



United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA - Council for Native American Farming and Ranching
March 26, 2015

[Note: A lot of the participants talked off the mic around the second half of the conference, affecting audio quality and making accurate transcription difficult]

Mark Wadsworth: We're getting ready here in a few minutes so if everybody wants to kind of get situated. I'd like to get the afternoon session going here. A quick housekeeping scenario is that when you speak in the mic, please turn on the button and the red light will come on. At that time when you're finished, please shut your power off or your voice. We can only have three of these going at once; otherwise, it clogs the system. This is a recorded meeting.

It is Thursday, March 26, 2015. This will be the USDA Council for Native American Farming and Ranching. First of all, we'll start with a roll call. Porter Holder?

Porter Holder: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: John Berrey? John Berrey is not here.
Tawney Brunsch?

Tawney Brunsch: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Gilbert Harrison?

Gilbert Harrison: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Derrick Lente?

Derrick Lente: Present.

Mark Wadsworth: Jerry McPeak?

Jerry McPeak: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Angela Peter?

Angela Peter: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Edward Soza?

Edward Soza: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Mary Thompson? Mary Thompson is not here.

Sarah Vogel?

Sarah Vogel: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Chris Beyerhelm?

Chris Beyerhelm: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Jim Radintz?

Jim Radintz: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Carl-Martin Ruiz?

Carl-Martin Ruiz: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: We do have a quorum today. We'll kind of go through a quick blessing here.

Leslie Wheelock: I'm here.

Mark Wadsworth: Oh, I'm sorry about that. Leslie? They got your name. I'm sorry about that. Leslie is here and Mark Wadsworth is here. I'm here as well.

Male Voice: Mr. Chairman, before the blessing, can I ask a question?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes.

Male Voice: If you're late, did they put you over here all by yourself? Is that what happens?

Jerry McPeak: Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Jerry.

Jerry McPeak: I'd like to answer that. The vote was actually 7 to 6 to just not let you come back in at all.

Mark Wadsworth: I was the tie breaker. We forgot that that's how [indiscernible]. If we could all stand and Derrick Lente will be doing the blessing.

Derrick Lente: [Off mic/speaks in native language]. Lord, we ask you in this fine spring afternoon to bless us all. Thank you for allowing us to meet as one, united organization. We appreciate all that you've done for us. We appreciate you allowing us to see another day. In the honor of the ancestors and all that's good in the world, please bless us all with the ability to make right decisions, to make the right recommendations, so we might help our people. Amen.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Derrick. We're going to go through and do a review of the agenda. And then we do have some CNAFR housekeeping items. John, would you like to go through with that?

John Lowery: Yes, sir. Looking at the agenda, we do have beginning at 1:50, Generation of Indigenous Food and Ag, and an update from the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative. Dr.

Janie Hipp will be here to speak with us. After that, we have Nancy Arnett from the Oklahoma Northeast District 4-H Youth Development. She will come in and speak with us. Is Nancy here? Okay. She'll probably be here soon. After that we're going to take a break.

And then we have a number of students here from the Checotah High School along with their ag teacher, Jason McPeak who's no kin to Jerry McPeak. No, I'm just playing. These fine individuals have come up probably about an hour drive, an hour and a half drive, two-hour drive, to visit with us. So we're going to do a youth roundtable. We're going to bring in the chairs here. We're going to have us a little circle and we're going to do a little one-on-one with our youth. That's something that's discussed a lot amongst us in this council. You always hear people say, well, if you want to talk about youth, you need to have them in the room so you can hear it from the youth. So that's what we're going to do here today.

I'm thankful for everyone who's come along. And then after that we'll have a brief transition period. And then at 4:15 we have Eddie Streater, who is the acting regional director for the Eastern Oklahoma region of the BIA. He will come and join us. Along with Scott McCorkle who is the acting superintendent for the Concho Agency-Southern Plains here. Both of these

individuals are based here in Oklahoma so they will come. And then around the 5:30 mark, we will adjourn.

Regarding housekeeping issues, I guess this is just a time to ask, does any of the council members have any question or just regarding anything going on with the meeting itself when you think around the logistics of the meeting, any questions? Mr. Chairman, I'm finished.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. I guess, Janie would you like to run a little ahead of schedule if that's a good thing, so if you'd like to start?

Janie Hipp: It's really great to see you all. Can you hear me okay? I don't even need the mic as you know. It's really an honor to be with you all again today, to see all of you that I've worked so closely with over the years. It's a joy to be here at the council for sure.

It's a joy to see Leslie. She hadn't run screaming out of the room yet at USDA. We have a really strong leader at USDA at the Office of Tribal Relations in advising the secretary. Leslie, thank you for the important role that you continue to play and it's so critical. I just kind of get up every morning and pray for her, because I know what she has ahead of her. It's a big behemoth of an agency to deal with.

I wanted to spend a little bit of time to recap some things that we are doing at the Indigenous Food and Ag Initiative. You

got to meet Erin Shirl yesterday. She's a staff attorney that works with me. We have some other staff attorneys but also some other staff that work with the initiative. We couldn't bring everybody, but Erin is a recent graduate of our Food and Ag Law, LLM which is a specialty degree in law, which we're hoping to get Derrick involved in that program.

We've been around for over 30 years. I'm a graduate of that program about 30 years ago. It really is an important initiative we believed to be housed there at the law school sitting right next to the Food and Ag Law specialization program. Because I don't have to tell you all that doing Indian country agriculture requires a whole different -- you got to know production agriculture for sure or any kind of food. But you've also got to know the law in a way that a lot of other producers don't have to know or can maybe go through the rest of their production careers and not really fully have to come to terms with it. It's just extremely complex and we're very honored to have the initiative there at our law school.

We are involved in a lot of projects right now. It seems like every week Erin is going, "No more projects." I meet with tribal leadership almost every week on kind of assisting in conceptualizing and strategizing around not only how to access USDA programs in new ways, but also how to think through scaling up the food activities that are going on within their tribe and

thinking about new markets. It really is all the way from traditional foods to community gardens. All the way up into health and nutrition. It's all the way into small to mid-size scale production systems as well as large production systems, exports. We really are across the gamut.

I've never seen it's so exciting to be doing what I'm doing in my whole life. I know that we're on the cusp of some really incredible breakthrough things for Indian country agriculture. I know it. I've been at this long enough that I know. It's going to happen. It is happening. We have tribal leadership all over the country that are engaging in new ways that I think our individual producers are going to get some much needed support from them. But there's just a lot going on we are bringing to conclusion this summer.

We were reached out to by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. We're doing an Indian country food systems scan which will be a national report that they're going to release later this year. That, basically, is not trying to report at everything that's going on but it is kind of doing a scan of new and exciting and innovative things that are happening in Indian country food and agriculture across the country. We have an ongoing needs assessment. Whenever the Keepseagle trust is actually seeded [sounds like] and begins its work, our needs assessment will be presented to that first body, that first meeting in that first

body. It's going to be deeply involved in data and all of those things that you actually do have to have under your belt to really see and be fully informed as you kind of move forward. So we're excited about that.

We've created strong partnerships with First Nations Development Institute. They actually have put money into our LLM program every year and are supporting any native lawyer who comes to us for training. They have picked up their graduate assistantship funding and we're starting to have kind of a pop [sounds like] line of publications that are going to flow out of those supported lawyers who are getting that food and ag law advanced training. We've just completed or about halfway finished, almost completed a project with the Notah Begay III Foundation, exploring that intersection of health, nutrition, obesity prevention, diabetes, wellness, and how it links into food production locally and regionally.

We have a lot of projects that are emerging in that space, which is kind of an interesting piece. It's not just the health and nutrition and wellness piece. It's actually migrating it over into an understanding of the need to encourage and support and promote local food production and our producers because sometimes those things are disconnected and you all know that.

We have an ongoing relationship with Indian Land Tenure Foundation and also we couldn't live without our ongoing

partnership with Intertribal Ag Council. We depend on them a lot. I'm not sure if any of their folks are here today, but I truly encourage you as you put forward recommendations to the secretary to remember that that technical assistance network of people must continue to move forward.

It must be there. It was there years and years ago, but it entered a period where it was basically just wasn't supported. We actually do need those significantly trained people on the ground who are in that space of business planning, sitting down at people's kitchen tables with them and actually going through the business planning piece, but also matching that up with intense knowledge of the USDA programs. So I will always pitch that we have to keep that going. We can't lose that network of people.

One of the things that we are on the same page about, and I talk about it all the time, is our greatest need in Indian country is technical assistance. It's really the on-the-ground knowledge of USDA programs, but also the on-the-ground knowledge of the business planning pieces that allow people to match them up and use them effectively. You cannot have one without the other. I will also tell you that we have one person in the audience. We have a lot of people I'd like to introduce, but Dennis, could you stand up please? Dennis Green is the Chief Risk Officer for Farm Credit of East Central Oklahoma. We are

currently involved, and Sara Jane [phonetic] is involved in that. Dennis is our counterpart. They haven't met yet, but everybody meets on the email.

One of the things our initiative is doing this spring and early summer is a series of boot camps, literally, in Southeast Oklahoma. Just half-day sessions where we go through business training, food safety laws, emerging food safety regulations, legal issues - what else is on our agenda - financial planning, market planning, just risk assessment planning, all of these things. It's going to be fun. It's going to be a lot of fun. Choctaw is actually stepping up and they're actually hosting each one of those sessions in their community centers. That can be replicated everywhere.

But I'll tell you, the one thing that I have to say to you all is that we couldn't do what we do with regard to youth if it were not for Farm Credit. Farm Credit stepped up last year and they're giving campaigns nationally. They gave us some resources that allowed us to actually start this Native Youth and Food and Agriculture Summit, a summer leadership summit. We had it in late July when it's nice and hot in Arkansas. We welcomed 48 students from 22 tribes all across the country. It really was people self-selected. We had no idea who was going to come in the door. We had kids from all over. Our target was 50, because we wanted to get the curriculum right. We wanted to

know that the curriculum that we were going to put the kids through was appropriate for the age, but also challenging and required them to step up.

When they walked in the door, we told them, right? I told them, we don't have time for you to be 50. You need to step up right now, did I not? We need you to step up today. You need to step up in leadership in your own communities today. You need to know your stuff. You need to know your business planning. No matter whether you're doing traditional foods in your community's garden. We had several kids, that's all they produce - it's their traditional community's foods. That's it. They're not involved in some export market. We found that it really didn't matter what they actually were growing. They totally got that they had to know the inner workings.

So we put them through their paces. They came. They showed up the first day. We divided them into small groups. Each group of ten students was given a project that they had to do the mission, vision, and goals for that particular food project. By the last day, they had to present their business plan, whether it was blue corn. I don't care what it is. Grow whatever you want. They had to actually present those to the entire group. What we found was very interesting because the very last day, the last night -- and they were up until 1:00 every night working on their plans. Zachary was meticulous.

Zachary over there was, I got to get these numbers right. He was just rah.

What we found the night before they were to do their final presentation is that they had intuitively, without anybody telling them to, they had started sending emissaries to each other's groups. I can't do this without crying. So that they can actually weave their business plans together in such a way that they supported each other in their own dreams, in their own aspirations within their own tribes. That's what we got to have folks, and they did it without anybody telling them to. They were there. I've never been so proud to be involved in something in my whole life.

In your folder, I've got several things in here for you. One of the things that they don't even know I've done yet is the president has launched Generation Indigenous for young people. I've gone online and I've accepted the challenge. The summit from now on is going to have GEN-I, which is what it's called, GEN-I projects that we weave together into the summit work and that the kids do when they go home. I say kids, because I'm 60 so I'm allowed to say kids. But we also have - these are late high school, early college age young people - young adults. Over here, let me just kind of walk through that.

The other thing we found is that if we just stay together on social media after everybody goes home that we can just

continue to build up and build up and build up, don't we? What we also found is that when somebody hits a rough spot, all of the other students reach out to that person and help them through their day. That's happened more than once. I've been involved in there. We also were reached out to by the *Farm Journal*, Farm Journal family of publications. Their editor is a graduate of our LLM program. So she reached out to me before World Food Day and she said, "What can we do to help you and your work?"

So there are two World Food Day stories that were featured on the United Nations Food and Ag Organization website on World Food Day that were submittals from people who were involved in the summit as leaders. One is from Odessa Oldham and one is from Ridge Howell who is here with us today who is a superstar in his own right. These two, right here, are examples of the business plans. So you can kind of get a sense of what the students actually put together in terms of their final presentations.

This is embarrassing. This is an article just about our summit. It includes a bio of myself and Stacey. This is for Derrick's purposes and any other lawyers you may have. There's some fliers about just the LLM and food and ag law. And then on the right hand side of your folder, this is just a brief report that came out of the summit that we put together so people could

have a takeaway and see the things we were involved in. This document right here is the actual agenda for the entire week. It's not a one-page agenda, people. It's extremely lengthy. It's like eight pages.

They were in classrooms or in workgroups the entire time. That will be replicated this year. And then right here, these three documents are the fliers for this year's summit application process which is already open. We have sent an email blast to all tribal headquarters of federally and state-recognized tribes, all inter-tribal organizations. We've sent it to the USDA people. We've sent it to all the native media that we have access to. We're going to continue to do email blast and burst continually. We have an application for the first timers.

The summit fellow applications are for second timers who are not yet in college. They will have a heightened leadership role within the small groups this summer. And then the student leader applications are for those college-aged students who have significant leadership and agriculture and food experience and who want to lead within the summit itself. So we're getting geared up. We're very excited. I'm going to kind of leave it at that. Although, I want to do one thing before I turn it over to the students who were asked to come and speak with you.

One of the things that was really fun that kind of emerged, IAC has always been so supportive of what we've been doing from the beginning. They have been bringing about 50 to 75 students to the Intertribal Ag Council Annual Meeting in December on an annual basis for probably 15, 16, or 17 years. This year they did two things. One is two of the students at the summit decided that they were going to leave the summit, and they were going to go to IAC, and they were going to ask IAC. They were going to put forth a proposal to IAC to actually seat a national intertribal youth advisory board to the Intertribal Ag Council. That was presented in December of this year. It was adopted unanimously and this year in 2015, IAC will be seating a national intertribal youth advisory body to the board of IAC.

And then Ross stuck his neck out and said, everybody, all of you kids who are here, you're all going to the summit. So it's like, oh my God. We know that we can't grow from 50 to 300 overnight. We are going to top it out at 75 this year. We know that we can't just grow that quickly. We got to do it exponentially. We don't want to turn young people away. Our greatest need right now is travel scholarships. These kids are coming from all over the country and many of them are first-time fliers. Farm Credit is giving the group at the national level, has put forward the money to cover all of their room and board.

We just got to get them there. So that's what we need more than anything is travel scholarship money.

But IAC reached out and actually we're approached by StyleHorse Collective. They went around to the youth and all of the youth that were involved in IAC got involved in the actual development of a video that was posted on YouTube two weeks after the IAC meeting. So we're going to show that right quick and then I'm going to introduce you to some of the young people who participated in the summit and you'll get to hear from them.

John Lowery: I hope this is --

Janie Hipp: We hope it works.

John Lowery: Yeah. I downloaded it all.

Janie Hipp: We haven't tested it.

John Lowery: Yeah.

Janie Hipp: So that's why we do this. A lot of fun, we're going to continue to see things like that, I think, pour [sounds like] out of these young people the more involved we get with them in helping them realize their passions and their dreams.

One project that I did not mention, I failed to mention, only because it's so daunting that it kind of scares me. I'm waking up in the middle of the night. We're hopeful that in the next few months we'll be able to announce a comprehensive model food and ag law code project, which will help all tribes.

Really help them to more effectively be in the space of the food

and ag code preparation and getting those in place. With that, I'm going to turn it over. I want just briefly for them to stand up each individually and give everybody your name. Let's go with Theresa [phonetic].

Theresa: Hello, my name's Theresa. I'm from [indiscernible].

Janie Hipp: Braelyn [phonetic].

Brilan Oxtoby: Hello, my name is Brilan and I'm from Checotah.

Juleah Hollingshed: My name is Juleah Hollingshed, and I'm from Checotah as well.

Janie Hipp: Zachary?

Zachary Ilbery: I'm Zachary Ilbery, I'm also from Checotah.

Jaycee Philips: Hi, I'm Jaycee Philips [phonetic] and I'm from Chelsea, Oklahoma.

Janie Hipp: And then Ridge, you're the man.

Ridge Howell: Hi. My name is Ridge Howell and I'm from Checotah, Oklahoma as well.

Janie Hipp: So we're going to hear from Braelyn, Zachary and Juleah first, right? Brilan, sorry. God, I'm old. And then we're going to hear from Jaycee and then I've asked Ridge to say a few words.

