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

Johnny Buck
CONFEDERATED TRIBES AND BANDS OF THE YAKAMA NATION
GRADUATE
Master of Science Human-Centered Design & Engineering
University of Washington
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.
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!

Lemlmtš (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.

Savanna Romero
EASTERN SHOSHONE TRIBE
Master of Fine Arts
Creative Writing/Fiction
Institute of American Indian Arts
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

Krystalyn 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 Tewanina Taylor IV

Wayne Tewanina Taylor IV
HOPI TRIBE OF ARIZONA
Undergraduate
Bachelor’s Degree, Civil Engineering
Arizona State University
TRIBES REPRESENTED

193

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
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.
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
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
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.

“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
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.
### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

#### First-Generation Students

41% of students are first-generation.

#### Institutions Attended

- 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

339 institutions attended by Native Forward Scholars Fund recipients.

### TOP 10 INSTITUTIONS

BY NUMBER OF AWARDEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Oklahoma</th>
<th>Northern Arizona University</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
<td>University of Arizona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma State University</td>
<td>Salish Kootenai College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of New Mexico</td>
<td>University of North Dakota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeastern State University</td>
<td>University of California</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

3.48

AVERAGE ACCUMULATIVE Grade Point Average

31% MASTERS
37% UNDERGRADUATE
16% DOCTORAL
16% SCHOLARS

1,343

TOP 10 AREAS OF STUDY BY NUMBER OF Awardees
Education
Public Health
Business
Law
Engineering
Medicine
Nursing
Psychology
Social Work/Welfare
Biology
Maka Monture Päki
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

Gavin Nadeau
TURTLE MOUNTAIN BAND OF CHIPPEWA
Alumnus
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.
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
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.