



**American  
Indian  
Institute**

**Report  
2012**





## **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 Chair

We are pleased to bring you this report of the activities of the American Indian Institute in 2012. I would like to thank the many individuals and organizations whose time and resources enabled the organization to have a most productive year.

The American Indian Institute celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2012. On this special occasion the staff and trustees of the organization reflected with humility and gratitude on the road traveled thus far - with the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders & Youth in one hand, and mainstream support in the other. Joining hands with both has been a delicate task at times, but always rewarding for the lessons of truth and reconciliation learned and lived.

It is worth mentioning up front the item on the facing page, “Above All, Respect,” a simple statement that deserves to be included among the mission and vision statements of the organization. Elders from all Four Directions echo a similar sentiment, that the first law of Indian people is “respect”; respect for all Creation of this Earth and for our Mother the Earth herself. The use of words is critical to the oral tradition; names set boundaries for relationships. Therefore the term Mother Earth is used explicitly to make that relationship more relevant than it would be by simply saying “earth”.

In 2012 the Institute and Traditional Circle (the Two Circles) organized a historical gathering of Indian Elder women from across the U.S. and Canada titled “Weaving Webs of Women’s Wisdom.” It was a Haudenosaunee women-led gathering exploring the role of the feminine in leadership through the concept of Mother Law – the matrilineal order inherent in the natural human pattern of life’s vital flow.

In early August the Traditional Circle held its 36<sup>th</sup> annual Elders & Youth Council, attended by 300 delegates from throughout Indian country. Traditional leaders of four Salish tribes and one Kootenai tribe were the hosts for the Council, held north of the village of Arlee above the Jocko River on the Flathead Nation Territory, Montana. It was the first time the Council has been held at the Flathead.

After paying our respects to the late Mohawk Elder Jake Swamp in our 2010 annual report, we are pleased to report in these pages that his long-held dream of a ceremony to close the wounds of colonization that Indigenous Peoples have suffered finally came to pass. The “Gathering of Condolence, Strength, and Peace” for Indian people from the Four Directions was held at the Mississippi Headwaters over the summer solstice last June.

Our Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative continued to spread its roots in 2012. We believe that much of the wisdom, knowledge and experience of the spiritual Elders, acquired over a lifetime of walking their paths, can never be taught in the schools. Our deliberate work bringing Elders and youth together outside the classroom continues to be one of our primary areas of focus as we look toward the next 40 years.

Thanks to the many who make our work possible. We welcome your comments or questions about this report.

Steve Browning  
Board Chair  
Tucson, Arizona





## Gathering of Condolence, Strength and Peace

Mississippi Headwaters, June 18-22, 2012

Some years ago Kanien'kéha Elder Jake Swamp, Tekaroniaken, had a dream that revealed a need for healing by Indigenous Peoples from east and west, north and south. Across a river he saw his Indian brothers and sisters slowly walking toward the water, hanging their heads in deep sorrow. He felt a hand on his shoulder from behind then heard a gentle voice that said, "Help them."

As a spiritual and cultural leader of his people, Jake knew something must be done as a result of the dream, and after several years of consideration he decided that a continental



condolence ceremony was being called forth. It seemed appropriate for Indian people to receive the new times invoking not only the spirit of hope, but also the spirit of unity between north and south. His dream called for the need to close the wounds that Indigenous Peoples have suffered since the arrival of Europeans. It promised to reinstitute long-forgotten traditions and ways of life

that will ensure the survival of the future generations of Indian people of the Americas.

At an October 2010 Condolence Ceremony Planning Meeting in New Mexico, just four days before he crossed over, he verbalized the necessity of the ceremony when he said:

"Today many of our Indian people unknowingly carry the burden of historical trauma passed down from generations past. These emotions that are not identifiable to the individual can cause dark and even violent times especially when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Working with Indian people who have been stripped of their culture is very

difficult. Only after given the opportunity to learn cultural values does the individual start to make changes needed. Therefore, there is a great need to heal the grief in order to unburden the people so that they can confront their own issues to be freed from the bondage of the past."

On June 18-22, 2012 at the headwaters of the Mississippi River, an Indigenous Continental Meeting of unprecedented scope and size was held, at which Mr. Swamp's dream was honored with a special ceremony that healed the wounds of Indigenous Peoples and brought continental unity for the new time coming.

The burdens of historical trauma were eased through the loving process of the Condolence Ceremony of the Haudenosaunee, a sacred rite never conducted on this scale outside of their home territory, and a water ceremony conducted by spiritual leaders from South and Central America. The ceremonies and prayers from the Elders brought hope, love, and life back to the delegates from the Four Directions in attendance, and they will bring this strength home with them. The words of condolence and direction from the Elders will forever be felt and remembered, and will illuminate once more the path of the ancestors and their teachings.

