

# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

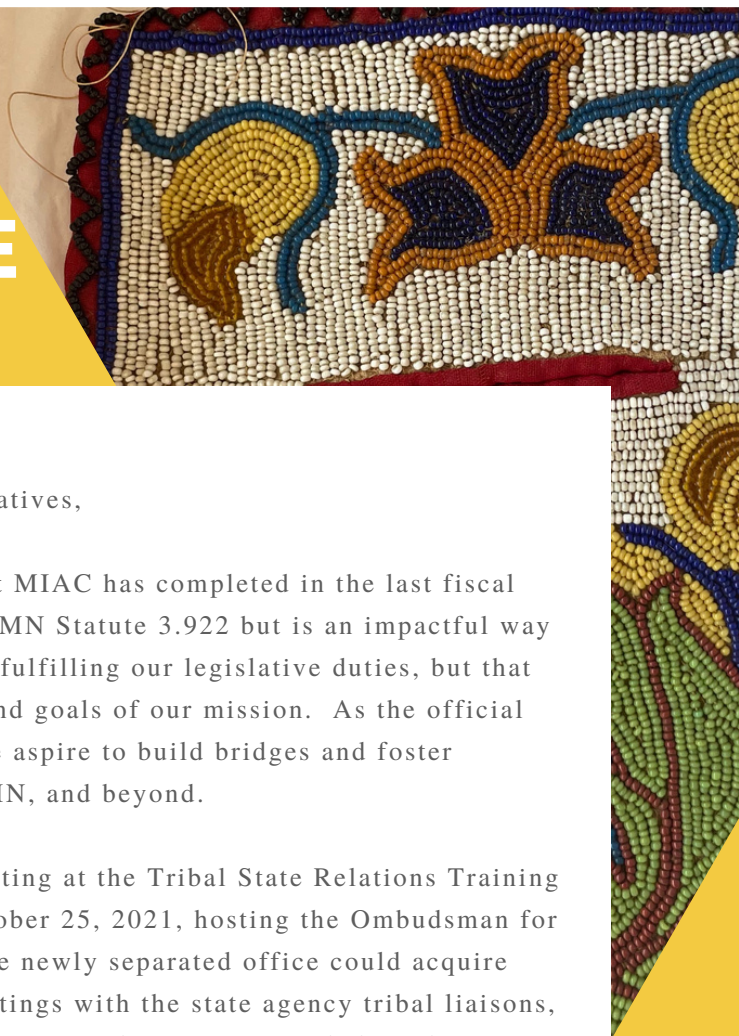
2021 -2022



**m** MINNESOTA  
INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

*a year's overview*

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Aaniin Indinawemaaganag, Han Mitakuyape, Dear Relatives,

In this report you will find a snapshot of the work that MIAC has completed in the last fiscal year. The report not only fulfills the requirements of MN Statute 3.922 but is an impactful way to gauge the work we do to ensure that we are not only fulfilling our legislative duties, but that we are intentional and focused on meeting the spirit and goals of our mission. As the official liaison agency between state and tribal government we aspire to build bridges and foster relationships between the tribal nations, the state of MN, and beyond.

We have done so in a myriad of ways including presenting at the Tribal State Relations Training for the House of Representatives in Bois Forte on October 25, 2021, hosting the Ombudsman for American Indian families in the MIAC offices until the newly separated office could acquire their own permanent space, facilitating bi-weekly meetings with the state agency tribal liaisons, providing guidance and support for the Toward Recognition and University Tribal Healing (TRUTH) project <https://sites.google.com/view/truthproject/home?pli=1>, and sitting on the advisory panel to the Attorney General's office on the distribution and allocation of the Opioid Settlement Funds.

