

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation  
12151 Avenue of the Chiefs  
Crazy Horse, SD 57730

Contact: Amanda Allcock  
(605) 673-4681  
[amanda.allcock@crazyhorse.org](mailto:amanda.allcock@crazyhorse.org)



### **Crazy Horse Memorial Will Commemorate 30th Annual Native Americans' Day & Present "Educator of the Year" Award on Oct. 12**

CRAZY HORSE, SD (Oct. 6, 2020) — Native Americans' Day is less than a week away, and Crazy Horse Memorial is gearing up for the 30th annual commemoration of this holiday in South Dakota on Monday, Oct. 12. Not only will the Memorial provide a 10 a.m. public program and lunch for visitors, staff also will present the annual Crazy Horse Memorial Educator of the Year Award.

Admission to the Memorial will be waived on Oct. 12 with a donation of three cans of food per person to support regional food drives for those in need. Without the donation, regular admission rates will apply.

Crazy Horse Memorial created its Educator of the Year tribute in 2003, seeking to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to Native American education. The award includes a \$1,000 grant to the recipient's school library — or to the program of his or her choice.

This year's award winner is Jill D. Kessler, an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe who works as a certified school counselor at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School in Eagle Butte, South Dakota. According to The Indian University of North America faculty and leadership team who recommended her for the award, Kessler is one of the best counselors in the state, and she always has been supportive of her students attending the university's summer program.

"Wopila for honoring me with this award," Kessler writes. "It's odd for me to think of accepting an award for a job that I not only love, but (also) that fits the expectations that come from our Lakota teachings."

Crazy Horse Memorial's Native Americans' Day celebration includes the 10 a.m. public program featuring Native American singers and dancers. Special displays will be offered in the visitors' complex, and the Memorial also will offer a buffalo stew lunch made possible through generous donations from Korczak's Heritage Inc., Laughing Water Restaurant, and Custer State Park.

"Crazy Horse Memorial's Native Americans' Day celebration gives us the opportunity to take a moment to recognize the differences, and also the similarities, among people," said Monique Ziolkowski, Crazy Horse Memorial's chief executive officer. "We are blessed to be able to be a part of many cultures."

South Dakota was the first state to officially celebrate Native Americans' Day instead of Columbus Day on the second Monday in October. The South Dakota State Legislature established this holiday after Tim Giago of *The Lakota Times*, now *Indian Country Today*, lobbied former Gov. George S. Mickelson to proclaim 1990 a year of peace between Natives and non-Natives, and to change Columbus Day to Native Americans' Day. Together, they came up with the "year of reconciliation," and called for the first Native Americans' Day observance to be held at Crazy Horse Memorial.