



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2024

Acre, Inc Team Introductions

Acre, Inc. was created by the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe to promote research and development in agriculture and to promote best practices and opportunities, including value added agriculture, for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. The Acre team will be meeting with community members and key stakeholders to strategically plan a sustainable food and agriculture system on Cheyenne River.

K'Lona Lofton-LeBeaux

Environmental Outreach Coordinator

K'Lona (Chante Hinapa Win~ Rising Heart Woman) is an enrolled member, born and raised on the Cheyenne River Reservation. She is a recent graduate of United Tribes Technical College with a degree in Environmental Science & Research. Throughout her studies it was crucial to reclaim and integrate indigenous history and traditional teachings into the western science world. She focused on this passion through environmental research and community outreach.

Her time at United Tribes allowed her to help decolonize STEM learning environments and implement indigenous science and land-based teaching for youth programming within the local community; igniting curiosity and a deepened understanding of our beliefs about the natural world through indigenous perspectives. When faced with a global climate crisis, it is key to highlight Indigenous leadership and community-led decisions regarding land restoration and food sovereignty. She says it is collective work ~ our community, traditions, and values will be a vital approach to ensure the future of our younger generations.



"My research was centered around our food systems, and making an environmental impact by lessening our organic food waste through Vermicomposting (earthworm composting) to create a natural and beneficial soil amendment that we can return to the land. This study was influenced by our Lakota values, generated reciprocity and found ways to give back to Unci Maka, mother earth. To me, this is what it means to be a Native in Science and Conservation."

- K'Lona Lofton-LeBeaux

Ayanna Maynard

Food Sovereignty Coordinator

Ayanna (Ilewin Mani "On Her Journey She Burns") is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation. She is an avid gardener, caretaker of seeds, and a business owner (Kantotowin-Green Plum, LLC). She is a graduate of United Tribes Technical College's Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program and the Business Management program.

She works on seed-saving projects and seed "rematriation" for indigenous communities, so Tribes have more access to traditional foods and medicines. In her spare time, she loves to socialize and spend time with her 3 daughters while decolonizing healing through indigenous ways of knowing: healing through a strength-based process, with focus on shifts to relationships – relationships with self, community, more-than-human, and mother earth.



"I travel to surrounding indigenous communities to assist on garden projects and ideas. One of my projects involves growing prairie turnip, echinacea, blanket flower, sweet grass, sage, and wild mint, with a goal of getting these medicines transplanted throughout North Dakota, South Dakota and back into our communities so elders have better access to them."
-Ayanna Maynard

Donita Fischer, CEO

Donita Fischer, Cheyenne River Lakota, is the owner of Wóyute, a micro grocery that carries whole foods and a bulk foods apothecary and Wóyute2Go, a takeout restaurant that features fast, homemade goodness. She is working to develop a Tribally Supported Agriculture model for a cooperative, Wóyute Wašté Akhíptan, an integral part of a local food revolution.

She believes in being a good steward of Unci Maka (Mother Earth) and reclaiming our traditions and culture with local foods, traditional harvesting and gathering and promoting regenerative farming methods.

She has thirty years of experience in the non-profit field where she grew a passion for community and economic development in Indian Country. She graduated from Black Hills State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration; she is a Native Nations Rebuilder and a certified nutrition coach.



"It's all about food. Whether it's eating good clean food, growing good food or raising or harvesting animals in a regenerative way; it's all to nourish Unci Maka and bring our communities back to health for the next seven generations."

-Donita Fischer

For more information, contact us at acre.crst@gmail.com