

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

Contact: Jadwiga Ziolkowski
(605) 673-4681
jadwiga@crazyhorse.org

Former Indian University of North America Student Alexander “Zane” Zephier III
Joins Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation Board of Directors

CRAZY HORSE, SD (Nov. 11, 2019) — The Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation announced today that Alexander “Zane” Zephier III, a former student at The Indian University of North America, has joined the board of directors. Zephier, a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, completed the Memorial’s innovative summer program in 2013.

Raised by his grandmother, Zephier grew up in Lake Andes, Marty and Wagner, all in southeastern South Dakota on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. He said he first heard about the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation’s university program as a high school student, and he knew he wanted to try it after he graduated from Wagner High School.

“I wanted to prove to myself that I could accomplish something like this,” he explained. “I never really pushed myself academically in high school, and that reflected in my grades. I’d never done anything like this before, and I knew it was going to be intense.”

Zephier had two goals going into the summer 2013 program: to complete it, and to meet new people. He accomplished both, establishing longtime friendships and meeting his girlfriend of six years.

During his time with The Indian University of North America, Zephier engaged in distinctive academic programming that Crazy Horse provides in partnership with select colleges and universities; the summer program’s college credits are offered through the University of South Dakota. He also received success coaching and completed a paid internship.

“Charlie Luecke was an excellent professor,” he remembered. “I learned countless lessons from his classes—not only how to succeed in the classroom, but outside the classroom as well. I was a tour guide for my internship. I enjoyed my work, and I believe it helped me grow in both social and professional aspects.”

Looking back, Zephier said he believes The Indian University of North America allowed him to realize his full potential. Not only did he learn that he was capable of managing a college-level workload and excelling in a paid internship, he also discovered that he could handle college life, making new friends, and being away from home.

“Because I essentially completed my first semester of college at Crazy Horse, I was able to continue that fall at the University of South Dakota feeling comfortable,” he remembered. “I felt confident, knowing I was off to a great start, and I gained a completely new level of independence. I saw many students feeling overwhelmed during my first year of college, and I recall many—even some of my friends—dropping out. However, I felt at home for the first time in my life, and I owe that, in part, to Crazy Horse’s university program.”

Although Zephier had the option to return to Crazy Horse the following summer, he decided to accept a position with the Upward Bound program. He graduated from the University of South Dakota in 2017 with degrees in criminal justice and political science, and today he serves as field advisor for the university’s Upward Bound program, traveling to target schools across South Dakota to meet with Upward Bound students and working on the program’s six-week summer initiative at the USD campus.

“I love my work because I get to help facilitate an environment where students are able to feel at home and grow,” Zephier said. “My favorite is the summer. That’s where I see the most student growth. I was once a student just like them, and I have walked in their shoes, so I hope I can help in the same way The Indian University of North America helped me.”

This year, the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation invited Zephier to become a member of its board of directors. He attended his first board meeting in September.

“I’m truly excited about this opportunity to serve,” he said. “I want to assist future generations who will be positively impacted by this special place and program.”

In the last 10 years, nearly 300 students from more than 40 native nations and 20 states have completed The Indian University of North America’s summer program. Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation funds the tuition, books, and the majority of food and lodging costs for those accepted, and it provides native students who start their college careers here with an unconventional level of student support from university success coaches, no matter where the students pursue their degrees.

Surveys have shown that 74 percent of respondents have graduated from their universities and colleges or remain enrolled in their degree programs. College graduates who began their higher-education journey at The Indian University of North America currently work as teachers, counselors, nurses, business professionals, an assistant museum curator, a bank examiner, a law enforcement officer and a dental hygienist; more than 50 percent of graduates work at native-led organizations, giving back to their communities.

To learn more about the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, to plan a visit, and for information about making a contribution, call (605) 673-4681 or visit crazyhorsememorial.org. To stay up to date on the latest news and events, follow the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation on Facebook ([/crazyhorsememorial](https://www.facebook.com/crazyhorsememorial)), Twitter ([@crazyhorsemem](https://twitter.com/crazyhorsemem)) and Instagram ([@crazyhorsememorial](https://www.instagram.com/crazyhorsememorial)).

The Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation is dedicated to protecting and preserving the culture, tradition, and living heritage of the North American Indians by continuing the progress on the world’s largest sculptural undertaking, the memorial of Lakota leader Crazy Horse; providing educational and cultural programming to encourage harmony and reconciliation among all peoples and nations; acting as a repository for Native American artifacts, arts, and crafts through the Indian Museum of North America and the Native American Educational and Cultural Center; and establishing and operating the Indian University of North America and, when practical, a medical training center for American Indians.

