

RETURN TO THE HEART FOUNDATION



IMPACT BRIEF

OUR STORY

WOMEN ARE THE HEART OF OUR NATIVE NATIONS

Indigenous Womxn were the traditional Tribal leaders who helped our people thrive, but centuries of colonization ripped that away. And the results are clear: Native people experience the highest rates of violence, poverty, death, and disease in the U.S., and our Womxn and Girls are the most vulnerable.

To repair this deep, generational trauma, we must return to our traditional Indigenous values. We must **RETURN TO THE HEART** of our nations – to the Womxn who carry the ancestral knowledge and leadership we need to thrive once again.

Recognizing this need, three visionary Native Womxn created Return to the Heart Foundation (R2H), a nonprofit designed to uplift equity and healing for Indigenous Womxn and Girls – and the Tribes, communities, and families they represent.

LEADERSHIP



SARAH EAGLE HEART
CO-FOUNDER/CO-CEO



GINA JACKSON
CO-FOUNDER/CO-CEO



RED DAWN FOSTER
CO-FOUNDER/CONSULTANT

R2H is led exclusively by Native Womxn who are called to bring healing to Indigenous communities and beyond, through ancestral wisdom, knowledge, and practices. Their work is driven by an Indigenous worldview and broad experience in advocacy, civic engagement, coalition-building, community development, economic growth, narrative change, philanthropy, strategic planning, and leadership development.

SARAH EAGLE HEART

STORYTELLER ♦ AUTHOR ♦ EDUCATOR ♦ ACTIVIST



Sarah is an Emmy-winning social justice storyteller, activist, media consultant, cultural strategist, and producer focused on advocacy for Indigenous peoples. Rooted in her Indigenous worldview as an Oglala Lakota woman from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, she has garnered international attention as an accomplished executive for a number of large-scale corporate, nonprofit, and Tribal organizations. She is passionate about showing people how Indigenous values will save the world.

CO-FOUNDER/CO-CEO



GINA JACKSON, MSW

INNOVATOR ♦ EQUITY-BUILDER ♦ TRUTH & HEALING CHAMPION



Gina is a dedicated dreamer and doer with 20+ years of experience in Tribal/state justice, policy, and philanthropy. Her expertise in coalition- and bridge-building took her to Washington, where she served on the Obama Administration's Community Solutions Team and contributed to crucial policies like the Indian Child Welfare Act. Gina is a connector, innovator, and igniter, committed to working with other equity-seeking groups for collective liberation. She has a zeal for bringing real Truth and Healing to our nation.

CO-FOUNDER/CO-CEO



RED DAWN FOSTER, MBA

CHANGEMAKER ♦ COMMUNITY LEADER ♦ TRIBAL ADVOCATE



Red Dawn is the South Dakota State Senator currently representing District 27. With degrees in both political science and business administration, she brings a uniquely relevant perspective to R2H. She also has 10+ years of experience working with Tribes for economic and community development, giving her a broad network of connections across the country. She is particularly passionate about positive planning, design, and construction that will ensure Tribal growth and success for the next Seven Generations.

CO-FOUNDER/CONSULTANT



VISION & IMPACT STATEMENT

Return to the Heart Foundation empowers and resources Indigenous Womxn bringing holistic healing to their communities and beyond. Through this work, R2H cultivates a world where Indigenous Womxn and Girls are valued, protected, and supported – and where Mother Earth thrives for future generations.



R2H Society Fellow Holly T. Bird (San Felipe Pueblo/Perepucha/ Yaqui) is a Tribal judge, activist, and grassroots organizer for Indigenous issues, including water protection and racial equity.

CORE COMPETENCIES

INTERMEDIARY GRANTMAKING AND DIRECT PROJECT SUPPORT

Funding, project support, and skill-building for Native Womxn and Girls who are fighting for Indigenous causes across the globe and restoring traditional lifeways for the health of their communities.

CULTURAL STRATEGIZING

Amplifying the voices of Indigenous Womxn and Girls to shift culture and change the narrative – partnering with media and technology leaders, as well as celebrity artists, allies, and influencers.

COALITION- AND POWER-BUILDING

Collaborating with other equity-seeking movements across the U.S. to scale power and influence through solidarity and mass mobilization – advancing toward a national policy agenda that prioritizes the safety of 2SLGBTQ+, BIPOC, and Immigrant/Migrant Womxn and Girls.

