



**NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS**  
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

## APPLICANT KIT

TILLIE BLACK BEAR  
MEMORIAL  
FUND

*Making*  
**a difference.**

[niwrc.org](http://niwrc.org)

# Making a difference.

The spectrum of violence against Native women is not a “new” issue. American Indian and Alaska Native women suffer the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault, with more than 4 in 5 – a staggering 84.3% – having experienced violence in their lifetime. In addition, 96% of American Indian and Alaska Native female victims of sexual violence experienced violence at the hands of a non-Native perpetrator (i.e. individuals of other races). This violence continues to be multilayered, occurring over a lifetime.

As advocates, our work is centered on the reclamation of the sacred status and safety of Native women. Until all Native women and girls are safe and free of violence in all forms, we will continue to carry the medicine passed down from our elders and ancestors to heal by advocating for the sovereignty of tribes and supporting our sister advocates, Tribal leaders, and community members in strengthening their capacity to serve American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian victims and survivors of violence in their communities.

The Tillie Black Bear Memorial Fund was established to honor her legacy by providing educational opportunities to Native survivors of domestic violence and their children. Through generous donors and fundraising, we hope to award 2-3 scholarships annually to individuals who demonstrate a commitment to their community and personal growth.

With the support of our community, we are honored to empower survivors and advocates on their journeys to becoming the stronghearted leaders our peoples need.

**Together, we can make a lasting difference.**

— Tillie Black Bear Memorial Fund Committee

ABOUT THE  
FUND

# Her legacy.



Tillie Black Bear (Sicangu Lakota), a founding mother of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC), is considered one of the movement's leading voices to end violence against Native women. In its early years, the movement was largely unfunded; it grew as a Tribal, grassroots effort out of survival and resistance. Tillie provided guidance at critical moments of our struggle for safety and sovereignty, founding groups and organizations with the mission to advance the protection of women while furthering a national agenda to strengthen the autonomy of our Tribal Nations, our spirits, and our bodies.

For more than four decades, Tribal advocates have carried forward Tillie's legacy as a consistent strategy of increasing safety for Native women by strengthening Tribal sovereignty, resulting in landmark changes to federal Indian law and available resources, providing lifesaving services for Native victims and survivors. The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center was born to advance this legacy.

### **Roots of Scholarship**

In December 2023, in honor of Tillie Black Bear's vision for work beyond shelter doors, a supporter made the initial donation to establish a scholarship for survivors and their children affected by interpersonal violence, particularly domestic violence.

This scholarship program is central to our efforts, providing financial support to Native survivors and their families as they pursue educational and professional growth—reflecting Tillie's belief in the power of education and community healing.

**TILLIE BLACK BEAR**

DECEMBER 10, 1946 - JULY 19, 2014

# Scholarship

IMPACT AND  
SCHOLARSHIP

## ABOUT THE PROCESS

The scholarship application process serves as a platform for public education about Tillie Black Bear's life and contributions. Applicants are encouraged to learn about her legacy, ensuring that her story continues to inspire future generations of advocates; the selection committee will award 2-3 scholarships to applicants who best align and follow the criteria of:

- (1) community involvement,**
- (2) having an established goal or plan for education or betterment,**
- (3) outlining how this financial support with help inspire their goals and plans into fruition.**

We have established a comprehensive application and selection process to ensure fairness and transparency. To be eligible for consideration, each applicant must submit a checklist of required materials. The selection process, in which we have assigned committee roles and an open criteria rubric for applicants to view as they submit materials, is designed to be anonymous and fair, allowing applicants to be evaluated solely on their merit and need.



For more information, including **how to apply**, please visit:

 [scholarship.niwrc.org](https://scholarship.niwrc.org)

Search



## **ORGANIZATION MISSION**

To provide national leadership to end violence against American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian women by supporting culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy.

## **VISION**

The restoration of sovereignty and safety for Native women.

## **TAX STATUS**

NIWRC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. EIN 27-4971660.

## **MAIN OFFICE**

12 Bowstring Street, Lame Deer, MT 59043  
406-477-3896 | niwrc.org



**NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS**  
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER