



Smithsonian
National Museum of the American Indian

STRONG WOMEN NATIONS | *Native American Women & Leadership*

Friday, March 18, 2016 · 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Rasmuson Theater · National Museum of the American Indian
4th Street and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC

“Every step I take forward is
on a path paved by strong
Indian women before me,”

CHEROKEE CHIEF WILMA MANKILLER

once pointed out while explaining the importance of having women in active leadership roles to “restore balance and wholeness to our communities.” Indigenous women had long held social, spiritual, economic, and political power in their societies. Overcoming the great historical ruptures of colonialism, indigenous women are reconnecting with leadership traditions and empowering themselves to help create a stronger, healthier, and more prosperous world for all. Join us at this special symposium for a historical perspective on the complex identities of Native women and lively, insightful discussion by elected tribal



leaders, activists, artists, and business leaders about the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities confronting women today.

Live webcast at: <http://nmai.si.edu/multimedia/webcasts>

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Program

9:00 AM • OPENING SONG

Deborah Parker, tsicyaltsa (Tulalip), Former Vice Chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes

9:05 AM • INTRODUCTION

Brenda Toineeta Pipestem (Eastern Band of Cherokee), Chair, Board of Trustees, National Museum of the American Indian

9:15 AM • NAYNAABEAK'S FISHING NET: ILLUMINATING THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN

Brenda Child (Red Lake Ojibwe), University of Minnesota

9:50 AM • FINDING BALANCE

The Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (We Wai Kai Nation), Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

10:20 AM • MORNING BREAK

10:30 AM • A CONVERSATION WITH PLAYWRIGHT, MUSICIAN, POET, AND ARTIST JOY HARJO

Joy Harjo (Muscogee Creek)

Mary Kathryn Nagle (Cherokee), Attorney and playwright

11:00 AM • TRAIL BLAZERS AND SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTORS

The Cheyenne Nation received this instruction a long time ago: The Nation shall be strong so long as the hearts of the women are not on the ground. Focusing

on the ways Native women have made Native nations strong, the panel will discuss the trails blazed and movements led by the participants and others—and what made these accomplishments important for Native nations, women, and rights.

Moderated by Suzan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee), President, The Morning Star Institute

Patsy Phillips (Cherokee), Director, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts

Lois J. Risling (Hupa/Yurok/Karuk), Educator and Medicine Woman

Mary Hudetz (Crow), Associated Press journalist

12:30 PM • LUNCH BREAK

1:30 PM • THE EMERGENCE OF WOMEN AS LEADERS IN TRIBAL GOVERNANCE

Native women are increasingly moving into leadership positions. This panel focuses on their experiences—and lessons learned for all women.

Moderated by Jodi Gillette (Standing Rock Sioux), Policy Advisor, Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP

Kim Baird, Owner, Kim Baird Strategic Consulting; former Chief, Tsawwassen First Nation

Karen Diver, Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council; former Tribal Chairwoman, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Lynn Valbuena, Tribal Chairwoman, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

3:00 PM • AFTERNOON BREAK

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3:10 PM • VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN

Deborah Parker, tsicyaltsa (Tulalip),
Former Vice Chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes

3:30 PM • REBELLION AT THE ROOTS: REFLECTIONS ON THE LAST TWENTY YEARS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S ORGANIZING IN MEXICO

Maylei Blackwell, University of California,
Los Angeles

4:00 PM • FORGING NEW GROUND AND GIVING BACK

Nearly half of Indian-owned businesses, which contribute billions to tribal, local, state, and national economies, are owned by Native American women—and that number is growing. This panel will focus on the innovative leadership of Native American women who are not only forging new ground in the private sector

but also giving back in powerful ways to impact the lives of their tribal nations, communities, and women.

