

2025 INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AWARDS

EXTENDED DEADLINE NOMINATION FORM

* Nomination fee will be returned if your candidate is not selected.

Issue will be printed: winners receive 2 magazines

As a special thank-you for your nomination, organizations that submit a candidate for any Profiles in Leadership Journal award will receive a complimentary full-page ad in the upcoming issue—no strings attached.

You can use the space to highlight your brand, share your values, support recruiting efforts, or feature any leadership initiative you choose.

For over two decades, *Profiles in Leadership Journal* has honored individuals who have blazed new trails, led with purpose, mentored others, and advanced leadership in the workplace and community. In our upcoming third-quarter issue, *PLJ* will celebrate Native American Indigenous Leaders with the fifth annual Native American Indigenous Leadership Awards.

Profiles in Leadership Journal proudly recognizes these exceptional individuals whose contributions drive organizational success. We invite you to nominate one or more team members who exemplify outstanding Native American Indigenous leadership through advocacy, perseverance, legacy-building, and notable achievements.

Why Nominate?

Your nomination is an opportunity to publicly honor the exceptional talents, determined ambition, and remarkable accomplishments of distinguished Native American Indigenous Leaders. This is a meaningful moment to celebrate and elevate the voices of those shaping their communities and organizations.

Who Are These Outstanding Individuals?

Nominated by employers or colleagues, Native American Indigenous Leaders are confident, determined, high-performing, and purpose-driven professionals. They create value for coworkers, customers, communities, and the organizations they dedicate their talents.

Throughout its history, *Profiles in Leadership Journal* has celebrated thousands of leaders worldwide who are making a difference. The profiles featured in this upcoming edition will honor our fifth group of Native American Indigenous Leadership Award recipients. These recognitions celebrate individual achievement and enhance the reputations of organizations that encourage, empower, and support these trailblazing leaders.

Celebrate leadership. Honor legacy. Nominate today.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: July 18, 2025

Your nomination allows us to showcase and honor these Indigenous Leaders and recognize the inclusive organizations that support their success.

Our crystal award (see above) provides each recipient with a lasting reminder of this prestigious honor. It will be shipped directly to your designee for internal celebrations at organizations around the globe.

Questions? Contact James Rector Publisher

Email: publisher@leadershipjournal.com **Office:** 440-892-0444 **Mobile:** 440-662-9770

EXTENDED DEADLINE NOMINATION FORM

Complete Your Nomination in 5 Steps

1. Provide important nomination information on pages 3 & 4 of this document.

Nominations will be reviewed and judged based on the brief bio you provide, which may include contributions and achievements in support of colleagues, customers, or communities, and in other areas the nominator deems important:

- Professional Achievement
- Innovation
- Mentorship
- Community Involvement
- Leadership
- Pipeline development
- Legacy

2. Complete the Nomination Processing Fee online

There is a \$495 processing fee per nomination which must be received by the nomination deadline. If your nominee is not selected your nomination fee will be refunded. You can pay online here: <https://buy.stripe.com/bIYdTGfJFggj9e83ce>

3. Upload* Your Completed Nomination document by July 18, 2025 at <https://leadershipjournal.com/nail-nomination-upload/>.

* Nomination forms must be submitted/uploaded via *PLJ*'s secure online portal.
Email submissions will not be accepted!

4. Recognize Your Leaders with Confidence

We understand that today's communications require care and consideration. That's why *Profiles in Leadership Journal* offers all nominating organizations the opportunity to review and approve their award winner's profile prior to publication.

Your organization remains in full control of how your leadership is portrayed — we're your partner in celebrating excellence, not a source of concern.

It's that Easy

If your nominee should be selected as a **2025 Native American Indigenous Leadership** award recipient, we will notify both your successful nominee and the person who nominated him or her. We'll also send each nominee a Question & Answer packet. He or she will be asked to answer a few questions, write an optional essay, and provide two high-resolution photographs of him- or herself, as well as a digital version of your organization's logo. Each nominee's photograph, essay, and professional information will appear on a dedicated full page in our Q3 issue. Just complete the Nomination area on pages 3 and 4. Links for upload and payment are on page 4.