Juleah Hollingshed: After attending the Native Youth and Food and Agriculture Leadership Summer Summit, Zach, Brilan, and I all felt extremely inspired to go home and do something to introduce what we have learned to our communities as well as everyone else we passed in the hallways.

Brilan Oxtoby: At the closing of the Ag Summit, I realized just how much I have learned, but there was still so much more that I had yet to learn. Through preparations for the summit, I learned that my family did not have a family will to pass down our farm.

Zachary Ilbery: I too learned that my family did not have a will to pass on. I run a total of 30 registered and commercial Angus cattle, but my family has about 400 acres and we ran about 200 commercial Angus and Hereford Angus cross cattle.

Juleah Hollingshed: Along with many other summit fellows, I too have learned that there was no will designed to pass out our family land. I personally raise hair sheep for production and sale in the local areas, most of the time we drive to Leach, Oklahoma to sell our hair sheep once they reach old enough to sell.

Brilan Oxtoby: Important topics such as forming a successful business plan as well as learning risk management.

Zachary Ilbery: Dr. H.L. Goodwin helped the Summit attendees better understand the importance by creating a business plan, by introducing a program called Ag Plan. Through this website, we've been able to see and write a successful business plan. Not just write a business plan that will help you get there in, but one that is successful that you will profit from.

Juleah Hollingshed: Along with the very educational sessions, we took fieldtrips too. My personal favorite was to Crystal Bridges Museum where we took a guided tour of the museum and were shown all of the Native American pieces. After our tour, I knew that I wanted to have a piece of my own original art featured in the museum one day. The completed piece that I have drawn when I got home was a dreamcatcher. Underneath it, I wrote *vine halo* [sounds like] which means I can. To me the piece means I can dream with no words because of people like Janie Hipp, my ag teachers in IAC. I know that my dream of writing a book and illustrating it myself will be accomplished.

Brilan Oxtoby: The most memorable experience I had at the Ag Summit was meeting other tribal youths. While attending I learned about tribes that I had honestly never heard of - Pomo and Lumbee are some. Many activities we did along the way, such as in our downtime, allowed us to get to know each other's heritage. Even though I had spent most of the time getting to

know everyone else, I had learned so much more about myself that I could have ever imagined.

Since the Ag summit, I've been involved in stock shows, beach [sounds like] contests, and along with caring for my family's show cattle. Even recently, we have faced a small hardship losing one of my cows while giving birth. So I have taken responsibility for caring for that calf in the hope that one day she will become a new show heifer.

Zachary Ilbery: One of my favorite parts in the Ag summit was learning about food safety. We got to tour the Tyson Food plant and learned about how they inspected food to make sure it was a quality grade and that the food was safe for consumption. I guess you can say that food safety concerns me, because of the fact that I am a beef producer and in the beef business. I raise cattle for consumption. I have always enjoyed raising my own herd of Angus cattle.

From the time I was a little boy working with my grandpa, I always knew this is the lifestyle that I would truly enjoy. I have always enjoyed this lifestyle. For that reason, that's why I plan to become an agricultural education instructor whenever I graduate. I believe that we need to educate our youth. The average age of the Indian farmer is 58. The average age of the American farmer is 65. If we don't educate our youth on farming and the agricultural business, that will plummet. We need

agriculture to stay strong. Without agriculture, really, where are we?

Janie Hipp: Jaycee?

Jaycee Philips: Oseo [sounds like], hello, my name is Jaycee Philips. I am a junior at Chelsea High School. First, let me say thank you for allowing us a few minutes of your time today. I am sure that you have already gathered by looking at me that I am a member of the FFA. I have been a member for four years and held an officer position within my chapter for the last two. FFA is as much a part of my life as breathing. Before joining the FFA, I was a member of our local 4-H chapter.

Now let me tell you what you don't see. I am a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. I have always known that I was Native American. But it has only been in the last few years that I've really looked in to what that meant. I have discovered a part of myself in studying the history of our tribes and my own family's journey. I am proud to say in the coming months that I will be voting in my first tribal election.

Last summer, my mom received an email about an exciting opportunity to attend the Native Youth Summit in Arkansas. Ask anyone who knows me, shy will not be in the description. I am very interested in seeing what it was all about. Anything involving agriculture in any way, shape, or form, interests me.

I quickly sent in my resume and registration papers. I was excited to be accepted.

The day I arrived changed my life. I never expected to gain the knowledge I did in one short week or the friendships or any of the opportunities I had. As an agricultural student, I was overwhelmed at the opportunities for our tribal youth. When I left the Ag Summit, we were told to watch for upcoming opportunities to attend the Intertribal Agricultural Council membership meeting in Las Vegas. I received that information and entered an essay contest. I am proud to say that I was one of the ones chosen to present our essays.

The IAC presented the youth in attendance with more information in what we, as tribal youth, can bring back to our farms and ranches to help us gain better knowledge and understanding of agricultural opportunities available to the U.S. Upon returning home I used some of the knowledge I gained to buy my show steer. I filled out the papers and requested a loan of my own. I have always been grateful for my mom for providing me the means to show livestock. But the pride in making a purchase of my own is beyond words. If I can do this, so can others. So I stand here today to tell you, without the Ag Summit, the Intertribal Agricultural Council, and other programs that promote our tribal growth in our agriculture, it will die.

That in turn means I and other tribal students will not be living up to the potential opportunities to create for our family and tribes better and more structural guidelines for farming and ranching. I have been an unpaid worker on our family farm since I was little. All of us who grow up ranching and farming understand the hard work and effort it takes to keep growing and improving. I want a better life for my children and my grandchildren. That change begins today. I am preparing to enter my last year of high school. I have a lot of decisions to make but I am very certain of one thing. My life has always been revolved around agriculture. I plan to spend my last year in FFA promoting ag education to anyone who will listen.

Education is the key to growth. Promoting programs such as the Ag Summit and IAC are the tools to getting more tribal students involved. Through my involvement with the FFA, I know that there are many tribal students, who just like I was last year, are uneducated to the opportunities that already exist for us today. I am excited to be here. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak.

The Native American community is in good hands. The work that Janie Hipp and other tribal members do is nothing but remarkable. I believe the more education and training our youth have through programs such as 4-H and FFA, the better equipped they will be to become our future leaders and invocators for our

tribes. Programs provided by the IAC and the Ag Summit are valuable tools. Put those tools in the hands of students who are willing to step out in front and take risk and make changes necessary to help our tribes and communities move forward. The Webster's dictionary defines change as this - to become different.

The funny thing about change is it does not define us. Change doesn't care that I am female or that I am from a single family home or that I am still afraid of the dark sometimes. Change happens to all of us, we have to decide if it's for the better. I choose change because as a young Native American woman within the agricultural industry today, I can be anything I want to be. Today, I choose to be heard, *wato* [sounds-like], thank you.

Ridge Howell: Thank you all for having us. As Janie said, I'm a sophomore at Oklahoma State University. I'm an English and history major, and a political science minor. Hopefully, I'll be doing some agricultural law one day, but we'll see. I just had a few words about the summit. I don't know how I'm going to follow up those two great acts.

Janie and I came to know each other the end of my sophomore year of high school through a program with the National FFA organization that my high school selected for Checotah in Indianapolis but then further on in D.C. We kind of had a

relationship for the two remaining years of my high school career. Whenever she reached out to me this past year to be a facilitator for the Native youth or the Agricultural Youth Summit, I was so excited.

I grew up with a pretty unique upbringing that combined agriculture, my native heritage, and several really, really strong leaders in my life. I saw this as an opportunity to not only pass on what I had learned from these three components that had been uniquely brought together in my life, but get to just really invest into students who I was in their position just a few years before.

Like I said, I had three components. I was passionate about agriculture. I was Native American and had quite a bit of involvement with my personal heritage. And I had a strong record of leadership through the people who I grew up with but different advisors to my ag teacher, grandparents, just a really, really great community - they gave me my basis. I saw this as the coolest opportunity to take these three things that I have been given and invested into those students who I know in some capacity had the same three things. Whether or not they came from a background where they had a really strong Native American culture, but maybe not quite so strong in an agricultural background. Maybe they're super strong leaders and had a lot of agriculture, but didn't know quite as much about

their Native American heritage. They represented these three things in some way.

As the two previous groups said, education was the key to it. Those three components initially, but then without the education this summit would not really have a point. Maybe, they would have learned stuff there, but it wouldn't have gone home with them. So that really stands out to me as why we're here today, and the importance of this summit as it moves us forward because we are bringing those three groups together but we're bringing the more important piece of education into it.

One of my majors like I said is history. One of the biggest things that a history professor or a student can track throughout civilizations reaching back to 4000 B.C. is that whenever education and whenever a civilization stops learning they start going down. The easiest thing to track is the dying of a civilization. One of the biggest ways in which they die is they stop educating others. Whether it's involving with food or basic skills that somebody needs to live day to day, whenever education stops, the civilization goes down.

We are trying to educate not only ourselves, my generation, but the generations to come. So one, we have food in the future, but two we have strong indigenous Native American foods that we can go back to and we can keep that culture with us today, because we have this group right here, and then what

else? We have to continue the legacy and the legacy has to grow.

In my eyes, the unique part of the Ag Summit is we are taking a step not only to continue the legacy but to make the legacy grow. We're hopefully making the changes today that my children and grandchildren, they're going to see the repercussions of it. That is, I think, why we're all here today and the importance of why we need to move forward with this. And again, why students that range from Checotah, Oklahoma, where so many of us are from to the three students who came from Hawaii last year. They need the ability to come so they can not only grow as a leader and grow in their knowledge of agriculture, but grow in their native heritage. As a community, not their own personal tribe or like for instance the Hawaiians, and the Alaskan natives that we had, but as a community across the board because without the unification of it, we're eventually going to disappear and that's what we're trying to prevent. Thank you.

Janie Hipp: Ridge didn't tell you but he was, actually a couple of years ago, selected as one of the White House Champions of Change for 4-H and FFA and gave a similar talk in the White House.

You can tell we don't have any slouchers in our midst. We are in good hands and we're very excited to continue this work.

The initiative is all about tribal governance, building strong and strategic community plans, and business plans that will support Indian agriculture well into the future. But if we don't invest in our young people - I can't imagine being in any better hands - then we are lost. So we are going to keep doing this and I told people in public settings, that even if I have to look for pennies in the couch cushions, we are going to keep doing this. So if you know people who have some extra money lying around and want to support some young people taking part in this and working with each other. I think we've only begun to see where it can all go. Thank you for your time and we're here to answer any questions that you might have and it's great to see everybody.

By the way, Erin and I were so excited we got a call from Kotzebue, so word is getting out and I've already told Erin that we will have some kids from Alaska come, which means that we're going to have to raise twice the money for them to actually get here. It's just very important that kids from all over come. One of the teachers that called us said, "Is this for our kids up here too?" And I said, "Yes, bring it on." It'll be fun. We're just very excited. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. Thank you all for your nice speech and everything. It's really educational on our part. We need to know, too, what's going on. I'd like to introduce our

next speaker in the Oklahoma Northwest [sic] District 4-H development, Nancy Arnett. She is a native of Stilwell, Oklahoma who enjoys working with people of all ages. She has been an educator in both the Oklahoma Public School system and cooperative extension service for the last 21 years. She is currently the Northeast District 4-H Youth Development specialist and serves as a principal investigator on the Muscogee -- and then your thing died on here. I'm sorry about that, Nancy, but I just messed this up. Got the last but I'll let you finish. **

Nancy Arnett: All right, thanks for having me today. I'm sorry for the delay here. I'm not sure what's going on but anyway it would never load completely so hopefully you can see that. If you can't, I talk really loud so I'm sure you'll be able to hear me.

My name is Nancy Arnett. I am in charge of the Northeast District 4-H program, specialist overseeing programs throughout the district and those kinds of things. I am also the principal investigator on the Muscogee Creek Nation FRTEP grant which is the Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Programs.

There we go. Just some facts about the FRTEP grant. The Muscogee Creek Nation FRTEP grant is the only one that works with a tribe that is not on a reservation. So we're really blessed to have that in Oklahoma. This actual grant has been

around for about 20 years with the Muscogee Creek Nation. I have only been on the grant for three years because I just came to the district office three years ago.

At the current time, we have three program assistants. When I first came on, we had an educator and a full-time program assistant. The educator, moved on to another job and the program assistant retired. That all came about the same time that the money, because of lots of different cuts everywhere, we were cut in funding. The funding was not enough to support a full-time educator, so we had to be strategic and decide how we're going to do this and still fulfill the requirements of the grant. So we put our heads together and decided maybe, we can do this with program assistants and let them work alongside the educators. They can go out and do some teaching and those kinds of things.

So at the present time, we have a full-time program assistant who is located in my office. And then we have a 62.5 percent person, I believe, that's the percentage in Creek County, which covers that part of the district. And then, we have another person that is a quarter time, she's 75 percent in that county but 25 percent on the grant and she's located in Okmulgee where the Nation headquarters are located.

The livestock program, the Creek Nation has definitely been a huge factor in putting in money for the kids that are not only

4-H members but FFA members to be able to purchase livestock. This is again provided by them. It's available to any 4-H or FFA member. They have to have a CDIB card and they have to live within the boundaries of the nation. So sometimes we get people that will be outside of that nation. We'll call them. They say, "Hey, I'm Creek." But that's just not the way it's written, they have to live within the boundaries.

For cattle, sheep, goats, and hogs, they're allowed \$500 a year. That \$500 can be used to purchase an animal. It can also be used to purchase feed, fencing, or some type of pens they're building, those kinds of things. The way this works is the youth actually purchase the stuff that they need and then they turn in receipts and then the tribe reimburses them up to the \$500. So they could actually spend more, but they're only going to get reimbursed for the \$500. But \$500 can go a long way for a kid that is starting a project and maybe has never had that opportunity to do something like that. They also provide some other funding and maybe funding that you weren't aware of.

Archery is another big area for the Creeks. They started this a few years ago, which has been quite a few years now. They wish to try to attract teenage boys to stay in the 4-H program. Knowing that they need to be role models and they are going to be father figures in the Creek nation at some point that we needed those kids to be involved. So the archery

program really did bring in a lot of young males, but it also brought in a lot of those fathers to come in and be 4-H volunteers and to be trainers for the archery program.

They do provide \$300 for those kids if they want to be in the archery program and they can purchase a bow. They may purchase some safety equipment. They could even probably pay for going to different contests with that money if they wanted to, but there's lots of money there. You think \$300 may not seem like a lot if you purchase a bow lately, that doesn't seem like it goes very far. But over the years, if that kid could add things to their bow, they can have a pretty good setup, the BNA [phonetic] will do it to compete at some of these different contests.

The other area that I feel like is very important because a lot of kids aren't raised on places that have enough acreage to have a goat or sheep or cattle or those kinds of things. We have a lot of kids who live in town. So this past year, they have actually added a small animal project and they will pay up to \$300. That could be for a dog or small animals like chickens, and poultry and those kinds of things. Rabbits are a big one. They can, again, buy the feed with that. They could purchase cages and those kinds of things. And now, we've got a lot of other kids involved with an animal that maybe would have

never gotten that opportunity because they can't have a cow in town.

Some other programming that this grant provides is we do some leadership type things. We have a Youth in Action conference, which is a leadership conference for our district. We also have State Roundup where those kids are going to those kinds of things. A lot of times our counties are putting in leadership type things that they can go in and work with their county commissioners and county treasurers and those kinds of things. My goal is to keep working with those kids that soon will be able to have that group be able to go to the tribe and be able to shadow some of those people because we want those kids to eventually run for tribal office. Some of them, not everybody's going to do that. But if we could build our own leaders to come back and be those kind of leaders for the nation, that's going to be a plus for the nation.

One other thing on there I was going to say we have STEM. We do a lot of science type things with the kids, day camps, some of the school enrichment or going in that direction. So we do a lot of stuff with science and we know that that is a huge thing for us to get ahead in the world. I know she mentioned technology earlier and I think that is a big one that we have got to keep giving those kids more and more ways to use technology, and more and more ways to see how it applies even to

agriculture. Because sometimes I don't think they realize how much technology is really in ag because they don't see that side of it. I think it's important that we teach our kids that's going to be something that they're going to have to know to be able to go on to the next level.

Another thing on there was camping. I think it's been three years ago, Juleah. We camped and we actually were on a trip for about a week together and hiked into the Grand Canyon. Now, that might not seem a lot for young kids. For me, at 42 at that time, that was a challenge. We walked all the way down to the very bottom, which is six miles down. Juleah probably can tell you really well that she and I were the two that got sick and they had to wait on us a long time at the bottom. But the six miles down wasn't bad. The six miles up was bad. I don't care who you are, it was bad.

