



# Minnesota Indian Affairs Council Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Committee 2023



INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

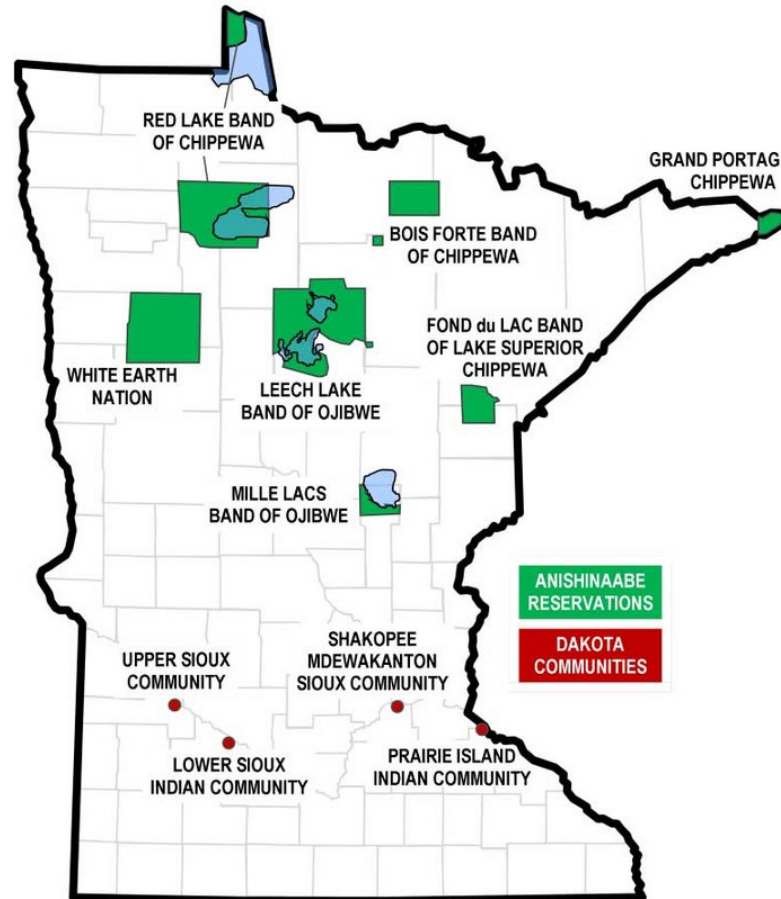
## **Mission**

To protect the sovereignty of the eleven Minnesota tribes and ensure the well being of all American Indian citizens throughout the state of Minnesota.

## **Vision**

To strive for social, economic, and political justice for all American Indian people living in Minnesota, while embracing our traditional cultural and spiritual values.

# Tribal Nations in Minnesota





## Board

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, as defined by Minnesota Statute 3.922, consists of 27 members.



INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

# Executive (Voting) Board



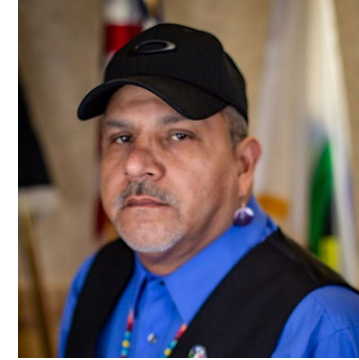
Board Chair  
Robert L. Larsen  
President of Cansa'yapi  
(Lower Sioux Indian Community)



Board Vice Chair  
Robert Deschampe  
Chairman of Gichi Onigaming  
(Grand Portage Band of  
Lake Superior Chippewa)



Cathy Chavers  
Chairwoman of  
Zagaakwaandagowiniwag  
(Bois Forte Band of Chippewa)



Kevin DuPuis  
Chairman of Nahgahchiwanong  
(Fond du Lac Band of  
Lake Superior Chippewa)



Faron Jackson  
Chairman of  
Gaa-zagaskwaajimekaag  
(Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe)