DEADLINE for Nominations:
July 18, 2025

2025 INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AWARDS

EXTENDED DEADLINE NOMINATION FORM

(Please fill in all form fields and **be sure to save this file** when completed)

Before You Begin

As part of our collaborative process, your organization will have the chance to review and approve the final profile of your award winner before publication. This ensures alignment with your internal messaging and gives your team full confidence to nominate with peace of mind.

A. Nominee Information

Nominee's Name: ☐ Mr., ☐ Ms., ☐ Mrs., ☐ Dr. _____
(as it should appear in print and please check prefix that applies)

Job Title: _____

Organization Name: _____

Full Corporate Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Contact info for Nominee's
Administrative Assistant: _____

B. Nominated by:

Note: The nominator must be the primary point of contact for all editorial communications. Using a company executive as the nominator will not increase a nominee's chances of selection. He or she will be evaluated on merit alone. Please ensure that the person whose information is entered below is available to manage all communications related to the nomination and award process.

Nominator's Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Organization Name: _____

Corporate Mailing Address: _____

Office Phone Number: _____

Mobile Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Secondary Contact Name & Email: _____

EXTENDED DEADLINE NOMINATION FORM

C. Nominee Tribal Information

Tribal Affiliation(s):

D. Tell Us Why You Chose this Nominee

Briefly explain why your nominee should be recognized as a 2025 Indigenous Leadership awardee: (300 words max.)

Provide a brief bio that highlights your nominee's contributions and accomplishments, which may include examples of professional achievement, innovation, mentorship, community involvement, leadership, pipeline development and legacy. (500 words max.)

E. Final Profile Approval

Please confirm your preference regarding the final profile approval process:

- ☐ **Yes**, we would like to review and approve the final profile before publication.
- ☐ **No**, we trust the editorial process and do not require a final review.

Note: If "Yes" is selected, publication will not proceed without organizational approval.

EXTENDED DEADLINE NOMINATION FORM

F. Nomination Processing Fee

NOMINATION FEE: \$495:

After uploading your Nomination form, please be sure to go to our secure payment portal where you can submit your entry fee payment.



Please upload this document (do not email)
at: <https://leadershipjournal.com/nail-nomination-upload/>



Submit \$495 application fee payment at:
<https://buy.stripe.com/bIYdTGfJFggj9e83ce>

If you need an invoice for payment please email
James Rector: publisher@leadershipjournal.com

Submitted nomination and fee must be received by July 18, 2025
Emailed submissions will not be accepted!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Will our organization have the opportunity to review the award winner's profile before publication?**
Yes. We offer every nominating organization the chance to review and approve the final profile of their award winner before publication. We understand the importance of alignment with internal communications and public messaging. Your team remains in full control of what is shared publicly.
- Will the nomination fee be refunded if our candidate is not selected?**
Yes. Your nomination fee will be returned in full if your candidate is not selected.
- Can my organization nominate more than one 2025 Indigenous Leader?**
Yes. Each organization may nominate up to four (4) candidates for this award.
- How will my organization be notified of our nominee's acceptance?**
Confirmation that your organization's nominee has been accepted will be sent to the nominator and the award winner along with the Question & Answer Form.
- Is purchasing an advertisement in the Q3 2025 issue of PLJ required if our nominee is accepted?**
No advertising purchase is required.
- Will my organization have an opportunity to revise each nominee's profile after it will appear in the Q3 2025 issue?**
Yes, if you have any edits or changes that you would like to make to your page(s) after the magazine is posted online please email steveveto@leadershipjournal.com.
- Will we be able to order printable pdfs of our nominee's profile layout?**
Yes. If you wish to receive a FREE pdf of your nominees layout from the Q3 magazine, please email a request to steveveto@leadershipjournal.com after the issue has been launched.

Each Winner will receive a full page in the Q3 issue

Here are samples of some past winners' profile pages.

AkinSM

Devin S. Sikes
Counsel



Education (degrees & institutions): BA, University of Kansas; JD, University of Kansas School of Law

Company Name: Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

Industry: Law

Company CEO: Kim Koopersmith

Number of Employees: 1,700+

Your Location (if different from above): Washington, DC & Houston, TX

Words you live by: Make yourself proud.