*"The idea that the Condolence Ceremony was already written into history through the stars and was part of the fulfillment of ancient prophecy was humbling. Our people have been on the edge of full assimilation as set out by the colonizers; despite this, the Ceremony reinforced that the spiritual force inside of us and our spiritual strength is to remain steadfast."*

- Kahontineh Swamp, Wolf Clan of the Kanien'kéha (Mohawk) Nation

# International Elders & Youth Council

## Flathead Nation Territory, August 2012



The most important annual program of the American Indian Institute is the International Elders & Youth Council, held each year in a different location in Indian country since 1977. Once each year traditional Elders and youth from the Four Directions gather to speak about the welfare of mankind and the world, and to re-energize in the name of cultural survival.

In early August of 2012 the gathering was held on the Flathead Nation Territory, Montana, just north of the village of Arlee above the Jocko River. Traditional leaders of four Salish tribes and one Kootenai tribe were the hosts for the Council, attended by 300 delegates from throughout Indian country. It was the first time the Council has been held at the Flathead.

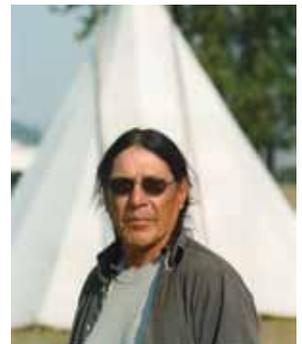
Following the tradition of Indigenous meetings, the gathering used the large circular arbor and an open fire within as the focal point for activities. Each morning before sunrise a singer with a hand drum went through the entire encampment in a sunwise direction singing the Wake-up song, which more or less is telling the people, "It is time to wake up, come to the fire for prayer, and begin our day of unity."

The Council's objective is to serve as a principal source of reinforcement of traditional values for participating Elders and delegates and as a forum for traditional youth development. Circle leaders reported that the daily group sessions in the arbor were meaningful and effective. Morning sessions under the arbor dealt with the spiritual side - the prayers, prophecies, traditions, medicines - the fundamental teachings of ancient values and worldviews as spoken by Elders from the Four Directions. Afternoon sessions dealt with issues facing the grassroots people in the communities, largely centered on youth.

During the gathering much of the discussions centered around the prophecies

and stories of the people in relation to earth changes – global climate changes. Prayers were offered asking for the blessing of water to grow the spiritual seed of traditional knowledge, and that rain be sent to all the drought-stricken areas of the country in this the driest year in memory. Prayers were also offered to bring order to Mother Earth and to the human race.

The Traditional Circle consists of Elders who carry the ancient instructions and teachings. They stand in a Circle praying for land and life. Their ceremonies are sacred. Their instructions are sacred. And as long as they hold fast to them, their life will continue, and there will be a future for all people. The Traditional Circle is the Circle of Life, and a lifeline to sanity. The annual Council held this year brought cohesion and validation and hope to the holders of the heritage of Indian people and to those with whom the future rests.



*"I appreciate all of the teachings and sharings you were able to present in such a short amount of time. I love that our people, our visions, our culture, and our prayers have survived. Our world needs much of it, especially circles of love, in which you welcomed me to.*

*Our people today are not as strong as our ancestors. But what we are witnessing is the younger generations rising up from under the wings of the elders and implementing stricter ways, while our elders remain at forefront of leadership and teachings. These are sad, wonderful, trying, and interesting times to be alive.*

*I look forward to seeing you again, whether in spirit, ceremony, or circle."*

- Youth Delegate J. Greene, Wasco/Paiute/Walla-Walla/Nez Perce, after attending the Elders & Youth Council in 2012, his first





## Indigenous Women's Gathering - Weaving Webs of Women's Wisdom

**Akwesasne Mohawk Nation Territory, August 2012**

A historical gathering took place under a full moon on the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation Territory August 28-30, 2012 where 25 Indian Elder women from across the US and Canada joined 75 Haudenosaunee women in a ceremonial council titled "Weaving Webs of Women's Wisdom." The convocation was a Haudenosaunee women-led gathering with participating Clan Mothers from various nations - sharing both knowledge of the role of the feminine in Indigenous creation stories, as well as experiences of mothering, raising families, and guiding communities in both historical and contemporary societies.