In addition to developing state and tribal relationships, MIAC has been working on growing relationships with local governments. For the third year, MIAC has participated in the Human Service Leadership Forum, an initiative brought forward in partnership with the Tribal Nations, Association of Minnesota Counties, Minnesota Department of Human Services and MIAC. This was a year of many firsts, including the first Tribal County Relations Training held in Hinckley on February 3rd. A true trailblazer, MIAC also hosted the first statewide Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium, worked to ensure codification of government-to-government consultation and attended the ceremonial signing of the 2021 MN Statute 10.65 historic bill, aided in the appointment of Tadd Johnson Esq., first Native American appointed to the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents, and assisted in the preparation of Department of Interior Secretary Haaland's listening session with tribal governments on May 7, 2022. None of this we did alone, as it is crucial to our work and mission to build coalition through partnership. We are immensely grateful to our partners.



Engaging with community is a critical component to building partnerships. We did so in a variety of ways including attending and presenting at community events such as the Black Indigenous and Women of Color Leadership panel. MIAC stays engaged by participating in various groups and committees including the Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council, Minnesota Historical Society's American Indian Council, monthly Tribal Historic Preservation Officer meetings, Native Nations Rebuilders, Urban Indian Advisory Board, Government to Government Climate Change Forum, Tribal State Relations Steering Team, and the Governor's External Advisors work group to name a few. In this way we are sure to stay informed on issues and problems facing tribal nations and people and best advocate for change or solutions. We also spend a good amount of time answering questions from within the state enterprise as well as external inquiries regarding tribal nations and people.

A reoccurring issue that we have become all too familiar with over the past several years is the lack of resources and funding provided MIAC to not only carry out our legislative responsibilities, but to also administer two immense statewide departments, The Dakota and Ojibwe Language Grants program and our Cultural Resource program. We have been without a Legislative and Policy Director since 2016 and even then, the role held dual title and responsibility with oversight of the language grants program included. Even so, MIAC serves as an important resource to both state and tribal governments while holding fast our vision to strive for social, economic, and political justice for all American Indian people living in Minnesota while embracing our traditional, cultural, and spiritual values. We are truly honored to be serving all Minnesotans and look forward to continued engagement and partnership.

Miigwech, Pidamaya, Thank you.

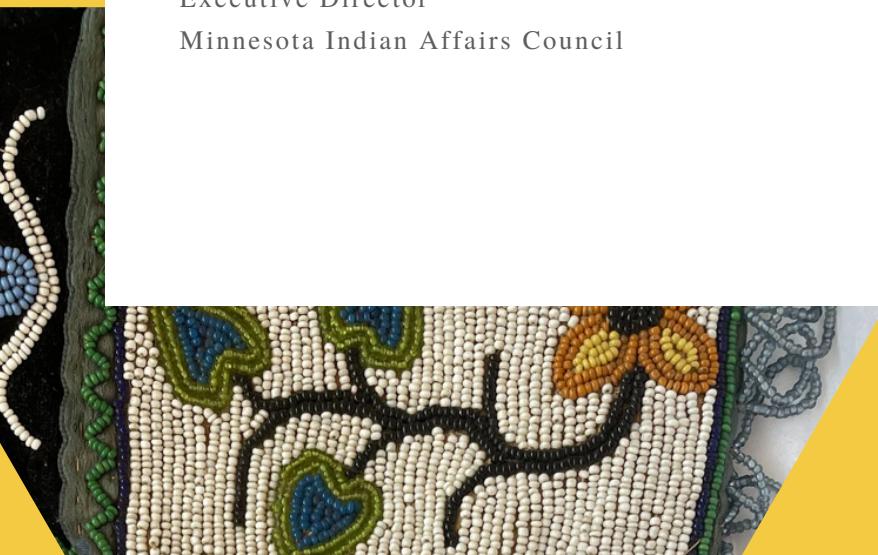
*Shannon Geshick.*

MTAG

(Bois Forte Band of Chippewa)

Executive Director

Minnesota Indian Affairs Council



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## MISSION

To protect the sovereignty of the 11 Minnesota Tribal Nations and to ensure the well-being of American Indian Citizens throughout the state of Minnesota.

