



# American Indian Institute Report 2011



*Two Row Wampum (above) and Hiawatha Belt, on display at the 2011 Ancient Voices Forum at the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community*

## **Above All, Respect**

The American Indian Institute and Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth continue along a wisdom guided journey into mutual respect; following the Elders' counsel that above all else, respect for self, respect for others and respect for Mother Earth must guide our lives.

## **Mission**

The mission of the American Indian Institute is to perpetuate the ancient wisdom and cultural heritage of North America's Native people, and to promote a greater understanding of that wisdom among all people. The Institute achieves its mission by serving as the administrative agency and support source for the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth, a coalition of grassroots spiritual leaders from Indian nations throughout North America.

## **Vision**

The American Indian Institute recognizes traditional Indian wisdom as an endangered human resource that is relevant to today's world and that holds keys to our common survival. Looking seven generations into the future, we see a world in which the values and traditions of indigenous people are respected for the wisdom they hold for the Earth and all its peoples.

We pursue this vision by supporting the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth as it teaches, motivates, and celebrates traditional Indian peoples today. We act as facilitators of gatherings of traditional peoples, promoters of healing of Indian communities, and supporters of efforts to educate non-Indians about the wisdom and harmony inherent in the traditional indigenous worldview.

## Message from the Board Chair

To our many friends from throughout the country, please allow me to express my deepest gratitude for your continued support in 2011. I particularly want to thank those of you who helped us complete our new headquarters facility project.

Since its founding 40 years ago, the American Indian Institute's staff has worked tirelessly with traditional leaders from throughout Indian Country. Oren Lyons, Onondaga Faithkeeper, and long-time member of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth, commented recently on the *Two Circles* journey so far:

*"We have taken a good first step together."*

Oren's observation about the evolving relationship between the two circles – the Traditional Indian Elders Circle and the non-Indian American Indian Institute Circle -- reflects the different perspective of time and trust between the traditional Native worldview and that of mainstream society. Forty years to take a single step. That's a thought worth considering.

The *Two Circles* model uses mainstream resources (with no strings attached) to support grassroots Elder and youth interaction. This model has proven to be uniquely effective due to the growing trust between the two circles. It is a model that was ahead of its time when we began, and it remains uncommon in the world of philanthropy today. By supporting grassroots leaders across nations, across tribes and across generations, the work of American Indian Institute continues to be fundamental to all our efforts on their behalf.

Elders from the Traditional Circle have always had as their first priority the young people and inter-generational communication. This is reflected in AII's two core programs: the annual International Elders & Youth Council, and our Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative. Both of these programs are reported on in the following pages. The essential ingredient in both programs is eye-to-eye and heart-to-heart contact between Elders and youth.

For me, the highlight of 2011 was our September meeting of the Board of Trustees. We met in our new headquarters facility in Bozeman, following a two-year capital campaign and nine-months of intensive renovation. Of comparable significance (although I didn't attend) was the 5<sup>th</sup> *Ancient Voices Forum* held in October 2011 at the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community in Upstate New York, hosted by Tom Porter and his family.

In 2012, AII begins a new era with a new headquarters and an infusion of enthusiasm and optimism about our "second step together" with the Traditional Circle. We thank you for making it possible for us to continue to keep our commitments to the Elders from the four directions.

We are proud to bring you this report of our activities from last year, and we welcome your comments or questions.

Steve Browning  
Board Chair  
Tucson, Arizona





Entrance to the upper floor of the new Headquarters Facility

*A special word of appreciation to American Indian Institute Trustee Meri Jaye whose undying encouragement and generous gift of nearly half of the funding required, made the dream of a permanent Institute headquarters building a reality. Thank you, Meri.*

## 502 West Mendenhall

We begin a new chapter in the 40 year history of the American Indian Institute with the completion of our headquarters facility project. After a two-year, \$550,000 capital campaign, and a year of construction renovations and upgrades, in September 2011 we finally moved in to our new home at 502 West Mendenhall Street in Bozeman. The historically registered stone-block house a block off Main Street is a symbol and foundation for a new era of growth based on past success and lessons learned.

Since our founding in 1972, the vision for the future of the American Indian Institute has included a national headquarters building. Today that vision is a reality. The acquisition of

a headquarters building, addressing the most basic necessity for permanence and long-term perspective, ushers in a new era for the Institute, setting us on a par with other national non-profit organizations with long track records of success.

The 100 year-old building itself is an elder, and has a special feeling to it that symbolizes the Institute's mission and spirit. The new headquarters gives tangible evidence to the Institute's commitment to its mission of reconciliation and restitution for the traditional indigenous peoples of North America.

Our future is brighter than ever today with a new facility in place, providing immediate and untold future benefits to staff, trustees, and constituents. The future holds new promise that we can not know today. We welcome you to stop in anytime and say hello. The coffee is always on.

