

NATIVE GOVERNANCE CENTER



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION:

Native Governance Center is a Native American-led nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting Tribal nations in strengthening their governance systems and capacity to exercise sovereignty.

OUR HISTORY: Native Governance Center was established in August 2015 in response to a need identified by Tribal leaders representing the 23 Native nations sharing geography with Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. These leaders expressed the need for an independent, Indigenous-led organization to sustain the Native Nations work that the Bush Foundation started into the future. In order to meet the expanding demand for Tribal-governance and nation building-related support in the region, the Bush Foundation created Native Governance Center and generously provided initial seed funding.

WHY GOVERNANCE? Tribes are working to rebuild their governments in ways that work for their Tribal citizens and align with their culture and history. Research conducted by the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (HPAIED) confirms that strong Tribal governance leads to more successful Tribal communities and economies. We define the processes by which a Native nation enhances its own capacity for effective self-governance and self-determination as nation building.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

We provide leadership development opportunities for Native Americans through the Native Nation Rebuilders and Youth Rebuilders programs.

2017 ANNUAL REPORT TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Native Governance Center . . .	2
Message from the Executive Director. .	3
Featured Highlights.	4
Leadership Development.	5
Tribal Governance Support.	6
2017 Nation Building Highlights.	7
2017 Donors	8
Financial Summary	9
Staff Bios	10
Board Bios.	11

OUR WORK: Native Governance Center assists Tribes in their effort to improve governance through two main program areas: **Leadership Development** and **Tribal Governance Support**.

TRIBAL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT:

We provide support to Tribal governments through three main strategies: Customized Tribal Assistance, Tribal Resource Grants, and Education.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dear Native Governance Center
Partners and Supporters,**

2017 was a time of growth for our organization. During our second year in operation, we not only expanded our team to six, but we also increased and diversified our program offerings in the areas of Leadership Development and Tribal Governance Support. Additionally, we built a strong foundation for further program-related growth in 2018. All of us on staff look forward to implementing these plans during the coming year as we seek to increase our efforts to support Tribes in strengthening their sovereignty.

We brought on a Development Director and Development Manager in 2017, which allowed us to round out our development team and implement a communications strategy. This extra capacity has enabled us to deepen our efforts to keep Native leaders in our networks up to date on nation building-related topics and our new program offerings, such as Youth Rebuilders.

In response to direct feedback from Native Nation Rebuilders, our program team launched the initial phase of a new leadership program for Native youth—Youth Rebuilders—in late 2017. Youth Rebuilders is a summer experience that equips Native youth with nation building skills and empowers them to map out their visions for the future. Essentially, Youth Rebuilders trains the next generation of Native leaders. 2018 will serve as a pilot year for the program, and we received overwhelming interest from Tribal youth groups both in our region and across Indian Country when we announced our program launch at the end of 2017.

On another Rebuilders-related note, our Cohort 9 selection process was the highlight of the year for me. We added a new element to our application process that allows folks to nominate candidates whom they feel would be a good fit for our program. This new nominations process helped us extend our reach beyond our network; as a result, we increased



Wayne Ducheneaux II

the number of applications we received this year by 42%. In December, we graduated 18 Cohort 8 Rebuilders and welcomed 25 Cohort 9 Rebuilders to the program during a session held at Treasure Island Resort and Casino (Prairie Island Indian Community).

Our 2017 Nation Building Celebration was also a success. The attendance at our convening vastly exceeded our expectations—we met our five-year attendance goal just one year after hosting our launch event. Our Nation Building Celebration reinforced the fact that there's a huge demand for Tribal governance support services in our region and beyond. We focused our event on cross-sector and cross-governmental partnerships; given our current political climate, the need for partnerships and understanding, more generally, is a very timely subject. I look forward to seeing what our Tribal partners accomplish through collaboration in the coming year.

Sincerely,



Wayne Ducheneaux II, Executive Director

FEATURED HIGHLIGHTS

ONLINE
REBUILDERS
DATABASE
LAUNCH

We rolled out our new Native Nation Rebuilders database on our website in May 2017. The database allows users to search for Native Nation Rebuilders by name, year, state, and Tribe, and it also features a photo and short bio of each Rebuilder. We plan to continuously update the database as more Native leaders continue to join the Rebuilders program.