I just remembered going to the restroom somewhere along the line and it always said, "These are the people that go down but don't always come back up." And they're like guys that are 25 and all muscular and all that kind of stuff. I'm thinking, if they can't make it out I'll probably not going to be make it out. But it was really interesting and it wasn't something that you just said I am going to go in this trip and I am going to hike down into this canyon because 12 miles is a long way to walk.

So these kids had to start really early about a year earlier than this and doing some of those kinds of things. Juleah probably could tell you the first time we camped and did that the next morning. Oh my lord, I thought I was going to die. It was like six miles so it took a lot of training and the kids have to be dedicated to this program. But I can tell you those 25 or 30 that made it to the bottom and back out were so proud of themselves. They had accomplished something that probably most of us would never even try, so it was a good thing.

Is there's anything else I was supposed to say? Right now, our full-time program assistant is going into the schools. She's been in to three different schools just here in the spring semester and teaching a curriculum that's called, "Take a Stand." It is an anti-bullying curriculum. That is a curriculum that we are seeing a lot of need for because kids need to be able to stand up for themselves. She has gotten an overwhelming response from lots of the school's saying, you know what, it's really changed my class. They don't treat each other the way they used to treat each other.

Anyway, that's in a nutshell, I know I didn't have a whole lot of time. Hopefully, you will stick around and ask me some questions if you have other questions. Thank you.

Porter Holder: Thank you, Miss Arnett. The next item on the agenda is we'll take a short break and I guess we'll set the room up for a roundtable session with our smart people in the room, our kids. I can't wait. Thank you all for coming. We'll see you all back here at 3:00, right, 15 minutes? Be back here in 15 minutes.

Mark Wadsworth: -- bring this into some sort of order is that I would like us as the council and our people that are involved with us to introduce yourselves in a roundabout way. And then, as we go around and then Jason will do a brief speech, and then he'll introduce the students to us. But if we could start with, maybe, if Sarah will start out with her experience. Put yourself back into their age groups on how you basically felt when you were first starting to get involved with Indian agriculture and bring us up to date about who you are. You could start, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: My name is Sarah Vogel. I'm from North Dakota. My dad was a lawyer and was U.S. Attorney. I remember when I was in grade school he would go to every reservation every summer [sounds like] to talk to the tribal councils. He would take at least one of us kids along and I remember going to the reservations and watching the meetings and being -- just find it fascinating.

Anyway, I think it had an impact to go to those communities and to see the serious discussions. And I thought it was pretty cool when my dad went there. They had conversations about what the tribes needed and what he could deliver as the attorney for the federal government in the State of North Dakota.

Eventually, I went to law. When I was you guys' age I was in politics, Teen Democrats. Politics were very much tied in with helping farmers. That's what we did. When I went to law school, I did these papers on cooperatives and Indians. I thought what is a good business structure [sounds like] for Indians? I found that paper a few years ago. I thought, well, I could really write pretty well back then, but I did it already in law school.

Over the years, I've done a lot of work for farmers and in the '80s I remember the farm foreclosure cases against the USDA, and for the last 16 years we're working on the Keepseagle case - still am. It's been a ride. I'm done.

Tawney Brunsch: I'm Tawney Brunsch. I'm the executive director of the Lakota Funds, which is a native CDFI on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, which is in the lower southwest of South Dakota - very sparsely populated, very impoverished. We are the third poorest county in the nation. But as far as me growing up, I grew up on a farm ranch, I guess, well, not really, south of Interior which is the middle of

nowhere so Badlands. We had mountain cows, roaming steers, and horses for the most part. My grandpa was the one with the great big ranch. And then I got married and I raised my boys on a farm ranch.

I was just telling some of the guys earlier that it was actually with the help of an FSA union [sounds like] livestock loan that my boys paid for their college. At that time, I think my boys, they were ten years old and I purchased [indiscernible] 4-H and I think it was \$10,000 because I know that they got ten pairs. Starting at ten years old, they kept building their herd. Eventually, then they did come to use that in community college. I did say they finished college, but [indiscernible].

Carl-Martin Ruiz: My name's Carl-Martin Ruiz. I don't have a whole lot of experience in agriculture. I'm the director of adjudication for the Department of Agriculture. That means when complaints are filed against the department, we investigate them. My office investigates them, makes decisions whether there's findings or non-findings of discriminations based on those allegations.

What little experience I have about agriculture, in middle school I remember growing soybeans in science class. And then, when I lived in Kentucky, I came in contact with some farmers growing a lot of corn and a lot of soybeans in Kentucky. So I decided I was going to try to grow a little bit of watermelon,

and corn and soybeans. What I didn't know was I shouldn't plant them right next to each other which is exactly what I did, and the beans choked the corn. That's about my experience, the degree of my experience in agriculture. I'm here to learn from you guys.

Gilbert Harrison: Hello, my name's Gilbert Harrison. I'm from the Four Corners area which is Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah. I'm a Navajo from a Navajo reservation. My wife and I, we farm and we ranch on the Navajo reservation. Our farm and our livestock are just enough to make it miserable [sounds like]. Miserable we call it. You never make enough money, but you're never done with chores. Some of our nieces and nephews, they want to go into farming and all of that. The first thing I tell them is that if you're serious and their friends, high school friends and everybody - I wanted to constantly tell them you can't be [indiscernible] you have to be in the farm. You have to be on the ranch. That's what it takes, you know, from sunrise to sunset. You got to love the land. That's number one. You're in there basically, number one, to work with your hands, you love the land, and you want to grow things.

In the spring, my wife and I, we plant corn and melons. You get about two to three days then you start going out into the field to see if anything is popping up. You feel good when

you see that first ear of corn that's coming up. You know it's going to be good, those kind of things. On the other hand, we live out by a river and the melons, corn all ripened, there are other guests that come and help themselves. Coyotes, skunks, raccoons that come help themselves to your crops, that's the kind of life we have. We don't have the big acreage. We have five acres on one and ten acres on another field. But it's a good life.

I started my family. When we started out we had a little farm. Then I couldn't wait to get away from it. I went to school. I got my engineering degree. I did my thing. It's a full circle, it's come back. But anyway, I want to congratulate you, at least you're trying. Just don't give up. Times are going to be hard. Not only that, you're up against Mother Nature.

Just like last season. What happened? You put [sounds like] control out there. So you try to beat the elements. If there's a storm coming, you put a deep whatever. Sometimes you get Mother Nature and Mother Nature leaves you so. If you really go into the ag and want to stick with it, it's a good life but, you know, be prepared. I think you can do a lot of reports too. It's not really the personal report and kind of the experience. If you're in the office and do your paperwork and do this and that, go home and that's it.

But on the farm and ranch, you see little sheep and all things in there. The lambs are born and you come up. You really bring life to the world there. It seems like the crops, the melons, the corn, alfalfa, you know, that's a complete set. There's a lot of enjoyment and satisfaction in that that you have missed. Juicy lamb. I know you get hungry but you'll learn. I believe you'll learn to do what's necessary also. Again, congratulation on your efforts and continue. Thank you.

Edward Soza: My name is Edward Soza. I'm from the Soboba Indian Reservation in Southern California and I sit on my tribal council. I sat on there for three terms now. And I also sit on the school board. We have a BIA school on the reservation. It's not a boarding school. We invite students in from all over Southern California. I also sit under the Intertribal Ag Council board of directors. I'm the director for California and Nevada. I've been raising cows since I was probably 13 or 14. I started out small but you got to start up small, I guess. I figure I was about 13 or 14 because I didn't have a driver's license, but I still drove anyway and just probably everybody else does. I got into different breeds.

Like Gilbert said, it's hard. You get so frustrated. It is frustrating down to earth. But then I rodeoed for quite a few years, but now it's just I don't have the time. Everything takes up too much time, you say, but you still do it. It's

something that you kind of got to love and you do get to love it after a while. I don't know. All I can suggest is stick with it. Somebody has got to feed the world. Somebody has got to feed this United States. If there were no farmers, I don't know. We'd be [indiscernible] I guess or so. But literally, we do feed the world and feed especially the United States. We feed the United States.

I live in California. That's a big ag state - a lot of beef, a lot of cattle. But I think the majority of ag is grown there. It's the state to grow. If you get some water, it would be a little better. It will come eventually. Get some rain and all. But I commend all of you students for the things that you do. Be sure you come to Vegas next year for a symposium, for a summit. It's a strictly educational summit. Thank you.

Leslie Wheelock: Hi, my name is Leslie Wheelock. I am a member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin but I grew up in Indiana. I grew up in Indiana because my grandfather told his children, including my father, that we were about to become extinct and they needed to go out off the reservation and find a life for themselves. And so my dad joined the navy during World War II. They stationed him at a dormitory called the USS Cary Quad. It's a commissioned dormitory - USS Cary Quad at Purdue University, a big ag school, a big engineering school. He taught them electrical engineering and aviation technology.

When World War II ended, Purdue University asked him to stay on to teach electrical engineering. He did that while he earned his GED. We've stayed in Lafayette, Indiana. I love that.

What that means or meant to me is that I didn't know my grandfather. I didn't know my grandfather's farm. He passed before I was born but I didn't know his farm. I didn't know the family. I didn't really get in with them until sometime later. I grew up in Lafayette, Indiana. I got the livestock when I was in high school. It was when the hogs got loose behind the stage during the dress [sounds like] review. I was living in the city so I was in 4-H for ten years but I didn't have any animals.

Kind of fast forward a few years, I lived in New York for a while and when I came back to Washington, D.C. which is where I live now, I really missed the fresh fruits and vegetables that you can get at the local markets. And Washington, D.C. at the time had one really big farmer's market and a couple of other little ones. So I started up the fourth farmer's market in Washington, D.C. in a public park which is illegal and it's still going. We got the city council to change the laws.

But that's how I got into agriculture. It was supporting the farmers who are near enough to Washington, D.C. that they will take the time and the travel and the effort to drive in every week no matter what the weather to sell their stuff. We were the fourth farmer's market. The third has started up the

week before ours in Washington, D.C. and there are now around 50 farmer's markets within Washington, D.C. We were right at the edge of that.

But that got me kicked into nutrition and fruits, food - what were still food stamps then but now it's EBT, and the programs that are operated that helped people buy fresh fruits and vegetables in the markets. And that got me started to facilitate more and more stuff in agriculture. And then I went to work at the National Congress of American Indians as the director of Economic Development and everybody is kind of ignoring USDA. I couldn't figure out why they would because not only does it feed our people, not only does it have programs that support what we all want do and what you all are doing already. But it also has a lot other funding, other programs for all kinds of things that we need in Indian country. That got me introduced to this person named Janie Hipp. We won't go there and the rest is kind of history.

So it's interestingly, I'm more a facilitator than a grower but I appreciate everything that everybody in this room does to help feed our people and get ready to feed our people, work in nutrition, work in food, because it's as teaching or whatever it is, wherever it is you go, writing books for our kids so our kids know that farming and ranching is cool and that they can be

cool. I think that's I'll discuss. I want to thank you all for doing what you do.

Kathryn Isom-Clause: My name is Kathryn Isom-Clause. I don't really have much of an agriculture record. I'm a lawyer. I'm a counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of Interior. I guess my one agriculture experience is my husband and I just bought a house last year. So I've been living in tiny apartments since I was a kid. It's so funny, a little tiny piece of land. I really want to grow corn, but I have no knowledge or experience in that, and grazing. So it was corn and it grew about as tall as I am and I'm so excited about it. We finally have some corn and it started to grow and then suddenly it all died. I lost it overnight and then we figured out it was quite gross. We're trying to figure out what to do about that. If anyone has any agriculture tips, I'd love to hear it. There's so much I think that's here.

It's just a pleasure to be here with you all and I'm learning so much about agriculture. It's been an honor to be involved with the council doing all these meetings, so I thank you all for your inspiring words about the future of agriculture. It's really [indiscernible].

Derrick Lente: Good afternoon. My name is Derrick Lente and I'm from Sandia Pueblo, New Mexico 87004. Google it. When

you see the map come up and you'll see a whole lot of brown from up here to out there. We live in the middle of the desert. And to grow stuff in the middle of the desert takes a certain kind of experience and the knowledge because we get about eight inches of rain each year. Not in a month and not in a season, but throughout the year. And so the knowledge base it takes to be a farmer in the middle of the desert is something that you can't learn in a book, I can't learn by myself. It's something that's passed down through generations.

When Mr. Harrison talks about the power and the fury of Mother Nature and the fact that we are all susceptible to her strength, it's like I have to agree that last night's storm, I can't say I didn't shed a tear thinking that I was going to die last night. But the fact is that I didn't and I figured I'll live another day.

I grew up farming with my father because his family did it as well. And today, I farm the lands that my forefathers farmed since the late 1500's. It's just who we are. It's an identity. It's a culture. It's a heritage. And growing up with my father, he never farmed because he wanted to make money. It was just something that he grew up doing. So we farmed real small acres. We had cows that didn't really match, as I would say, because they were all colored in shapes and sizes. We took them

to a sale barn and we made a couple of hundred dollars. He was happy and that's how he lived.

And growing up farming with him and ranching with him, I hated it because it was hot in the summer time, in the middle of the summer, in the middle of July, and you have the haul bales in 100-degree weather. I hated it. And so the first chance I got, I got a job in the east side washing dishes. It was just to get away from him and the work. It was funny because even though I got away to go work eight hours a day, I had to come back and the work was still there waiting for me. But I'll tell you what, is that that ability to learn how to work with your hands, you need appreciation to what you want to do in the future.

Now, when I say that, I had an ability to work with my hands. I knew that I could do that but I didn't want to do that. Do you know what I mean? I wanted to be able to have the ability to work with my mind as well. And so I went to school and I went to an undergraduate degree cert at the University of New Mexico. I also went to law school at the university school. I became an attorney. And just like Mr. Harrison as well, I kind of came full circle in terms of what I like and what I appreciate. I liked the fact that I was able to go out and do my own thing but yet still have a farm to come back home to, because I missed that. I missed that work that I can do with my

hand, the fact that I grew a herd [sounds like]. The fact that I can touch an animal and beside -- not value, but appreciate its value and appreciate what it does for me and my family, and there's more of a story to that.

But the fact is that now with my own daughter and thanks to God that my father is still with us, he's able to still teach me how to be a farmer, how to be a better farmer, how to be a smarter farmer. And it takes that really [indiscernible] that the state that it is to become a farmer in the desert. When I bring my daughter, when I speak to my daughter or something like this or wherever I go, I don't say it because I want her to be a farmer. There is no question for her to say, I needed you to take over the family farm. I needed you to do this and do that. I simply say things that I bring her along because I want her to know that she has an option. That there's an option that you don't have to be the best looking person, you don't have to follow what's on E! Television or the Kardashians or any other things out there.

The fact is that you have an identity as a tribal person, as a tribal member that goes way further back than the 2000's or the 1900's or whatever it might be. That it's in your blood, it's who you are. And if you don't want to be a farmer, there's nothing wrong with that. If you want to go out and you want to be an attorney or an engineer or own your own company or

whatever you want to be, it's a good thing. It's a good aspiration to have but the fact that you always have the farm back at home, God willing that somebody else is there taking care of it while you're away, it's important because you'll have that understanding. You'll have that knowledge that you can do something else instead of just be at home. You know what I mean?

That means a lot, especially to me and that's why today at home, we started up the 4-H Club because unfortunately there are lots of kids around our pueblo that don't have that father figure. They don't have the ability to go outside and go to the farm because they don't have that. It's not because of their fault but because of this [indiscernible]. And so the ability to get them away from television, to get them out of the house, to get them what we feel is important, to give them an option that it's about who you are, it's about who we are as a community. It's all that we believe we have here and it's good to have my daughter with me. [Indiscernible]

Jade Lente: Hi, I'm Jade Lente. [Indiscernible]

Angela Peter: She reminds me of my niece. This is going to be a little hard. My name is Angela Peter and I'm from the Great State of Alaska. I'm a Dena'ina Athabascan. I come from a small, small village of 193. Both Leslie and John have come to Tyonek and visited us. I'm going to appreciate, I think, the

small little place that we're from in [indiscernible]. I'm from Tyonek and our name is the Tebughna and that means beach people. We live on the beach. We are a nomadic people which means we would go to different camps in the summer. We would fish in the winter. We would go where the moose were and such.

In Alaska, you don't have the traditional agriculture portion. Our agriculture grows everywhere. We got to go find it. Now we got to make sure that gets some funding. And the problem we're having now is that our numbers for fish are down, the numbers for moose are down but it's just a whole different ballgame. We have subsistence which is granted to the tribes and there were people that allows them to take fish, a certain amount of fish and process it and eat it.

