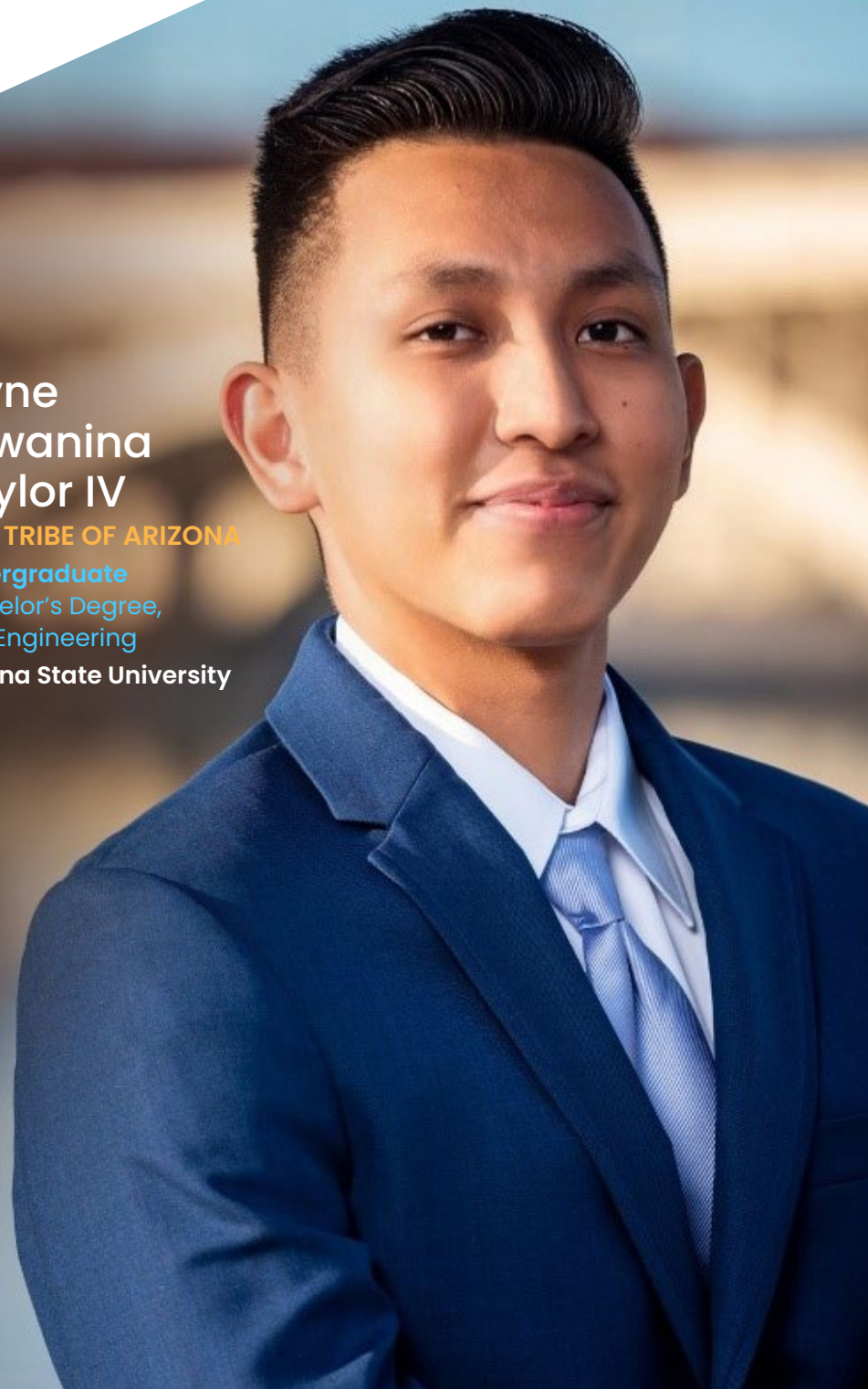
Wayne Tewanina Taylor IV

› HOPI TRIBE OF ARIZONA

Undergraduate

Bachelor's Degree,
Civil Engineering

Arizona State University



COMMUNITY IMPACT

193

TRIBES REPRESENTED

TOP 10 TRIBES

BY NUMBER OF AWARDEES

Navajo Nation
Cherokee Nation
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
Indians of North Dakota
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge
Reservation
Chickasaw Nation
Confederated Salish and Kootenai
Tribes of the Flathead Reservation
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa
Indians of Michigan
Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet
Indian Reservation of Montana

**Emerald
Byakeddy**

› **NAVAJO NATION**

Alumna

Columbia
University

AT A GLANCE



Sage Innerarity

› LONE BAND OF
MIWOK INDIANS OF
CALIFORNIA

Masters in Library and
Information Technology
Concentration in
Cultural Heritage
Simmons University

Sage is a Miwok storyteller, writer, and citizen of the Lone Band of Miwok Indians from Elk Grove, California. She was awarded The George Rogers Taylor Prize for her Summa-recommended thesis entitled "Stealing the Fire: (Re)claiming, (Re)telling, and (Re)covering Miwok Creation Stories and Oral Histories."