TURTLE
MOUNTAIN
“NATION
BUILDING
101”

We hosted a “Nation Building 101” session for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (TMBCI) at the request of the TMBCI Tribal Council in April 2017. The full Tribal Council, Chairman, and Human Resources director attended the two-day executive education session focused on nation building case studies and strategic planning.



Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians Human Resources Director Cynthia Poitra presents part of the action plan devised by session participants.

In late November 2017, Cohort 8 and 9 Native Nation Rebuilders gathered together for a combined session held at Treasure Island Resort and Casino (Prairie Island Indian Community). The final Rebuilders “graduation” session always includes Rebuilders from the incoming cohort; that way, outgoing Rebuilders can welcome them into the program and share the wisdom and insight they’ve gathered during year one. 18 Rebuilders from 10 Tribes graduated from the program and outlined the action plans they’ll implement in their communities in 2018.

COHORT 8
REBUILDERS
GRADUATION

In 2016, we awarded the Yankton Sioux Tribe (YST) a \$7,600 grant to host an enrollment-focused convening for YST citizens. As a follow-up to our grant, we sponsored three members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe to attend an enrollment conference at the University of Arizona College of Law in March 2017. The “Who Belongs? From Tribal Kinship to Native Nation Citizenship to Disenrollment” Conference brought together Federal Indian Law experts and Tribal leaders to discuss current issues related to citizenship and enrollment.

“WHO
BELONGS?”
CONFERENCE

“The [Nation Building 101] session put a lot of things on the table. ...Everyone agreed to start working together and to hold each other accountable.”

—Turtle Mountain Councilman and Cohort 9 Rebuilder Jamie Azure

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

NATIVE NATION REBUILDERS is a two-year, cohort-based leadership program for Native American leaders ages 25+ from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The program empowers participants to develop the knowledge, skills, and connections they need to lead nation building efforts and improve their communities. Rebuilders gain governance knowledge and community organizing/advocacy tools to mobilize their fellow Tribal citizens to make positive change. Enrolled members of the 23 Native nations in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota are eligible to apply.



“I’m in my second term as an elected representative for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. The Native Nation Rebuilders

Program empowers leaders like me and prepares our future leaders to recover our sovereignty in both action and attitude.”

—LeRoy Staples-Fairbanks III
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Cohort 1 Rebuilder



“Through the program, I developed lifelong bonds that not only benefit the work of Native nation building in

our respective communities but also provide a supportive network that helps us heal.”

—Nikki Pieratos
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Cohort 7 Rebuilder

YOUTH REBUILDERS: Youth Rebuilders is a new, youth-centered wing of our Leadership Development program area launched in 2017. The program empowers young Native American leaders ages 14-24 from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota to dream about their visions for the future and the contributions that they hope to make to their communities. It’s a multi-day experience that uses digital advocacy, videography training, and Tribal governance education and case studies to equip participating youth with leadership skills and inspire civic responsibility.

REBUILDERS REUNION: In response to Rebuilder feedback, we’ve made it a priority to facilitate opportunities to connect Rebuilders across Tribes and cohorts. In June 2017, we hosted a Rebuilders Reunion, which brought together 43 Rebuilders from 16 Native nations in our region. Attendees participated in sessions on topics ranging from “Social Media Strategies” to “Art as Activism.” Rebuilders also had the opportunity to network with one another during several team building exercises and a networking reception.

REUNION
ATTENDEES WHO SAID
THEY’D BE INTERESTED IN
ATTENDING REBUILDERS
NETWORKING EVENTS AT
LEAST TWICE PER YEAR:
100%

NATIVE
NATION
REBUILDERS
ALUMNI AT THE
END OF 2017:
138

TRIBES
REPRESENTED:
21

TRIBAL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT

We provide support to Tribal governments through three main strategies: Customized Tribal Assistance, Tribal Resource Grants, and Education.

- **CUSTOMIZED TRIBAL ASSISTANCE:** We help Tribes create and implement governance solutions through technical assistance and consulting services.
- **TRIBAL RESOURCE GRANTS:** Tribal Resource Grants help connect Native nations to resources—expertise, knowledge, education, and additional funds—to strengthen governance.
- **EDUCATION:** We work with Tribes to host large- and small-scale educational convenings. We also hold educational events open to the general public.