The voices of Indigenous women worldwide have long been silenced by colonial oppression and institutions of patriarchal dominance. Recent generations of powerful Indigenous women have started speaking out so that their positions of respect within their families and communities might be reclaimed. Haudenosaunee women are reclaiming the role of the feminine in leadership through the concept of Mother Law:

"Matrilineal influence is a continuous sisterhood of clanship that derives from our celestial mother and our intimate connection to the land. As daughters descended from ancestral clan mothers, we Haudenosaunee women adhere to principles of peace, power, justice (fairness) which promotes a system of con-

duct based on natural law that connects our society to a Matrilineal Order inherent in the natural human pattern of life's vital flow. "

The gathering was designed to be an opportunity for women to discuss matters affecting their side of the "house," as well as those affecting Mother the Earth. The themes throughout the gathering revolved around understandings of Mother Law and the role of the feminine in creation stories, and an examination of issues surrounding and impacting Indigenous women and mothers and their families in a variety of contexts due to living in a traumatized culture.

The closing fire on the final afternoon contained words from the host clan mothers who reiterated the collective agreement of the Indigenous women that has long been prophesied and long awaited for. They agreed to convene in one year's time to bring solutions and strategy on how to mobilize movement in all areas of their discourse.

*"What could have been more illuminating than the loving energy of Indigenous women sharing wisdom, songs and lessons in a beautiful setting hosted by beautiful peoples of the land; I am in such awe at the power of guided women's generational energy which is purity to its core."*

- Participant from San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico



# Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative

Mississippi Headwaters, June 18-22, 2012

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.

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 (Flat-head Reservation)***
- ***Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation***
- ***Akimel O'otham, Gila River Reservation***
- ***Haudenosaunee Territory, the Six Nations of New York & Canada***
- ***Miniconjou and Oglala Lakota, Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota***

In 2012 our Traditional Youth Leadership Initiative provided major ad-

ministrative and financial support for a Mohawk Rites of Passage program called Iatsitewah:ton (a Mohawk phrase meaning "Let us become again"). The Rites of Passage Program at Akwesasne is a ceremonial process to ensure that the needs within the stages of development of Mohawk adolescent youth are being met. Throughout the winter and spring of 2012, both boys and girls met every week at the longhouse and were instructed by a clan mother and other helpers to prepare them for their coming of age ceremony.

The ritual aspects incorporated many cultural teachings and experiences including the creation story of the people, the Great Law of Peace, sweat lodges, moon lodges, medicines, hunting, fishing, planting, song, dance, cooking, knife and bow making, fire making, shelter making and storytelling.

*"The young people have nothing here. We need to bring them together to learn our ways – everything has a story to it and we need to keep up that oral tradition. We need to talk about the foundation of our lives. Our Creation story. We need to share with them, point out the things that really matter. These things we want to do. We will pass along our history and inheritance in this way."*

- Akimel O'otham Elder, Gila River Reservation



Photo by Bernard Azure



One of the best has left our Circle. Audrey Shenandoah stepped to the other side on March 15, 2012. She was 85.

The loss of Audrey goes deep, her family first, her nation, the Circle, all indigenous people and those who value integrity, courage, wisdom, commitment, moral and spiritual insight and the ability to use all of that in service to others.

Audrey was a role model for all women. She personified the best of her heritage, living it, teaching it and fulfilling it in her duties within her community and nation. She was a force for good in a time of increasing pressure for her people and chaos throughout the world, and her influence was widely felt. We remember her keynote speech at the 1990 Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders in Moscow. She and Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway, were keynote speakers. Strong women who headlined the international gathering. Audrey's message was one of respect, harmony and peace among all people, respect for all life and for the earth and the forces that sustain life. She carried that message throughout her life.

Audrey is now free of this life's limitations, and we rejoice for her even as we share the pain of her loss. We say goodbye with love.

- Bob Staffanson, on behalf of the American Indian Institute



*Audrey Lazore Shenandoah "Gonwaiani" 1926 - 2012*

# Thank You to the Many Who Helped in 2012

## ***Individuals***

Grant Abert  
Anonymous  
Jenny Astwood  
Holly Bahn  
Stephen & Angela Barral  
Kimberly & Simon Blattner in  
memory of Diane-Noyes Cole  
Walter & Ruth Bortz  
Steve & Judy Browning  
Bobbie Burdett  
Sharon & George Burt in  
memory of Diane-Noyes Cole  
Susan Butler  
Guy Campbell  
John & Patricia Case  
Billy CloudWalker  
Michael Clow in honor of Lyle Clow  
Guadalupe Contreras  
Grant Couch & Louise Pearson  
Phil Coupe  
Virginia Coyle  
Bob Crabtree & Jennifer Sheldon  
Barb & Gene Croisant  
Barbara Cummard  
Katherine & Sidney Dallas  
John & Sally Dargle in  
memory of Diane-Noyes Cole  
Carolyn Deitenbeck  
Nicolette Ehernberger  
Liza Eng  
Daniel Fiehrer  
Rosemary Forester  
Hadassah Galey  
James Galuza  
Charles & Judy Gibbon  
B/G R.M. Goodwin USAF  
Mirkalice Gore  
Shelly Gossard  
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Nina Harrison  
Hillary & Betty Hastings  
William Holt  
Erik Höpfner  
Victoria Howard  
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William & Anne Jacobi  
Meri Jaye  
Anne & Kirk Johnson

