

# Oçeti Šakowin

*Revitalizing Our Sacred Language*

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*June 2 & 3, 2021*

*VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ONLY*

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# WELCOME MESSAGE

# WELCOME MESSAGE



Hau Mitakuyepi,

On behalf of Whitecap Dakota Oyate, I welcome you to our third annual Dakota Language Conference. This year due to Covid-19 restrictions we are hosting it virtually, we hope your experience is enriched with knowledge we bring from our relatives across Očeti Šakowiŋ Territory. We have an impressive line up of presenters that are all well respected in their field of expertise for you to enjoy from the comforts of your home fires.

This year we recognize our origins through the depiction of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major) as it also represents the Očeti Šakowiŋ Oyate, the Seven Council Fires of the Dakota, Lakota and Nakota nations. Through recognition of the constellations, it is our way of promoting traditional universal knowledge that is foundational to our ways of knowing. It is also symbolic of a flag in which we humbly exist under practicing our natural laws that were given to us by Creator, Great Spirit as told in our Creation stories.

Thank you to all our sponsors, our organizers, volunteers and all the presenters. Most of all, thanks to you as conference participants, and for your interest and dedication in making our languages and traditional Očeti Šakowiŋ knowledge an important part of your life. Let us continue to work together and remain vigilant in our revitalization, preservation, and maintenance of our languages.

Hau Tokša,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darcy Bear".

Chief Darcy Bear  
Wapaha Ska Oyate  
Whitecap Dakota First Nation

Hau Mitakuyepi,

Welcome to our third annual 2021 Dakota Language Virtual Conference. As conference chair and Whitecap Dakota Nation Councillor, čaŋté waštéya owáya nabé čiyúzapi do, I shake all your hands with a good heart. This year due to Covid-19 pandemic we decided to move forward with a virtual experience and hope you all enjoy the presentations from across Očeti Šakowiŋ Country. We did our best to bring you relatives that are experts in their own fields and teachings that applies to us all.

Our theme this year is in recognition of our origins the star constellations from which we came and where we will ultimately go back to. The Big Dipper is the western term but to our people we know it as a symbol of our great nation the Očeti Šakowiŋ Oyate.

Our wičó'i'a language is the foundation to our existence and is the cornerstone to our connection to all life. We must all do our part in our efforts to revitalize, preserve, maintain, and strengthen our languages. We each have distinct dialects, but we are all of one Nation-Očeti Šakowiŋ Oyate.

A wopída taŋka, thank you to all our sponsors, vendors, presenters, and most of all you. On behalf of our Whitecap Dakota Nation Council, our Conference Committee members and our Community we hope you all enjoy the next couple of days, and we hope to see you in person next year if gathering restrictions allow at the 4th Annual Dakota Language Conference 2022.

Hau Tokša,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank D. Royal".

Conference Chair/Councillor  
Frank D. Royal  
Wapaha Ska Oyate  
Whitecap Dakota First Nation

# AGENDA

## DAY 1 - JUNE 2, 2021

**7:30am @ site**

Pipe Ceremony & Protocol with Elders

**9:00am - 9:30am**

MC: Curtis Standing – Welcoming Virtual Participants  
Grand Entry & Introductions of Dignitaries

**9:30am - 10:00am**

Virtual Break (30min)

**10:00am - 11:00am**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Arvol Looking Horse  
(19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe Bundle)

**11:00am - 11:15am**

Virtual Break - MC Curtis Standing

**11:15am - 12:15pm**

Dakota Speaker: Glen Wasicuna + questions (15 min)

**12:15pm - 1:00pm**

Virtual Lunch Break (Cont. MC - 45 min)

**1:00pm - 2:00pm**

Lakota Speaker: Dallas Nelson + questions (15 min)

**2:00pm - 2:15pm**

Virtual Break (Cont. MC - 15 min)

**2:15pm - 3:00pm**

Aspiring Nakota Speaker: Jaunita McArthur-BigEagle + questions (15 min)

**3:00pm - 3:15pm**

Virtual Break (Cont. MC - 15 min)

**3:15pm - 4:00pm**

University of Minnesota & WDFN Partnership (Instr. Joe B. & WDFN students) (45 min)

**4:00pm - 4:15pm**

MC: Closing Remarks

# AGENDA

## DAY 2 - JUNE 3, 2021

**7:30am @ site**

Pipe Ceremony & Protocol with Elders

**9:00am - 9:20am**

MC: Curtis Standing – Welcoming Virtual Participants

**9:20am - 9:30am**

Introduction of Special Lakota Guest Speaker - Duane Hollow Horn Bear  
by WDFN Councillor/student Frank Royal & Dakota Language Coordinator/student Verna Buffalo