Tribal leaders complete an exercise at the 2017 Tribal Leader Orientation session in Fargo, ND.

2017 TRIBAL GOVERNANCE SUPPORT PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

CONSTITUTION MEETINGS: MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE

In August 2017, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) invited Native Governance Center to assist with a series of constitution meetings to gather information regarding the changes that enrolled members would like to see made to the MCT constitution. Working with the University of Arizona’s Native Nations Institute, we helped the MCT bands facilitate five constitution meetings during 2017. The MCT ultimately wants enrolled citizens to have an opportunity to make their voices heard and the information from the meetings passed on to those in leadership positions.

“This is the second meeting I’ve attended. It’s been eye opening.”

—Survey response from an enrolled citizen of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, December 2017 Leech Lake Constitution Meeting”

TRIBAL LEADER ORIENTATION SESSION: FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

Newly-elected Tribal leaders are expected to hit the ground running as soon as they take office. On top of balancing demands from their constituents, they must find time to collaborate with their fellow council members to lay plans for the future. We put on a Tribal Leader Orientation session every other year to give newly-elected leaders and their support teams some scheduled time to strategically consider their goals and how they plan to implement them. We held a Tribal Leader Orientation in January 2017 in Fargo, North Dakota. The event drew 40 Tribal leaders representing 15 Native nations from across the region.

2017 NATION BUILDING CELEBRATION

Each year, we host a Nation Building Celebration, a gathering that brings together Tribal leaders, grassroots Native leaders, local and state lawmakers, and members of the general public to network, learn, and gather resources related to leadership and nation building.

On August 14-15, 2017, we showcased groundbreaking Tribal initiatives and strong inter-Tribal partnerships at our Nation Building Celebration held at the JW Marriott Minneapolis Mall of America. Over 100 elected Tribal leaders and others who work in Native communities attended the event. Presenters such as Minnesota State Representative Peggy Flanagan and Chief Judge Lorrie Miner

highlighted examples of partnerships in the food, wellness, and energy sectors in hopes of inspiring further cross-sector and cross-governmental collaboration by Native nations in the region.

In addition to speakers and panels, the event featured an interactive “Rez Cafe” session that gave leaders from across Indian Country the opportunity to discuss ideas for implementing innovative partnerships in their own communities. One event attendee said the following about the Rez Cafe portion of the Celebration: “Learning about the innovative projects that other Tribes are doing inspired me and gave me ideas to take back home.”

SURVEY RESPONDENTS WHO ENJOYED THE EVENT CONTENT: 100%

ATTENDEES: 106

PRESENTERS: 14

SURVEY RESPONDENTS WHO SAID NGC COULD PLAY A ROLE IN THEIR WORK: 100%

SURVEY RESPONDENTS WHO FELT THE EVENT PROVIDED THEM WITH MEANINGFUL NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES: 100%

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin (left) and Minnesota State Representative Peggy Flanagan (right)

Nation Building Celebration attendees engage in a group activity.

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians Councilman Jamie Azure

Cohort 7 Rebuilder and Center for Indian Country Development Project Director Nikki Pieratos

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Teresa Anglo-Thomas

Anonymous (7)

Shaylyn Bernhardt

Elizabeth Branca

Eileen Briggs

Kim Cerise

Tyanna Crooks

Rebecca Crooks-Stratton

Jacob Davis

Denise Desiderio

Wayne Ducheneaux II

Frank Ettawageshik

Donita Fischer

Richard Fletcher

Megan Forgrave

Patricia Franson

Elli Haerter

Richard Jacobson
- Tadd Johnson

Kevin and Michelle Kramer

Lauren Kramer

Daniel Lemm

Amber Mathern

Pamela Moret

Jaynie Parrish

Teresa Peterson

Nikki Pieratos

Jaime Pinkham

Tiffany Roemer

LeRoy Staples Fairbanks III

Jane Townsend

Pearl Walker-Swaney

Vi Waln

Kathy and Wever Weed

Tracey Zephier

FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE FUNDERS

- Agency MABU

Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP

Bremer Bank

The Bush Foundation

The Center for Indian Country Development

CliftonLarsonAllen

Gray Plant Mooty

Loffler Companies, Inc.