*Moderated by Clara Pratte (Navajo),
Acting President and CEO, NOVA Corporation*

*Michelle Sparck (Qissunamiut), Co-founder,
ArXotica Inc.*

*Andra Rush (Mohawk), Founder, Rush Trucking
Corporation*

*Karlene Hunter (Oglala Sioux), CEO/Co-founder,
Native American Natural Foods*

5:30 PM • CLOSING REMARKS

Brenda Child

RECEPTION, POTOMAC ATRIUM



Speaker Biographies

KIM BAIRD (Tsawwassen First Nation) is the owner of Kim Baird Strategic Consulting and offers services in relation to First Nation policy, governance, and economic development issues. Baird was the elected Chief of the Tsawwassen First Nation for six terms, from 1999-2012. She had the honor of negotiating and implementing British Columbia's first urban treaty on April 3, 2009, and has since overseen numerous economic and institutional development projects for TFN. The recipient of a number of prestigious awards, Baird has been appointed to the Premier's Aboriginal Business Investment Council and the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women. She is a trustee for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.

MAYLEI BLACKWELL, an interdisciplinary scholar activist, oral historian, and author of *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, is an Associate Professor in the César E. Chávez Department of Chicana/o Studies and Women's Studies Department, and affiliated faculty in the American Indian Studies and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research is based on accompanying indigenous women's organizers in Mexico, the U.S., and in continental networks across Abya Yala. Her current research focuses on gender, indigeneity, and migration with Zapotecs and Mixtecs from Oaxaca as well as the increasingly Mayan diaspora from Guatemala in Los Angeles. She is currently completing a book entitled *Scales of Resistance: Indigenous Women and the Practice of Autonomy*.

BRENDA J. CHILD (Red Lake Ojibwe) is a Professor of American Studies and former Chair of the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota. She is a trustee for the Smithsonian's

National Museum of the American Indian. Her first book, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* won the North American Indian Prose Award. She is also author of *Holding Our World Together: Ojibwe Women and the Survival of Community*; *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, and *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation*. Child was a consultant to the exhibit, "Remembering Our Indian School Days" at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, and co-author of the book that accompanied the exhibit, *Away From Home*.

KAREN DIVER (Chippewa) is Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council. In addition to serving as Chairwoman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa for more than eight years, Diver also served as Vice President of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe; a member of the Board of Directors for the Corporation for Supportive Housing; a two-term Chair of the Boards of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota; and a Presidential appointee to the State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resiliency. Diver has a bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and a Master in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

JODI A. GILLETTE (Standing Rock Sioux) is currently a Policy Advisor for Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP, after serving in the Administration of President Barack Obama from 2009-2015. During her tenure under the Administration, she served as the Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs in the White House Domestic Policy Council, as the Deputy Assistant Secretary to the Assistant-Secretary Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior, and as the Associate Director of

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Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House. Gillette was influential in advising President Obama on policy to improve the lives of Native Americans and strengthen the nation-to-nation relationship between the United States and Indian Tribes, and advancing the protection of Native women and children against violence.

JOY HARJO (Muscogee Creek) is the author of eight books of poetry, including *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings*, *How We Became Human: New and Selected Poems*, and *She Had Some Horses*. Harjo's memoir *Crazy Brave* won several awards, including the PEN USA Literary Award for Creative Non-Fiction and the American Book Award. She is the recipient of the 2015 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets; a Guggenheim Fellowship; the William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America; and the United States Artist Fellowship. A renowned musician, Harjo performs with her saxophone nationally and internationally, solo and with her band, the Arrow Dynamics. She is Professor of English and American Indian Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

SUZAN SHOWN HARJO (Cheyenne & Hodulgee Muscogee) is a poet, writer, lecturer, curator, and policy advocate who has helped Native Peoples protect sacred places and recover more than one million acres of land. She has developed key laws in five decades to promote and protect Native nations, sovereignty, children, arts, cultures, lands, languages, religious freedom, repatriation, sacred places, and water. President of The Morning Star Institute and an award-winning Columnist for *Indian Country Today Media Network*, she is Guest Curator and Editor for the National Museum of the American Indian's exhibition (NMAI Museum on the Mall, 2014-2018) and book, both titled, *Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations*. In 2014, Harjo was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian honor.