Yeah, we're just having a little difficulty trying to fit in to the whole USDA loan thing. I might have been working on that. I sat on the IRA council of Tyonek for 12 years. I was the secretary of the president. It's pretty hard living in a little place. We have barely no economic development to speak of. There are 229 tribes in Alaska and you think of a reservation and we're talking about Oklahoma. You guys run the reservation and stuff, right? Well, I mean okay, you know what I mean. In Alaska, the State of Alaska is in-charge of managing all of the game and the fish, not the tribes. They don't even represent tribes. So we run a little hard ball game, but I'm

trying to figure out how to help. I've learned a lot from the council, I have a very great bunch. I'm hopefully going to get some of our kids up here or down here or wherever here.

Leslie Wheelock: How much dirt did you fly in in order to plant your garden for the village? It's like six tons.

Angela Peter: Yeah, six tons they flew in. I have my own personal garden in the fish camp where I live. This would be my fifth year. Yeah, they had to fly in the manure which it wasn't manure. It wasn't.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah, that's right.

Angela Peter: We flew in five tons of manure.

Leslie Wheelock: Because manure, there was a forest fire that got awfully close to it, I remember.

Angela Peter: Yeah, we had a forest fire down there. It came right to the village. But yeah, that was a lot of manure. I know, I could see that everywhere.

Leslie Wheelock: The good thing is that the village of Tyonek has two hoop houses and a garden that's surrounded by a really, really tall fence, so the moose can't get in and eat the garden. They got a solar panel that runs the irrigation system and potentially -- I don't know if you got heat in there or not. But they have folks who are working with their schools who help the kids put the seedlings in the little cups, grow the seedlings, take them out, and plant them. In the first year,

they didn't have a huge crop. That everything that came out in the ground, the kids took around to the elders. Last year they flew, I think, it was about 600 pounds of potatoes to the farmer's market in Anchorage. They flew 600 pounds of potatoes to the farmer's market in Anchorage. That's how it is in Alaska. Everything is a bit of a challenge.

Angela Peter: Yeah, it is and the thing about this is that we do have such a good youth program in the Tyonek Tribal Conservation District. I kind of missed this part which is why I'm here is I'm the first chair of the first Tribal Conservation District in Alaska which is Tyonek. I'm just really, really proud to be from there because our district is awesome. We have a curriculum in the schools that the Tribal Conservation District works with the kids. Our school district actually gives them credit for that in science. So they have a lot of programs and just about to be [inaudible].

Jerry McPeak: I'm Jerry McPeak from Northern [phonetic] Oklahoma. I'm a Creek. I'm a tax commissioner from the Muscogee Creek Nation as well as being a state representative. Most of the kids here know me really well, so when I'm talking about I should be talking to you. My background - my dad was a school teacher. I'm a school teacher but I didn't want to be one. The things I'm proudest [sounds like] about - I have four children by last night. I have a whole bunch of kids that don't

have mothers. They are my kids, right? They are [indiscernible] and I'll go to them. We've got about 20,000 kids go through our camp at summer time. We have ties at our camps in summer. I told people to camp and so the folks have their amigos about that, so I don't have an amigo inside that building. That lasted all summer. These kids, about 500 of them, I guess, I called them. I'm not getting the number damn good. That's a good thing I'm all right.

I'm really proud of my own blood children. I'm very proud like they were there with my other kids. That's the thing I'm proudest of. I was raised for it but I didn't know what else. I was not very much in it but my mama was very, very proud. And people who say that their folks are full blood, but there are a bunch of folks that are 16, they are a bunch of outlaws. [Indiscernible]. But I never learned what motivated me. I don't know. I didn't learn how to think until after I've gotten in the military - how to think positive, how to attack things. Some folks think I attack just a little bit too much. I'm always on attack mode.

But my first horse cost \$20. The second time, that really turned [sounds like] me off. My first pigs cost \$25. That wasn't each. I paid \$25 for two pigs. My first calf cost \$50 so I never was supposed to win anything. I've always been short. Now there's more of a whole lot of folks, I never was

supposed to win anything in my life or being [sounds like] in one budget. I figured out you got a lot of folks who are kind of like they don't work very hard. They're not very tough. They don't get out there very much. So every time you're sleeping and you stop on the beach, they don't want [indiscernible] unless you do because we're not just going to.

I have young people around me who are like that and those are the things that motivate my entire family. My entire family is involved at camp we have at summer time. My daughter is one of the staff there [indiscernible] teachers all the time and comes all the time. And the kids we have that come wind up being the teachers who come back. I'm proud of those things that keep me wound up. I don't have to tell the kids about life [sounds like]. It wasn't that we had or didn't have. It was supposed to be something I thought about in high school. The thing that they taught me when I was eight years old working in a cotton patch for \$4 a day. I was damn proud of the \$4. I can do a lot with it. I can buy a ball, a baseball and found a way out [sounds like] of that until you get that thing. You wanted to take them off and if you lost the baseball, how did -- you found it. That's the baseball.

But we're no different than the kids they have now, my kids I have at my camp now. He was in college. He said you recruit kids like you, just give them [indiscernible]. They're older

than my kids about 13 or 14 years old. I need my boy and they can't do anything to get my boy. They're mine. These kids that I have coming in the camp, those are mine. I'm part of them, they're part of me and we like it that way, don't we? That's what it is.

Our lives are a little bit intense perhaps for some folks but we just think that's how the way we live and what we do but I'm fortunate they get to do it. I don't know, have any idea how until I got there. I didn't want to be a state representative. I did not want to be a state representative. I never thought about having a camp for kids. We have the very first one in the history of the world. We've got the largest in the history of the world. We have [indiscernible] the longest. I'm not a good example for the children because I don't have a long-term skill or a long-term -- I just wake up once, stuff just happens.

Jim Radintz: Well, good afternoon. My name is Jim Radintz. I'm the acting deputy administrator for Farm Loans and the Farm Service Agency back in Washington. I was just thinking because they asked where were you when you were in your age. My answer was I was sitting right there. I wore that blue and gold jacket for five years and I wouldn't be here sitting with you today if it hadn't been for those five years wearing that blue and gold jacket. I remember, I don't know if you guys still

have the creed. I believe in the future of farming, with a faith born not of words but of deeds - achievements won by the present and past generation of agriculturists. [Cross-talking] The first time I had to say that in class, I was so scared. I closed my eyes. I didn't look at the class and since then, I've done things like help testify in front of the House and Senate Ag Committees. That's what that blue and gold jacket can do for you.

As far as kind of getting from here and there. I grew up on a farm in West Central North Carolina. We were tenant farmers. My folks owned a grand total of five acres, we still do. We rented a whole lot of land. It was the 1980's and if you go back and study about what happened in agriculture in the late '70s and early '80s, that's why I ended up going to college. I never really got agriculture out of my system and again, that's one of the reasons I'm here today. I would tell you that one of the things I really liked most about my job is that I get to make a difference in folk's lives. It's what we do - make a difference hopefully every day in some small way. I would just tell each of you that the only one who puts the limits on what you can do is yourself.

Chris Beyerhelm: Good afternoon, my name is Chris Beyerhelm. Currently my position is associate administrator of the Farm Service Agencies in USDA. That means I'm in-charge of

IT, budget, and HR. For which goal, I was doing the job he's doing now and that's how I got started in like -- but rewinding 30 years ago, my dad was a missionary in Tanzania, Africa. I was actually born in Africa. I lived there for 12 years. It would give me a unique perspective because I was in a minority and I think throughout the rest of my career, it's enabled me to kind of look at things differently [indiscernible].

So I grew up in Iowa after we came back from Africa, a farming community. Learned all about farming, growing soybeans and cattle. I graduated from college and went to work immediately for a thing that's called Farmers Home Loan [phonetic] Administration. I started making loans to farmers and started learning more about farmers. I really thought we're doing a great job. I did that for 20 years, I thought we're really helping people and I think we were. I moved to Washington, D.C. In about that time, now my friend, Sarah, and my now friend, Porter sued us. We weren't doing a very good job particularly in Indian country. I think it was -- what was that?

Sarah Vogel: We are friends.

Chris Beyerhelm: We are absolutely friends.

Porter Holder: It took a long way to get there.

Chris Beyerhelm: But that forced me to start researching the issues of Indian country and why I had a different

perspective of the situation. I learned a lot during that research just trying to defend the lawsuit. But then I think what really turned the tide was about four or five years ago we did tribal consultation. We went on to eight different sites around the United States and just met with tribes, just like we're doing here - just around and listening to the issues and tribal tribulations about the difficulties in agriculture and what the challenges were. Not just with FSA, not just with USDA, but just in general and I just got hooked. I was just so impressed with the culture. A lot of young kids came to those things and talking about they wanted a future in agriculture.

And then the opportunity came up to get on this council and I just thought my level of pride to be associated with this council and the issues basically we had to try to do something about them. They've just grown tremendously. I really consider it one of the best things that's happened in my career and my personal life.

I mean I just wanted to say to you kids that when I was your age, I wasn't thinking about the things that you're thinking about. I was playing sports and thinking about what I was going to do on Friday and Saturday night. I'm just so impressed when I think about how far I've come not having a plan at 17. You guys got a plan. I can't imagine what you're going to accomplish when you're my age.

I want you to think about that. I hope when you're 58 years old you think back to what we're all talking about here and the things that you thought about. Stephen Covey wrote a book - *The 7 Habits of Effective People*, it's incredible. One of the things is start with him in mind. What that means is where you want to end up when you're 58 is you have to start doing something about it now. I'm impressed with all you guys are, so a good job done. Thanks.

Porter Holder: My name is Porter Holder. I'm from Oklahoma. I'm now in Soper. You all know where that's at. I was raised on a cattle ranch. My grandparents owned about 2,500 acres and it was about 500 or 600 head of Angus cows. When I was probably two or three years old, my grandfather passed away. So it's kind of unpleasant to [indiscernible] and said we raise the cattle and we raise all sheep [indiscernible]. We were [indiscernible] for older kids. Looking back you know it's just part of it. We really don't have a choice. I mean it had to be done. We didn't know [indiscernible]. I remember having my brothers [indiscernible]. I have to get on to that.

Jerry McPeak: They gave you that horse [indiscernible]. There was a [indiscernible].

Porter Holder: All it did was getting me to head in the right direction. I think I knew that, you know. I always wanted to do it. I knew just what I wanted to do. In fact, all

of those grandsons have been born with knowing that's what we ought to do. I knew that's what I wanted to do, but I didn't know quite how to get there. I am so impressed at your business plans. We just sat in here talking. You all are so far ahead. When I was that age, I had no idea how to do it. I didn't even know what I want to do. I don't know about the business but I knew what I wanted to do.

But around that, well, I wish it was smoother around here when I was 35 or so. It's just 20 years, saying don't worry about this place. I have now the whole 10 or 20 acres.

[Indiscernible] There's always a difference keeping down and [indiscernible]. If you want something, you go for it. Don't take no for answer. If someone tells you no, move around them. You know that's what you want. Do not take no for an answer.

I am so impressed with you all. I'm knew when I said no that's miles ahead of the way I was when I was that age. I feel like we're in good hands. I feel like we're going to pass the torch to young minds here. I was really impressed. This is what I like. I like this council. I know this council does good work but we've been so unique [sounds like]. I don't know who's responsible for having it out here. This is not far being passed [indiscernible].

Jerry McPeak: Chris by the way, I know you're getting [indiscernible]. Jason and I really know him really well.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah, but in between you think about something else.

Jerry McPeak: Yeah.

Mark Wadsworth: Just taking back the clock about 35 years ago --

Jerry McPeak: When you were 30?

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah, about that age and stuff. My brought up and stuff, we started out real poor. Actually, my grandmother lived in on old box car, that they had a train. They had to live in a caboose. And that's pretty neat. And actually, when we're young we still didn't have plumbing and stuff. And then you said you had to go out there to the outhouse and do your thing. Hopefully, you'd always wait for somebody else to have first [indiscernible]. You got sort of that scenario that I started with.

But I was really young and then as I grew up, my father, he was a union farm worker. Then he got a position at the Department of Labor. And both of my parents at a really young age was, you know, hey, there isn't any opportunity here. You have to go out. You have to learn how to work with the non-Indian world. You have to be better. You're just going to have to compete.

Some of the places and you know, this is just kind of reality in the fact of the times and stuff and it's still kind

of today in some places that there's still real prejudice out there. And some of the most prejudiced places that you'll see in the country are right next to Indian tribes. It's just one of those atmospheres that some of these -- your comrades that you'll meet throughout Indian country, they'll come from different backgrounds where they have those experiences and they will try to communicate with the union [sounds like]. I just hope that you'll open your mind if you have never experienced that. All that is still [indiscernible] some Americans.

And so I grew up, my parents separated but I got to live in Boise, Idaho through their school system and then I was up to Anchorage, Alaska. I was a pretty good student at a really young age and they actually wanted to bump me up from the fifth grade over to sixth grade. At the time they chose not to, but then when I moved back after my parents separated back to Idaho, going to school around the reservation back there, I literally had to sit in a classroom and wait for six months for them to catch up with what they were teaching me in a different state.

I guess that the education levels you know are different. Some things are new [sounds like]. These are the wrongs that you know you kind of see and I think that's what we were about here in the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching. We see a wrong and we want to make it right.

So we're brought in those sort of situations. I was a pretty good athlete when I was young and a pretty good football player and stuff so nobody ever messed with me. I was a good wrestler and stuff like that. I grew up and got to know the country boys and of course I was living on the reservation. My mom did marry a non-Indian so we've moved off the reservation but we're still in the same community. So it's around that type of world and the Indian world and then I got the good country boys and they said, "Well, why don't you come to take this FFA class?" FFA, what's that? I didn't know what they're talking about.

I went to work with them. And then one of my friends introduced me and said, "How would you like to work on a farm because my uncle is looking for a worker?" I was about 14 or 15. I was 15 years old at that time. I said, "Yeah, I needed a job during summer work and stuff like that." So I applied. I was included by [indiscernible] reservation. And during that timeframe -- and it was just one of those things where all these kind of darkness bleakness, but then all of a sudden you find a mentor. This guy was a non-Indian but there wasn't a prejudiced bone in his body. He basically looked at me and said, "Okay, this is your interview. See that pipe trailer, see that truck? If you could pick that pipe trailer up and put that at the back of the bumper, you're hired." It was heavy. And there I went

to work for him, so I got to work on his spud and grain farm, and he was quite wealthy. He ran about 1,500 acres of spud and grain farm. I drove the tractors. He showed me how to -- the fertilizers, I got really involved and I kept doing that.

But you know, I didn't really have the ability -- probably if I would have stayed with him, I could have become a farmer with him. He also ran about 300 head of cattle. But as I was going through my school, the FFA teacher started saying, you know not everyone is going to be a farmer in agriculture. But look at all of these other professions that are involved within it. There's agriculture economics. There's veterinarians. There's all these off shoots for agriculture that you can look at it if you want to. It's not just farming. That kind of piqued my interest and things because this new kind of agricultural business degree, agriculture business development. I tried that, not knowing what I was getting into. First generation college students on both sides of my family. I come from the family where if you got a high school diploma, you're brought up right. Do you know what I mean? You're smart or something.

Anyway, I went to college. I went through agriculture economics and got my Bachelor's Science in Ag Econ. And after I got through that, I just kind of said, I don't know whether I want you're just stuck sitting behind the desk. So I decided to

go in the Marine Corps. I went through the Marine Corps for four years. And then after I came out of the Marine Corps, It seemed how come this person who sits next to this person in this house, how come this person has more money than this person? So I decided to go on to finance so I became a registered representative with a financial [indiscernible] financial institution to learn how to do mutual funds and investments and all of this finance and interest rates work. It's just as a tool and I had the ability to do that.

But then after I got into that industry I thought, hey you know, I'm kind of missing farming here and then it just so happens that I just met my wife. She said, "Hey, there is this position in the Intertribal Agriculture Council," and this was back in 1995. And IAC was first established back in 1986, 1987. I was hired on as one of the very first outreach workers within the whole United States.

There were six of us and I was one of the ones that they kept on afterwards. I worked with IAC for about seven or eight years and then I got a position cataloguing the [indiscernible] association. I was the executive director with them. Me and my wife wanted to go back to the reservation and then there was this position for a range manager, a program manager and that's how I got into that position of managing 300,000 acres and 8,500

head of cow over 15 producers out there with their riders and then all of the fencing and all of the water developments.

And it just expanded that when you're going into agriculture, you should prepare yourself too. You possibly can become like a construction manager. You're going to have to be able to build those things in remote places. You're going to have to be able to operate the backhoes and the heavy equipment, to be able to deal with the new technology. And I've always been a technology person. There was never any solar systems on our reservation. Right now, we have - since I've been there - we put in 15 new solar systems in which we used to have these gas engines that we put five gallons of gas in there to run it for about two hours and come back to fill it up and pump it out again. It just helps save us money.