North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission

The Northwest Area Foundation

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

The Joe Kalt and Judy Gans Family Foundation

The Numad Group

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

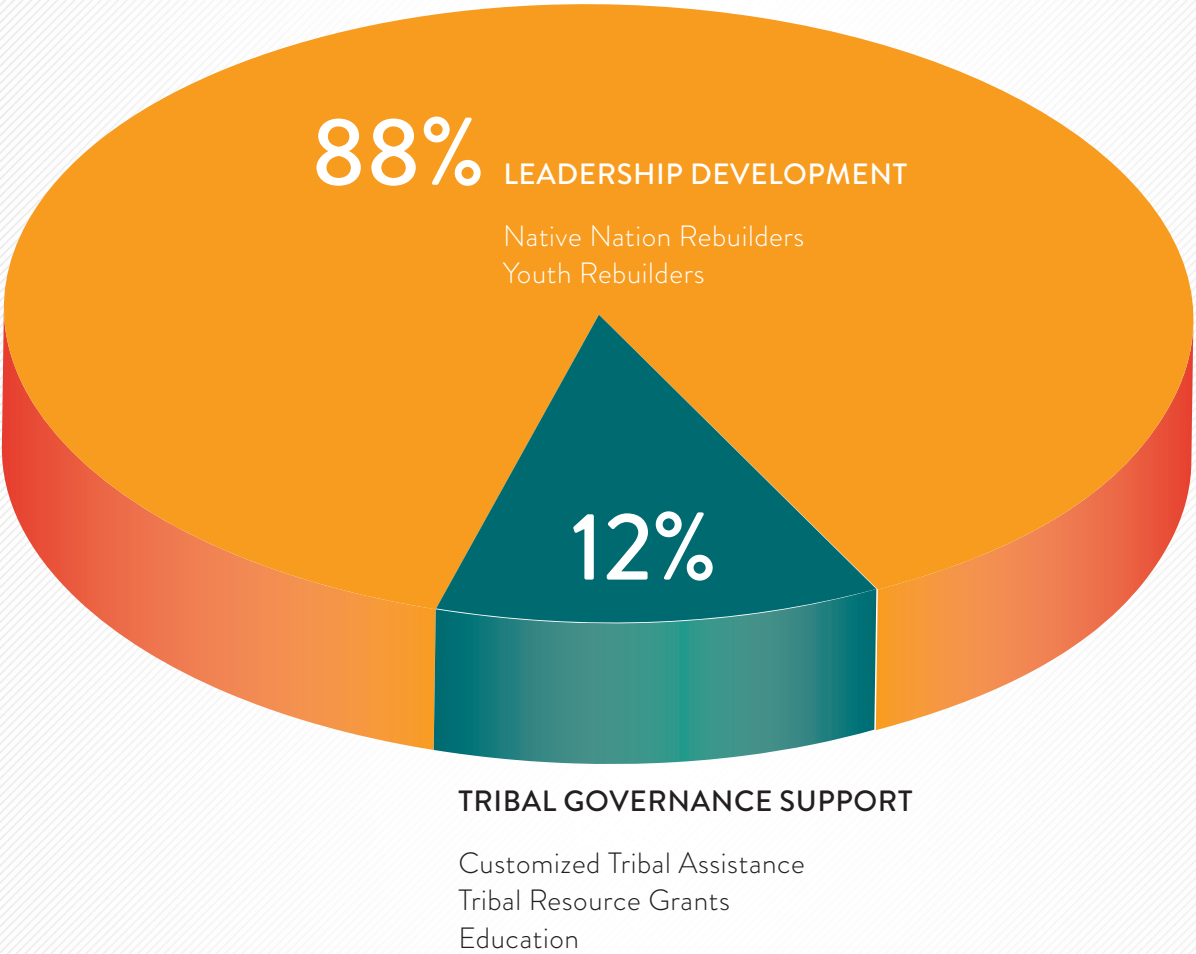
Native Governance Center completed its second full year of operation in 2017. It was a year of growth for our organization. We increased and diversified our program offerings, added fundraising and communications staff, and began to build a strong foundation for future growth. We continued to cultivate relationships to support our work and started to diversify our funding sources with an eye toward the long-term sustainability of our organization.