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) is the official liaison between Tribal Nations in Minnesota and the state of Minnesota. MIAC is mandated to make recommendations on legislation that is important to Tribal governments and American Indian people and improve services between the state and American Indian communities.

Established in 1963 (under the name Indian Affairs Commission), the Indian Affairs Council is the oldest council of its kind in the nation and serves as a liaison between the Indian tribes and the state of Minnesota.

MIAC provides a forum for and advises state government on issues of concern to American Indian Tribes and communities, develops and advocates for legislation, and administers cultural resource preservation programs and the Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization Grant program.



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# Staff & Board Members



American Indian Day on the Hill, 2022. President Robert Larsen, Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, MIAC Executive Director Shannon Geshick



Tribal State Relations Training 2022. MIAC Executive Director Shannon Geshick



American Indian Day on the Hill, 2022. Urban Indian Advisory Board Members Tera Nelson and Richard Latterner.

## MIAC Executive Board Members

Board Chair - Robert L. Larsen, President Cansa'yapi

Board Vice-Chair - Robert "Bobby" Deschampe, Chairman Gichi-Onigaming

Board Member - Cathy Chavers, Chairwoman Zagaakwaandagowininiwag

Board Member - Kevin R. Dupuis, Sr., Chairman, Nah-gah-chi-wa-nong

Board Member - Johnny Johnson President, Tinta Winta

Board Member -Faron Jackson Sr., Chairman, Gaa-zagaskwaabiganikaag

Board Member - Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive, Misi-zaaga'iganiing

Board Member - Samuel R. Strong, Secretary, Miskwaagamiiwi-Zaagaiganing

Board Member - Rebecca Crooks-Stratton, Secretary/Treasurer, Mdewakanton

Board Member - Michael Fairbanks, Chairman, Gaa-waabaabiganikaag

## MIAC Staff

Executive Director - Shannon Geshick

Executive Assistant - Kaytlyn Lundstrom

Grants and Contracts Manager - Keegan Flaharty

Cultural Resources Specialist, Senior - Melissa Cerda

Cultural Resource Field Investigator - Dylan Goetsch

## Urban Indian Advisory Board Members

Bemidji Representative - Terra Nelson

Duluth Representative - Jason Loons

Minneapolis Representative - Marisa Miakonda Cummings

St. Paul Representative - Richard Latterner

St. Paul Representative - John Day

## STRATEGIES

To accomplish its mission, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council uses the following strategies

- Convene three-day executive and public board meetings quarterly which bring together elected tribal leaders from tribal nations that share geography with the State of Minnesota (MIAC Executive Board), state agency commissioners, state government elected and appointed officials, key agency program staff, and the public. Executive Board discussion and formal action through adoption of resolutions leads to increased collaboration and coordination with state agency leadership.
- Make policy recommendations to the governor, state legislature, and state agencies.
- Promote the revitalization and preservation of the Dakota and Ojibwe Languages through the Language Grants department supported by the Legacy Amendment.
- Coordinate with state agency Tribal liaisons to ensure effective program implementation and compliance with MN State Law Sec. 10.65 Government to Government Relationship with Tribal Governments and Tribal Consultation.
- Partner with state agencies and tribal nations to plan and facilitate the Minnesota Tribal State Relations Training.
- Regulate and oversee repatriation and respectful and culturally competent reburials of American Indian remains throughout the state. This requires collaboration with state agencies, federal, state, and local governments, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and elected tribal officials.

