Empowering Families, Building Communities

ANNUAL REPORT 2020
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORY, MISSION &amp; VALUES</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOARD &amp; STAFF</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM</td>
<td>8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINANCIALS</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everyone says that 2020 was a wild year, but when we say it, we mean it. There were incredible highs and devastating lows, beginning with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic that greatly impacted many in our community. Before we could even start to think about dealing with and recovering from the pandemic, the Twin Cities was devastated by the murder of George Floyd and the civil unrest that followed, as years of unsettled racial and social issues rose to the surface.

As an organization of and for Indigenous residents of the Twin Cities, we began to look critically at our role in solidarity with other communities of color. Tiwahe means family--how should we take care of our American Indian community, and our relatives from BIPOC communities who are also facing oppression? We continued to partner with three other networks of leaders encompassing the African American, Asian American, and Latinx communities through the LinkingLeaders Partnership, which increases our shared leadership development, network building, and solidarity practices to advance powerful systems change for racial justice and equity.

We harnessed another opportunity when Tiwahe Foundation received a $100,000 grant from the Minnesota Council on Foundations to address the impact of the COVID pandemic in our community: we were able to increase both the number and amount of grants to AIFEP applicants, and added in support for artists who were responding to and documenting this period of importance for our community. This grant allowed us to provide significant financial assistance to the Twin Cities American Indian community during a time of unprecedented need and social change.

Internally, we hurdled through several challenges and goals: Tiwahe Foundation is still searching for the best fit for our critical executive director role. Thankfully, our board of directors remains active, engaged, and committed to Tiwahe’s foundational values. We added three new board members in the Fall of 2020: Amber Annis, Patrick Rock, and Alyssa Terleski. Looking innovatively forward, the board adopted a new strategic plan to take us through the end of 2023 which includes goals for re-envisioning the Oyate Leadership Network and expansion of the AIFEP program.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that the endowment for the American Indian Family Empowerment Program continues to grow. In fact, by the end of 2020, the endowment had reached a combined value of nearly $7 million. Our careful governance of this endowment ensures it will continue to be a resource for the community.

As 2020 closes and a new year begins, I keep in mind our tiwahe (family). It takes all of us--donors, staff, board, supporters, families, entrepreneurs, innovators, artists, and friends--to heal and uplift a community. Thank you for walking this journey with us.

Nicole MartinRogers
(White Earth Nation descendant), board chair
OUR HISTORY

The Foundation evolved from origins as a culturally responsive grantmaking initiative of three Minnesota family foundations known as the American Indian Family Empowerment Program. Launched in 1993 initially by the Marbrook Foundation, American Indian Family Empowerment Program was the inspiration of Markell Brooks. It operated as a donor-designated fund with monies from a collaborative of the Marbrook, Westcliff and Grotto Foundations.

In 2009, American Indian Family Empowerment Program transformed into a new entity, the Tiwahe Foundation. While Tiwahe Foundation is an independent community foundation with its own board of directors, the original American Indian Family Empowerment Program remains part of the ongoing work.

OUR MISSION

The Tiwahe Foundation is a place for giving — and giving back — that benefits the well-being of American Indian people and communities in Minnesota. We are a community foundation of friends and supporters — Indian and non-Indian — who have resources, time, and talents to share. Together, we all work to unleash more philanthropy and generosity that are not only held within every person but also embodied collectively.

We think of this as the Circle of Giving — a continuous cycle of success grounded in Indigenous culture that recognizes that giving benefits both giver and receiver.
OUR CORE VALUES

Tiwahe (ti-wah-hay) means family in Dakota. It symbolizes how we are connected to all living things and one’s personal responsibility is to protect family, community, and mother nature. There is no asset more precious to Indigenous communities than the health, safety, and well-being of our children, youth, elders, leaders, and families. Tiwahe Foundation is located on Dakota and Ojibwe homelands, and we honor Dakota and Ojibwe cultural values. These values help guide our directives and commitment to our relatives -- all Indigenous peoples who live in the Twin Cities and Minnesota:

- **Gwayakwaadiziwin** (Honesty) To achieve honesty within yourself is to recognize who and what you are.
- **Wóčhekįya** (Prayer)
- **Wóčhekiy​ja** (Humility)
- **Waúnšila / Zaagi'idiwin** (Love/Compassion)
- **Waónšila / Manaadendamowin** (Respect)
- **Wičákha / Debwewin** (Truth)
- **Wičákha / Debwewin** (Truth)
- **Wóohitike / Aakwade'ewin** (Bravery/Courage)
- **Wacantognaka / Gizhewaadizi** (Generosity)

The Tiwahe Foundation embraces a mindset of abundance. As an Indigenous-led and staffed organization, we deeply understand the shocks, stresses, and healing our community members face. Through our programming we build capacity and provide resources to uplift the talent, resilience, and strength of our people who are today’s and tomorrow’s leaders.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020