**9:30am - 10:30am**

Lakota Speaker: Duane Hollow Horn Bear

**10:30am - 10:45am**

Virtual Break - MC Curtis Standing

**10:45am - 11:00am**

Continued - Duane Hollow Horn Bear - questions

**11:45pm - 12:20pm**

Virtual Lunch Break with MC Curtis Standing

**12:20pm - 12:30pm**

Introduction of Special Lakota Guest Speaker - Dr. Craig Howe  
by WDFN Councillor/student Frank Royal & Dakota Language Coordinator/student Verna Buffalo

**12:30pm - 1:30pm**

Lakota Speaker: Dr. Craig Howe

**1:30pm - 1:45pm**

Virtual Break - MC Curtis Standing

**1:45pm - 2:45pm**

Continued - Dr. Craig Howe + questions

**2:45pm - 3:30pm**

MC Curtis Standing - Conference Wrap Up  
Exit of Eagle Staffs & Flags (Dancers)



## EMCEE

## PRESENTER



### Curtis Standing

Háu mitákuyepi. Čhaŋté waštéya napé čhiyúzapi. Tanján wačíyakapi.

Dakhóta iá “Hokšina Duta” emákiyapi do. Wašiču iá “Curtis Standing” emákiyapi do. Waŋpéthuŋwaŋ oyaŋke ed omáwapi. Saskatoon othúŋwe ed wathi. Waŋpéthuŋwaŋ ed ħtawani.

From early childhood Curtis has always been involved in his community, attending and participating in powwows, ceremonies and sporting events. He is a member of the Wahpeton Dakota Nation in Saskatchewan, and attended school in Prince Albert, SK. Curtis continued his education at the University of Regina where he received his degree in Business Administration.

His business career includes employment at the Human Resources Development Canada in Ottawa, and for over a decade held the position of General Manager at two SIGA Casinos: Northern Lights Casino and Painted Hand Casino.

Curtis remains involved in his community organizing powwows, sporting events, and live music events. Most notably, he was the Executive Producer of the Saskatchewan Indigenous Festival for the Arts, a three-day festival showcasing Indigenous talent from across the globe. Currently he is the host and producer of the Indigenous Radio Show in Saskatoon, SK.

Curtis is a father to six children, four daughters and two sons. He takes special interest in recreational activities such as skating, golfing, and watching hockey. Additionally, he enjoys supporting and being involved within the live music scene.



### Arvol Looking Horse

Arvol Looking Horse offers a hopeful message that will remind us of our place within the sacred circle and our responsibilities towards humanity and the environment. As Očeti Šakowiŋ people we believe we come from the Star Nations, we're apart of an ancient way of life, as such we must do our earthly part by practicing our inherent traditional values, being respectful of all nations, and stand strong in prayer. Our languages are the foundation to our Nations and is our sacred communication to our spiritual connectedness to All My Relations.

## PRESENTER



### Dallas Nelson

Dallas Nelson was born on the Pine Ridge Reservation. His mother is Una Yellow Bull and his father is Daniel Nelson. His paternal grandparents are Willard Nelson and Francine Brewer-Nelson. Dallas' maternal grandparents are Wendell Yellow Bull Sr. and Mildred Horn Cloud. Dallas grew up at Three Moccasin Park in Pine Ridge, SD and is currently living in the Red Cloud Community in Slim Buttes, SD. He is married to Emily Charging Crow-Nelson and they both have four beautiful children. Dallas holds a Bachelor of Science in Sociology, a Bachelor of Science in American Indian Studies and a Master of Arts in Lakota Leadership and Management.

#### **ABSTRACT:** The Lakota Language Initiative on the Pine Ridge Reservation

The Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation is a native-led grass roots nonprofit that envisions a liberated Lakota nation through our language, culture, and spirituality. Iyápi Glukínipi | Lakota Language Initiative is one of the nine initiatives within Thunder Valley CDC on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, U.S. This initiative is a multi-faceted effort to revitalize and restore the Lakota Language and lifeways. In this session, we'll explore all the work happening from Immersion Montessori, Curriculum Development, Second-language learning programming, multi-media development. Youth involvement, and more.

Special guest presenters will also be joining Dallas' presentation:  
Verine White - Director of Curriculum Development  
& Shawnta Jones - Lakota School Design Coordinator

## PRESENTER



### Duane Hollow Horn Bear

Duane Hollow Horn Bear, a Sicangu Lakota, was born and raised on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Duane was a faculty member of Sinte Gleska University, a four-year private American Indian tribal college in Mission, S.D., where he taught for 25 years in the field of history and culture and language, and he is a spiritual leader. Currently, he is the Director of the Lakota Studies Department at St. Francis Indian School for the past 5 years.