Our total spending for 2017 was \$1,430,979, which is nearly double our 2016 total. We spent 65% of that amount, or nearly \$1 million, directly on programming (primarily on our Native Nation Rebuilders leadership program). We invested significantly in our core functions (23% of spending) as we continued to

build programmatic and operational infrastructure. We put the remaining 12% toward building our fundraising capacity.

We are incredibly grateful to the Bush Foundation for continuing to provide Native Governance Center’s primary operating support for 2017, as a key investment of their Native Nations initiative. However, we are pleased to report that we had some early fundraising success with our new development team on board. We secured sponsorships from 8 partners, totaling \$5,750, for our 2017 Nation Building Celebration. And we raised \$9,800 from 44 generous individuals who supported our work through their year-end giving!

2017 SPENDING BY PROGRAM AREA:



THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS MADE OUR 2017 NATION BUILDING CELEBRATION POSSIBLE:



NATIVE GOVERNANCE CENTER STAFF

WAYNE DUCHENEAUX II, *Executive Director* (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe): As Executive Director, Wayne leads the organization in all facets of Native Governance Center’s operation, shaping its programs and outcomes. He is a Cohort 3 Native Nation Rebuilder and has served as Executive Director since 2016.

REBECCA CROOKS-STRATTON, *Program Director* (Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community): As Program Director, Rebecca’s primary role is to direct the design and implementation of Native Governance Center’s Leadership Development and Tribal Governance Support programs. She is a Cohort 2 Native Nation Rebuilder and has served as Program Director since 2016.

JAYME DAVIS, *Program Manager* (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and Standing Rocks Sioux Tribe): As Program Manager, Jayme supports the implementation and execution of Native Governance Center’s Leadership Development and Tribal Governance Support programs. She is a Cohort 7 Native Nation Rebuilder and has served as Program Manager since January 2017.

LISA GIEFER, *Operations Coordinator*: Lisa’s primary roles as Operations Coordinator are to manage Native Governance Center’s core operations functions, provide executive support, oversee information management, and support the organization’s financial management. Lisa has served as Operations Coordinator since June 2017.

JANE TOWNSEND, *Development and Communications Director*: As Development and Communications Director, Jane oversees Native Governance Center’s fundraising and external communications activities. She has served in this role since August 2017.

LAUREN KRAMER, *Development and Communications Manager*: As Development and Communications Manager, Lauren supports Native Governance Center’s fundraising and external communications activities. She has served in this role since May 2017 and started her work at Native Governance Center as Operations Coordinator back in 2016.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DR. TWYLA BAKER (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation): Twyla is the President of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, a Tribal college that serves the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation. She joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2017.

ROCHELLE DIVER (Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa): Rochelle is a consultant for the International Indian Treaty Council, an organization that advocates for the rights and recognition of Indigenous Peoples worldwide. She joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2017.

FRANK ETTAWAGESHIK (Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians): Frank is the Executive Director of United Tribes of Michigan, an organization that advocates for the mutual interests, treaty rights, sovereignty, and cultural way of life of the sovereign Tribes of Michigan. He joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2016.

TADD JOHNSON, *Board Treasurer* (Bois Forte Band of Chippewa): Tadd is a Professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) and the Director of UMD’s Master of Tribal Administration and Governance program. He joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2015.

DR. JOE KALT, *Board Secretary*: Joe is the Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy, Emeritus, at the Harvard Kennedy School and the Co-Director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development. He joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2015.