Nicole MartinRogers (descendant White Earth Band of Ojibwe) | Chair
Mary Kunesh (descendant Standing Rock Sioux Tribe) | Vice-Chair
Wakinyan LaPointe (Rosebud Sioux Tribe) | Secretary
Nikki Pieratos (Bois Forte Band of Chippewa) | Treasurer
Reid Raymond (Rosebud Sioux Tribe)
Marisa Cummings (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa; UmoNhoN)
Alyssa Terleski (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa)
Amber Annis (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe)
Patrick Rock (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe)

MEET OUR STAFF

Nikki Pieratos, Transition Chair

Nikki Pieratos, Transition Chair, is a member of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa. She previously served on the Tiwahe Board of Directors for three years. She has over ten years of experience in community development finance, most recently providing financing and capacity building for large-scale Indigenous regenerative development projects. Nikki also is also a recognized thought leader, speaker, and writer on changing systems within philanthropy and impact investing to align and support racial justice, social justice, economic justice, and climate justice. She holds a Master’s degree in Public Policy from the University of Chicago.
Tony Drews, Program Manager

Tony Drews has worked in the Native American community his whole professional career. As Tiwahe’s Program Manager he leads both the American Indian Family Empowerment Fund, and the Oyate Leadership Network. Tony comes to Tiwahe as a recent grant recipient. Tony used his grant to develop board and hand games in traditional Anishinaabe language to foster cultural knowledge for youth and adults.

Tony has spent the last 5 years working with Anoka-Hennepin Schools as the Indian Education Advisor. In addition, Tony also worked as the Residential Director of two Native American Youth Homeless shelters, and as Vice President of Operations for a Native American owned elder care organization. Tony attended the University of Minnesota and studied Sociology and American Indian Studies. He is from the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and has studied the Anishinaabe language for over 15 years.

Libby Knapp, Program Associate

Libby Knapp has an extensive background in communications, government relations, event planning and coordination, and sales. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communication and American history from Loyola University, New Orleans. She has worked in many settings, including as staff for a member of the United States Congress, and in government relations for a firm in Minneapolis. Libby has a passion for teamwork and supporting others through her high level of engagement in the community.
The American Indian Family Empowerment Program is a grant-making project of the Tiwahe Foundation, which awards grants to individuals working to be of service to their community, connected to their culture, and to have their potential realized.

Program Overview
Throughout its history, the American Indian Family Empowerment Program has invested in human capital — in the skills, resources, and cultural strengths that American Indian families and individuals possess that allow them to contribute to the cultural and social wellbeing of their community.

2020 Grant Recipients
Jessica Gokey, Incorporating technology in Ojibwe beadwork | Keeli Siyka, Traditional regalia expenses | Sheila Zipher, Travel expenses to Gathering of Nations Pow Wow | Susan Crow, Start up funds for business creating traditional garments and regalia | Samsche Sampson, Creation of visual arts for Pow Wows and art festivals | Carrie Phillips, College education expenses - Licensed addiction counselor | Andrea Reese, College education expenses | Ronald WhiteRabbit, College education expenses | Jasmine Funmaker, Yoga for healing past and current trauma in the Native community | George McCauley, Omaha language preservation project | Roy Taylor, Purchase of radio equipment for community radio broadcast | Kira Vanderlan, Start up funds for home organization and design business | Lauren Pankow, Purchase of vehicle to help with educational needs | Lisa Skjefte, College education expenses - Masters in Public Health | Michael Loso, College education expenses | Peyton Counts, College education expenses - Doctorate in Clinical Psychology | Joanna Boyer, Purchase of computer and printer for continuation of education | Apryl Joe, Research on trauma and healing focused on non-Native and Indigenous approaches | Marcie Rendon, Project: Decolonize our Hearts | Isabelle LaBlanc, Funds to author poetry | Will Robinson, Funds to write and sing music | Tom LaBlanc, Funds to author poetry | Robert Desjarlait, Funds to create artwork through painting | Pearl Walker Swaney, Funds to author poetry | Mary Lyons, Communication with elders in remote communities on current events | Callie Stubbins, Provide traditional healing from trauma for Native Community | Nancy Swanson, Shkaab to elder, learning ceremonial healing and language | Lonna Hunter, Learning Dakota quill work | Oscar Curtis, Rent assistance for college | Darren Thompson, Release one film and a showcase of photography in the community | Deanna StandingCloud, Create an Indigenous Comic book | Annastacia Cardon, Expansion of beekeeping and sweetgrass business | Elizabeth Ruiz, Education expenses - Certified Dental Assistant | Tara Perron, Dakota and Ojibwe language education project | Julie Hutchenson Downwind, Sewing lessons for star quilts | Alesha Goodwin-Gutierrez, Cultural preservation through health and wellness | Sigwan Rendon, Learning language, culture, plants, and medicine from Anishinaabe women | Sage Davis, College education expenses - PhD Design | Amanda Dionne, Home ownership | Amber Brunelle, Providing mental health services to others during the pandemic | Brienna Lee, Computer and camera equipment to fund career as an artist | Crystal Pelchat, Licensure and insurance for a small business | George Gogglieye III, Start up funds for a Native owned clothing business | Iris Roane, Start up funding for artwork business | Jennie Kappenman, Funding for website for self owned business | John Annette, Start up funding for handyman repair business | Makwa Bellanger-Rook, Funds to purchase car to travel to cultural events | Meegwin Desjarlait, Funding to offset hardship due to COVID Pandemic | Melissa Davis, Funding for a computer, tutoring and childcare expenses | Preston Dionne, Funding for childcare | Rafael Gonzalez, Funding for music business due to COVID pandemic hardship | Rueben Stately, Funding to support music career impacted by COVID Pandemic hardship | Weyakapapawe Cavanaugh, Funding to purchase vehicle for work | Carmelita Sharpback, College education expenses - Master of Arts in Holistic Health Studies | Rosy Simas Guthrie, College education expenses - Bachelor of Fine Arts
JOHN HUNTER,
FOUNDER OF TWIN CITIES NATIVE LACROSSE