MARY HUDETZ, an Associated Press (AP) journalist, is a member of the Crow Tribe and an immediate past president of the Native American Journalists Association. She is also the former editor of *Native Peoples Magazine*, where she elevated the publication's focus on Native American youth, the environment, and tribal language preservation, while continuing its culture and arts coverage. Hudetz has produced breaking news and feature stories for the AP on unemployment, homelessness, and politics from Denver, Portland, and now Albuquerque, where she focuses on law enforcement and criminal justice reform. She also has written for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Washington Post*, and *Al Jazeera America*.

KARLENE HUNTER is CEO and co-founder of Native American Natural Foods. A member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, Hunter has more than 25 years of experience working on educational and economic development on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, where Native American Natural Foods is based. The Kyle, SD, company, founded with her longtime business partner Mark Tilsen, is the second business Hunter has started on the reservation. In 1996, Hunter and Tilsen created Lakota Express, a direct marketing and customer care management company. Hunter has received numerous awards, including the 2012 Vision Leadership Award from the Specialty Food Association and the Natural Foods Industry's prestigious 2010 Cliff Adler "Heart in Business" Award.

MARY KATHRYN NAGLE, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, studied theater at Georgetown University, and went on to Tulane Law School, where she graduated summa cum laude. She has worked as an associate at a law firm in New York for the past four years, working on litigation relating to structured finance, bankruptcy, qui tam, and federal Indian law. She is currently a partner at Pipestem Law Firm P.C. Nagle is a 2013 alumna of the Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group. She is the author of *Manhatta*, *Miss Lead*, *Fairly Traceable*, *In My Father's Eyes*, *Sliver*

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of a Full Moon, Diamonds ... Are a Boy's Best Friend, and *My Father's Bones* (a play she co-wrote with Suzan Shown Harjo).

DEBORAH PARKER, tsicyaltsa (Tulalip) was elected to the Tulalip Tribes Board of Directors in 2012 and served as Vice-Chairwoman until 2015. She brings to Tulalip leadership nearly two decades of experience as a policy analyst, program developer, communications specialist, and committed cultural advocate and volunteer in the tribal and surrounding communities. She served as a Legislative Policy Analyst in the Office of Governmental Affairs from 2005-12 for the Tulalip Tribes. Parker helped the passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 2013. She is a trustee for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.

PATSY PHILLIPS is the Director of the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA) based in Santa Fe, New Mexico (2008 to present). Before joining MoCNA, Phillips worked at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (2000 to 2008) and Atlatl, Inc., a national service organization for Native Arts (1996 to 2000). Phillips holds an MA in Writing from Johns Hopkins University, a Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies from Harvard University, and a BA in Anthropology from Southern Methodist University. She is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

BRENDA TOINEETA PIPESTEM (Symposium Chair) is a citizen of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. She serves on the Supreme Courts of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Pipestem previously worked for the White House Commission on Race under President Bill Clinton, and with the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and the Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Prior to attending law school, she worked for the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, and for ORBIS Associates, an Indian education consulting firm in Washington, DC, working with Tribal and Public

Schools' Indian Education Programs. Pipestem is Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. She is an alumna of Duke University and Columbia Law School.

CLARA PRATTE, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from Lupton, Arizona, serves as Acting President and CEO of NOVA Corporation. At NOVA, she leads the executive team and manages the day-to-day operations of the Navajo Nation-owned, award-winning IT services firm. Prior to joining NOVA, Pratte led the Navajo Nation's advocacy efforts for all federal policy matters, managing a team of advocates at the Navajo Nation Washington Office. She also served the Obama administration as the National Director of the Office of Native American Affairs of the U.S. Small Business Administration. She was formerly at the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration with the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

LOIS JANE RISLING is an enrolled member of the Hoopa Valley Tribe, affiliated with the Karuk Tribe and the Yurok Tribe. Risling resides on the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation in Hoopa, California. She is married to Steve J. Baldy, a Hoopa Tribal member and has four children. Currently, Risling works for the Hoopa Valley Tribe in the Hoopa Land Management-Tribal Realty Department. She has taught courses in education, Native American history and studies, social science, American history, and grantsmanship at various institutions of higher education.