He comes from a strong heritage of leadership from his great grandfather, Chief Hollow Horn Bear, who lived from 1850 to 1913. Known to have inherited his grandfather's skill as an orator, Duane has traveled extensively around the country and abroad, lecturing and speaking on the history of the Očeti Šakowiŋ people (People of the Seven Council Fires) and continues to advocate for the Lakota way of life.

#### **ABSTRACT:** Thought & Philosophy on Lakota language

As we go through life as Očeti Šakowiŋ people, we believe that we have a sacred connection to all on Unci Maka-Mother Earth. This connection is through our languages of which our thought and philosophy is embedded. There are deeper meanings and understandings from knowing the true intent of knowing who you are as Lakota, Dakota, Nakota people. We have these sacred meanings in our kinship systems, social systems, plants and medicines, our whole environment. To live with these understandings and follow this way of living in a sacred manner will bring WOLAKOTA - peace, balance and coming together. The presentation will uncover these meaningful philosophical concepts that are found in our traditional systems of Očeti Šakowiŋ knowledge.





# PRESENTER



## Dr. Craig Howe

Is the founder and Director of the Center for American Indian Research and Native Studies (CAIRNS), earned a Ph.D. in architecture and anthropology from the University of Michigan. He served as Deputy Assistant Director for Cultural Resources at the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, and Director of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History at the Newberry Library in Chicago. He is an enrolled citizen of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

### ABSTRACT:

Using a research approach that is built on the Four Rs of Rigor, Reliability, Respect, and Relevance, this fast-paced image-based presentation explores the myriad ways traditional Oceti Sakowin thoughts and philosophies are embodied in narratives, star knowledge, architecture and educational resources.

# PRESENTER



## Joe Bendickson    Sisoka Duta

Sisoka duta is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate. He teaches Dakota language at the University of Minnesota. Sisoka duta didn't grow up speaking the Dakota language. He learned it as a second language. His grandparents were fluent speakers and he wants to pass on the Dakota language to the next generation.

### ABSTRACT:                    Teaching Dakota On-line

An overview of the Dakota language in a historical context will be shared with participants, and why we are in danger of becoming a word nation. We start teaching the language by identifying colors, numbers and animals and you pass the grade and go on to next grade with added vocabulary, why? We will talk about this. Does this method create speakers? This presentation will explain the different obstacles we need to recognize and overcome so we may become fluent in Dakota.



## PRESENTER

### Juanita McArthur-Big Eagle

Wagiya Wiyaga Gi Wi  
YELLOW FEATHER THUNDERBIRD WOMAN



A Mother, a kushi, a land and language advocate. Currently she is an elected leader in her community for the past 6 years. Numerous years in the health field and currently working on advancing the land-based living from a catch phrase to daily living.

With a degree in Sociology and Justice Administration she worked in the social field for many years, then after a life changing event decided to change career paths. She worked as a Dental therapist for private practice and health field as a dental health educator. This position has many aspects to it and the focus became food and speech.

As a second language learner she is currently focused on the link to health and language and how to encourage others to bring more language into their homes; with the loss of our language and many of our speakers, especially our women. The basic programming in school and community work has taken her on a very humbling journey.

She left her health region career and yet remains a registered dental therapist to concentrate on home, language, and family. Today working with families at the Little Peoples Learning Lodge while holding the Education Portfolio, utilizing her position to deliver and implement language in the school's daily curriculum of "language lives here" philosophy.

She connects with Mother Earth and the environment working outdoors, camping, gardening, picking, and preserving medicines with a focus on traditional food and the inclusion of medicines in our daily cooking. One day to live off the grid and have a Nakota cook-book for all to use when strengthening our roles in the home around food and a focus on diabetic friendly ways. She continues her work on the community language plan as our next generation depends on it.

Micade' ne Makoce tawa Her

### **ABSTRACT:** "If not now, then when?" As language and our way of knowing is deeply rooted in the land, it awaits us.

The last few years we have lost our dedicated women language supports. Devastatingly we lost our last Nakota speaker this year; today to maintain our language we are having to refer to the written word, orthography, and other communities. It takes dedication and patience, community involvement, and great number of prayers to see this grow in strength.

Our approach is to included language in all we do; even if just one word. Constructing plans to implement language back in our community until it is a part of our daily living is the primary. Language lives in our little school with the parents and in the various activities which are part of our school vision, to provide the opportunity for language to be heard. The traditional and contemporary approach to provide the language through uses of video's or our invited language givers from other communities is how we deliver today.

