

***THE* Plant.**



**RETURN TO
THE HEART
FOUNDATION**



standing together for climate justice

THE Plant.

**RETURN TO
THE HEART
FOUNDATION**

The Plant, a global home for climate solutions, is partnering with Return to the Heart Foundation, a foundation created by Native womxn for Native womxn and girls, with our nexus being a vision for climate justice and healing of the land and people.



“Indigenous wisdom
is critical to saving
Mother Earth.”

Sarah Eagle Heart

Co-Founder and CEO, Return to the Heart Foundation



Indigenous people are the Climate Justice Warriors of today.

Indigenous people have the solutions to care for Mother Earth. Our Indigenous, matriarchal worldview distinguishes us as caretakers -- not consumers -- of the land, actualizing solutions grounded in Native wisdom. Our stories and storytellers hold real power. They provide the deep, ancestral knowledge **we all need to live in relationship with the land**. In partnership, we can uplift and shift to the forefront the voices that carry healing for the climate and for our planet.



In partnership, we can create a space at The Plant to implement In-House led programs that lift up Indigenous voices, giving Indigenous peoples platforms to share the stories, wisdom, worldview, and insights that are so desperately needed to heal the Earth and to heal the people.



We can share healing stories.

- ◆ Catalyze reconciliation and healing by telling our powerful stories rooted in climate justice, Indigenous values, wisdom, and connections to community and land.
- ◆ Develop a filming and recording workspace for Indigenous people to co-create platforms using technology to maximize their stories through various mediums, such as podcasts, live streams, film, and TV.
- ◆ Capitalize on exhibition and event spaces to spotlight and advance Indigenous art, fashion, and live music.





The leaders of Return to the Heart have already begun experimenting with storytelling in Virtual Reality (VR)-enabled experiences that allow people to not only see, but also inhabit the transformation that is possible. Our VR plans include creating visits to Native communities and sacred sites. These experiences can be utilized in many settings, including the corporate sector, philanthropic spaces, the academic arena, and beyond. Building platforms that bring experiential and heart-changing education, we can usher in a new era of responsibility and caring for our Mother Earth.



We can create healing spaces.

- ◆ Establish a memorial to acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of the land The Plant now occupies. U.S. lands were violently taken from Native peoples without consent and at a great cost -- one that continues to impact today's generation and those to come. This acknowledgement is an important act, a spiritual act designed to increase understanding and healing around this important but overlooked history.



- ◆ Create an Indigenous Storytellers Amphitheater. This would be a shared space for everyone, but it would be dedicated to the Indigenous people of the land. Strategically placed placards with important historical information would illuminate the history and contributions of Native peoples that are not widely known to the general public. This space should also be made available to Native American tribes and communities for pow wows and other cultural events.



- ◆ Develop The Plant's landscape with consideration for Native plants and medicines. In this space, placards would educate visitors on the plants, their history, and their traditional uses. This kind of intentional, healing landscape will underscore the relational connection between the people and the Earth -- and will serve as a model for taking real steps toward regenerating healing to the land.





“

The voices of Native womxn and girls carry the power to bring solutions and healing to Native communities and beyond. We can only heal as a nation by acknowledging, listening to, and respecting the first people of this land.

”

Gina Jackson

Co-Founder and CEO, Return to the Heart Foundation



Traditional Indigenous ways are today's climate innovations.

Return to the Heart Foundation brings powerful climate innovations and solutions rooted in ancestral **Indigenous knowledge that regards Earth, water, air, plants, and animals as relatives.** We have created fellowships that uplift and amplify trailblazing Native womxn who are using this knowledge to champion climate solutions, narrative change, civic engagement, and restorative and regenerative economic development in Native communities.

Through fellowships and grants, Return to the Heart opens doors to innovate and catalyze Native womxn-led initiatives through access to capital, asset development, climate justice, civic engagement (power building), and narrative change. These are but a few examples of the many changemakers and projects we support.



Morning Star Gali (Ajumawi Band of Pit River)

Advocate for Indigenous issues, such as missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW), climate justice, gender justice, and sacred site protection. Project director of Restoring Justice for Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Water Organizer for Save CA Salmon.



Elise Gerrish (Muckleshoot)

Educator working to restore Native people's traditional connection to the natural world through Indigenous plant and food education. Advocate for revitalizing Indigenous plants, foods, and languages as a form of healing for Native peoples.



Allie Young (Diné)

Storyteller and writer on a mission to increase authentic representation of Native Americans in TV, film, and mainstream media in a world where they are largely invisible, underrepresented, and misrepresented. Co-founder of Protect the Sacred.



Sivan Alyra Rose (Apache/Puerto Rican)

Actress, model, artist, and activist using her platform to raise awareness about Native American issues, especially the need for mental health care support and resources for Native American youth. First Native American female lead in a TV series.



We bring a worldwide network of changemakers.

We have relationships in communities rich in ancestral Indigenous knowledge, both in the U.S. and around the world, including Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Our strong and longstanding relationships with the UN will be particularly powerful, especially during UN General Assembly Climate Week and other global convenings. We are also cultivating relationships with NASA and other powerful institutional actors using transformative justice and community-building values.



We bring relationships with media partners and influencers.

We have developed personal relationships and impactful partnerships with cutting edge media, artists with global reach, and influencers who are passionate about climate justice to help spread and support the work of Indigenous womxn.