Who is your personal hero? Irvin Darge, my great-grandfather

What book are you reading? *There There* by Tommy Orange

What was your first job? Lawn care

Favorite charity: Habitat for Humanity

Interests/Hobbies: Art, music, nature; bonsai, running

Family: My wife (Sheebani) and sons (Bodhi and Silas)

Mentors matter. So do their experiences.

I descend from the Cherokee Nation's Deer Clan, whose members served as keepers, trackers, and hunters of deer, as well as messengers, in their community. As deer bones and antlers became important sources of trade over time, deer clan members became ideal candidates to help grow commerce. It seems only fitting that generations later I became an international trade lawyer, a profession that allows me to help facilitate trade, just as my ancestors did.

Traveling abroad drove me to consider international trade law as a profession. I gravitated toward local markets, eager to interact with people and learn more about them. Hungry for more of these experiences, I decided to attend law school and study international trade law.

But I had no lawyers in the family and needed a mentor. I attended the University of Kansas School of Law because it gave me a chance to learn from Raj Bhala, one of the world's leading international trade law scholars. His passion for international trade law ignited a spark in me. So did his knack for developing new, creative solutions to old problems. Both attributes continue to inspire me.

Other mentors followed. I had the privilege of clerking for Judge Judith M. Barzilay of the U.S. Court of International Trade and Judge Evan J. Wallach of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, two

dedicated public servants who lived very different lives personally and professionally before reaching the bench. She picked international trade law as a second career when few women practiced in the area, all while raising young kids; he became a lawyer after distinguished military service, substituting active combat for trial work. Those experiences gave way to unique perspectives about the law and life, and I benefited immensely by learning from both.

A similar theme emerged when I worked at the U.S. Department of Commerce. There, attorneys from all walks of life took care to train juniors (like me) and foster collegiality. A shared passion for public service brought us together, and their perspectives helped me better understand the different ways to contribute to our work together.

At Akin, it has been no different: the unique experiences of my mentors have served as guideposts, marking the different paths for me to consider as I navigate my career. That strong mentorship has in turn given me the tools needed to serve as a mentor, a role that I cherish.

Lessons come in many forms and from many sources thanks to our rich tapestries of experiences. I suspect that my ancestors learned that same lesson when trade took them to communities beyond their own. I try to pass on that lesson, too.

Questions? Contact James Rector *Publisher*

Email: publisher@leadershipjournal.com **Office:** 440-892-0444 **Mobile:** 440-662-9770



Education (degrees & institutions): Doctor of Laws honoris causa, Gonzaga University; MBA, Gonzaga University; BA, Native American Studies, Liberal Arts, and Human Services, Salish Kootenai College

Company Name: Native Forward Scholars Fund

Industry: Nonprofit – Education

Company CEO: Angelique Albert

Company Headquarters Location: Albuquerque, NM

Number of Employees: 34

Words you live by: “To recognize that all of us are wonderful human beings shaped by different backgrounds, different ways of looking at the world, but still human beings.” – Dr. Henrietta Mann

Who is your personal hero? US Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland

What book are you reading? *A Promise Kept* by Robert J. Miller and Robbie Ethridge

What was your first job? I worked for my family’s concession stand at the Arlee Pow Wow

Favorite charity: Native Forward Scholars Fund

Interests/Hobbies: I enjoy creating traditional and contemporary Native art, as well as dancing traditionally, and being in nature.

Family: I have three brilliant sons and two amazing grandsons.

This CEO and first generation college student knows how to uplift and support her Native community

My path to lead Native Forward Scholars Fund was not linear, but every experience I have had along the way has prepared me to be an effective CEO. My academic background—including three degrees from Salish Kootenai College as well as an MBA and honorary Doctor of Laws from Gonzaga University—coupled with my professional roles in criminal justice advocacy, gaming industry leadership, philanthropy, and as an award-winning artist have uniquely positioned me to drive meaningful change.

My journey is also deeply rooted in personal history. As the first in my family to graduate college, I believe strongly in investing in higher education to support the next generation of Native leaders. Doing so has intergenerational effects that contribute to greater economic mobility, self-determination, and Tribal sovereignty for scholars and Tribal communities.