ANDRA RUSH is founder, chairwoman, and chief executive officer of Rush Group LLC, a Michigan-based automotive manufacturing, logistics, supply chain management, and freight transportation company, which operates Rush Trucking Corporation, Dakkota Integrated Systems, and Detroit Manufacturing Systems. Rush launched her first company in 1984 with a \$5,000 loan from her parents and her credit cards to buy a van and a pair of pickup trucks. Today, her companies employ nearly 4,000 team members,

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creating sustainable jobs in underserved communities. She was recognized by President Barack Obama during his 2014 State of the Union address for innovative job creation and manufacturing ingenuity. That same year, she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

MICHELLE (MACUAR) SPARCK, along with her triplet sisters Cika and Amy Sparck, is the owner of ArXotica, a botanical skin care and toiletries company. A member of the Qissunamiut Tribe of Chevak, Alaska, she and her sisters were inspired by the natural resources of their region and its people and culture. Sparck has had a seasoned career in public service, working with both government and non-governmental organizations that benefit Alaska Native Tribes. She has also co-authored a chapter in *Northern Lights Against POPs: Combating Toxic Threats in the Arctic*. Sparck handles the bulk of ArXotica's day-to-day operations including research, networking, social media, and sales. She utilizes traditional gathering knowledge in wild harvesting in the tundra.

LYNN VALBUENA is Chairwoman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in Southern California. She has held numerous elected positions within the tribal government, including past terms as Chairwoman, Vice Chairwoman, and member of the Business Committee, which manages daily governmental operations on behalf of the General Council. She believes in community outreach, involvement with local organizations, and creating awareness of tribal traditions. In addition to her tribal government duties, Lynn is the chairwoman of the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations, a coalition of tribes in California, and was an elected officer for the National Indian Gaming Association. She is a trustee for the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and the Los Angeles-based Autry National Center. In 2015, Valbuena was inducted into the American Gaming Association's Gaming Hall of Fame.

JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD began her legal career in 2000, when she worked as a provincial crown prosecutor in Vancouver. In 2003, she became an advisor at the British Columbia Treaty Commission, a body established to oversee treaty negotiations between First Nations and the Crown. In 2009, Wilson-Raybould was elected as the Regional Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations where she devoted herself to the advancement of First Nations governance, fair access to land and resources, and to improved education and health care services. On October 19, 2015, she was elected as the federal Member of Parliament for the riding of Vancouver Granville. On November 4, 2015, she was sworn in as the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. She is a descendant of the Musgamagw Tsawataineuk and Laich-Kwil-Tach peoples and a member of the We Wai Kai Nation.

Images

Shan Goshorn (Cherokee), *Hearts of Our Women*, 2015. Center basket approx. 8" X 8" X 26"; 10 smaller baskets approx. 4" X 4" X 4" each. Arches watercolor paper splints printed with archival inks, acrylic paint, copper foil. © Shan Goshorn Studio

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*A Nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are on the ground.
Then it is finished, no matter how brave its warriors or how strong its weapons.*

"When I was doing research among historical photographs of the National Museum of the American Indian and the Smithsonian National Anthropological Archives, I was struck with the realization that most of the studio portraits featured Indian men, not women. And most of the women who were photographed were identified as if they were the chattel of men, i.e., 'Squaw of Spotted Tail' or 'Little Soldier's Squaw.' The viewer should understand that the term 'squaw' is not a favorable one but rather the Algonquin word for vagina—indicating the white newcomers' perception of the worth of Indian women. I felt very fiercely that these beautiful, strong women, who were representative of a variety of indigenous nations, deserved recognition and honor beyond these labels. I wanted to demonstrate how they personify the passion of our tribes, tending the home fires of tradition. I was profoundly inspired by the above Cheyenne saying. I also wanted to pay homage to extraordinary women of all tribes both past and present. I made an online request for the nominations of names of such women and received over 700 within 48 hours. Each name has been woven into the interior of the basket to honor those women who've impacted our lives in some way."

—Shan Goshorn (Cherokee)