She is a member of Native Americans in Philanthropy's 2023 Native Youth Grantmakers cohort with sponsorship from the Miwok Heritage Center. Sage is deeply committed to cultural revitalization efforts in her Tribal community. In addition to working as a researcher and interviewer with the Miwok Heritage Center, she is involved in designing and teaching language courses for Miwok youth as well as learning basket weaving with her mother and sister.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

SCHOLARSHIPS

With over five decades of experience, Native Forward's core competency is the administration of scholarship programs. We offer more than 40 scholarship programs to undergraduate, graduate, and professional scholars pursuing degrees in any field. Native Forward provides:

- Access to scholarships/fellowship funding through effective scholarship administration. Marketing and outreach to national Native audiences. Efficient application, review, and awarding process, including distribution, and tracking.
- Examination funding to assist with the costs associated with taking professional examinations, including the Bar and CPA examinations, as well as graduate entrance exams.
- Professional development funding to empower Natives who work in STEM fields and radio communications. Individuals may apply if seeking funding for continuing education, conferences, training, and certifications, through the entire academic journey.

“Because my people have poured so much into me, I find it important to give back to my people in a way that is most needed. Your generous donation brings me closer to helping cultivate and improve my community.”

*- Hailie Henderson
Blackfeet &
Little Shell Tribes*

A portrait of Jantzen Hale, a young woman with voluminous, dark, curly hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a black sleeveless top, a gold chain necklace, and large, ornate earrings. Her left hand is resting on her right arm, and she is wearing a large, dark, oval-shaped ring. The background is a light-colored, textured wall.

Jantzen Hale

› NAVAJO NATION

Graduate

Master of Public
Policy Political
Science

University of
California

PROGRAMMING

College access is one of Native Forward's core skills and primary areas of focus. We collaborate with individual Tribal members of the 574 federally recognized Tribes to provide access to funds, resources, and information for higher education. Our holistic and culturally relevant programming includes:

- One-to-one outreach to students, including financial aid assistance, application support, and advocating for our students through improving policies, reducing obstacles, and increasing on-campus support available to Native students.
- Webinars and Workshops. From navigating imposter syndrome to mastering the art of building your resume, join Native Forward for webinars and workshops built from Native scholar feedback and designed to provide relevant information and support scholars throughout their academic journey.
- Student Center, an online collection of best practices, strategies, and advice specifically tailored for Native student successes that supplement our one-to-one services and provide additional guidance through the entire academic journey.

“This scholarship holds a special significance for me. Growing up, I witnessed the challenges faced by my community and developed a deep desire to contribute to its growth and empowerment.

- Parker Falling
Cherokee/Shawnee
Oklahoma State
University
Undergraduate
Industrial
Engineering and
Management

“ I desire to tackle major public health issues within our kindred communities, and this financial support both sustains and motivates me.

– Marianna Cota
Pascua Yaqui Tribe
The University of
Iowa, College of
Public
Health MPH
Community &
Behavioral Health

SUPPORT

What sets Native Forward apart when it comes to college success are our time-tested, culturally attuned student support services. For decades, we have worked to improve and excel at the support services we offer to all Native students. We provide:

- Adjacent high impact, culturally responsive support through multi-faceted and targeted programming.
- Financial aid counseling, assistance with Native Forward applications and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), standard financial literacy information, award revisions, Cost of Attendance adjustments, and resolved award disbursements.
- Support through the most difficult parts of the academic journey using a one-to-one, three-touchpoint student outreach system which includes email, flyers, social media, direct calls, and surveys.
- Institutional outreach and advocacy to assist students in connecting to campus resources such as tutoring, mentoring, financial aid, peer groups, etc.
- Transcript review to assure students success, with targeted “back on track” initiative to assist students with on campus resources including mentoring and connections to other Native students around the country.
- Incentive programs celebrate student accomplishments through acknowledgement, including the awarding of stoles, achievement medals, and Student of the Month.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Miller Indigenous Economic Development Fellowship

Through the generous support of Native Forward Alumnus Robert J. Miller, Native Forward Scholars Fund established the Miller Economic Development Fellowship after recognizing the current economic climate and the underrepresentation of Native researchers in the field of economics and economic development.

