

Largest Native-serving direct scholarship provider in the United States announces its 50th Anniversary Gala

Celebrating five decades of impacting Native higher education and Tribal self-determination

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, UNITED STATES, February 1, 2023

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Native Forward Scholars Fund, previously known as American Indian Graduate Center, is proud to celebrate its 50th Anniversary Gala. Originally scheduled for 2019 but delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Native Forward is proud to host its 50th Anniversary Gala: Honoring Our Legacy on February 22, 2023, at 7 p.m., at the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.



The nationally based nonprofit and the largest direct scholarship provider to Native students in the U.S. has been funding Native students' educational journeys for five decades. Celebrating over 50 years, Native Forward will be Honoring Our Legacy by recognizing its founders, special Hall of Fame inductees, and those making an impact for, and in, Indian Country. Founded on the core tenet of representation of Native people within all sectors of society, Native Forward will continue to empower Native people and communities through higher education resources and advocacy.

"This celebration honors our visionary founders Robert Bennett and John Rainer, as well as all who have contributed to our story. We recognize and celebrate the many lives of those that have been instrumental in building our legacy. From the original four employees working out of a trailer in Taos Pueblo to the many board members, directors, and staff who built an organization that thrives today. We invite all to join us in this event to celebrate our history, our

shared stories, and our future,” said Chief Executive Officer of Native Forward, Angelique Albert (Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes).

Native Forward has empowered over 20,000 scholars from more than 500 Tribes in all 50 states and contributed to over 1,600 law degrees and more than 2,200 Ph.D. degrees. Native Forward alumni are now among the most influential Native leaders in the U.S., including:

- Deb Haaland, U.S. Secretary of the Interior
- Dr. Cynthia Chavez Lamar, Director of the Smithsonian Institute’s National Museum of the American Indian
- Fawn Sharp, President of the National Congress of American Indians
- Dr. Henrietta Mann, award-winning academic and activist

The formal event will include music, fine dining, and a celebration of our founders, educational warriors, and the inaugural class of Native Forward’s Hall of Fame. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with Tribal leaders, higher education change agents and advocates, and policy and decision makers. The fundraising event will also host a silent and live auction with contributions of fine art from Native artists and Native Forward alum nationwide.

More information on event details, tickets, and sponsorships can be found at NativeForward.org.

Native Forward Scholars Fund is the largest direct scholarship provider to Native scholars in the U.S. We are committed to creating impact in Native communities by providing access to quality education for Native students. For over 53 years, it has empowered over 20,000 scholars from more than 500 Tribes in all 50 states and contributed to over 1,600 law degrees and more than 2,200 Ph.D. degrees. Through scholarship funding and holistic support, Native Forward has increased the graduation rates of undergraduate students to 69% and graduate students to 95%, compared to the national average of 41% for Native students. To learn more, visit NativeForward.org.

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