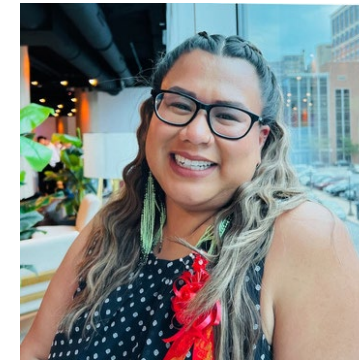
Melanie Benjamin  
Chief Executive of  
Misi-zaaga'iganiing  
(Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)



Johnny Johnson  
President of Tinta Wita  
(Prairie Island Indian  
Community)



Sam Strong  
Secretary of  
Miskwaagamiwi-Zaagaiganing  
(Red Lake Nation)



Kelsey Scares The Hawk  
Charitable Giving Specialist  
(Shakopee Mdewakanton  
Sioux Community)



Michael Fairbanks  
Chairman of  
Gaa-waabaabiganikaag  
(White Earth Nation)



## Governors Office



Lieutenant Governor  
Peggy Flanagan

## State Senators



Mary Kunesch (D)



Paul Utke (R)

## State House Representatives



Heather Keeler (D)



Bobbie Harder (R)

# Commissioners



Dept of Administration  
Alice Roberts-Davis



Dept of Corrections  
Paul Schnell



Dept of Education  
Willie Jett II



Dept of Employment and  
Economic Development  
Steve Grove



Dept of Health  
Brooke Cunningham



Dept of Human Rights  
Rebecca Lucero



Dept of Human Services  
Jodi Harpstead



Iron Range  
Resources & Rehabilitation  
Ida Rukavina



Housing Finance Agency  
Jennifer Leimaile Ho



Dept of Natural Resources  
Sarah Strommen



Dept of Transportation  
Nancy Daubenberger



Veterans Affairs  
Larry Herke

# Executive Director and Staff



**Shannon Geshick**

Executive Assistant  
Vacant

Legislative Director  
Vacant

Grants and Contracts  
Keegan Flaharty

Grants Admin  
Skyler Kuczaboski

Cultural Resource  
Dylan Goetsch

Cultural Resource  
Melissa Cerda

Cultural Resource  
Vacant



## The Agency

- Established in 1963 as the first council of its type in the nation
- Authority under MN Stat. 3.922
- Liaison between Tribal Governments and State Government
- Work closely with state agency tribal liaisons
- Plays a central role in the development of state legislation
- Propose Agenda for the Governor's Tribal Leader Summit





INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

## Cultural Resources

- MN - first state in the nation to collaborate with Tribal Nations regarding protection and preservation of human remains and burial sites
- Authority under:
  - MN Stat. 307.08
  - MN Stat. 138.31 to 138.42
  - PL 101-60
- Works closely with Office of State Archaeologist (OSA) and the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
- Osteology Lab housed at Hamline University



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# Language Grants

- Legacy Amendment – Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund
- First appropriated in 2009 for the 2010-2011 biennium
- 
- Just under \$4m Biennial Grant Portfolio
  - Tribal Nations
  - Competitive Grants
    - Immersion
    - Educational Entities
    - Non Profits
    - State Agencies
- Volunteer Language Revitalization Work Group
  - This year hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium
  - State of the Languages Reports and Strategic Plan 2011, 2013, and 2016



## Tribal State Relations Training



- Partnership between the Tribal Nations, MIAC, MnDOT, & University of Minnesota-Duluth CE,
- Educate state employees regarding Tribal Nations and people
- Build respectful relationships between the state and tribal government
- House of Representative Training 2019
- To date have trained 5,113 state employees



# State Agency Tribal Liaisons

- Bi-weekly check-ins facilitated by MIAC
- Tribal Government Affairs and State Agency Tribal Liaison Partnerships
- Collaborate and work in partnership with MIAC and Tribal governments
- <https://mn.gov/indian-affairs/resources/state-agency-tribal-liaisons--.jsp>





INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

# Pidamayaye (Dakota) Miigwech (Ojibwe)

**Robert Larsen**

**President, Lower Sioux Indian Community  
Chairman, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council**

**Shannon Geshick**

**Executive Director**

*Shannon.Geshick@state.mn.us*