The Miller Indigenous Economic Development Fellowship provides assistance to eligible American Indian and Alaska Native doctoral candidates to cover the costs related to data collection and data analysis. Doctoral candidates pursuing research in economic and economic development focusing on or influencing Native communities are encouraged to apply. This one-time award provides assistance for research travel, research supplies, data analysis tools, or subscriptions. This award will also cover fees incurred for transcription services, analysis services, analysis review, and editing fees.



**Robert J.
Miller**
› **EASTERN
SHAWNEE
TRIBE**
Alumnus

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

41%
First-Generation
STUDENTS

339
INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED

TOP 10 INSTITUTIONS

BY NUMBER OF AWARDEES

University of Oklahoma
Arizona State University
Oklahoma State University
University of New Mexico
Northeastern State University

Northern Arizona University
University of Arizona
Salish Kootenai College
University of North Dakota
University of California

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

3.48

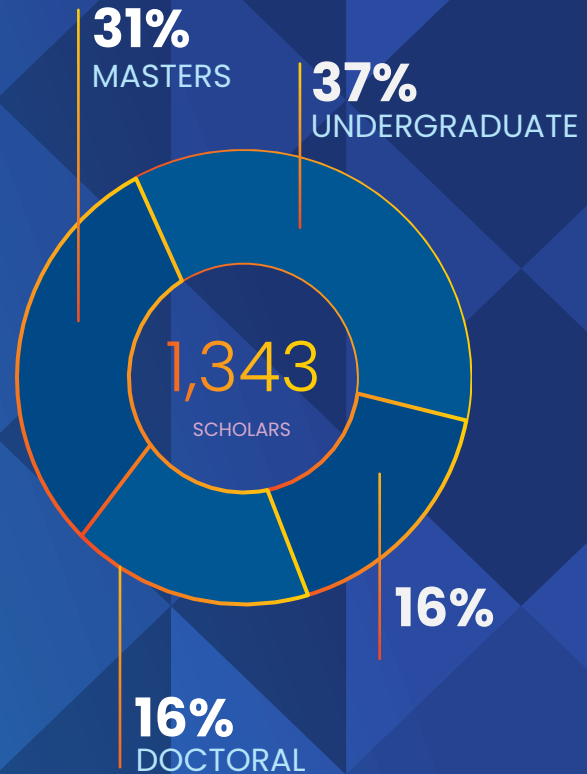
AVERAGE ACCUMULATIVE

Grade Point Average

TOP 10 AREAS OF STUDY

BY NUMBER OF AWARDEES

- Education
- Public Health
- Business
- Law
- Engineering
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Psychology
- Social Work/Welfare
- Biology



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Maka Monture Păki

› **TLINGIT AND MOHAWK
TRIBE**

Alumna

An Alaska Native, Maka studied Applied Indigenous Studies at Northern Arizona University. She then received her Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of Alaska at Anchorage. Maka co-founded the Arctic Youth Ambassadors Program, which creates opportunities for Indigenous young people from rural Alaska to share their voices and offer solutions to address the effects of climate change in the Arctic. As a member of the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, or International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change, Maka has worked with Indigenous representatives from around the world to push for government action in international climate negotiations and for centering Indigenous people's experiences and solutions to the global climate crisis. Maka's academic work and advocacy have earned her multiple awards including the World Wildlife Fund's Youth Leadership Award, Danny Wilcher Award for Young Environmental Activists, Environmental Protection Agency Carroll Jorgenson Award, and the National Parks Conservation Association's 10 Under 40. On August 21, 2023, Maka received the President's Volunteer Service Award from AmeriCorps, which honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires others to act.

OUR PARTNERS

THANK YOU

Accenture

Amateur Radio Digital
Communications (ARDC)

American Indian Science and
Engineering Society

American Indigenous Business
Leaders

American Indian College Fund

AMERIND Risk

APIA Scholars

Bank of America

Big Fire Law

Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation

Blue Stone Strategy Group

Bureau of Indian Education

Catena Foundation

CBRE

CLA Foundation

CNIGA

Colorado University Upward
Bound

Cypress Creek

Edelman

FoodCorps

Google

Hewlett-Packard

Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Indigenous Education Inc

Johnson Scholarship
Foundation

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

MetLife

Murdock Charitable Trust

Native American Agriculture
Fund

NDN Collective

NextEra Energy

NIKE

NIKE N7

Northwestern University

PNM

Poarch Band of Creek Indians

REDW LLC

Rincon Band of Luiseño
Indians

Salish Kootenai College

Sandia National Laboratories

San Manuel Band of Mission
Indians

Salesforce

Shakopee Mdewakanton
Sioux Community

Sky Eagle Collection

Sogorea Te' Land Trust

Society of Professional
Engineering Employees in
Aerospace

UNCF

Urban Native Era

Wells Fargo

Wend Collective

A portrait of Gavin Nadeau, a man with dark hair, a beard, and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a patterned tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera.