But I guess the only thing that I really want to impress upon you, you have a whole variety. Try them by one or two. Work for a grain seed company. Work for a machinery company. I mean there are just so many opportunities within the BIA [phonetic] and it's all open out there. It's just starving for people like you to come and take your positions. I hope you'd [indiscernible]. Thank you.

Jason McPeak: Lowery, you said that you wanted me to get to talk for an hour. It's officially been an hour so we're done. Almost exact. I'm Jason McPeak. I'm from the Muscogee

Creek Nation. I go with several of these students and then some of them are adopted. I have personal [indiscernible] been several of these throughout the process of me learning kind of a little bit more about what we all were trying to do and accomplish here. And there's bits and pieces of everybody else's story that really covers exactly what we wanted to talk about and what we wanted to instill and what we want to visit. I'm hoping that you want to visit and talk about.

I started this process, I think we're all very familiar with Janie Hipp. She, just by sheer dumb luck the way we even came across each other when we met. My process in this whole thing started about five years ago with a survey. I got a survey. And you get them on your email all the time and you delete them or send them off, blah, blah, blah. I fill out tons of paperwork as an FFA teacher. I send it in to the National Affairs Organization. I send it in to Congress and they fight for the funding for career tech and so on and so forth. It's always a big bureaucracy. And I got this email. It comes back and said something about Indians, Native Americans, and I'm like, delete, delete, delete. You know what, I'm going to open that. So I opened it up because like my father said, you guys have to pick up on that yet through nepotism or whatever. I'm sure that the problem works really wide [sounds like] here but

with that being said, my students are very, very deserving of some of the recognitions they've got. You always do.

So anyway, I fill out the survey. I come to find out, I got 125 ag kids. Eighty six of my 125 ag kids are card-carrying Indians. I mean card-carriers. Now, not all of them are card-carriers, because a lot of them look like card-carriers but they're not and a lot of them -- where's Oxtoby? A lot of them look like Norwegians and they got a coat [sounds like]. You know I don't want if you have that same shirt that say, that's got the Indian brave on it and it says, "Fighting terrorism since 1492." Well, let's be honest. Civilized tribes are called civilized tribes for a reason because when Columbus landed out here and floated up the Mississippi, we said welcome and come on in. So we've been crossbreeding with them for a long time. It's got thin blood, thick blood sometimes.

Every one of you all had a story that we can relate to personally, that we can go back on. I know that you talked about how you grew up on a farm, you worked on a farm when you were a little kid, and the last thing and the work you wanted to do is work on a farm or work on a ranch or whatever. Duh, when I graduated in high school I went so far away from agriculture, you can't imagine. I mean, trust me. Well, I won't let you think who's the hard ass here.

So I actually went off to college and got a finance degree. I graduated with a finance degree. You talk about the '80s and how horrible the '80s were, and you know those savings and loans scandals here in Oklahoma, the oil bust here in Oklahoma, the banks were burned. There wasn't a whole lot of financial institutions looking to hire people in the early '90s. So I went off and made some really, well successful show cattle operations. I made some of the biggest ones in the county. And then I went to work for a bank. Quit working for a bank. Got to go to New York for a little while; I worked for a man who owns an investment brokerage company in Manhattan, New York. And then I came back and became an ag teacher.

And through that process, I've been able to live with it. Kind of like what you were saying, go out and see what else is going on. Your horse that you had it was a knot head, it might throw you off. Trust me. I had that knot head horse too. Believe me, I had it. And we were out getting cows on horseback at five and six years old and we didn't know any better. That's just what we did. I mean we honestly didn't know any better.

Now, I've got a five-year-old little girl home. I can't imagine sitting her on a horse, which she does have one, but I can't imagine sitting her on a horse with her eight-year-old brother and saying, "Go out in that 160 acres and bring up that cow that's got foot rot and walk her to the corral." A six-

year-old and an eight-year-old. And then expecting them to do it, and then expecting them to go to the tack room and get the medicine and come out and give her a shot which happened pretty frequently on our place which is why I just could not stand being in agriculture when I graduated in high school.

But I filled out this survey. I got 86 kids. I get a phone call from the National FFA and it makes it kind of bluntly, do you really have 86 Indians? I said, "Who is this?" "Well, this is so-and-so from the National FFA. Do you really have 86 Indian kids?" I said, "Who's this?" I grew strong [sounds like] and talk to you about how many Indian kids I've got. What do you want? What do you need? We ain't buying and we ain't selling so what do you want?" And she said, "Well, here's what we got. We're having this thing in Indianapolis and you've got a lot of Indian kids in your ag chapter and we'd like to invite you all to come up to the National FAA Convention and blah, blah." I said, "Well ma'am, that's in Indianapolis and I hate Indianapolis and I hate going up there. The parking is horrible and the motels cost \$400 a night and it will cost us a fortune to get up there. Ma'am, I appreciate it but I don't think we're going." She said, "We'll pay for the trip." I said, "I think we'll do that. How many of them can I bring because I got 86 of them who want to come?" She said, "Only about six or seven." And I said, "Okay, we'll do that."

We go up there. We have a roundtable discussion like what we're having here. In the process of the roundtable discussion, they broke us up into different tables. Janie was there. I've never met her before. I have never heard of Janie. I didn't know anything about that. I'm sure you guys were all aware of her history and she used to work with the USDA's Public Relations Division which I guess is now what you do, and I know I've met you because my sister worked for your old office right at the USDA.

Jerry McPeak: I've been actually there. [Cross-talking]

Jason McPeak: So we go through this roundtable discussion. They divide these kids up. Ten kids, ten tables. And they had an adult in each table and they started asking their own questions about their tribe, their government, their agricultural opportunities and things like that. And there were kids there, literally kids there from all over the United States. But we as Oklahomans are not reservation Indians. And I don't want to be blunt, and I don't want to be [indiscernible]. We're all friends here. There's a huge difference between a reservation child and an Oklahoman Native American child.

Female Voice: Alaskan.

Jerry McPeak: Or an Alaskan Native American child because we're already integrated. And not by choice we're integrated -

by feast and famine and gunpoint, but they sure got integrated. But what it's done is it's allowed our children to be very well-rounded. It's allowed them to not dream about stagenis [sounds like] when they go off and stay the night somewhere, and not to be scared, and not to think that everybody is out to get them. You all know what stagenis is?

Female Voice: No.

Jason McPeak: Okay. At the Cherry Creek, those are the people that come back -- it's little people that come and haunt you in the night. But anyway, there you go. Every culture has got one. You just call it something different.

So in this roundtable discussion, I had a young man which was Ridge Howell who stood up and talked to you earlier today. Ridge stood up, and Ridge is very articulate. And Ridge affectionately got nicknamed Casper because when we actually went to Washington, D.C., he was by far watching the kids that were there - by far.

Male Voice: He glows in the dark.

Jason McPeak: Yeah. If you put him underneath a fluorescent light, he -- so anyway, Ridge talks very well and is very articulate. And Janie picked up on that, and Janie came to me after that and said, "You know, this boy is very impressive and we would like him to come to Washington, D.C." And I said, "Great. Can he bring a friend?" And she's like, "He can bring

a parent." I said, "I'm his parent." Because that was no [indiscernible] going to be at school. So we go to D.C. and we set through some things which is going to actually resonate very well with you. Because I can't remember exactly the young man's name, I can't remember except he was from one of the Lakhotas, whether it was north or south Lakhota. And he was Sioux or Lakhota. I can't swear to which one. He worked in the west wing of the White House. He came and talked to us and visited with us.

We come here and we try to get things done. We talk about the troubles and the things we have going on. When you go to D.C. -- and I kid John about things all the time, ride the fence and how he has little phrases. When you say something, oh, yes, well, we'll look into that, or, yeah, well, that's something that sure needs to be talked about. But it's never yes when -- I come from background, somebody says you can't do that, oh, that aggravates me to no end. Really I can't do it. Watch. Let's find out if we really can't or not. What you mean is you don't want to. You don't work that hard. You won't put effort through. But don't tell me we can't. I don't understand can't. There's no process. Tell me I can't do something, by gosh, and I make 3.8 GPA in college my second year after 1.5 because he told me I couldn't.

Female Voice: Way to go, Dan [phonetic].

Jason McPeak: So we were there. We were there with a lot of Indian kids; 90 percent of them that come off from reservations. And these were kids that had been hand-chosen. These were the absolute cream of the crop of these kids off these reservations, and they were very articulate. We met some kids who were very smart and very capable and had very well-rounded backgrounds, and that's why they were there and that's why they were chosen to be there.

And we had this bureaucrat from the White House walk in and he went checking his watch the whole time. He would have died, he would roll over his grave over this meeting right now because he left 20 minutes -- and he walked in, and he proceeds to talk, and he told us real fast who he was, which is why I don't remember it. And he told us really fast what he does, which I don't remember. And then he said, "Okay, you got here. You all guys are Native American kids. Welcome to the White House. We work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and we work through land-grant colleges and we work for Indian colleges." He goes on, blah, blah, blah.

This young lady, he asked the question. [Indiscernible] five years ago. This young lady stands up and [indiscernible] she starts talking to me. Now keep in mind, this student walks in, tells who he is, doesn't say what tribe he's from, doesn't say nothing. He looks at [indiscernible] but doesn't really go

into a whole lot of background. She stands up, introduces herself like she should if she is talking to elders and does it in her native language, running through her genealogy while she's doing it. When she got done, he didn't approach the podium again and he said, "I'm so sorry. Let me start over." At which point, he introduced himself in his own native language, the proper way, and they were related. They had come from the same descendant clan. After that, we'd go anywhere we wanted to. That is fact.

I apologize for getting a little emotional on that deal, but that was nothing that had to do with me. But it takes one instance like that to open one door and then here we are. And you never know when that door is going to open. You never know when you're going to hit that tuning fork that's going to click in somebody's mind. I'll guarantee you. If I'm remembering it and it didn't even happen to me, I'll guarantee you that sucker remembers it. I know he does because it was very emotional for him and you could see it. That girl stood up, introduced herself in her native language, went through her genealogy, and then he not only was from the same tribe as her, but if he does his introduction correctly, they have the same -- and I apologize for my ignorance; you probably understand and know. There was some clan in the genealogy breakdown that was the same ancestral clan that his mother or his grandmother was from.

And when that happens, just like that, what do you all want? What do you all need? What can I do for you? Whereas, before that, it had been, okay, here we are. We're going to give you some information, and we're going to wrestle you all now and wring as fast as we can so I can get to my next appointment. That was the mood when we walked in. By the time we left, that wasn't the mood. The mood was, what do you all need? What do you all want? What can we do for you?

So everybody in this room can share a lot of the same background and similarities because we're all involved in that regard [sounds like]. And these kids are going to get up and tell you a little bit about their experiences and their agricultural things. On top of that, for why we're here, we are very, very, very good - I'm going to brag a little bit - we are very, very good at what we do. We are very good at what we do.

I played college baseball for four years. I should be an average [sounds like] athlete. I was in the banking business. I was a really good loan officer. I didn't have to repossess very much stuff, and we worked it out. Now, the base don't like that. The owners don't like them working out because there's too much potential for loss later on down the road. But by gosh, the people like it. And we answer surveys there once in a while that open up doors for my kids. We've had three IAC scholarship winners. Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

It opened doors for those kids. It gave them opportunities for more scholarships. It gave them opportunities to grow and to know and to understand that they wouldn't have gotten.

So when Janie had her deal and -- in fact, she called me up and she says, "Hey, I need some kids." And I said, "All right, we'll get you some kids." Then she called me up and she said, "Hey, I need some more kids." And I said, "We don't need any more for Lakhota [phonetic]. You need some more from somewhere else." She said, "Yes, but I need." I said, "All right, we'll get some more." So we started calling other ag teachers, and we started saying, "Hey, guys, you got a card-carrying Indian kid. Get that sucker sent. Get them going. Do you know what I mean? [Indiscernible] Get it turned in. We'll make it work." If you call me up and say, "Hey, we didn't get our paperwork. We're just going [sounds like] about that. Don't worry about it. I know the lady in charge. We'll take care of it. I'll call her. I'll call her and see if it works out.

Gilbert Harrison: She can't say can't.

Jason McPeak: Uh-uh. She can't say can't. We'll work it out. We'll figure it out. We'll figure it out. We'll slip them outside [sounds like] the wall. It's all right. We'll make it work.

So I want to thank you all, number one, for the opportunity that you've given us, specifically [indiscernible] had probably

reaped the benefits of IAC as much as anybody. We might have even reaped the benefits more than anybody. Hopefully we're doing a good job as a representative of telling you how the story goes. Hopefully we're representing you well enough that you want to help these kids, and not just my kids but all the kids in general.

Luke, here, he's going to get up and tell you a little something about himself here a little bit. That kid right there does not have an Indian card. Look at him. I live in Oklahoma where there are 77 different tribes. That boy is Choctaw as Choctaw can be. He's more Indian blood than all of us probably put together and don't have a card, but that's because Oklahoma wasn't really set up as Indian territory. It was set up for Indians. And when they relocated us here, they said every Indian is going to get 160 acres. Well, by gosh, you always trust the government, right? The government would never lie to you, so I think.

So [indiscernible] Andrew Jackson, he's a friend of the Indians, right? He's like our number one friend. So they relocated us to Oklahoma and they said everybody is going to get 160 acres, and then they stalled out for about 10 or 15 years because we didn't kill enough of them on the trail. Trail of Tears happened. We just didn't quite get rid of enough folks. Only half of them died on the way over. We got to Oklahoma with

8,000 Cherokees. That wasn't supposed to happen. There were only supposed to be about 4,000 or 6,000.

Female Voice: You forgot the mule [sounds like].

Male Voice: Oh, yes, a mule. I forgot that 160 acres had the mule, yeah, 160 acres of mule. So then they want to make Oklahoma a state, but they can't make Oklahoma a state because of all those Indians were there. Indians can't vote. They can't prosecute a white man for stealing their land or for shooting them or for doing anything else to them because the Indian can't testify against a white man. We want to make a state. We can't make a state of Indians, so we got to figure out some way to get the white folks to come here. The white folks ain't going to come here because all these Indians are here.

How are we going to do that? Well, let's tell them they got to sign up on a roll. They got to sign the Dawes Roll. That's some genius at their Congress. Go sign that Dawes Roll. All the Indians came in to sign this book. And if they sign this book, then we may or may not give them their land, but we ain't going to tell them why they got to sign the book. Then, we're going rumors all over the state of Oklahoma that says if you sign the Roll and you're full blood, they're going to pack you up to ship you off again. They're going to move you farther west.

If you sign the Roll and you're half blood, then their tribe is going to let you keep your house, wherever you're living at now, but they're probably only going to give you 80 acres because you're assimilated. You start taking up on the white man ways because you're integrated. You're breathing with the white men so the half-bloods could stay.

So we haven't got those books. Knowing the government, knowing how these have been, how many people went and signed up on that deal? Well, all us mixed breeds wouldn't sign up on it because we want our 80 acres. But the full-bloods didn't because they were scared they were going to shipped off again. So that's how you end up with so many kids who look like him that can't [indiscernible]. So anyway, you going to start this?

Female Voice: Yeah.

Male Voice: Atta girl.

Female Voice: Hi. I'm Stacey [indiscernible]. I'm Cherokee.

Male Voice: Louder.

Female Voice: I didn't grow up on the farm. That's not where I started. My parents didn't divorce until I was probably 4th grade. We grew up with hogs, and we had rabbits. We would breed the rabbits, then every so often the babies, that was some of our meat. We would stew [sounds like] the rabbits and we'd eat them.

My parents got a divorce in 4th grade. That's when I got involved with 4-H. My mom signed me up for it. I got my first show pig and I started showing. My ag teacher took me under his wing. He kind of was my father figure there for a little bit and got me into showing. Well, then I got [indiscernible] came in the picture. He's my dad. I have a sperm donor which is what I call him and Bonita [phonetic]. But I have my dad. My dad is not related to me by any shape or means, but he's my dad. My very first day out on the family farm, he had all the tractors lined up. He had just worked on them, and I remember he looked at me and he went, "Are you ready?" And I remember we loaded up on the truck and we drove every single one of the tractors there. We spent a whole day driving and then it just went -- I started going back and I learned everything in the farm. That's why I love the land, was because of him.

And he was [indiscernible] and then I started showing cattle. I went to visit show camp two years with sheep, but then I got cattle and I love cattle. I love cows.