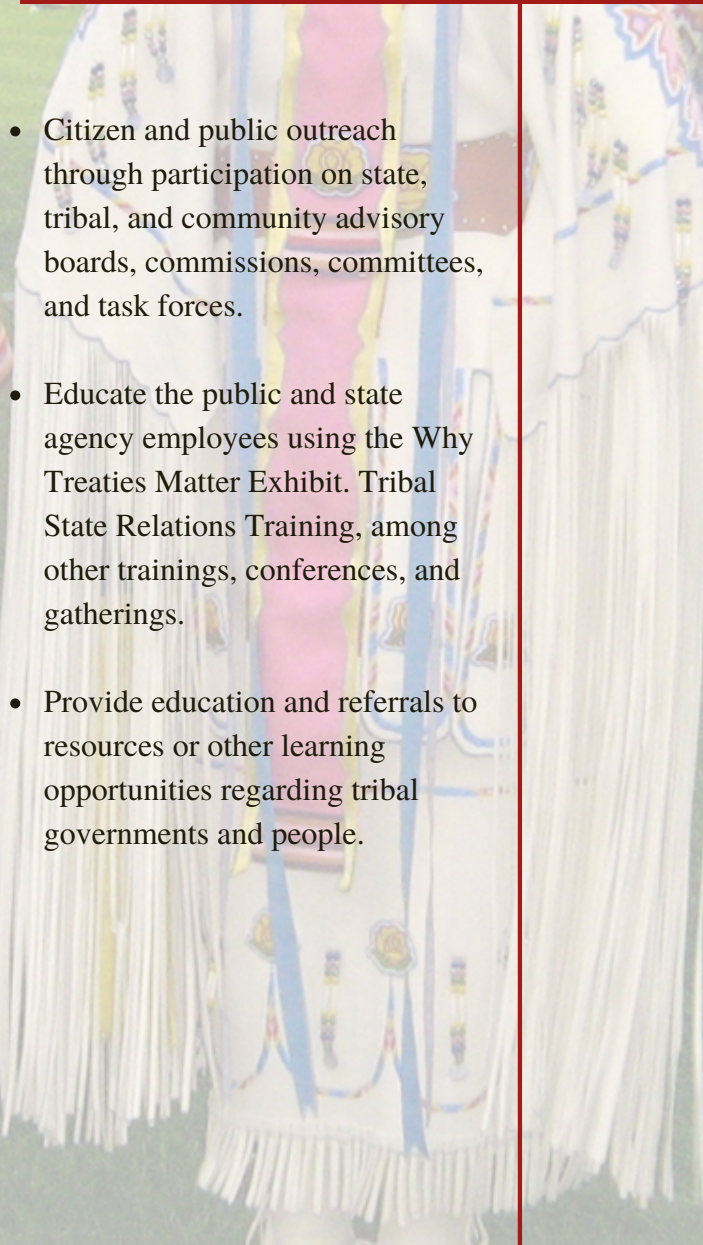


Secretary Crooks-Stratton, Senator Kunesh, Governor Walz, and Chairman Dupuis.



# Education, Community, Leadership



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- Citizen and public outreach through participation on state, tribal, and community advisory boards, commissions, committees, and task forces.
  - Educate the public and state agency employees using the Why Treaties Matter Exhibit. Tribal State Relations Training, among other trainings, conferences, and gatherings.
  - Provide education and referrals to resources or other learning opportunities regarding tribal governments and people.



## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2022



Governor's Tribal Summit, 2019.

This legislative session, MIAC collaborated with the Department of Administration and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to introduce language to the MN Statute 307.08 Private Cemeteries Act acknowledging the federal Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (Pub.L. 101-601; 25 U.S.C. 3001-3013; 104 Stat. 3048-3058) among other language changes to the state law. The bill did not move past being introduced and will be one of our legislative priorities next year.

Since 2017, MIAC has been in support of the Increase Teachers of Color Act\*. Representation matters, especially in the classroom. While there is an overall teacher shortage, the shortage of American Indian teachers and teachers of color is even greater. ICTCA aims to address this through “legislation that strengthens existing program for attracting, preparing, and retaining an increased percentage of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota. It promotes needed system change to help close opportunity and achievement gaps and increase TOCAIT”. \* While some of the provisions were passed, we will continue to support and advocate for the ITCA next legislative session.

MIAC elected not to pursue increased operational funding even with a state budget surplus as we worked internally to fill vacant positions and staff capacity. We anticipate requesting funding next legislative session for a Legislative and Policy Director.