On a crisp spring Saturday at the Lake Nokomis Community Center Fields, you can see entire families gathering for lacrosse. As young and old run up and down the field, howls, laughter and strategy ensue as handmade sticks are flung to catch the small handmade ball in one of the oldest games played among Indigenous people in North America.

The gathering is a dream come true for John Hunter, founder of Twin Cities Native Lacrosse, who started the first lacrosse organization for Indigenous people in the Minneapolis area in 2014.

“We wanted to create good opportunities for Native families to first play traditional game, which is part of their own family histories and traditional history,” says Hunter, who played lacrosse in high school and had the interest reignited after his then 11-year-old daughter wanted to play. “It’s not just about the game. It’s about making sticks and certain lessons and teachings about the game.”
**TIWAHE FOUNDATION IN 2020 BY THE NUMBERS**

**Grantmaking in 2020** - $196,962 to 116 Native individuals in the Twin Cities Metro area.

- **$25,200** in Education Grants
- **$37,940** in Economic Independence Grants
- **$24,200** in Cultural Grants
- **$7,200** in Health & Wellness Grants
- **$99,856** in COVID-19 Grants*

*These grants were distributed within the Twin Cities along with Greater MN

**INCREASED GRANTMAKING TO OUR NATIVE COMMUNITY**

**GROWTH IN TOTAL ASSETS**
## TIWAHE FINANCIALS - 2020

**Grants out the door** $196,962  
**Incoming Revenue from Foundations** $684,808  
**Incoming Revenue from Individual Donors** $17,722  
**Total Assets** $8,002,145

## STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

### ASSETS:

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<tr>
<th>Current Assets:</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$387,603</td>
<td>$418,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates</td>
<td>401,082</td>
<td>527,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledges &amp; grants receivable, net</td>
<td>283,214</td>
<td>211,691</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid expense</td>
<td>4,158</td>
<td>6,333</td>
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<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,076,057</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,163,834</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**Total current assets** $1,076,057  
**Other assets:**

| Investments              | $6,790,271        | $5,529,226        |
| Pledges & grants receivable, net of current portion | 134,034       | 80,712           |
| Deposit                  | 1,783             | 6,926,088         |
| **Total assets**         | **$8,002,145**    | **$6,773,772**    |

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current Liabilities:</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of long-term debt</td>
<td>$387,603</td>
<td>$418,271</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>401,082</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued Expenses</td>
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<td>211,691</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,076,057</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,163,834</strong></td>
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<td>Non-current liabilities, long-term debt</td>
<td>6,890</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$54,446</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,433</strong></td>
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**Net assets without donor restrictions:**

| Undesignated             | $561,539          | $632,591          |
| Designated by the board for endowment | 12,933,824     | 1,762,779        |
| **Total**                | **$3,495,824**    | **$2,395,370**    |

**Net assets with donor restrictions:**

| With donor restrictions  | $4,452,336        | $632,591          |
| **Total Net Assets**     | **7,947,699**     | **6,763,339**     |
| **Total liabilities and net assets** | **$8,002,145** | **$6,773,772** |
SUSIE BROWN,
PRESIDENT, MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS

As COVID was barreling down the Midwest, the Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF) wanted to be proactive in protecting communities. In March of 2020, MCF and the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation convened to discuss the impact of a potential COVID-19 outbreak in Minnesota. Together, they created the Minnesota Disaster Recovery Fund, which ultimately raised over $11 million to support communities through the pandemic. **We are excited to report that $100,000 of these dollars were granted to the Tiwahe Foundation.**

Susie Brown, President of MCF, states that it was critical for the fund to “target communities of color and communities particularly hard-hit by COVID-19, and after the murder of George Floyd, communities that were hard-hit by the ensuing racial reckoning crisis.” Ms. Brown adds that Tiwahe Foundation is unique in its role: “We don’t have a lot of Native-led, Native-focused funders in Minnesota. It’s a special and important niche: a philanthropy foundation by and for the Native community, which is not common.”

Specifically, the unique community-based grantmaking of Tiwahe Foundation made it an ideal partner for the Minnesota Disaster Recovery Fund. “We were looking for funding intermediaries—organizations that have the capacity to do grant-making to their own communities. The whole strategy was to give the money to intermediaries who know way more about their community needs than we do,” says Ms. Brown; “Tiwahe is in and of the community; an established grant maker. They were a really good fit—able to use their existing relationships and grantmaking processes and infrastructure to distribute this money to people who needed it.”