To all of our friends who supported the capital campaign, we say thank you, and we honor you.

## Those Who Made the Headquarters Project a Success

### Individual Contributions

Grant Abert  
James Babson  
Elizabeth A. Boland  
David Bonderman  
Steve & Judy Browning  
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Orlando Piva  
Pete Oliver  
Dave Rusling



*Entrance to the reception area*

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Marilyn DeKleer  
Harmon Houghton & Marcia Keegan  
Garcia & Assoc.  
Knife River, Inc.  
Wayne & Ann Miller  
Margaret Serene



## The Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth

The Traditional Circle is a grassroots group of Elders, traditional leaders, and youth representing Indian nations from throughout North America. It is a living repository of ancient knowledge and wisdom - a circle of caretakers to protect the original Indigenous ways of life, and to ensure their survival.

The Elders & Youth Council is their most important annual program. It constitutes the

Participants at the 2011 International Council of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth

continuation of an ancient practice of joint council among the most respected traditional Indian Elders and spiritual leaders from across North America. It is one of the few times each year when such an extensive assemblage of Indian Elders gathers together in a spiritual body to strengthen traditional values and to consider from the spiritual perspective issues involving and effecting indigenous peoples and the larger society.

*“There is so much that’s important about the Council. It’s a spiritual experience – spiritual renewal – an educational experience. I learn things coming out to these gatherings they don’t teach in any school.”*

**Debrah Clifton, of Creole and Muscogee Heritage, from Louisiana**

The Council is a time for sharing oral history traditions of previous times, exchanging deep cultural stories, comparing ancient prophesies, and discussing Indian rights. Each year the Elders & Youth Council is held in a different location in Indian Country.

In late July of 2011, traditional indigenous Elders from the four directions of the United States, as well as from Mexico, Central America, and Canada attended the 34<sup>th</sup> annual International Elders & Youth Council. This esteemed group gathered at an encampment in Onondaga Nation Territory - heart of Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The chiefs and clan mothers of the Onondaga Nation were the hosts for the Council, attended by 300 delegates from throughout Indian Country. It was the third time the Onondagas have hosted the Council, the first two being in 1981 and 1990.



## Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative

The American Indian Institute's Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative is a community-based initiative aimed at helping Native youth by building and strengthening the foundations of their traditional cultural heritages. The essential ingredients of the initiative are Elders, youth, and community.



Participants in the Fall 2011 Flathead Hunting Camp

The Elders are the holders of the living heritage. Their great gifts and strengths are used for the good of the people, the earth, and future generations. For Elders and youth to come together around the culture, the unity and presence of the community is fundamental. The unity of family, clan, and community provides the context for inter-generational learning and growth.

Current programs are under way in the four directions in the following Native communities.

- ***Bitterroot Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai (Flathead Reservation)***
- ***Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation***
- ***Akimel O'otham, Gila River Reservation***
- ***Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Iroquois Six Nations)***

Eighty youth leaders from throughout the Haudenosaunee Confederacy attended a three day Youth Gathering at Onondaga prior to the Elders & Youth Council in July. This was the culmination of a series of youth meetings occurring over a one year period around the theme of "Uniting Our Nations Youth."

In late 2011 the American Indian Institute began providing funding and administrative support for a Mohawk rites of passage program called *Iatsitewah:ton - Let Us Become Again*. The goal of the project is to improve the quality of life for Native children through the restoration of traditional indigenous knowledge and practice. The program was developed by community leaders in response to growing problems among the youth of the community. *Let Us Become Again* restores a culturally meaningful "coming of age" process that guides young men and young women through the complicated transition into adulthood.

*"The Youth Camp was a blessing from the Creator, and we are blessed to have such a strong Salish family with cultural and traditional ethics."*

**Willie Stevens, Salish Elder**



Talking circle during the Ancient Voices Forum at the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community

## ***Ancient Voices - Contemporary Contexts***

The objective of our *Ancient Voices - Contemporary Contexts* Forum Series is to fulfill a mandate of Traditional Circle Elders: “help us get the message of the Elders out to the larger society and get dialogue started across cultures”. The 2011 *Ancient Voices* Forum was a three-day gathering at the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community, on the Mohawk River, just outside of Fonda, New York, with Mohawk Elder Tom Porter and his family as hosts. Prominent traditional Elders from the four directions gathered with members of the larger society in a cross-cultural exploration of the message of *Peace, Power, and the Good Mind* of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) People.

Keynote speakers were Oren Lyons, Onondaga Faithkeeper, and pre-eminent spokesperson for traditional Native Americans; Louise McDonald, Akwesasne Mohawk Clan Mother and eminent speaker and advocate for Native American women; and Tom Porter, founder of the Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community. Small group discussion leaders consisted of Elders and traditional leaders from other Haudenosaunee nations, and from the Pueblo and Northern Plains regions.