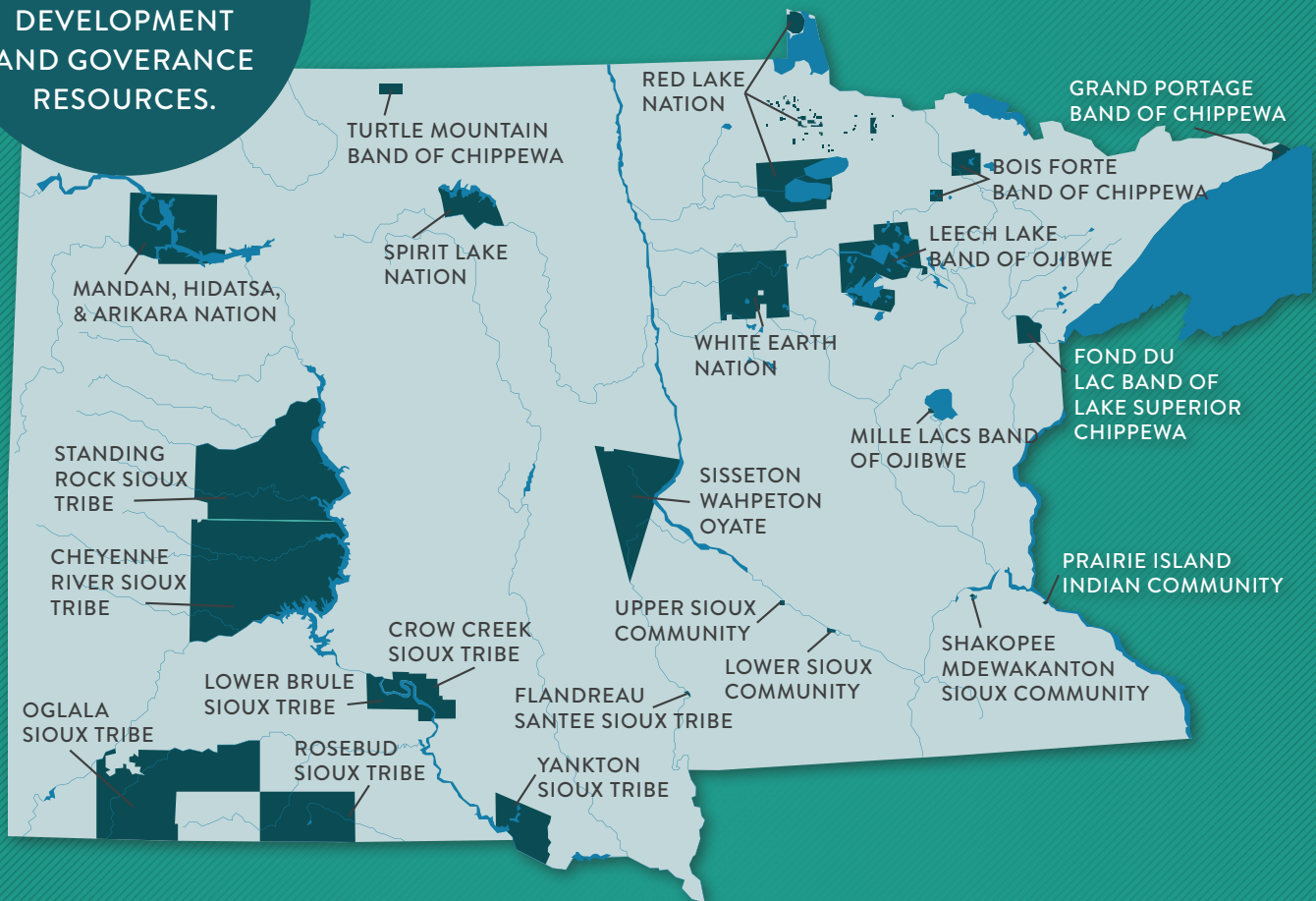
CRIS STAINBROOK, *Board Chair* (Oglala Sioux Tribe): Cris is the President of the Indian Land Tenure Foundation, a national, community-based organization that serves American Indian nations and people in the recovery and control of their homelands. He joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2015.

TRACEY ZEPHIER (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe): Tracey is a Partner at Fredericks Peebles & Morgan LLP, a law firm dedicated to the representation of American Indian Tribes and organizations throughout the United States. She joined the Native Governance Center Board in 2015.




STRENGTHENING
TRIBAL NATIONS
THROUGH LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
AND GOVERNANCE
RESOURCES.

NATIVE NATIONS SERVED



NATIVE GOVERNANCE CENTER

60 Plato Boulevard E, Suite 400
St. Paul, MN 55107
Phone: 651-571-0826
Email: hello@nativegov.org

 /nativegov
 @nativegov

NATIVEGOV.ORG