Gavin
Nadeau

› **TURTLE MOUNTAIN
BAND OF CHIPPEWA**
Alumnus

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



**Kesheena
Doctor**

› **NAVAJO**

Graduate
Library & Information Science
San Jose State University

Kesheena intends to focus on academic librarianship and assist other Indigenous and first-generation students like herself towards academic success. She also plans on centering her librarianship on promoting Indigenous narratives, Indigenous knowledge, and Indigenous self-expression with digital media.

Kesheena is dedicated to community building and has volunteered for several organizations, including Portland State's Women's Resource Center, the Portland Zine Symposium, the Independent Publishing Resource Center, SCRAP PDX, and the Multnomah County Library.

BOARD

Holly Cook Macarro
Red Lake Band of Ojibwe
Chair

Stacy Leeds, Alumna
Cherokee
Vice-Chair

Franklyn “Hud” Oberly, Alumnus
Comanche, Osage & Caddo
Treasurer

Amber Garrison
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Secretary

Aurene Martin, Alumna
Bad River Band of Lake Superior
Chippewa
Member at Large

Cecilia Gutierrez
Member at Large

Ernest Stevens Jr.
Oneida Nation of Wisconsin
Member at Large

Kimberly Teehee
Cherokee Nation
Member at Large

Lillian Sparks Robinson
Rosebud Sioux Tribe
Member at Large

“Thank you for being a part of our journey in breaking barriers and empowering Native scholars!”

– Angelique Albert
Native Forward
Scholars Fund Chief
Executive Officer

EMERITUS BOARD

Steven Stallings
Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians

Walter Lamar
Blackfeet & Wichita

STAFF

Angelique Albert, MBA
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
Chief Executive Officer

Erin Griego
Chief of Staff

Elisa Gonzales-Phillips
Controller

Sara LaBarge, M.S.Ed., CFRE, Alumna
Menominee Nation
Director of Strategic Partnership
& Interim Marketing Director

Christa Moya, MCRP, Alumna
Navajo Nation
Director of Scholarship Operations
& Programming

Michael Bates, M.Ed., Alumnus
Cherokee
Scholarship Operations Manager

Alshana Jake
Navajo Nation
Scholarship Operations Assistant

JT Schreier
Scholarship Operations Assistant

Daryan Singer, MPS, Alumna
Navajo Nation
Student Programming Manager

Marveline Vallo Gabbard
Acoma Pueblo
Scholarship Operations Manager

Antonia Belindo
Kiowa, Pawnee, Choctaw, Navajo
Alumni Engagement Manager

Jessica Bullard
Lumbee
Development Officer

Gabriel Diamante
Data Analyst

Parker Duff, M.A.
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Development Associate

Adriann Francis
Pueblo of Laguna, Mojave
Grants Manager

Shundiin Sorensen
Navajo
Administrative Services Assistant

Alyssa Bitsie
Diné
Marketing & Communications
Specialist

Britney A. King, MFA
Diné & Chippewa-Cree
Social Media & Graphic Design Specialist

Matthew Mora
Assistant Marketing Director

Taylor Clements-Hammond
Accounting Specialist

Denise Olivarez
Tarahumara
Accounting Assistant

Donielle Ball
IT Support Specialist

Kakiley Workman, Alumna
Cherokee Nation
Scholarship Operations Manager

Megan Sierra
Administrative Services Manager

Kolton Nephew
Navajo Nation
Administrative Services Assistant

Angel Burnside, PHR
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
Human Resources Manager



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING NATIVE FORWARD SCHOLARS FUND

Native Forward is in its fifth decade of providing scholarships for undergraduate, graduate, and professional education for Native students. **Currently, we are able to fund only 18% of all applicants, leaving 82% of students unfunded.** Our goal is to meet the unmet financial needs of every Native student and help every Native undergraduate, graduate and professional student achieve their educational goals.

**Chad
Abeyta**

› NAVAJO NATION

Juris Doctorate

University of
New Mexico

82%
Students
UNFUNDED

Our work is not done. Your generous contributions allow us to continue advocating for Native students from college to career. Every dollar raised goes to support our scholars on their journey through higher education to better their lives and give back to Tribal communities.



NATIVE FORWARD

SCHOLARS FUND

NativeForward.org

**Native Forward
Scholars Fund**

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web@nativeforward.org

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