We bring a bold vision to rebalance for racial equity.

The global COVID pandemic has brought inequity and the climate crisis into stark relief. It is no accident that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities have borne a disproportionate burden of COVID infection and death; it is no accident that BIPOC communities feel the effects of climate change the most, and it is no accident that BIPOC communities have been the target of mass shooting violence.



There is a resurgence of violent eco-facism among white supremacist groups, who blame BIPOC people and immigrants for overproduction and resource utilization. The 2019 massacres in El Paso and Christchurch were perpetrated by white nationalists who espoused these views.

“The common theme is this link between a yearning for purity in the environmental sphere and a desire for racialized purity in the social sphere.”

- Peter Staudenmaier, professor of history at Marquette University



The racial crisis in the U.S. specifically is based on the birth of our country and the government that took places and people -- and decimated those that stood in its way. In order to heal and rebuild, we need to shift the narrative, so **those who can make a difference are able to make a difference by sharing the stories that will change the world.**

Social justice and environmental movements must partner with BIPOC communities to get there -- but so far, that's not happening.



The largest environmental philanthropies are giving just 1.3% of their U.S. climate dollars to BIPOC-led environmental justice groups. **The Climate Funders Justice Pledge calls on climate funders to increase funding of BIPOC-led powerbuilding groups to at least 30%** -- and to commit to transparency in grant reporting. Four of the top 40 climate funders have taken this pledge to date.

✓ **The Kresge Foundation**

✓ **The JPB Foundation**

✓ **Pisces Foundation**

✓ **The Schmidt Family Foundation**

Climate funders outside the top 40 who have taken the pledge:

Open Society Foundations ◦ Seventh Generation Foundation ◦ Meyer Memorial Trust ◦ Libra Foundation
Surdna Foundation ◦ Northlight Foundation ◦ Tides Foundation ◦ Grove Foundation ◦ Chorus Foundation
Nathan Cummings Foundation ◦ Bullitt Foundation ◦ The David Rockefeller Fund



“

It is critical to support Native womxn who are leading a non-extractive approach to regenerative and restorative economies.

”

Red Dawn Foster

Co-Founder/COO, Return to the Heart Foundation



The Plant is uniquely positioned to lead the way.

As an abandoned coal-burning power plant, The PowerPlant will be a potent symbol of the world's transformation from the industrial revolution to an abundant, regenerative future that will fuel a clean economy.





Reversing the vandalization wrought by the industrial revolution and the 20th century will require not only repairing the environment, but also mending the human relationships that were sacrificed in favor of “progress,” like the transcontinental railroad, coal-powered factories, and mass manufacturing.

Built at the end of the Gilded Age, The Plant is situated at the eastern starting point of an inexorable westward expansion of American borders. With this expansion came the displacement and genocide of Native American peoples.



The insatiable need for land and resources led to broken treaties, the forced removal of Indigenous peoples to reservations, and the wholesale erasure of Native Americans from the consciousness of the country today.

Partnering with Return to the Heart, The Plant can make this story known and work toward a transformation that is not only environmental and economic, but social as well. The leaders of Return to the Heart are experienced in healing modalities, as bridge builders that have worked with the White House, worldwide Christian denominations, juvenile and family court judges, and state legislatures.



Wopila!

Return to the Heart Foundation is ready to advance our partnership with The Plant, and we look forward to a powerful, reciprocal relationship that productively advances both organizations' goals.



Leadership

The co-founders of Return to the Heart Foundation are visionary Native womxn experienced in community bridge-building, called to bring healing and action to Native communities through their ancestral wisdom. They believe impact and cultural shifts come from a diversity of perspectives and skills. This team holds unique expertise in advocacy, civic engagement, community development, healing, narrative change, philanthropy, strategic planning, and leadership development.



Sarah Eagle Heart
Co-Founder/Co-CEO

ABOUT SARAH

Sarah is an Emmy-award winning social justice storyteller, non-profit leader, consultant, activist, author, media strategist, and producer focused on advocacy on behalf of Indigenous Peoples rooted worldview as an Oglala Lakota raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. She is an internationally accomplished executive with a diverse background in tribal, corporate, and non-profit organizations. Ms. Eagle Heart is the former CEO of Native Americans in Philanthropy. She has raised over \$20M for native people. You can reach Sarah at sarah@return2heart.org.



Red Dawn Foster
Co-Founder/COO

ABOUT RED DAWN

Red Dawn is currently the South Dakota State Senator with over ten years of experience working with Tribal communities in economic development fields. Red Dawn is passionate about utilizing her education and experience to promote positive planning, design, and construction for the future growth and development of Tribal Nations. Red Dawn received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Colorado and received her Master of Arts degree in Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame. You can reach Red Dawn at [reddawn@return2heart.org](mailto:red dawn@return2heart.org).



Gina Jackson
Co-Founder/Co-CEO

ABOUT GINA

Gina Jackson, MSW is Western Shoshone and Oglala Lakota. She is a dreamer and a doer. She worked on groundbreaking Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Guidelines and Regulations then joined the Obama White House Community Solutions Team. She recently worked for Native Americans in Philanthropy bringing the Truth and Healing Movement to the philanthropic sector. She has 20 years experience encompassing state/tribal justice, collaboration, policy, and philanthropy. She is a connector, igniter, innovator, and equity builder to bring healing for our nation. You can reach Gina at gina@return2heart.org.