UPLIFTING REMATRIATION OF INDIGENOUS VALUES

Restoring the feminine in communities of origin; returning to a spiritual way of life with respect for Mother Earth; reclaiming ancestral spirituality, culture, knowledge, and resources; and recentering Womxn's roles in leadership.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



Native Americans represent just 2.9% of the U.S. population, but we are young and growing. We have been called the “sleeping giant” because our voices can turn elections, disrupt the status quo in America, and even change the world.

R2H builds Indigenous Womxn and Girls’ agency and influence to advance policies that respect Native sovereignty, communities, and values.

R2H Society Fellow YoNasDa LoneWolf (Oglala Lakota/African American) leads marchers at National Stop Police Brutality Day, October 2020.

CLIMATE JUSTICE



Climate change is the defining crisis of our time, and Indigenous peoples are on the front lines. With our traditional knowledge and matriarchal worldview, we have the solutions, but the largest environmental philanthropies give just 1.3% of U.S. climate dollars to BIPOC-led environmental groups.

R2H accelerates climate innovations led by Native Womxn and Girls, rooted in Indigenous wisdom for healing Mother Earth.

R2H Traditional Helper & Healer Elise Bill-Gerrish (Muckleshoot) works to restore Native people's traditional connection to the the land through Indigenous plant and food education.

NARRATIVE CHANGE



40% of Americans think Native people no longer exist. “Pocahontas” is a racialized slur. “Indian maiden” is a Hollywood trope, and “Indian princess” is a Halloween costume. Misconceptions dominate the public consciousness, and we are dismissed, dehumanized, or erased altogether.

R2H indigenizes cultural narratives by uplifting the voices of Native Womxn and Girls in film, TV, music, art, fashion, digital media, politics, academia, and more.

R2H Society Fellow Raye Zaragoza (Pima/O’odham) is an award-winning singer-songwriter who writes about race, gender, and social justice issues.

RESTORATIVE AND REGENERATIVE DEVELOPMENT



Indigenous economic stability has been historically suppressed by colonization and further impacted by COVID. Unemployment reached 80% on reservations prior to the pandemic, and Native Womxn earn 58 cents on the dollar of white/non-Hispanic men.

R2H empowers Indigenous Womxn and Girls who are creating healing pathways to economic stability and generational wealth for Native peoples and communities.

R2H Traditional Helper & Healer Tipiziwin Tolman (Standing Rock Sioux) teaches her community how to harvest and store traditional food and medicine, specifically those that help boost immunity against cold, flu, and COVID-19.

INITIATIVES



R2H Society Fellow Jordan Marie Daniel (Lower Brule Sioux) is a professional runner using her platform to advocate for climate-racial-social justice issues.

TRADITIONAL HELPERS & HEALERS MICRO GRANT

Funding, project support, and skill-building for Native Womxn and Girls who are restoring traditional lifeways to improve physical, mental, spiritual, cultural, and economic health in their communities. [Meet our 2020 grantees.](#)

RETURN TO THE HEART SOCIETY FELLOWSHIP

Funding, project support, and skill-building for Native Womxn and Girls with a broad impact -- those doing healing work not only in their own communities, but also on a national or international level. [Meet our 2020 fellows.](#)

NATIVE COVID ACTION

Funding and in-kind donations of PPE, rapid testing equipment, and traditional medicines for Native Womxn-led regional distribution centers in the hardest hit Tribal areas. [Learn more.](#)

INITIATIVES



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

Capital, business-development training, and network support for entrepreneurial Native Womxn and Girls seeking to grow their businesses and create jobs in Indigenous communities. [Learn more.](#)

NARRATIVE CHANGE

Indigenous storytelling, cultural immersion, and heart-changing education via cutting-edge experiential media that will bring Native spaces, places, and experiences to life.

TRUTH, JUSTICE, & HEALING

Indigenous education and training that brings the truth of history to light, transforms hearts and minds, and drives bold action for a more just world – specifically designed for executives and influencers.

R2H Traditional Helper & Healer Cecily Engelhart (Yankton Sioux) keeps the traditional art of wizipan (parfleche) alive to create rawhide jewelry and accessories for her small business.