We organize *Ancient Voices* Forums in the belief that change is possible. The authentic voice of the traditional Elders, with its holistic view of environmental and social responsibility, offers a way back to understanding our responsibilities to Earth, each other, and the generations yet to come. We believe the ancient voice of the only wisdom indigenous to this hemisphere will add a new set of possible answers to the burning social, cultural, economic and environmental issues we all face.

*“The participants saw real; from one end of the spectrum to the other. They saw our beauty and strength, and they saw our pain and dysfunction.”*

**R. Printup, Tuscarora Traditional Leader, Forum Discussion Leader**

*“This was truly a life changing event. I hope we will all stay connected and encouraged to mutually solve problems and support each other.”*

**M. Markewitz, Portland, Oregon**

*“The gathering had so many moments that I will always cherish, but what sticks with me the most is the overwhelming feeling of joy experienced in the deepest part of my soul through the cumulative exposure to Tom Porter and his humanness.”*

**R. Thomson, Vermont**



## Thanks to the Many Who Helped in 2011

### Individuals

Grant Abert  
Jean Altshuler  
Anonymous  
Philip Arnold & Sandra Bigtree  
Stephen & Angela Barral  
Beth Beloff  
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Zoot Enterprises

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Anderson ZurMuehlen & Co., P.C.  
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Bozeman, MT

The American Indian Institute is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization tax ID: 81-0339551

**Statement of Financial Position  
As of 12/31/11**

**Statement of Activities  
January through December 2011**

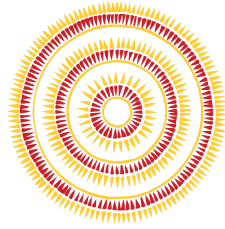
**ASSETS**

<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
General Account	153,138.81
Checking	1,670.16
Money Market & CD	<u>156,608.85</u>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b><u>311,417.82</u></b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>311,417.82</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
Art - 502 Mendenhall	19,195.00
Furniture & Fixtures	10,089.03
Program Equipment	53,257.73
Library - 502 Mendenhall	3,062.00
502 Mendenhall - Real Property	500,992.20
502 Mendenhall - Land	68,827.80
LESS Accumulated Amortization	-1,250.00
LESS Accumulated Depreciation	-79,161.55
Leasehold Improvements	<u>9,023.83</u>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b><u>584,036.04</u></b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
Plantagon International	152.56
Loan Origination Fees	1,250.00
Montana Community Foundation	
Agency Endowment	809,682.48
Restricted Fund	628,644.95
Art Investments	140,325.14
Organizational Costs	<u>504.60</u>
<b>Total Other Asset</b>	<b><u>1,580,559.73</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>2,476,013.59</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
<b>Temporarily Restricted Funds</b>	
Restricted Fund	628,444.95
Temporarily Restricted Program Funds	<u>172,389.00</u>
<b>Total Temporarily Restricted Funds</b>	<b>800,833.95</b>
<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>872,339.07</b>
<b>Permanently Restricted Funds</b>	
Agency Endowment	809,682.48
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>-6,841.91</u></b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b><u>2,476,013.59</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>2,476,013.59</b>

**Ordinary Income/Expense**

<b>Income</b>	
Foundation Grants	272,026.54
Corporate Grants/In-Kind Donations	33,571.45
Individual Donors	84,930.48
Interest & Dividend Income	63,222.97
Royalty Income	382.73
Unrealized Gain (LOSS) on Invesments	-33,075.29
Program Revenue & Sales	<u>25,930.14</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>446,989.02</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Direct Program Expenses</b>	
<b>305,338.33</b>	
<b>General Operations Expenses</b>	
Bank/Financial Advisor Charge	14,371.68
Commercial Building Expenses	1,669.74
Consultants	12,025.00
Fund Development	4,613.85
Insurance	4,468.93
Miscellaneous	260.00
Office Supplies	2,835.98
Postage and Freight	809.38
Printing & Publications	1830.82
Professional Fees	9,475.50
Public Relations/Marketing	2,354.67
Rent	3,324.00
Taxes & Licenses	2,164.91
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	181,169.22
Telecommunications	4,098.20
Vehicle Expense	<u>2,015.79</u>
Total General Operations Expenses	247,487.67
before program allocations	
Less indirect costs allocated to programs	<u>-98,995.07</u>
<b>Total General Operations Expenses</b>	<b><u>148,492.60</u></b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b><u>453,830.93</u></b>
<b>Net Income/Loss</b>	<b>-6,841.91</b>





American Indian Institute  
502 West Mendenhall Street  
Bozeman, Montana 59715  
Phone: 406-587-1002 or 1-877-587-6001  
[www.twocircles.org](http://www.twocircles.org)