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Leslie Schiffert  
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Jim Schuster  
Helen Schwickrath  
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Dave W. Siljenberg  
Mickie Simonson  
Martin Smith  
Hal & Sheila Stearns  
David Stenson  
Ann Strauss  
Lauren Tancona  
Rob & Lydia Thomson  
Marilise Tronto  
Josh Turner  
Margaret Tyzack More

Susan Varner in  
memory of Diane-Noyes Cole  
Beatrice Weyrich on behalf of Hans Lang  
Louis & Audrey Wilson

## ***Volunteers***

Dave Rusling  
Kathy Coyle

## ***Foundations/Corporations***

The Bay & Paul Foundations  
Charles Engelhard Foundation  
Christian A. Johnson  
Endeavor Foundation  
Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes  
Eide Bailly  
Foundation For Community Vitality  
Gallatin County Community Foundation  
Gathering Thunder Foundation  
Gilhousen Family Foundation  
Institute of International Education  
Jewish Communal Fund  
John & Sophie Ottens Foundation  
Kalliopeia Foundation  
Moonifest Foundation  
Nike USA  
Northwest Area Foundation  
NorthWestern Energy  
OneFamily Foundation  
O.P. & W.E. Edwards Foundation  
Pew Charitable Trust  
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors  
Ruth Danley & Enoch  
Moore Charitable Trust  
Sacred Fire Foundation  
S & K Technologies  
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians  
Seattle University  
Seventh Generation Fund  
Susan & Donald Babson  
Charitable Trust  
Tides Foundation

## ***Corporate Grants/ In-Kind Contributions***

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Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven P.C.  
Canyon Records  
Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes  
Barb & Gene Croisant  
Robert Putsch  
Mary Stranahan  
White's Wholesale Meats, Ronan, MT

Statement of Financial Position  
As of 12/31/12

Statement of Activities  
January through December 2012

**ASSETS**

<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
General Account	163,505.61
Checking	1,986.36
Money Market & CD	<u>159,037.35</u>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b><u>324,529.32</u></b>
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
Endowment Earnings Due From Montana Community Foundation ("MCF")	<u>37,136.76</u>
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b><u>37,136.76</u></b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>361,666.08</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
Furniture & Fixtures	18,262.59
Program Equipment	53,257.73
Library - 502 Mendenhall	4,366.48
502 Mendenhall - Real Property	510,122.52
502 Mendenhall - Land	68,827.80
LESS Accumulated Amortization	-1,265.26
LESS Accumulated Depreciation	-90,360.24
Leasehold Improvements	<u>9,023.83</u>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b><u>572,235.45</u></b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
Plantagon International Share	152.56
Loan Origination Fees	1,250.00
MCF Agency Endowment	863,771.77
Restricted Fund	683,685.69
Art Investments	32,645.00
Organizational Costs	<u>255.40</u>
<b>Total Other Asset</b>	<b><u>1,581,760.42</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>2,515,661.95</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
<b>Temporarily Restricted Funds</b>	
Restricted Fund	683,685.69
Temporarily Restricted Program Funds	<u>202,241.00</u>
<b>Total Temporarily Restricted Funds</b>	<b><u>885,926.69</u></b>
<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>702,559.38</b>
<b>Permanently Restricted Funds -</b>	
<b>MCF Agency Endowment</b>	<b>863,771.77</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>63,404.11</u></b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b><u>2,515,661.95</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>2,515,661.95</b>

