

Bios for Faculty

Joe Misty Lake Garcia was born and raised in Ohkay Owingeh, NM, and continues to serve his community in traditional, educational, tribal government, and economic development efforts. A graduate of the University of New Mexico and an electrical engineer by profession, Joe worked at the Los Alamos National Laboratory for 25 years. Additionally, Joe has been actively involved in NCAI since 1995. Joe served two, two-year terms as the 1st Vice President of NCAI prior to being elected President in November of 2005 and re-elected in 2007, thereby serving 2 terms as President. Joe also completed his 3rd term as Governor of Ohkay Owingeh 2005-2006. After his term as Governor, he was elected as Chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC), the organization which was formed in 1598 and serves the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico. He served as Chairman for 4 years (2007-2010). His most recent effort in 2012 for Ohkay Owingeh is the Self Governance Initiative whereby the tribe runs all of its BIA Programs under Self Determination. In 2009 he became Head Councilman by tradition and will serve a lifetime appointment in that capacity. He continues to be involved in Tribal efforts at the federal & state levels. He is a member of the Tribal Leaders Task Force served as Co-Chair for 3 years for FCC, a Co-Chair of the Tribal Technical Advisory Committee for SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), and Co-Chair of the Tribal Transportation Self Governance Program Neg-Reg Team.

Monica Rattling Hawk is a citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation, an aspiring Unci (grandmother) and resides on Quiver Hill, near the northeast corner of the Pine Ridge Reservation, where she happily toils in the soil, harvesting medicines. She enjoys the challenges of walking in two worlds: walking a journey of discovering traditional knowledge and eco-system relationships, from an Indigenous perspective, and sharing in a western world. She joined the WWF-Northern Great Plains program in 2017 to lead outreach efforts on Pine Ridge regarding the Badlands National Park South Unit (Strong Hold), land owned by the tribe and co-managed by the National Park Service. Monica is a member of the Buffalo Nations Grasslands Alliance that works to ensure the sustainability of tribal wildlife conservation, protection of natural and sacred resources and to ensure there are grasslands for generations by creating sustainable financing, engaging local communities and leadership, and connecting conservation with life ways. Monica is also an advocate of the Buffalo Treaty and has brought the Oglala Sioux Tribe to be a signatory and continues as a working group member tackling issues impacting tribes and the buffalo relative. Monica works with her community bringing forth education on “Food as a medicine” to the community through education in planting, harvesting and preserving foods. She participates in public service as the President of the Crazy Horse School Board and is a founding member of a Women’s Society that focusses on ethics and traditional thoughts and philosophy.

Brett Lee Shelton is Oceti Sakowin Oyate, enrolled in the Oglala Sioux Tribe. As a Senior Staff Attorney with the Native American Rights Fund, Brett focuses on Indigenous Peacemaking, Boarding School Healing and Cultural protection and revitalization. He also occasionally serves as an Appellate Justice for various Tribal Courts. He is Project Leader of NARF's Sacred Places Protection Project in partnership with The Morning Star Institute. Previously in private practice, he managed a firm with seven attorneys; worked for a non-profit domestic violence advocacy organization on his home Reservation; and was a policy analyst for the National Indian Health Board. He received his law degree from Stanford University Law School and a Master of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Kansas. Honored by the Foundation of the State Bar of California with an Exceptional Merit Award for Public Service Leadership, he also earned the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation Award and Scholarship and the John Milton Oskison Award for best Native American graduate student paper, and was named Indian Graduate Student of the Year. He is licensed to practice law in various courts including California, Colorado, South Dakota, the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, as well as in multiple United States courts.

Lauren van Schilfgaarde (Cochiti Pueblo) is Assistant Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law and previously was a UCLA Law Research Fellow and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Tribal Legal Development Clinic Director at UCLA Law. van Schilfgaarde supervised live-client projects concerning tribal governance and justice systems, ethics, cultural resource protection, voting, child welfare, and more. She received her undergraduate degree at Colorado College and her law degree from UCLA School of Law. van Schilfgaarde previously served as the Tribal Law Specialist at the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI) in West Hollywood, CA. van Schilfgaarde currently serves as Vice-Chair for the Native American Concerns Committee of the American Bar Association, as a Commissioner for the Lawyers Network Commission of the Center for Reproductive Rights, and as a Board Member of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Child Well-being Program and the Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation.

Special Guest Speaker:

Suzan Shown Harjo is a Cheyenne citizen of the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes, born in El Reno, Oklahoma, on Cheyenne and Arapaho Nations and U.S. Treaty territory; as well as culturally Hodulgee Muscogee and Nuyakv, also raised on allotted farmland on the Muscogee Nation-U.S. Treaty Reservation. Awarded a 2014 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest national civilian honor, she is a writer, curator and policy advocate, who has developed landmark laws and led myriad campaigns protecting Native and Indigenous Peoples' rights and cultural, historic and sacred places, and recovered over one million acres of land. A leader of campaigns to end racial and gender stereotyping, mascotting, tokenizing and appropriating in advertising, sports and popular culture, she may be best known for her tireless work to eliminate the vile R*dsk*ns name and logo of the Washington football team and for Indigenizing official place names, including Piestewa Peak and Black Elk Peak. President of The Morning Star Institute since its inception in 1984, she's focused on sacred places reclamation, heritage languages revitalization, repatriation policy and historical and policy research and other assistance to traditional leaders and practitioners on cultural matters. She founded the National Sacred Places Prayer Day (2003-

present) and directed other Morning Star initiatives: The 1992 Alliance (1990-1993), the NMAI Treaties Project (2003-2017) and Just Good Sports (1984-present), and co-chaired the historic gathering at Taos Pueblo of 100 wisdomkeepers, writers and artists, “Our Visions: The Next 500 Years (1992).” An award-winning Columnist for Indian Country Today in all its incarnations over the decades, her columns, articles, policy writings and poetry are widely published and anthologized. She is Editor of the book (2014) that accompanies the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of the American Indian’s exhibition (2014-2027), for which she was Guest Curator, both titled, “Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations.” A Carter Administration political appointee, she was Principal Author of the 1979 President’s Report to Congress on American Indian Religious Freedom. The Senior Policy Advisor to the NARF/Morning Star Sacred Places Protection Project, she is the first Native woman elected to both of the two oldest learned societies in the U.S.—the American Philosophical Society (1743) in 2022 and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1780) in 2020—and was named in 2022 to Forbes 50 Over 50: Impact and to the National Native American Hall of Fame: Activism.