POSITIONING

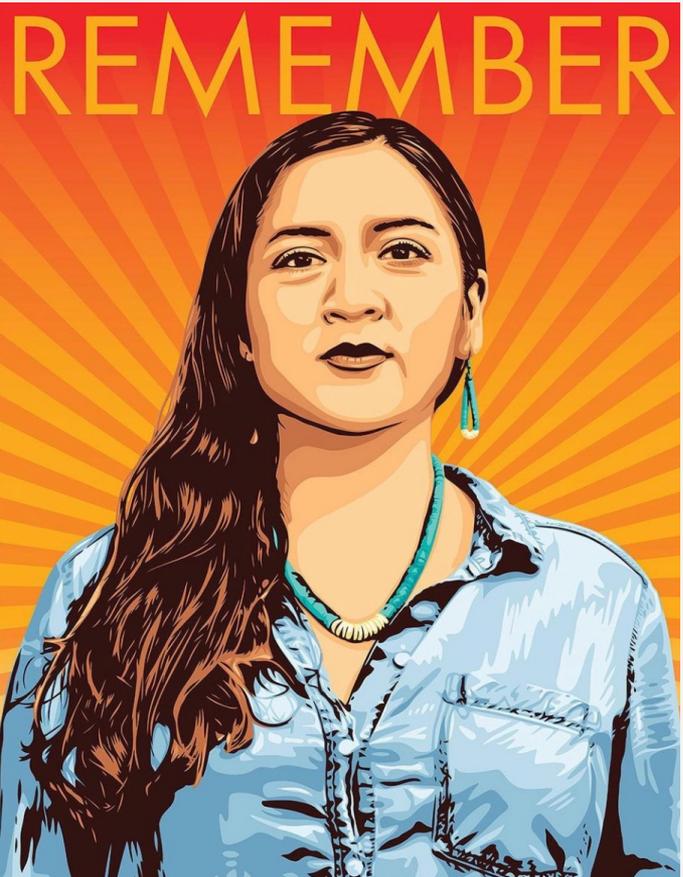


Native Womxn and communities have been historically left behind in the philanthropic sector.

R2H has the leadership and networks to deploy funds to less visible but vital projects serving the most vulnerable populations in the country.

R2H Traditional Helper & Healer Lisa Iron Cloud (Oglala Sioux) teaches children in her Tribe how to prepare a traditionally harvested buffalo, while providing meat for the community.

PARTNERSHIPS



R2H is continuously engaged in coalition-building with other equity-seeking movements across the U.S. to scale power and influence through solidarity and mass mobilization – advancing toward a national policy agenda that prioritizes the safety of 2SLGBTQ+, BIPOC, and Immigrant/Migrant Womxn and Girls.

We have worked with Women’s March, Sisters Rising, Harness, YWCA USA, Time’s Up, Rising Hearts, Protect the Sacred, and many more.

R2H Society Fellow Allie Young (Diné), founder of Protect the Sacred, is featured in Amplifier Art’s #REFRAMEmerica Campaign. Her portrait encourages viewers to remember and acknowledge the first peoples of these lands and our contribution to this country.

INFLUENCE



R2H Co-Founder/Co-CEO Sarah Eagle Heart celebrates with Anne Hathaway, as she receives a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

R2H has personal relationships and impactful partnerships with cutting edge media, artists with global reach, and influencers who are passionate about supporting Indigenous Womxn and Girls.

We have worked with Anne Hathaway, John Legend, Mark Ruffalo, Shailene Woodley, Tonia Jo Hall, Portugal the Man, Mumford and Sons, Dispatch, Taboo, Monkeypaw Productions, Prism Media, Unity Technologies, and many more.

UNIVERSAL IMPACTS

A return to Indigenous values will bring healing not only to Native peoples, but also to the world at large. Living in relationship with Mother Nature as caretakers, not consumers, makes for a healthier planet. Seeing all people as relatives, not enemies, promotes racial justice and civic peace. Honoring Womxn and Girls results in healthier families and more vibrant communities. Respecting elders and children ensures learning from the past while protecting the future.

This is the kind of change R2H wants to be and see in the world, and we can achieve it by empowering Native Womxn in leadership. Now is the time to support Indigenous Womxn and Girls — to uplift their work as they bring healing to Native nations, the U.S., and the world.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WATCH

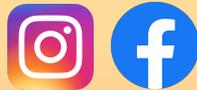
[2020: Our Amazing First Year](#)

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