\*Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota. (2020, Jan. 28). “Increase Teachers of Color Act of 2020.” [www.tocaimn.com](http://www.tocaimn.com)



# CULTURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT



## Background

During the country's civil rights era, Minnesota was one of the first states to pass state legislation affording equal treatment to American Indian burial grounds and cemeteries. The Cultural Resources Department has been a vital part of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council since the early 1980's. Through the repatriation and archaeological approval process delegated to MIAC they have repatriated over a thousand individuals over the last several decades.

MIAC Cultural Resources Department works under both State and Federal Statutes:

### The Field Archaeology Act MS 138.31-138.42

- State Statute
- Governs how archaeology is conducted in MN
- MIAC reviews and recommends action on construction or development plans on public lands or waters when archaeological sites are of American Indian cultural affiliation.

### The Private Cemeteries Act MS 307.08

- State Statute
- Directs how the State Archaeologist and MIAC address human burials, burial grounds, and cemeteries over 50 years old
- MIAC works collaboratively with OSA to in reviewing construction or development plans of known or suspected American Indian burial grounds and cemeteries.

### The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

- Federal Statute
- Passed in 1990
- MIAC complies with this statute because it receives federal funding.
- Regulations include provisions that provide a process for institutions including state or local government agencies that receive federal money to identify and repatriate American Indian human remains and associated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.



## Cultural Resources Department Fiscal Year Highlights



During this fiscal year MIAC Cultural Resources Department has worked with local governments, property owners, developers, museums, and other state agencies in fulfilling our legal responsibilities under state and federal statutes.



MIAC has reviewed over 500 MS 307.08 reviews, information requests, or other similar documents



MIAC worked with the University of Minnesota to further efforts for the NAGPRA repatriation of the ~~Minnes~~ to their ancestral tribes located in the Southwest U.S.



MIAC facilitated the NAGPRA repatriation of several ancestors to Tribal Nations in Minnesota.



MIAC held monthly virtual meetings with Minnesota's Tribal Cultural Resource staff or their Tribal Historic Preservation Officers to share information and address concerns within the field of cultural resources.



MIAC worked with MNDOT, the Office of the State Archaeologist, and the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in finishing the Mission Creek burial recovery and repatriation project.



MIAC continues to maintain the only Osteology Lab and Repository in the State of Minnesota with the capacity and expertise to fulfill duties assigned to them by state and federal statutes.



# DAKOTA AND OJIBWE LANGUAGE PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION GRANTS PROGRAM

## Background

The revival of Dakota and Ojibwe languages through immersion programs and other language acquisition strategies is a critical component of revitalizing and preserving the culture and traditions of the Dakota and Ojibwe peoples, as well as an impactful way to exercise and facilitate tribal sovereignty. It is particularly important for Dakota tribal nations because there are only a few Dakota first language speakers still living in Minnesota. This means the Dakota language is close to becoming an extinct language (DAKHÓTA IÁPI OKHÓDAKIČHIYE, N. D.). In 20201-2022 MIAC distributed and oversaw \$1.5 million in funding for language revitalization. This funding comes through the Arts & Heritage Fund appropriation of the Legacy Amendment, funded by Mn state sales tax.

## Language Symposium

### Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium

The language revitalization working group in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center hosted a successful Dakota & Ojibwe languages symposium last February. Over the two-day symposium there were over **110** attendees who participated in at least one of the sessions. Mr. Glenn Wassicuna and Dr. Anton Treuer were the keynote speakers. Lt. Governor Flanagan attended the symposium as well and shared her experience learning Ojibwe. The symposium as well was emceed by Ruben Kitto Stately and Deanna Standingcloud. There were several community submitted presentations that occurred throughout the two days. The working group was quite happy with how it turned out and would like to make this become an annual event.