In all the different opportunities in my careers participating with families, the most rewarding has been through education. The links to language through all activities or ways of living over the past years in story, song, art, food or ceremonies and life ways of our ancestors; the language presence is felt and heard. This has encouraged us to remain diligent and has provide personal growth for myself and family.

Reconnecting woman and children back to the ways of living and knowing will and needs to continue. With primary focus on revitalization of our language, traditional foods, and the life ways of our ancestors our Nakota language will thrive in the homes; for if we do not continue our reclamation of the language and our ways of knowing and doing now, then when. We have come this far.

## PRESENTER

### Glen M. Wasicuna



Glenn is a member of the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Manitoba, Canada. After a career in journalism, he decided to move to the US and became an educator focusing on Dakota language, and history. Presently, he teaches at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Glen also teaches and consults on Dakota with other Dakota communities and organizations: Sisseton Wahpeton College, Tiospa Zina Tribal School, Gustavus Adolphus College, Flandreau, Santee, Spirit Lake, University of Minnesota, Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota, and the Minnesota Historical Society. Glenn has written the foreword to book- Mni Sota Makoce:

The Land of the Dakota (2012) which won the Hognander Minnesota History Award, Minnesota Book Award, and a Leadership in History Award. He presently serves as the Lead Translator and Cultural Advisor for a scholarly edition of Dakota letters funded by a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

### **ABSTRACT:** The Dakota Language Then and Now

An overview of the Dakota language in a historical context will be shared with participants, and why we are in danger of becoming a word nation. We start teaching the language by identifying colors, numbers and animals and you pass the grade and go on to next grade with added vocabulary, why? We will talk about this. Does this method create speakers? This presentation will explain the different obstacles we need to recognize and overcome so we may become fluent in Dakota.



# YOUTH AGENDA

JUNE 2, 2021

# YOUTH CONFERENCE

**7:30am @ site**

Pipe Ceremony & Protocol with Elders

**9:00am - 9:30am**

MC: Sheldon Buffalo & Co-MC: Youth Dru Swain  
Welcoming Virtual Participants  
Grand Entry & Introductions of Dignitaries

**9:30am - 10:00am**

Virtual Break (30min)

**10:00am - 10:45am**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Tommy Christian

**10:45am - 11:00am**

Virtual Break

**11:00am - 12:00pm**

Empowering the Youth through Language & Culture - Tomecina Escarcega + Questions

**12:00pm - 1:00pm**

Virtual Lunch Break & Dance Demonstrations

**1:00pm - 2:00pm**

Dakota Traditional Games - Chris Standing

**2:00pm - 2:15pm**

Virtual Break

**2:15pm - 3:00pm**

Special Guest Speaker: Lois Standing

**3:00pm - 3:30pm**

MC's Closing Remarks  
Eagle Staff Exits



## EMCEE



### Sheldon Buffalo

Hau Mitakuapi,

My name is Sheldon Buffalo I am a WaPaHa Ska Dakota Oyate band member. Ive been walking this good life for 45 years. I am a Dakota man who believes in and was taught to walk in a humble way with compassion for others. I do not refer to myself with any title except for a common man. I share the little knowledge I have with the male youth in my community. and share land base teachings as well as talking and sharing circles with older youth and men.

I'm a father of 5, grandfather of 4. My Kungsi (grandmother) name was Helen FlyingBuffalo. My Unka (grandfather) was James Littlecrow. I worked in Saskatoon majority of my life and recently started working in the community as part of the Whitecap security team.

I have been walking the red road for 13 years and live a traditional sober lifestyle. I help my community by teaching the young boys to learn some ceremonial songs. I really enjoy helping others, looking after my family and the community. In my spare time I enjoy golfing and attending Pow wows.

Pidamiye do (thank you).

## YOUTH EMCEE



### Dru Swain

Dru Swain is a 16-year-old youth from Whitecap Dakota First Nation, he is of mixed heritage Dakota/ Lakota/ African American. Dru attends Grade 10 classes at Holy Cross High School, Saskatoon. Dru loves playing basketball, and in his spare time enjoys the company of his pets.

Dru grew up appreciating his Dakota language and culture, he credits his Kusi-Dakota language teacher-Vivian Anderson as his mentor in learning the language, cultural protocols, and customs. Dru recognizes that the Dakota way of life and his Christian faith have allowed him to walk in balance. Dru has showed interest in public speaking and has shared his personal experiences with racism and the effects it had on him, he hopes to continue to advocate and be a voice on racism. Dru aspires to be a professional basketball player with a degree in structural engineering.