Last year at camp, I remember we learned about the summit. He was like, "Do you want to go?" It was like it's late, and then they made calls and then we showed up at the summit. Well, at the summit, we learned about all kinds of stuff. We also learned about the IAC meeting in Vegas, and we signed up for that but I didn't get it. But then I entered an essay contest

and I was top three with my essay. And with the essay, they flew me to Vegas. When I got to Vegas, I learned even more about ones that I could, and I was able to actually come home and get my first loan to purchase my very first -- well, not my very first, but it was my first loan to purchase [indiscernible]. And with that, once I get this loan paid off for, I'll be able to get another loan to actually start a herd, to start my cows. That's about it.

Male Voice: This is a shameless plug that I'm permitted to say, right?

Jerry McPeak: I would give her a loan to get it.

Julie: My name is Julie Hollingshead, and I'm a member of the Muscogee Creek Nation. Over the past year, I've been awarded with a position on the youth advisory board for the secretary of my tribe. Through the summer youth work education and training program, I showed wool sheep, but I raise hair sheep for the production itself on a one-acre farm. This past year, I was granted with the Reserve Grand Champion showing at our local show where my brother received [indiscernible].

Although our farm is very small, we are always busy and finding new things to improve. I also received [indiscernible] president of our FFA chapter this year. Through the FFA, I have accomplished many goals. I was able to go to Louisville, Kentucky and top the [indiscernible] debate about our community

garden. Our community garden is a one-acre farm and the summer work is funded by Creek Nation. Last year was the first year I was eligible, and I was 16. I put over 200 hours in just the summer alone working in our garden, along with attending ag summit and the many other leadership camps.

Besides all the work I do in our community and local livestock shows, I participate in public speaking. Since my anchor year, I placed in the top three in almost every speech competition I competed in. Honestly, I can't remember a time where I placed below fifth, from performing the opening and closing ceremonies and reciting the FFA creed, writing and giving a prepared speech and my personal favorite, narrating for our national winning school marching band. Through my narration for the Checotah marching band, I've been given an opportunity to audition for Nickelodeon and Disney Channel to possibly be a voice over for a cartoon character.

Zachary Ibery: Hi, I'm Zachary Ibery. I'm a member of the Cherokee Nation. I was [indiscernible] a little bit, I don't really know how to describe anything. After listening to my ag teacher, I honestly don't think I have ever seen him this emotional before. He knows a great deal [indiscernible]. Like I said, I'm a member of the Cherokee Nation. Coach over here, I've been to his camp before, and he's helped my family a lot. My family has had some problems in the past. Our families just

go back, all the way to Brush Hill. Coming from Brush Hill and coming up [indiscernible].

I live on a family farm. My grandfather owns it. My grandfather basically took care of me all my life. When my mom -- my parents got divorced when I was really young. We live on a farm. We own about 300 acres, and we lease about 150 acres. As a matter of fact, the old territory line, the Cherokee Nation and the Muscogee Creek Nation territory line divides our property in half. Part of it lies on the Muscogee and part of it lies on the Cherokee. We run about 200 head of cattle, and this year I started my own herd or I kind of started it back. I've been showing it for a few years that thing out. [Indiscernible] my seventh grade year. That's how I started my herd out.

I remember my grandpa, he helped me buy my first show heifer. With my show Heifer, I came back and bred and started my herd now. I personally own 30 head of registered angus [sounds like] cattle, and I've just been leasing -- I'm actually leasing 10 of my own land. I'm using a farm loan and I'm leasing some of my own land. I have two bulls, and it's just such a great experience. Agriculture has truly been my passion. There's just not much I can honestly say really to describe how my grandfather has installed on me. My grandpa and my parents have installed such time [indiscernible]. They've taught me

what life is. They've taught me that there's more than just agriculture. You can go out and explore some of the other fields. There's a lot more that agriculture is just a passion really [indiscernible].

It's just a passion that truly urges me. I don't know how to describe it. I fall in love with it over and over again. Thank you for giving me this the opportunity. Thank you.

Male Voice: Even though I'm not a speaker like the rest of the ones here, they've just pulled me out of the platform. I lived in and grew up on a farm since I was little and I've always shown that. I recently came to Checotah when I was a freshman. Before when I reached out for 4-H, and my little brother is still in 4-H because one of them has opened up at FFA but the school they're at now doesn't offer it. My mother is a teacher in the very small town in Braggs. They're called Braggs in Oklahoma. And they don't offer it at all, so they did it in McIntosh County 4-H because we lived there our whole life.

We've raised cattle since a long time now, as long as people were in that house. And it's always been for show, nothing but mainly show. My little brother who is 12 years old, I mean the boy, we compete all the time. We will get in fistfights about the cattle. Who's cattle is that? But this boy will pick out his own. He has gotten one cattle when he was a kid. His first cattle is what he got and he has picked

certain bulls to breed her too and had -- we've never bought him another show cattle after that. I am not that great, but he is. We all won many awards - the grand champion, Hereford [indiscernible], et cetera. Basically, every breed we've ever shown, except one of the [indiscernible].

But when I've gotten to FFA, I thought it was cattle, pigs, hogs, and goats. I never thought I'd be standing in front of people, my elders, and everyone speaking, which scared the crap out of me. Do you know what I'm saying? I came up the whole ride going, oh my, god. But I've met so many people through FFA and even 4-H even though we weren't very involved because we never understood any of it. But I've met hundreds of people and then going to Janie, like I said, I met people. I found out about tribes I never knew existed. I found about people I never knew existed, amazing people.

For the longest time, after I figured out what agriculture really is, it's always been just a passion of mine. I've always loved animals. I'm always taking care of animals. I've gotten in trouble for bringing a possum that I found in the road, letting in the house and letting it sleep in my room, which is all true which is sad. I brought a dove home that had a broken wing that I shot, but I took care of it.

Male Voice: They shot --

Male Voice: No, I shot it originally. I was like, I'm sorry. I'll give you a home. I'm always the one who acts before I think because after I shot it, I said, "Oh God, what have I done?" Since I was little, I've always wanted to be a vet. I don't know why. I couldn't tell you why. I started with wanting to scuba dive for a living, but then I realized I can't breathe under water. I know, of all places. But I started the vet thing and I just recently, yesterday actually, started working at one of our local vet clinics. I won't go into account, but I started working there along with having to [indiscernible] school every day with me to take care of it, which we put in the amazing act [indiscernible].

But other than that, I've really shown cattle and I'm just now starting the whole public speaking aspect of it after now realizing it my junior year, which is a great time to realize that. But hopefully, I will get a lot better at this than what I am now because I know now I'm terrible.

But other than that, I've done besides the public speaking or attempting to public speak, I've done [indiscernible] with Zach and a couple of other kids from the chapter, Julia, at opening and closing ceremonies which they forced me into basically gunpoint. [Indiscernible] no, they had a [indiscernible] kind of pathetic. After I got into it, I realized I do like to speak in front of people. Getting up here

now, I realized I'm kind of okay with it, besides the fact that my knees are still shaking and my hands.

But other than that, I've lived on a farm and been a part of agriculture my whole life on my grandparent's farm on my dad's side. My mother's side, she lived in a house and wanted [indiscernible]. So agriculture has always been a big part of my life, but it wasn't until recently that I realized what it was, what agriculture really was anyway. I believe I didn't say what tribe I was from when I started. I just realized that. I apologize. I'm from the Cherokee tribe. But that is all I have to say. Thank you.

Kate Rosin: Hi, I'm Kate Rosin [phonetic]. Me and my family, we raised four goats and we've been doing for about 10 years now. For the past six years, we won the Muskogee Regional Junior Livestock Show. We were Reserve Grand Champion for grants and about things like maybe two years since the point but I would -- I've been showing for about five years. My oldest sister started us with [indiscernible]. I really don't think --

Jerry McPeak: You're doing good. Do you know what that makes you? Normal.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible]

Kate Rosin: Me and my oldest sister -- I'm sorry.

Jerry McPeak: [Indiscernible] that's what I want to tell them. [Cross-talking]

Kate Rosin: She got third.

Jerry McPeak: She got third but she brought [cross-talking]. It wasn't in your farm.

Kate Rosin: Black bear boars.

Male Voice: Black bear bush or wasn't like --

Kate Rosin: Black bear boars. [Cross-talking]

Jerry McPeak: I've always thought it was a blackberry bush.

Male Voice: Boars, not bushes, Jerry.

Jerry McPeak: [Indiscernible] You raised it yourself, right?

Kate Rosin: Uh-huh.

Jerry McPeak: But you haven't raised them, but how [indiscernible] raise, two years?

Kate Rosin: About 10.

Jerry McPeak: You know when you raised that?

Kate Rosin: Oh, that was like three years ago.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] largest, toughest [indiscernible] livestock show. [Indiscernible]

Jerry McPeak: When you're raise it at home?

Male Voice: Yes.

Jerry McPeak: And what they started with was -- that's why I thought blackberry bushes.

Jason McPeak: That's why they got the goats originally was because the place they bought it off of, there was an old man named Mr. Maxi [phonetic] that owned this property. It's 260 acres, which is where she lives now. And he had imported some funky blackberries. We got regular Oklahoma blackberries. But somehow he found a strain of blackberries that were like these.

Jerry McPeak: They have more sugars on them.

Male Voice: They have. That's right. They have more sugars on the blackberry bushes but the berry was bigger. I mean, it was a huge blackberry, a big one. And he passed away. He raised watermelons out there. He'd have these great, big, huge blackberry bush and he would plow up around the blackberry bushes and plant watermelons. And he passed away, they bought the place and moved out there. There were so many blackberries that they decided, you know what? We're going to get some goats. We'll put these goats in there to eat them blackberry bushes up. That will work out good, right? So they give them some goats and they put some goats out there.

And her dad runs a cow-calf operation. And so they got the goats. They got the cow-calf operation. They've got all these girls. And all these girls, they don't want to mess with cattle a lot, but they love their nasty goats. So they get to really thinking about this goat deal pretty hard and they decided they're going to show these goats. The first year they're going

to show these goats, they got all these nasty, old, brush-eating goats. You're from here. You know what I'm talking about. You got these nasty, old brush-eating goats, and they decided they're going to show something. And so they go out and they decided -- their mother, she's pretty inclined. She's Indian as much. She's pretty inclined.

The mama, she decided, by gosh, if we're going to do this - she's a competitive woman - we're going to do it right, by gosh. We ain't going to get beaten around no more than these old berry goats we've been eating roughly. So she found out who's got the best buck in the area, and she [indiscernible] nanny goats and goes and pays I don't know how much money to get them breed this high-end buck and we get this offspring. Then, she takes those babies, and she works them around and swaps them around and she gets the girls all involved, and they kind of upgrade a little bit. And now they got some little bit better goats. And they take those little bit better goats now and they take them back up. The students got this great buck and they breed again.

One of those goats hits [sounds like] a lake. And I mean when she hits a lake, she hits a lake, because that doe and her three little sisters that are all young. Goats can have twins and triplets. So they've got these three goats, these three nanny goats or three doe goats, and they had babies, and their

babies are a really good buck. And we get to show it. We get to do them pretty good.

And then we decided, you know what? We're a little bit better than we're supposed to be. We got some folks around here who think they know something about goats, it's getting a little bit scary because these little girls got these goats. We took three goats to OYE, three goats that she raised. They sell 20. There's 4,000 goats at OYE. They sell 20 - 4,000, they sell 20. Guess how many of them we had in the top 20. Three. Guess where they come from? Home-raised.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible]

Jason McPeak: They sell the grand champion goat. Keep in mind. We're not supposed to be the winner. I'm not saying that it's political or anything, but when you home-raise goat and you're a nobody from Eastern Oklahoma and you're out here in the western part of state where all the bigwigs are. You ain't supposed to be up there in the top anyway, much less have three in the top 20. They sell the grand champion goat. The grand champion goat brings \$4,500. That's a pretty good a deal. They're still the Reserve Grand.

The grand champion goat comes from a good friend of ours. It was on [indiscernible] team, Stottlemeyers [phonetic] had the grand champion goat. The reserve grand champion goat come from Pfeiffers. You know anything about goats in the state of

Oklahoma. They are the bomb when it comes to goats. Reserve grand champion goat - Pfeiffers. Guess that one brings - \$4,500. They run Cody's [phonetic] goat in the ring. Cody's goat brings \$15,500. I'm not a rocket scientist, but I know we have the best goat. And we might have had the trophy to prove it, but that money went in the bank a lot faster than that trophy would have.

Jerry McPeak: [Indiscernible] He does a great job of -- because these kids want -- they've got chickens, by the way, and rabbits [indiscernible]. The kids want to show some chicken and the rabbits. If they want a whale, they'd bring in whale. If they want to do [indiscernible].

Jason McPeak: We built a seven-bale, tilt bed, gooseneck, tandem axle hay trailers this year [indiscernible]. And the bad thing is it's our fifth trailer and the first one we have in it. Do you know what I mean? As soon as we build them, somebody buys them. They're going to let you borrow it and take it to the fair because they're using that thing.

Jerry McPeak: These kids, what got to me was he comes up to dad, "This goat is pretty good." He said somebody offered him --

Jason McPeak: Eight thousand.

Jerry McPeak: Before the sale. And I said, "That's great. Did they sell?" I said, "That's really good." He said, "We

didn't take it?" I said, "What do you mean you didn't take it?" \$8,000 for a goat. He said, "I told him I could get more." I said, "Son, you're responsible for that. That's not a good thing. That's a goat." Well, well, that's wrong again.

Male Voice: My daughter has goats. She got them from my cousin Rita's [phonetic] goat and I didn't know that they were show goats. I thought she got them to eat. I was going to eat them. He said, "Oh no, they ain't for eating. They're just for looking at." I don't know what you do with them. I know nothing about goats. I know they make good roping practice for kids. They make excellent roping practice for kids and other than that, I don't know. I thought they were to eat. But she started breeding and raising them and all this and that. She got a bunch now. She's got a bunch of pigs. But she doesn't have a real pig. They ain't for eating either. They're pot belly pigs, but they act like dogs. I don't know about goats. I thought they were to eat.

Male Voice: Before you sit down, what's the trick to raising a \$50,000 goat?

Kate Rosin: We just raise it. We just -- I'm sorry I had been --

Male Voice: That's okay. I don't know anything about goats. [Cross-talking]

Male Voice: We raise sheep and goats, but we do the prize ones, the sheep or goats. We have them for lunch when we get [indiscernible]. [Cross-talking] What have I done wrong?

Male Voice: We clipped it really good, didn't we, Kevin? Thank you, Cody.

Female Voice: Hello. My name is [indiscernible]. I'm also from the Cherokee tribe like Zach and Roland [phonetic]. My family owns approximately 35 head of long horn cattle. We raise these long horns for mostly steer wrestling and team roping. My family team ropes and what not. And of course, we are the Checotah's team, the steer wrestling capital of the world, and we have five national winners in Checotah. That was where I was born and raised actually.

I've been in FFA since I've been in the seventh grade. Last year, which was eighth grade, I started showing again. I had two hogs. And with one of those hogs, I got the breed champion hog at our local show, which the other one stressed out and passed away before the show is even close. [Cross-talking] This year I decided to show lambs also, so I got two lambs and two hogs. And so I got to thinking, I go, hey, dad, I want to raise lamb. So this next year I guess, I'm going to start raising lambs and I'm going to actually go to the McPeak's playing camp hopefully and get to work at that.

I actually was on the state qualifying team, and I tried to back out. I was like, no, I ain't doing this. And Zach told me to suck it up, buttercup, you're doing this. I ended up doing it and I'm glad I did, which kind of helped me with this little thing. I also do [indiscernible] FFA home that I camp. And basically, I've been raised -- my dad [indiscernible].

Male Voice: [Indiscernible], you forgot your chance.

[Cross-talking]

Male Voice: Hello. I'm from the Cherokee tribe with my fellow members. Before I say what I do, I want to say something. Everybody finds what they do, what they want to do, but they always know what motivates it. What motivates me is everyone sitting here and exploring your own checklist. They want to push me on what inspired me. It's doing what I do. I love FFA to every last bit of my heart. It's my passion. Everyone here is more than the organization. It's a family. What I do is I raise beef cattle on a strictly pure red [indiscernible].

Beef pasture is composed of three [indiscernible] - Shorthorned, Hereford, and Brown. Our ranch isn't very big but it's a very decent size. We own about 150 head. Beef pastures are pretty good for breeding because they are slick-haired cattle, known as [indiscernible]. The slick hair keeps heat out of their body. Cattles have a problem in the wintertime.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] [Cross-talking]

Male Voice: By gosh, you could have bought that one of his within my pasture the other day.

Male Voice: He's in there. You come after me.