## Language Preservation and Revitalization Funding

There are three funding streams: a competitive grant, a grant for language immersion schools, and a grant specifically for Tribal Nations. To apply for the grant, organizations or Tribes propose a project that has a long-term vision to achieve language proficiency and uses short-term steps to achieve the vision.

Grantees also develop an evaluation component so MIAC can learn what is successful and sustainable for Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization programs. These programs operate across the state and serve a diverse group of American Indian communities. MIAC receives funds for and coordinates the Dakota and Ojibwe language volunteer work group with representatives from Tribal Nations and urban centers who are invested in revitalizing Dakota and Ojibwe languages.

Organization	Fiscal Year 2022 Award
<b>Competitive</b>	
American Indian OIC	\$25,396.25
Dakota Iapi	\$75,000.00
Dakota Wicohan	\$75,000.00
University of Minnesota	\$58,543.00
<b>Tribal</b>	
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa	\$66,500.00
Fond Du Lac of Lake Superior Chippewa	\$66,500.00
Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe	\$66,500.00
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	\$66,500.00
Lower Sioux Community	\$66,500.00
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe	\$66,500.00
Prairie Island Indian Community	\$66,500.00
Red Lake Nation	\$66,500.00
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community	\$66,500.00
Upper Sioux Community	\$66,500.00
White Earth Nation	\$66,500.00
<b>Immersion Programs</b>	
Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College	\$100,000.00
Lower Sioux	\$93,273.84
Niigaane	\$100,000.00



# EXPENDITURES

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council has a total biennial budget of approximately **\$5.7 million**. The biennial general fund support is approximately **\$1.7 million**. Funding from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund, consisting of grants to communities for Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization, is approximately **\$4 million**.

Full Time - Salary .....	552,000
Overtime and Premium Pay .....	5,000.00
Other Employee Cost .....	5,000.00
Space Rental and Utilities .....	52,000.00
Printing and Advertising .....	1,000.00
Professional Technical Services .....	80,000.00
Communications .....	6,000.00
In State Travel .....	60,000.00
Out of State Travel .....	25,000.00
Employee Development .....	15,000.00
State Agency Prof-Tech Services .....	10,000.00
Rate-Based MNIT Services .....	26,000.00
Agency-Specific MNIT Services .....	40,000.00
Supplies .....	30,000.00
Equipment .....	5,000.00
Repairs to Equipment and Furniture .....	1,000.00
Other Operating Costs .....	290,890
Equipment-Non Capital .....	4,000.00
 Total .....	 <b>1,207,890.66</b>

# Federally Recognized Tribes in the State of Minnesota

**ZAGAAKWAANDAGOWININIWAG / [BOIS FORTE BAND OF CHIPPEWA](#)**



**NAH-GAH-CHI-WA-NONG / [FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA](#)**



**GICHI-ONIGAMING / [GRAND PORTAGE BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA](#)**

**MISKWAAGAMIIWI-ZAAGAIGANING / [RED LAKE NATION](#)**



**MDEWAKANTON / [SHAKOPEE MDEWAKANTON SIOUX COMMUNITY](#)**



**PEZIHUTAZIZI / [OYATE UPPER SIOUX COMMUNITY](#)**



**GAA-WAABAABIGANIKAAAG / [WHITE EARTH NATION](#)**



**GAA-ZAGASKWAAJIMEKAAG / [LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE](#)**



**MISI-ZAAGA'IGANIING / [MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE](#)**



**TINTA WITA / [PRAIRIE ISLAND INDIAN COMMUNITY](#)**



**CANSA'YAPI / [LOWER SIOUX INDIAN COMMUNITY](#)**







# Pidamayaye, Miigwech, Thank You!

*We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to protect the sovereignty of the 11 Minnesota Tribal Nations and to ensure the well-being of American Indian Citizens throughout the state of Minnesota.*

About this report: This report was authored, designed and completed by MIAC Executive Assistant Kaytlyn Lundstrom, MIAC Cultural Resources Specialist, Senior Melissa Cerda, and MIAC Grants Administrative Specialist Skyler Kuczaboski.

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