

## PRESS RELEASE

### Two NIEA Members Honored at White House for Teacher Appreciation Week



#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2016

*Washington, D.C.*- Today President Obama honored two Native educators and members of NIEA at the annual National Teacher of the Year event hosted at the White House during Teacher Appreciation Week.

Shana Brown (*Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation*) has been teaching secondary language arts and social studies for over 24 years with an emphasis of honoring tribal legacies. She has written curriculum for the Washington State Historical Society and the University of Montana's "Tribal Perspectives of History in the Northwest" (Regional Learning Project). Shana teaches full-time in Seattle Public Schools where she continues to incorporate tribal history and issues throughout her classes.

Lana Toya (*Pueblo of Jemez*) serves as the Jemez Walatowa Head Start Director and continues to represent Jemez's commitment to language, culture, and immersion. Since joining the Head Start family, Lana served as the Chairperson of the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs Board of Directors from 2009-2014 providing professional development opportunities and trainings for tribal head start, early head start, and child care programs throughout the nation. She currently serves on the American Indian/Alaskan Native Advisory Council on Native Language as a representative of the head start community. The WK Kellogg Foundation is a supporter and

funder of the Jemez Immersion Initiative.

The commitment of these educators and their recognition by President Obama highlights the amazing work being done throughout Indian country, providing quality education to their students through a cultural lens. NIEA Executive Director Ahniwake Rose said, "Today President Obama acknowledged what we've already known to be true- Native teachers are world-class educators and by bringing their culture into the classrooms, they create an environment where students can succeed. With so much attention focused solely on deficits, we are happy that the nation can see the amazing work being done throughout Indian Country."

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***About The National Indian Education Association (NIEA)***

*The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) advances comprehensive educational opportunities for all Native students. Serving as the critical link between Native communities and the diverse array of institutions that serve our students, NIEA holds all accountable for improving achievement. Through advocacy, capacity-building, and education, NIEA supports Native students, and their communities to succeed. Learn more at [NIEA.org](http://NIEA.org).*

