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Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian Announces Six New Members Will Join its Board of Trustees in 2021

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian announced today six new members are joining its Board of Trustees in 2021. The board has also elected new leadership. Five members were confirmed by the Institution's Board of Regents at their Feb. 1 meeting; confirmation of the sixth is anticipated at the Board's April 12 meeting.

The new board members are:

- **Julie Fate Sullivan (Koyukon Athabascan):** Fate Sullivan is a shareholder of Doyon Ltd. and Baan O Yeel Kon, her regional and village corporations established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. She is a board member for Covenant House Alaska, the state's largest shelter for trafficked and homeless youth, ages 13 to 21, and a founding board member of the Alaska Native Media Group, which promotes and advances Alaska Natives in journalism.
- **Olivia Hoeft (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin):** Hoeft is a marketing manager for Google.org, the philanthropic arm of Google. She is a lead of the Google American Indian Network, an internal employee resource group that aims to improve the lives of Native Americans both at and outside of the company.
- **Robbie McGhee (Poarch Creek):** McGhee is vice chairman of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council. He previously worked at the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Senate and Troutman Sanders LLP-Indian Law Practice Group. He currently serves on the boards of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, Children First Alabama and the Center for Native American Youth.
- **Ann Silverman (Ojibwe):** Silverman is president of Wilmington Trust's private banking team and a member of its wealth management leadership team. Silverman started at M&T Bank (which acquired Wilmington Trust in 2011) in 2004 as a relationship manager and a commercial lender for its commercial bank in Washington, D.C. Before joining M&T Bank, she was a project manager

and exhibition developer for the National Museum of the American Indian in New York City and the National Museum of American History.

- **Valerie Smith:** Smith is the 15th president of Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. She began her career in higher education at Princeton and later joined the faculty at UCLA. In 2001 she returned to Princeton as the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature and professor of English and African American studies. She was the university's founding director of the Center for African American Studies and dean of the college. She is the author of more than 40 articles and three books. (Appointment pending approval at Board of Regents' April 12 meeting.)
- **Joshua Spear:** Spear is an active entrepreneur, investor and philanthropist. He co-founded Undercurrent, a consulting firm that applies a digital worldview to help solve some of the most complex problems facing today's corporations and their leaders. He supports numerous organizations around the world that fight injustice and poverty and give a voice to the voiceless.

The Board of Trustees elected **Kathy Hopinkah Hannan** (Ho-Chunk) to serve as its chair. Hannan is a retired executive of KMPG LLP, where she served as a global lead partner, national managing partner and a vice chairman. She is the recent past chairman and national president of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. Hannan succeeds Bill Lomax (Gitxsan), a vice president in the investment management division of Goldman Sachs, who will finish his term on the board as chair emeritus.

Greg Sarris, tribal chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, was elected to serve as vice chair, and **Allison Hicks** (Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation), vice president and co-owner of New World Environmental Inc., will serve as the board's secretary.

"I am pleased to have been elected as chair of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of the American Indian," said Hannan. "My fellow board members and I are eager to be advocates for this great national museum and to bring its work to more people across the country and around the world. We look forward to working with museum staff to build on recent successes like the opening of the National Native American Veterans Memorial."

"I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for their tireless work on behalf of the museum," said Machel Monenerkit, the museum's acting director. "Their support enables the museum—and the Smithsonian—to fulfill its vision of pursuing equity and social justice for Native peoples through education, inspiration and empowerment."

About the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees was established by the National Museum of the American Indian Act, the enabling legislation which created the museum in 1989. Per the legislation, the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees include:

- **Stewardship of the collections**, including purchases, gifts, loans and sales, as well as provision for the preservation and maintenance of the collections.
- **Use of the collections**, including the specification of criteria for the use of the collections, including research, education and display.

- **Budget**, including general authority to recommend annual budgets to the Board of Regents, approve expenditures from the museum's endowment, solicit private funds and determine the purposes to which such funds should be applied.
- **Advising and assisting with regards to operations**, including the authority to advise and assist the Board of Regents on matters such as administration, operation, maintenance and preservation of the museum.

There are 23 individual members of the board who are appointed by the Board of Regents. Also serving on the Board of Trustees are the Secretary of the Smithsonian and an Under Secretary of the Smithsonian appointed by the Regents. Board of Trustees members serve three-year terms.

The standing committees of the Board of Trustees are:

- **Executive**: Consists of the chair, vice chair and secretary of the Board of Trustees; the chairs of the standing committees listed below; and the Secretary of the Smithsonian.
- **Policy and Budget**: Oversees, considers and recommends policy regarding the museum's finances. Consults with the director of the museum and the full board on the museum's annual operating budget. Barbara Davis Blum chairs the committee.
- **Advancement**: Oversees, considers and recommends policy regarding the museum's efforts to generate and secure funds to support its programs and activities. Leslie Wheelock (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin) chairs the committee.
- **Collections and Scholarship**: Considers and recommends policy regarding conservation, stewardship and the acquisition and disposition of collection items. Also considers and recommends policy on research standards and practices. Pearl Brower (Inupiaq and Chippewa) chairs the committee.
- **Repatriation**: Considers and recommends policy regarding the repatriation of objects in the museum's collection. Reviews all requests for repatriation or return of materials in the collection and makes recommendations to the board concerning the disposition of the requests. Shari Huhndorf (Yup'ik) chairs the committee.
- **Governance**: Advises and makes recommendations on matters related to board procedure and on members' roles, responsibilities, attendance and performance. Makes nominations to fill vacancies on the board and for board officers and committee chairs. Greg Sarris (Graton Rancheria) chairs the committee.

The full membership of the Board of Trustees is:

- Pearl Brower (Inupiaq and Chippewa)
- Amanda Cobb-Greetham (Chickasaw)
- Barbara Davis Blum
- Philip Deloria (Standing Rock Sioux)
- Julie Fate Sullivan (Koyukon Athabascan)
- Jeff Grubbe (Agua Caliente)
- Allison Hicks (Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation)
- Olivia Hoeft (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin)
- Kathy Hopinkah Hannan (Ho-Chunk)

- Shari Huhndorf (Yup'ik)
- Peter Jemison (Seneca)
- Colin Kippen (Native Hawaiian)
- Bill Lomax (Gitxsan)
- Robbie McGhee (Poarch Creek)
- Elaine Peters (Ak-Chin)
- Greg Sarris (Graton Rancheria)
- Ann Silverman (Ojibwe)
- Gregory Smith
- Valerie Smith (appointment pending Board of Regents' approval)
- Joshua Spear
- Bob Weis
- Leslie Wheelock (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin)
- Armstrong Wiggins (Miskito)

Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch and Under Secretary for Museums and Culture Kevin Gover (Pawnee) serve on the committee ex officio.

Machel Monenerkit is the acting director of the museum.

About the Museum

In partnership with Native peoples and their allies, the National Museum of the American Indian fosters a richer shared human experience through a more informed understanding of Native peoples. The museum in Washington, D.C., is located on the National Mall at Fourth Street and Independence Avenue S.W. The museum in New York City is located at One Bowling Green. Connect with the museum on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [AmericanIndian.si.edu](#).

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