Male Voice: I won't start unless you told me. I helped raised this much cow on my grandfather's ranch. I raise them as very big, but it's decent size. We have about 150 head of cattle and they are strictly pure bred beef pasture. They are composed of 25 percent Hereford, 25 percent Shorthorn, and 50 percent Brown. One of the reasons we raise our cattle is for breeding purposes. We may not be well-known, but the big [indiscernible] breed is rapidly growing as we speak. They're great breeding animals. They are also known as [indiscernible] or slicked-hair cattle. The slick hair help keeps the heat out of the body but also causes problem in the winter. Since they don't have much hair as other cow, it's heavily coated so it's harder for cattle [indiscernible].

That's why raising cattle isn't too hard but it's a job. There are quite a few financial benefits from cattle. As of now, the cattle market is going up and there's some revenue to be made. Me and my stepfather sold one of our bulls as he mentioned that he brought us over \$3,300. He weighed 2,415 pounds. Now if that's not good money, I don't know what is. We sell quite a few cattle for commercial reasons. Every year, we

have trailer load, actual trailer load of steers, which bring us money for other fees. Also when cattle gets too old, there's more than one calf. They're always good money.

[Indiscernible] big cattle is good for commercial breeding. Our breeding program is pretty awesome. We have certain bulls that go into pastures with new heifers. So I don't have with many problems with their first calf. We have two young bulls. They do an amazing job. After they have their first calf, [indiscernible] better bulls, better calves. They've been trying this for three years and it seems to work just perfect. This spread out to surrounding states. We're trying to find some good quality calves and some good bulls for the best price.

We have three home-raised bulls that do a great job but aren't the best quality calves. So with the bulls we buy, they give us the better quality calves compared to bulls. We keep having better calves. It's a long cycle but it works out over time. Also, with this cycle, it gives us really good show calves. We have so many heifers that have beaten us out of several shows. When that happens, we don't get discouraged much. We see that our ranch has the capability of raising really good show calves. We keep raising those better heifers to be better cows so we can excel in shows and do better, have a bit of rush during nationals.

We have actually had a grand champion bull at the junior nationals. That bull is in our lot, at the whole place. [indiscernible] not to be in pasture this spring. He's a [indiscernible] pasture bull that we've raised in one of our own pastures. He's out an old show calf that did the best at any show that we've ever had. She's won the ranch lots of money. It does an amazing job raising quality calves. My grandmother owned almost 150 head of cow. I only owned about five, but my herd is about to grow. This is what I do to raise beef cattle.

Jason McPeak: They raised the National Champion Bull this year. Now think about that. We're from a Checotah, Oklahoma. There are 3,000 people. There are 100 kids in each grade. We're not Bigfoot. We got five World Champion Steer Wrestlers there. You've got famous people like me and [indiscernible] there. You've got a kid who's raising three goats. There's a [indiscernible] OYE. You've got a kid raising the Great Champion National Champion Beefmaster. Also, he's got the Champion Brahman Breeding.

Jerry McPeak: The lady from Checotah, what's her name?

Male Voice: Oh, yeah. Kerry Underwood [phonetic]. [Cross-talking] but, you know, there's a pattern here. There's really a culture where we live. There's a culture honestly where we live. There's a group of people there who just push and push and push not only themselves but their kids. We're not

going out and spending huge amounts of money to buy these animals. We're starting from a base herd and bring them up and raise them yourselves, and put hard work in. He touched on something that was pretty profound when he was starting off, and that was we work harder than everybody else. That's just the raw hard facts of it.

You'll find the successful people in this world have a pretty good work ethic. These kids have a good work ethic. They don't get this way on accident. They don't win those things on accident. They don't get to be the state champion OCCT [phonetic] or get to win the state speech contest. Zach was fifth in a state speech contest last year in extemporaneous, which is non-prepared public speaking as a sophomore. He still got the junior-senior year to go. These are your Indian kids and they're all over the country. We just got to find them and give them the opportunity and give them voice. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Krista Nicole: My name is Krista Nicole [phonetic]. I'm from [indiscernible]. I'm currently a senior. I am Cherokee, although I've not always known that. I originally came from Texas where I came through with that. I lived in a huge town. They weren't much on Indians. They discriminated greatly. So my parents didn't really have that much down there. I wasn't really involved in agriculture when I lived down there. The

most I got in agriculture was growing a garden with my grandpa who lived on the outskirts of town.

But when I moved back to Oklahoma, everything changed. The first day of school the local 4-H teacher came up to me and she's like, "Hey, you know what? We've got this great program where you can not only show animals and raise livestock, but you can also do many other opportunities that we offer." Although I've always loved animals and I got into showing hogs. Since I was nine, I have been raising, selling, and showing hogs. I just recently got my little brother involved in it and now he has taken over it, so god willing he'll be raising our hogs while I'm gone and taking care of them. I'll still be doing all the business for him. He don't quite get all that.

I definitely have always been [indiscernible] here, but I want to always branch out also. That's why I'm currently attending college to become a pediatric nephrologist, which is a children's kidney doctor. I'm doing that for a while, and then returning home to become a local vet. That's pretty much what I do.

Jason McPeak: You said when you were in Texas that you had been the example of some discrimination. I know that the reservation Indians understand that and had been through that. How many of you Oklahoma Indians, how many of you kids have experienced that in your lifetime? Be honest. Any of you

experienced that? It doesn't happen here. There are people here that when you tell them you're Indian, they go, "Oh, my God. I wish I was Indian." I'm not kidding. "Oh, my God. I wish I was Indian too." And you don't get that in any other place except here.

Jerry McPeak: This is coming from a boy who has just been to the western side of Oklahoma. I promise you the western side of Oklahoma is not like that. That state capital is not like that. [Indiscernible] there. There's a reason why I don't have open carry, because of all that. If I got to go to my pickup to get the gun, I'll get over before I go back to kill him. If I had to [indiscernible], I'd be dead.

Male Voice: He's probably true about that. Eastern Oklahoma was originally settled by the five civilized tribes. Those are the lands of the Cherokees, the Creeks, the Choctaws, the Chickasaws. They all got that land. Those tribes were already pretty assimilated when they made the walk. When they travelled, there was already a lot of mixed blood in there. Those people have always been --

Jerry McPeak: Careful now [indiscernible].

Jason McPeak: I know. Those people have always been a little bit more on the cusp of acceptance or acceptability of what the government is trying to do and what they're pushing on and what have you. And for that sake, we are 60 -- my school is

60 percent minority, and that's not 60 percent Asians and Hispanics. That's 60 percent you're either Indian or you're black. But there ain't very many of them that are full black. Most of them are Black Indians, you know. So I bet you, you never found any discrimination at Webbers Falls.

Krista Nicole: No. Never.

Male Voice: As a matter of fact, if you came to Webbers Falls, they said, "Oh my, gosh, you're the prettiest little Indian girl we've ever seen." Yes. You don't miss out on no prom dates, do you?

Krista Nicole: Actually when I got there, he was like, "Are you Indian?" I was like, "Yes, sir." And he was like, "That's it. We're getting you involved in everything."

Male Voice: Because there are a lot of opportunities, and Billy is going to talk on that here in a minute. He's going to talk about the opportunities that so many of the tribes here offer to our youth and to our Indian kids in agriculture and through agriculture. We have a lot of tribal help and participation. Like I said, I'm a member of the Creek Nation. I sit on the council with Billy Haltom as far as the Agriculture Council. We have the Youth Farmers and Ranchers Program that does all kinds of things for the kids, not just the FFA kids. It's 4-H kids too. We're progressing, and we are very

progressive. We have all Indian livestock shows. We have all Indian rodeos.

Krista Nicole: I traveled a lot and found discrimination in some places, and in some places they embrace it. What it taught me is just to be you and love you for yourself no matter what anybody thinks.

Gilbert Harrison: I wanted to touch base a little bit on what he said about proper introduction on reservation. You didn't do it. Here we say we're so and so, we're with the council. But on the Navajo and other reservations, you start out with identifying your clan. Your mother has a primary clan, your father. My mother's clan that was passed on to me, it's the primary clan. My secondary clan would be my father's side. Let me pull down a couple more steps here, your grandparents. That was just your clan or your identity. If you go somewhere else, you visit some relatives or you run into another Navajo, you would always say this is my clan. If he's a member of your clan, your primary clan like your mother is, then he is your brother. You have to say hello brother or hello sister. They're your primary clan. So that's how you greet each other.

As Native Americans, we have this clan system that's very useful. So if you meet a stranger, you can always introduce yourself by clan. Just like you were saying what happened in Washington, you make that connection. Your clan is great.

The other thing it does is it also -- we're taught very early you don't date your cousin. You don't date somebody in your clan. She's a very nice-looking young lady. I wanted to take her out. It would be my duty, it would be her duty to make sure she's not my sister, she's my clan. That's one of the things that we always honor. Because in our tradition, if you marry another clan, later on your kids are going to be confused on their clan relationship. If you have a brother and a sister clan-wise they [indiscernible]. That's very hard. It was explained to us very clearly. Make sure you introduce yourself clan-wise first. In that way, you know where you stand. So that's one of the things. Like I said, if I wanted to date her, I would say, "What's your clan?" If she is my sister, you say, "Sister, let's have dinner." And that's it. [Cross-talking] You see what I'm saying?

How many of you are in the livestock business? Why do you change rules every year or every other year?

Male Voice: The best in breeding.

Gilbert Harrison: That's another reason then. This clan was very strict on that one. Anyway, when you talk about proper introduction, there was a reason behind that in our tradition, how we introduce ourselves, how we establish like brothers or a sister or a cousin. In the English language, you say half-brother. You say half, like half-sister. In Navajo, it's your

brother. I'm sure you guys have the same tradition, your brother or your cousin. Anyway, I just want to expand a little bit on how we introduce ourselves in the native language and how we establish that family relationship. Thank you very much.

Male Voice: This is Billy Haltom. Billy Haltom is the director of the Creek Nation Young Farmers and Ranchers Program.

Billy Haltom: Agriculture and Youth Development.

Male Voice: There you go. We changed the name. I don't remember exactly what it was.

Billy Haltom: Agriculture, its development. Before I get started, I talked to Jason [indiscernible] this roundtable. I said if they ever let me get there and speak, I'm not going to shut up. I know we've been running long so I'm going to be quiet and keep it short. I'm Billy Haltom. I am a typical Oklahoma Indian. I don't have much breed and character, but I do have a card. I work with the Muscogee Creek Nation in that I run the programs basically that Nancy touched on. We offer the kids different opportunities. We work in an eight-county region.

Jerry McPeak: For you folks who are from other tribes, he's here for a purpose. This program really, really works. I know what I would like to hear is from you guys saying how it worked. He's got a program that absolutely works for the youth, and so that's why he's here. So there'll be some things he's

going to talk about that I think would work for everyone. They're not that hard to incorporate. Well, not incorporate. But he's got some things that you'll be able to incorporate.

Billy Haltom: Our program is funded basically all through public gaming, including my salary. Through that money, we offer to these kids financial assistance. Our biggest area is the livestock show program, and that is we help them financially with the assistance of buying whatever type of livestock it is that they might want to show. I work with kids that range from being a full blood to 1/524th, okay? That's the range of kids that we work with. But as a whole, they all kind of are at the beginning of this moment right here. A lot of them don't come from real strong homes that have a good home life. Single-parent homes are very common. Not such a bad thing. It's a common thing nowadays.

This program gives them kids - I always want to talk about the typical shy Indian kids because that's what 90 percent of them are - it gives them that opportunity to get out there and succeed at something, and they do it through agriculture and agriculture-related programs. The tribes did a great job with this. As Nancy said, we do [indiscernible]. We do a summer trip in the summer. We help them go to any type of leadership training camps that they want to go to. Most of our assistance is financial. I guess it falls back to the expertise, and that

would be me as far as trying to help them find livestock. We have a council that we work with. Jason is one of the members in that council. Julia here is one of our kids we're taking to that. She is a representative of the Muscogee Creek Tribe.

A couple of years ago, we started an all Indian livestock show. And I've heard you mention rodeo. I'm sure that a lot of you are familiar with the all-Indian rodeo. There used to be really big. I don't know how where they stand now. We started an all-Indian livestock show here in Oklahoma. You have to live within one of the eight counties that is within the Creek Nation and you have to be 919 [sounds like] which is based on the 4-H and FFA regulation guidelines. The first year we had 189 animals. We were honored to have a national judge to judge our show, Mr. Jerry McPeak, who's also the [indiscernible] for the tribe.

But the second year - he did it for free - our growth, we had 389 animals in one-year time. A large portion of those kids were free. Every one of them had taken advantage of this program which offers them a little financial assistance, whether it's for the purchase of livestock or [indiscernible]. If they don't use their money upfront, they can give it for feed or any type of animal husbandry that they might need in order to succeed. We're also there to assist them if they need help getting to and from a livestock show. Whatever they might need,

we're there. We have an office dedicated to that program. It's highly successful.

Jerry McPeak: It isn't funded all through it. It's about putting through anything else except it's funded through Creek Nation. Is that right?

Billy Haltom: Yes. Through the Office of Public Gaming. That's where our casino money is going, to fund this program that's helping these kids. It's a great program. They talk about work ethic. I'm a little bit on the lazy side, but I've dealt with these kids. I help kids. I guess it's the only good thing that I've really done in my life. I don't come from an agricultural background. My dad was retired from the military. I'm seven out of nine kids. We live in a lake home whenever I got around. And I grew up on water ski and all the big things I probably shouldn't have done.

When I got in FFA, just like these kids, through that, I've become an ag teacher. I found my calling in life through various changes in my life to I end up where I'm at now. I'm tickled to death I'm back in the agriculture youth part of society. I'm tickled to death to be here. I kind of follow the nepotism deal with Jerry. Jerry's been a part of my life since I was 14 and perhaps until I turn 50. So that's long enough. He's done things for me that my parents probably wouldn't have done. It's through him and having a really, really good ag

teacher that got me to where I am today. Just like each of you, I'm a product of that system. I have no agriculture background other than teaching ag which started when I was in high school showing livestock.

Krista Nicole: I will speak that the grand total that my family received from Creek Nation was around \$1,700 this year, and that helped us a lot. We got 500 each month, my brother and I, for the show pig. I think we used it for our show pigs this year. And then we both made our local premium sale, and Creek Nation didn't buy our show sheep at the premium sale but they add on \$100 because we really wanted it to be a part of the money that we had earned. And then my little brother's show pig actually made the sale too. So Billy wound up buying my little brother's show pig for 500.

Billy Haltom: She said they bought it. That means they gave the child the money, but the child keeps the animal. If you use this \$500 to buy a show pig and you buy a gilt, when that gilt has done a show, then she's yours. If you use it to buy a show heifer and you go and buy a \$2,000 show heifer, they give you \$500 to go buy that \$2,000 show heifer, you put \$1,500 with it. But when you're done, it's yours. You own it. The tribe doesn't take it back. If you make a great sale at one of these shows, the tribe will add on money for your good works because obviously, if you took care of it well enough, these are

shows that aren't just the all-Indian shows. These are shows that you're competing with everybody's [indiscernible]. But if you raise a good enough animal to do well to succeed, then they'll go ahead and give you another \$500 because you were able to get to that next level of expertise.

Jerry McPeak: I want to follow up on this. People make the effort. Billy has turned that program around from one that's pretty stagnant to one that become quite dynamic, instituting the show, the things -- They're giving money that wasn't there. It's amazing. Isn't it amazing how when you're successful and things work, how that becomes available and how that becomes there? Because everyone wants to be a part of something that's winning and doing well. I think you could see why I'm so impressed with my kids and maybe not quite so impressed with the state legislature. I am. They're good.

Female Voice: The only thing I wanted to share with you all is to kind of tie this up and bring you back to what we saw at the summit. About half of the kids who - everybody who came last year basically self-selected to come - about half of the kids who were there did not have any access to FFA or 4-H or any other youth organization where they were. They had some familial connection with food and agriculture or they decided that they were going to grow the traditional crops for their particular pueblo. I mean the stories were quite varied. But I

was struck with, you know, about half the kids had blue jackets and had been in 4-H. Maybe still were in both, but about half had not. Some of that is a relic of history and some of that we actually can do something about.

I would encourage the council to consider recommending to the secretary that he really think about what the council, what USDA, what we can all do working together to make sure that young people like these have full access to mentors and to other peers who are in these kinds of organizations that have access to summit experience or a 4-H camp or go to D.C. and actually be telling the secretary. You can actually see what their future has in front of them. I saw it at the summit. I really encourage you.

That's one thing that it should come out of the council as a recommendation, is that there is absolutely no excuse to have looked across the vast expanse of Indian country and to not have local resources for our young people so that they can actually live out these passions because they're there and they are passionate about food, about feeding people, about keeping people healthy, and about being the next generation.

