



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”

January 21, 2010

O-si-yo (Hello) AIANEA Members!

Happy New Year and welcome to the second decade of the 21st century. Additionally, we celebrate the 15th anniversary of the American Indian Alaska Native Employees Association (AIANEA) for NRCS! I am extremely honored to be your 2010 President during this exciting time. I have been a member of the association since 1995 and on the National Council since 2001. I am very proud of the journey the AIANEA has traveled during this first 15 years, the increase in membership, the tremendous accomplishments, and the difference the association has made in numerous lives.

I want to welcome the newly elected National Council members: Ralph Goh, West Regional Representative; John Harper, Southeast Regional Representative; Stacy Kimble, Midwest Regional Representative; and Gina Kerzman, in her change to 2nd Vice President! In addition, I extend my gratitude to the outgoing National Council members: Sharron Santure and Phillip Dixon. Thank you for leadership and the value you brought to the association. I am fortunate to serve with the continuing National Council members: Ciro Lo Pinto, Blythe Koyiyumptewa, Harold Bryant, Levi Montoya, Leota Burnett, and Nels Liljedahl. Please communicate often with any of us so that we can ensure an association that meets the needs of the membership.

In 2008 and 2009, the AIANEA Visioning Committee worked in conjunction with the membership to develop the ‘Visions for the Next Seven Generations 2009 Action Plan’. By utilizing input from association members, the plan visions and actions were developed to accomplish your vision for AIANEA. Some key components include: Relationships Among AIANEA, NRCS and Tribes; Elder Involvement and Knowledge Sharing; and Leadership, Growth and Mentorship within the association. This is only the beginning! Because of the dedication of committee members and the overall AIANEA membership, American Indians and Alaska Natives; tribes across the county; AIANEA Elders and other Elders; and NRCS employees and leadership will be positively impacted for seven generations! There is a lot of work to do and it will take all of us to accomplish it. The Visioning Committee invites new committee members. You can become involved by contacting Crystal Leonetti (crystal.leonetti@ak.usda.gov) or Ciro Lo Pinto (ciro.lopinto@pa.usda.gov), committee Co-Chairs. In addition, please contact the committee Chair of any other AIANEA committee you are interested in joining!

The 2010 Conference Planning Committee is very busy planning an extraordinary conference, which will take place in Rapid City, South Dakota on June 7 – 11, 2010. It promises to provide valuable cultural, technical, and career development training while exposing us to the native culture of the Dakotas! Look for a draft agenda and registration form soon at www.aianea.com.

Please remember that, as we begin a new year, it is important to submit your membership dues to remain a member in good standing. Please see the membership form located in this newsletter and submit to Harold Bryant, Treasurer.

Remember, I invite you to contact me or any National Council member with any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Our most valuable asset is you, the members. To retain that asset, communication is key. You can find the contact information for all of us in this newsletter and at www.aianea.com.

I wish you and your families a blessed and peace-filled 2010!

Wa-do (Thank you),

Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen
2010 AIANEA President