

Sandra Begay: Trailblazing Native American Innovator Ascends to Distinguished Member of Technical Staff

Sandra Begay advances to Distinguished Member of Technical Staff at Sandia Labs, championing Native American energy independence and STEM leadership.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, USA, August 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sandra Begay, an innovating force in energy analysis, economic development, and education, has been promoted to the prestigious role of Distinguished Member of Technical Staff at [Sandia National Laboratories](#). This honor recognizes her groundbreaking contributions and unwavering dedication to empowering Native American communities and women in STEM.



Sandra Begay, Distinguished Member of Technical Staff at Sandia National Laboratories, renowned for her contributions to Native American energy independence and STEM leadership.

Championing Native American Energy Independence



Sandra is a visionary leader whose expertise and mentorship are critical to building a sustainable and equitable future."

Dr. Arun Majumdar, Dean of Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability

Sandra Begay's vision to empower Native American tribes through energy independence led to the creation of the [Indian Energy \(IE\) program](#) at Sandia National Laboratories. This revolutionary initiative supports the Department of Energy's Indian Energy Policy and Programs, which now manages over \$75 million annually and reports directly to the U.S. Secretary of Energy. Sandra has driven the development of 27 unique tribal energy strategic plans and renewable energy systems, fostering economic growth and sustainability across Native

American communities.

A Stellar Academic and Professional Journey

Sandra's career is anchored by her academic excellence, with an M.S. in Structural Engineering from Stanford University and a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of New Mexico. Her journey has included significant roles such as Executive Director of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society and Director of the Environmental Health Department for the City of Albuquerque (Sandia) (UNM Rainforest).

Mentorship: Shaping the Leaders of Tomorrow

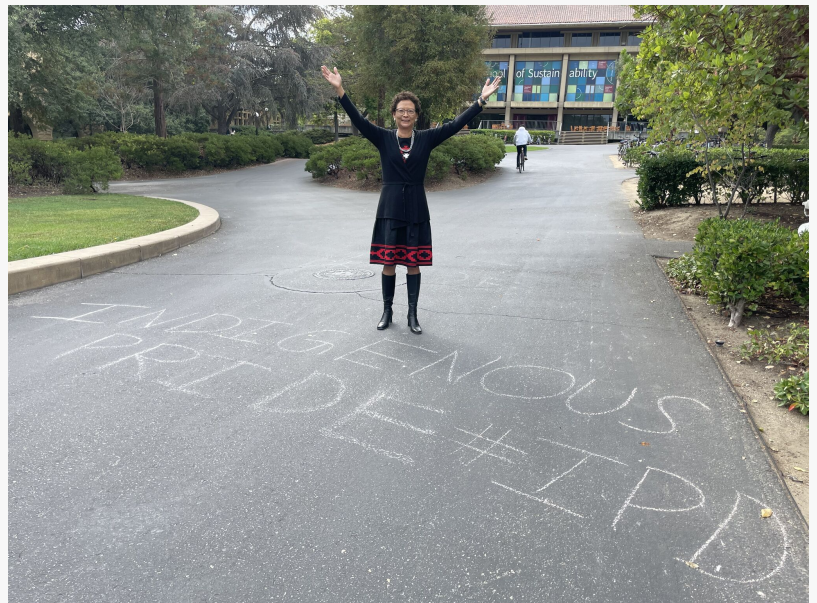
Sandra has mentored 52 interns, many of whom have ascended to leadership positions at Sandia, the Department of Energy, and within their tribes. Her mentorship has been a catalyst for change, inspiring a new generation of Native American scientists and engineers. Her influence extends beyond her immediate work, encouraging young Indigenous students to pursue STEM careers (Winds of Change).

National Recognition and Leadership

Sandra's expertise and leadership are celebrated on national stages. She serves alongside luminaries such as Condoleezza Rice on the [Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability Council](#) and holds esteemed positions, including Board Chair of UNM Rainforest Innovations (UNMRI), Regent on the University of New Mexico Board of Regents, and member of the National Academies Committee on Women in Engineering, Science, and Medicine. This year, Sandra presented innovative practices to U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm and co-founded the National



Sandra Begay with her interns at Navajo Nation, Monument Valley, where she mentors the next generation of Native American leaders in STEM.



Sandra Begay celebrates Indigenous People's Day at her graduate school alma mater, Stanford University, with students, staff, and faculty from the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability.

Laboratories Women of Color Forum (Diverse: Issues In Higher Education).

Voices of Praise

“In any discussion regarding energy development in Indian Country, Sandra Begay’s name is mentioned. She is known as a strong supporter and mentor. She is a great and deep source of technical resources,” said Dr. Tommy Jones, DOE Indian Energy (former Sandia Intern).

“Sandra is a visionary, an inspiration, and a true leader. As a member of the Advisory Council for the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, her immense experience and expertise that has come from decades of promoting equitable access to renewable energy and mentoring future generations of energy engineers is critical to our efforts to address the globe’s most pressing sustainability challenges. As we look to build a sustainable and equitable future, Sandra is a unique kind of leader that not only works for innovative solutions but also serves as a source of inspiration to all with whom she collaborates. Indeed, her emphasis on having the right set of values has shaped our thinking at the Doerr School,” shared Dr. Arun Majumdar, Dean of Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability.

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