**Ordinary Income/Expense**

<b>Income</b>	
Foundation Grants	347,181.08
Corporate Grants/In-Kind Donations	8,825.45
Individual Donors	90,096.57
Interest & Dividend Income	65,646.79
Royalty Income	1,130.51
Unrealized Gain (LOSS) on Investments	56,533.05
Program Revenue & Sales	<u>218.09</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>569,631.54</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Direct Program Expenses</b>	
<b>352,695.06</b>	
<b>General Operations Expenses</b>	
Bank/Financial Advisor Charge	17,010.75
Commercial Building Expenses	4,014.08
Consultants	12,000.00
Fund Development	6,158.49
Insurance	2,936.08
Miscellaneous	225.00
Office Supplies	2,717.53
Postage and Freight	1,209.52
Printing & Publications	2,173.43
Professional Fees	9,493.50
Public Relations/Marketing	2,377.81
Rent	1,584.00
Taxes & Licenses	2,168.64
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	185,580.71
Telecommunications	3,577.84
Vehicle Expense	<u>2,659.91</u>
Total General Operations Expenses	255,887.29
before program allocations	
Less indirect costs allocated to programs	<u>-102,354.92</u>
<b>Total General Operations Expenses</b>	<b><u>153,532.37</u></b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b><u>506,227.43</u></b>
<b>Net Income/Loss</b>	<b>63,404.11</b>

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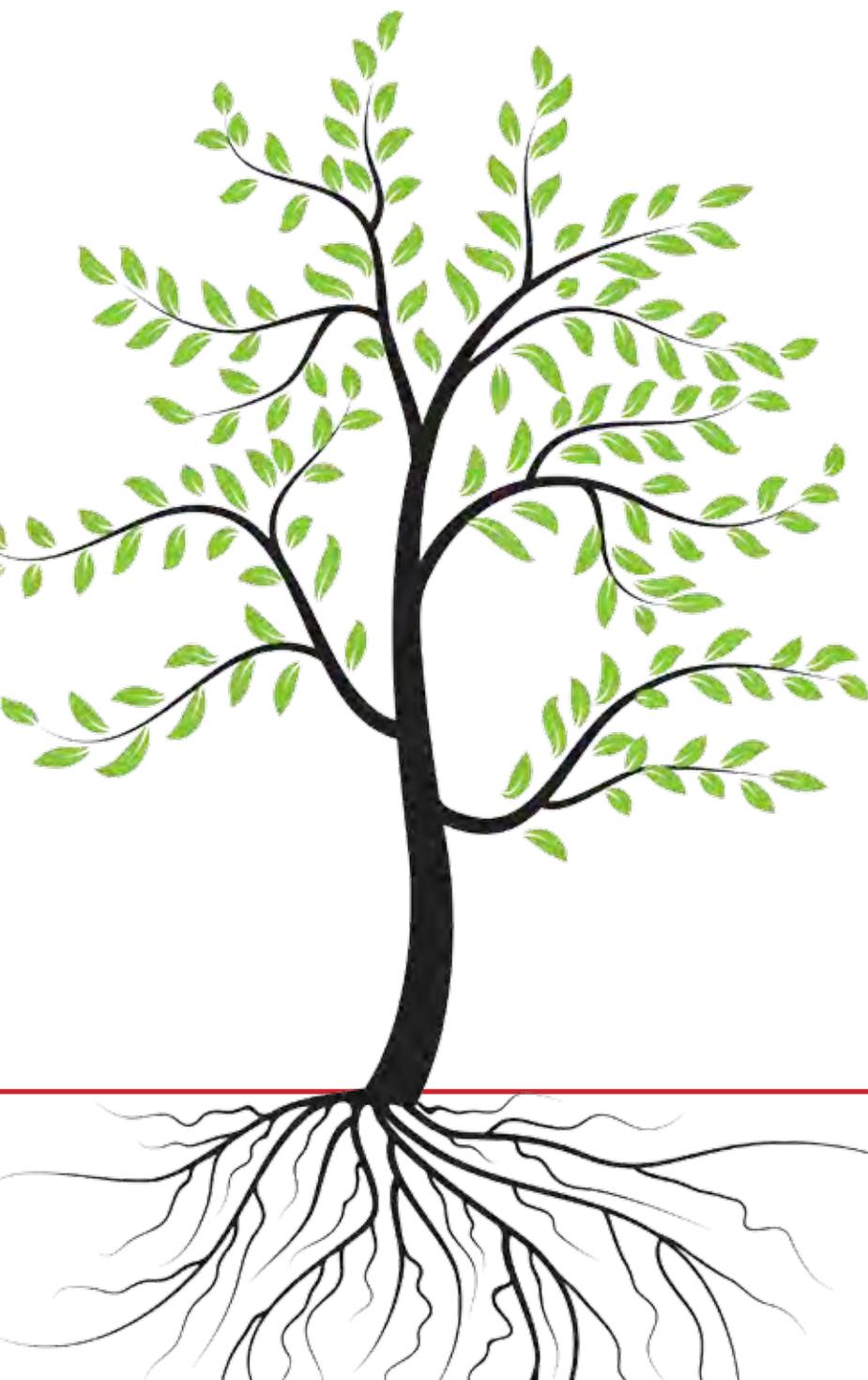
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