## PRESENTER



### Tommy Christian

Champion dancer, politician and pow-wow MC, Tommy Christian from Poplar MT is well respected in all three areas. Tommy has remained grounded, humble, and gained vast amounts of knowledge from teachings of the elders. Christian will share his knowledge and guidance on how he prepares mentally, physically, and spiritually for dancing and how that translates into preparing for life.

## PRESENTER



### Lois Standing

Lois Standing is from the Wahpeton Dakota Nation in Northern Saskatchewan and currently lives in Saskatoon with her family.

She is the Project Lead for the Northern Dakota Language Revitalization Group. A group she co-founded with her father to support language revitalization in her community. She is a graduate from the University of Saskatchewan having completed a Master of Business Administration and has worked for several years as a consultant in areas of community and economic development.

Lois is also a multifaceted artist. Her late mother was a passionate and proud storyteller of her family's history and culture and shared these stories with her. As a result, Lois has a deep respect for her family's matriarchal stories and ensures these influences are incorporated in the projects she creates.

#### **ABSTRACT:** Community-based efforts with First Language Speakers to Revitalize the Language

Over the past year Lois has worked with her father and other first language speakers to initiate projects to connect first language speakers with community members to share and reinvigorate the language. They created the Northern Dakota Language Group to develop language revitalization projects to address the decline of speakers and to increase speakers in the community. Weekend language learning gatherings were held in the community to connect language speakers with members. The language gatherings supported strengthening kinship, protocols, family stories, and land connections. The presentation will include the Northern Dakota Language Group's community-based language practise to date and discuss the importance of connections made from resourcing first language speakers.

Special guest presenter Cy Standing will also be joining Lois' presentation.



# PRESENTER

## Tomecina Escarcega



Haŋ Mitakúyapi,  
My name is Tomecina Escarcega, I am the youngest daughter of Tom Sr. and Esther Escarcega. I am of the Nahoboni and Yotachiini clan of Nageezi, NM and born into the Ihaŋktuŋwaŋ Dakḥóta Oyate of Poplar, MT. I am of the Chavez, Plateru, Spotted Dog, and Escarcega family of Nageezi, NM and Poplar, MT.

I was raised in the community of Poplar Waḥčiŋča Wákpa and Riverside Mákha Iču community where my parents still reside. I have one daughter, her name is Tomeya, she is 12 years old and quite the language activists herself. We make our home in the community of Marty, SD.

I am currently the Marty Indian School Middle School Dakḥóta Language teacher. I have been teaching at Marty Indian School for two consecutive years, going on my third year. Previously, I worked at Poplar Public Schools for three years as the High School Dakḥóta Language and Cultural teacher.

I am very passionate about my Dakḥóta language, my family, my child and the communities that I work in. I truly believe language and culture is our identity as Dakḥóta, Nakḥóta, and Lakḥóta people. We owe it to ourselves to find who we are truly meant to be through our language and culture. There is nothing more beautiful than to know who and where you come from.

### **ABSTRACT:** Empowering the Youth through Language and Culture

When you learn your language and culture, a lot of connecting and healing happens within. Learning what tribe and band you come from gives you an individual sense of belonging and more importantly, self-identity. When you have self-identity and knowledge of history of your people, you feel proud to be indigenous. Proud of the tribe(s) you come from! There is no definite right and wrong way to learn your indigenous ways of life. The more you learn about your language and culture, you'll find out there are spiritual and cultural protocols to follow. This is when life lessons on how to conduct yourself as young men and young women should fall into place. Have an open mind and heart when you learn your language and culture, it's up to you to begin practicing your indigenous ways. Personally, this is all I know from experience growing up with my language and culture; it helped mold me to be the woman I am today.

# PRESENTER



## Chris Standing

Chris Standing is Dakota & Nehiyaw from the communities Beardy's & Okemasis First Nation and Wahpeton Dakota Nation. Chris has a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. He's been a grass dancer since the age of 5 years old. Chris is also enrolled in the University of Minnesota, learning the Dakota language. Currently Chris is the Community Connections Coordinator at Wanuskewin Heritage Park and works at the SaskTel Centre in the audio visual department as a camera operator for the Saskatchewan Rush, Saskatoon Blades & Saskatchewan Rattlers.

### **ABSTRACT:** Traditional Games

Traditional games provided the teachings and skill development required for survival on the Northern Plains. The traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle was incredibly demanding and required superb levels of physical fitness. Come learn how games played an important role in educating the young by developing physical skills and encouraging social development.

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