This is precisely why Native Forward Scholars Fund seeks to meet the unmet financial needs of every Native scholar. Our goal is to empower the next generation of Native leaders by providing financial support and comprehensive services from admission

to graduation for every Native student wanting to pursue higher education. We don’t just give out scholarships—we are breaking down systemic barriers to higher education.

Native Forward awards up to \$15 million in scholarships annually and has awarded more than \$400 million to over 22,000 students since our inception in 1969. We pair these scholarships with meaningful, culturally relevant student support and programming that has succeeded in increasing the graduation rates of undergraduate students to 69%—compared to the national average of 41% for Native students—and increasing the rate for graduate students to 95%.

As Native leaders, it is our responsibility to leverage our experiences and skills to uplift future generations. What I see at Native Forward is a commitment to building a supportive structure for Native scholars and alumni alike, a community that supports one another and celebrates moments of perseverance and success. When we have representation across industries and in spaces that have historically excluded Native people, we can bring about meaningful change.



Britany Riley-Swanbeck

Senior Associate



WILMER CUTLER PICKERING HALE AND DORR LLP

Education (degrees & institutions): JD, Stanford Law School; BA, William Jewell College

Company Name: Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale & Dorr LLP

Industry: Legal

Company CEO: Managing Partner, Anjan Sahni

Company Headquarters Location: Washington, DC

Number of Employees: 1,100

Your Location (if different from above): Washington, DC and San Francisco, CA

Words you live by: "Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point." — C.S. Lewis

Who is your personal hero? I don't really believe in having personal heroes because people are flawed, and I think it is important to honor and uplift the work that people do without putting them on a pedestal. That said, I've always been inspired by John Lewis.

What book are you reading? Nothing at the moment, but eagerly anticipating Rebecca Nagle's upcoming book *By the Fire We Carry: The Generations-Long Fight for Justice on Native Land*

What was your first job? My first job was as a seasonal worker selling fireworks out of a fireworks tent in Kansas

Favorite charity: Native American Rights Fund; NAACP Legal Defense Fund

Interests/Hobbies: Reading, learning the Cherokee language and history, playing recreational sports and board

Family: I am the proud wife of Sonja Riley-Swanbeck, daughter of Michael Riley and Rochelle Donald, and granddaughter of Ruth and Robert Riley and Eugenia Turner-McBride



Her community supported her in her dream of becoming a lawyer. Now she's helping others

Despite the name on the diploma, I have long known my law degree does not belong to me alone. My career also belongs to my ancestors, my community, and future generations.

I was inspired to become a lawyer by the legacy of lawyers and activists before me. As a Black and Cherokee woman, my peoples' histories demonstrate the ways the law can be either a tool to uphold systemic injustices or a tool to dismantle colonialism and advance equal justice. I grew up less than an hour away from the Brown v. Board of Education school house museum. The Cherokee Nation has a long and complicated history with the United States and specifically the U.S. Supreme Court. Those histories have always felt incredibly present. So I've always idolized the advocates who fought for equal justice and to hold the U.S. government to its promises to Tribal Nations.

I also became a lawyer because throughout my life I have seen the ways the law and related policies affect the everyday existence of people in my communities. The historical legacy of racism and colonialism are still alive and well in the lives of Black and Indigenous people. It affects our lives in countless ways—from where we live, our educational and economic opportunities, health outcomes, interactions with law enforce-

ment, and more. I became a lawyer because I wanted to use my gifts to help my community in the best way that I can. But while I became a lawyer for my community, that same community has also been my primary source of support on this journey. I'm a first-generation graduate and lawyer, and at every stage I've had the incredible support of my family, neighbors, co-workers, and just about every other Indigenous and/or Black person I've met on my journey. I could not have accomplished half as much without them.

In so many ways my life as a lawyer looks nothing like the world I grew up in. After all, my first job in the legal profession was at the United States Supreme Court, and I'd only ever met one or two lawyers before that. Despite that, it is crucial to me that my legal practice reflects where (and who) I come from. I want to honor those who came before me, to work to protect my people, and to encourage other BIPOC lawyers. For me, that looks like taking every opportunity to support tribal sovereignty and equal justice. It means committing to mentoring future generations. And on an interpersonal level, it means treating my colleagues and peers with respect and doing my best to live by the Cherokee cultural value of Gadugi—working together for the common good.