I don't see that they have the access that they need to the tools that you heard from a lot of these young people that they're getting at such an early age, and that's needed. I think from what I can tell from the secretary after I left,

which I don't have access to it anymore, so I'm kind of putting all this together maybe in my head, I really feel like he feels a special urgency about the nation's beginning farmers and ranchers who are going to come up behind us. I think that we in Indian country need to really step up. We need to challenge our tribal governments to do what Muscogee Creek has done.

There are a couple of ladies here who are involved with the Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative. That tribe was the first tribe to actually put in place a tribal policy on food sovereignty and fitness. Every tribe should have that. Every tribal government should be challenged to actually step up and spend \$1,500 on a young person. We need to do that. If we don't have the resources, we need to dig deep and find them. But if we don't have the resources, we need to look to USDA to help us. Because I look out over the numbers and I've worked with National FFA, there are 12,000 native kids in over 200 chapters across the country. There are 60,000 4-H's. And this is on an annual basis. So I know Indian Country is in good hands. We just can't let them slither out of our grasp, and we've got to give them the support they need.

Jason McPeak: I'll add something to that just because we do have these meetings on time and just now, we talked forever, but we're just now getting to the substance of what we're really here about. The substance is we've got to figure out ways on

the reservation, in Indian country, wherever, where these kids are at, where we can put somebody in place, somebody like Billy, somebody like an FA teacher, somebody like yourselves that can be put into place, that can sit there and mentor for these kids and give them a place. If nothing else, just give them information so that they can go to that Indianapolis trip or that they can go to whatever is next. Because I promise you, once they get out there and once they get involved and once they see it, they're going to grow. They're going to blossom. They're going to meet people. They're going spread their horizons. They're going to be more successful through their experience.

I write on the chalkboard - my classroom is there - every year, all day long, knowledge and intelligence are not the same thing, but experience is worth twice as much as both. Knowledge and education are not the same thing. You can give them knowledge and education all you want to. But until they experience it for themselves, they're never going to learn. They're never really going to grasp and understand until they experience it for themselves, and it's our job to give them that experience to hopefully raise them and get them out on the path and give them that experience. That's what you guys can do because you guys can help those tribes to understand what benefit that has. I know I'm out of time but --

Mark Wadsworth: Okay, thank you. We've had a couple of gentlemen waiting to do a presentation from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We already talked to Jason and Ian. Gentlemen and ladies, you're welcome to stay here. But if you two would like to come in, hopefully there's a couple of seats in here that you guys can sit at. I'll do a brief introduction after you [cross-talking]. The first person will be the acting regional director for the Eastern Region in Oklahoma, Eddie Streater.

Eddie Streater: I guess I had the honor to be the bureaucrat here to tell you [indiscernible]. Listening to everyone's story, we really didn't know what to expect coming here. I know for one, I've been a little tired. I travel a lot. [Indiscernible] I'm going to give you a little bit of my background. I'm a member of the Cherokee Nation, and I worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs for 23 years now.

In our tribe, in our jurisdiction zone is for 41 counties in Oklahoma - 41 out of the 77. We have 20 tribes that are in the area. The Five Civilized Tribes have been mentioned. We have 9 tribes in the Miami area, [indiscernible] Missouri and Kansas. We also have the Osage Nation. We have three tribal towns within the Creek Nation and [indiscernible] which is within the jurisdiction of the Cherokee Nation. We also have a newly recognized federal tribe that's involved, and it's the Delaware tribe. That's a situation that they lost recognition

over the years and gained it back. We took them under my agency, so they're an additional [indiscernible].

In listening to everyone's story, it's amazing how everyone has such a similar story. I was raised on the land that my grandpa was born on, in a small town east of here called Loco. Some people may know of it. It's a similar [indiscernible], little different cities. It's [indiscernible] the Creek Nation language. When they say marked [sounds like] in water, it's like a green leaf on a tree. It's not really a literal translation. It's best what it means. When they hit the water, it doesn't mark it but that's the noise that the water is heading. To know stories like that is pretty interesting thing.

Hearing everybody out here, I had several good laughs, talking about just enough livestock, it'd be miserable. I'm like there with you. We have been [indiscernible] dead cows and broke down horses. They are [indiscernible] in those shows. There's just one little question. As my father passed away in April, my mom still owns the same tract of land that dad [indiscernible]. We got a bunch of cows that we've had. This sale is going to be a tough one for her [inaudible].

But getting off the land, I was right there too. I said I never really want a dirt road again. We always had a garden growing up. We always did until I left to go to college. It was amazing how when I came home that it would have been cut

down to about the size of this room here. When they lost the day laborers, we kind of lost it too. It's good to hear the stories. That's what I tell the kids when I go back [indiscernible] I travel a lot. I had to get an uncle up here last week. There's a little drag when I came up here.

I came in from [indiscernible] this afternoon to hear you all talk and to hear your goals, to hear your successes. It's meant a lot to me. It just really gave me energy and I really appreciate that, and I appreciate the time to be here. I heard the clans that people had. You know, whatever your prize is, that's what you're shooting for. If you want to raise beef cattle, that's what you need to shoot for. If something else is your goal, don't let somebody else going through your goal. Follow your own dream because that's the only way you're going to be happy in life, and I would highly recommend that. Go out like everyone among the table here has done and experienced life. There's nothing like home, I'll tell you that right now. There's nothing like [inaudible].

Our motion with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the federal government, well, what we do is we foster self-governance and self-determination among the tribes. I have 20 tribes. We only had three realty programs left under us. We have two at the agency level which is Chickasaw agency and the [indiscernible] agency. We have a program there. I believe

that's it. The rest of the tribes [indiscernible] natural resource. We provide the budget [indiscernible] we can. The tribes do a good job. There are certain regulatory things that we have to do to reduce the pain but other than that, the tribes take the programs and run with it and do a very good job.

The extent of our property on the eastern side of the state. We oversee about 630,000 acres of restricted trust property, but the greatest part of that comes from the development of a lot of acres. [Indiscernible] we talked about the assimilation that was divided up when it went from tribal ownership to [indiscernible] ownership. We kind of had to check [indiscernible] a lot of this process and maybe even have 60 acres next to 40 acres of non restricted. It makes some part of the job really tough. Other parts of this, we do have a good relationship with most everybody.

Jerry McPeak: Thanks. I sure appreciate it. The 630,000 acres that you guys oversee, is that trust land? Who's the owner of that?

Eddie Streater: The large majority of that is on the eastern Oklahoma side because [indiscernible] individually owned.

Jerry McPeak: So it's individually owned and you guys oversee it because -- ?

Eddie Streater: There's a section of a federal act that restrict the property vantage point. You hear people talk about restricted property. Well, that's literally what that means. That was the allotted land and it's restricted [indiscernible] nation. It can't be sold without the district judge signing off on it. That's because it was stolen so much early on [indiscernible]. In fact, that will be a long time that will be overseen.

Mark Wadsworth: Since most of the tribes in Oklahoma are starting to acquire new land that's within the areas, are you getting a load of requests for putting it back under trust?

Eddie Streater: We do get quite a few tribal requests for property -- some pursue it more than others, some tribes. Obviously, in today's climate for business opportunities, one acre that's ideally located is worth much more than let's say a thousand acres that's not. That's just doing [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: Could you kind of explain to the people here the difference between trust status and allotted status?

Eddie Streater: The trust status is a different set of federal regulations -- the disposition of a property. Once it's trust, it's held in U.S.A. trust. The U.S. government holds power to the property for that individual. And with the restricted property, the individual, the original lot

[indiscernible] title gets passed through inheritance through the years.

Mark Wadsworth: One very important issue within the Indian country is the trust that is in play.

Male Voice: Kind of related to that, one of things this council is talking a lot about. The lending functions of USDA, the problem with it is we try to lend Indian country, getting mortgages, adapting UCC standards. Do you see that same problem with your [indiscernible] ?

Eddie Streater: We don't do lending. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has lending and credit program. But like we're homeowners, we don't do the 184 programs [indiscernible].

Male Voice: I meant more like when we go to make a loan and somebody is to buy a farm, we do an appraisal and then BIA has to do an appraisal so that your concern is duplication of efforts there. When we go to do the closing documents, the BIA has to approve of it. In some cases - I'm not saying everywhere - maybe 6, 8, or 10 months. There's a concern about that.

[End of file]

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USDA's Council for Native American Farming and Ranching

March 26, 2015

[Indiscernible notations are in the transcript due to the audio quality and participants' speaking styles. Microphone seems to be away from the speakers.]

Male Voice: If the lender's happy with the appraisal and the lender's happy with the underwriting, then we could run in some of the identifications.

Jerry McPeak: This is what we want you to take back when you get out of here.

Male Voice: With the restricted properties the regulations do require that the federal government have to approve mortgage and they have to say it. Because that's another part of it. It can't be used as collateral without an approval, without being approved just a court that have to the most people do it in

bureau. We don't see it a lot. We don't really see a lot of mortgage group providers. In the last five years, I think, I've done two.

Jerry McPeak: What he is telling is that we have a problem. I'm with Creek Nation. We have a problem. It's like when our tribal people are renting out their land or a smoke shop and they're getting \$54,000 for this acre and a half or two acres of land, if they like the deal and the guy renting likes the deal but the BIA doesn't like the deal.

Male Voice: Creek Nation handles the realty program for --

Jerry McPeak: Right. But we still have to have your approval.

Male Voice: We do the [indiscernible]. They sign up on the lease [indiscernible] appraised value and that's up to the [indiscernible].

Jerry McPeak: That's why we know the problem because I'm the tax commissioner of Creek so we're familiar with this. We had a deal this year where they were losing money, so the people who own the land were amicable to reducing that rental, that's two acres to \$34,000 a year. That's a lot of money. And the guy needed to stay in business, but we had trouble getting the BIA to approve it. And for those of us working it out here, that's difficult for us to grasp. That's difficult. I'm sure you and I have got here to be away from the bureaucracy of it. I'm sure you're not such a hit. Yeah, that might be it. But for some

reason, there's a process. It almost became a deal where it almost lost a business because they had to keep on waiting to get that thing approved. Okay. So going down \$54,000 to \$38,000 [indiscernible] the highest rental ever in the history of Oklahoma for that kind of land, but we couldn't get the lease. I'm not getting on to you personally. I'm just saying that that's what we really honestly, and what we talk about in here when [indiscernible] we certainly how the BIA involved in the discussion. We found early on some of our discussion through a certain point, and then it would be the BIA will have counted [indiscernible]. We were able to find out what the regulation were, what the lines of demarcation were in making decisions.

Male Voice: We can certainly go to the regulatory background if you like [indiscernible]

Male Voice: No, I'm good [indiscernible].

Male Voice: Are you're talking the BIA approval on mortgage?

Male Voice: No, no. He's talking about the lease. There can be multiple reasons why we may have [indiscernible] out there where there may be not being probate in place. There's a lot of different things that it does.

Male Voice: I thought that the BIA did not have to approve any leases if the tribe had its lease policies and procedures in order.

Male Voice: This is an individual lot, not a tribal, not a tribal lease. This is individual property.

Male Voice: Individually owned property allotment that is actually still free land use stock involvement [sounds like].

Male Voice: Yes, [indiscernible].

Male Voice: Not individual allotment, that's trust? Okay. You're correct.

Male Voice: That would, yeah, because I've been to that.

Male Voice: And we're [indiscernible] that the [indiscernible] tribes are the only ones that did operate under their particular set of rules that they offered and end up [indiscernible] blood warrant with the property that no other tribe has the blood [indiscernible]. Once you go in their half-blood property, [indiscernible] in trouble.

Male Voice: But wouldn't that be [indiscernible] the whole tribal government decision?

Male Voice: No, that's Congress. That's a congressional decision.

Male Voice: With the BIA, it could be here or there.

Male Voice: That's why you see so many different reasons because the [indiscernible] law and you had -- it's still diverse in the United States.

Female Voice: So the reason that it comes down to the district judge making the decision is different. That process is

different from what happens in the reservation land because that's all elevated up to the Secretary of Interior under federal statute. This is under different statutory history.

Male Voice: [Inaudible]

Female Voice: It's specific to the --

Male Voice: It's specific to the products of [indiscernible] tribe.

Female Voice: The state goes with the [indiscernible]. They have [indiscernible] that sign [indiscernible] keep track of land or the out taking the land. Spread along without a statute and the rest of the [indiscernible] statute.

Male Voice: Basically, it did govern inheritance [indiscernible], the buying and selling of land [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Eddie. I'll introduce our next speaker, Scott McCorkle, the acting superintendent of the Concho Agency in Southern Plains.

Scott McCorkle: It's an honor and blessing to be with you today. I've enjoyed the stories too at your [indiscernible] where all the grace and a few good works and I think those stories are far eminent that then. My little bit of my history. I was born on Rosebud Reservation. I stayed there but a couple of months. Mom said we took a train ride to Oklahoma and eventually adopted by a non-Indian family. I grew up, went to school. Eventually, went to work for the Bureau of Indian

Affairs. My first duty station was the Pine Ridge Reservation. And after two or three years there, I transferred to Concho. Today, I'm representing the Southern Plains region that manages between 400,000 and 500,000 acres of these individual allotments.

I'm not sure, and I can't really tell you a whole lot about regional operations because all my career has been at the agency level. The Concho agency, the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes accepted a reservation in the 1860s in Western Oklahoma. It's about 5 million acres. And through the executive order and statutes, that 5 million acres was reduced to about half a million in individual allotments or about 3,300 members at that time. Each one was allotted 160 acres. There were some reserves made for demonstration schools that were intended to teach Indian people how to farm. And there were some military reserves. And I think the state school section in each township.

Early on, the cattle drives came through Jesse Chisholm and some of the other ones that will come through Western Oklahoma to graze those lands for nothing. And after allotment period, I think [indiscernible] tried to farm. But in those days, there wasn't hybrid seeds and they either get blown out or rained out or droughted out or one reason or another. It wasn't a good experience. Most folks began to sell their allotments or trade

them for town property. Then there was a decision made that maybe the government ought to manage those properties and collect the proceeds from renting, leasing, and permitting. And collected and maybe establish a small banking system where we could deposit that money into the landowner's account. We're still doing that.

But from a half a million acres, we're down to about 64,000 acres of surface. Today, we've got about 60,000 of that leased out. We do that through an advertised lease/sale program where we invite farm operators to come, put in sealed bids on the tracts that we advertise in the newspaper, and we send them out notices. We have a sale. Everybody's invited. We open the bids and the tracts that get more than one bid, we have a whole [indiscernible] on it. So everybody has a fair chance to get a shot at leasing the property.

I think about 66 percent of our tracts are leased through the sale process, and about third are negotiated between the farm operator and the individual allottees. Actually, now, they're uninvited [sounds like] interest donors. When the property was allotted, there was one allottee, and there's no provision made for inheritance. So we've got a big problem with multi-ownership. They tend to support the American [indiscernible] reformat that allows us to take on the tracts that have more than 19 owners. We can approve a lease with 51 percent

agreement as long as it meets appraisal. In some situations where there are circumstances that were warrant, we can approve the lease for less than appraisal. But we have to have a lot of supporting documentation for that.

We use a lot of wire and fire and herbicide in managing the grass that -- our tracts are real dynamic. Most of them are mixed tracts of upland, farmland, bottomland, native pasture, green [sounds like] pasture. I think it surprised me today to look at some numbers that our realty officer came up with. I think we have probably 60 percent of our tracts had pasture acres on them. And the remainder is either upland or bottomland property.

Male Voice: What percent?

Scott McCorkle: Sixty. I wouldn't have thought that, but -- [cross-talking]

Male Voice: Do you think it's higher or lower?

Scott McCorkle: I thought it would be lower.

Male Voice: Lower?

Scott McCorkle: Yeah. We use dry land farming practices. There's no irrigation. There may be a few tracts of alfalfa. The predominant crop is wheat, a little cotton, not much, and alfalfa. The operators in the community where these properties are located they are the folks that are partners, to manage the property, protect it and conserve it and develop it. Basically,

what we can do with this and what the communities do is to work with them. In our area, it's wheat that landowners can [indiscernible]. How about some sunflower seeds or this or that? That would be great, but the infrastructure is not there. You can't have 200 or 300 acres of sunflower seeds out the middle of wheat country because it's cost prohibited because their infrastructure is not there to harvest and process.

Male Voice: What state are most of these acres in?

Scott McCorkle: Pardon?

Male Voice: What state are most of these acres in?

Scott McCorkle: This is Western Oklahoma, ten counties in Western Oklahoma, 5 million acres reduced to checkerboard [cross-talking]

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] understand what state it is.

Scott McCorkle: Yeah.

Jerry McPeak: Why would they have to shut down? I [indiscernible] listen to you. I know that the question is out of range and I actually get along with that. But approximately, what is the rental for that bottom land farm land?

Scott McCorkle: You know, the average rental, overall, for the advertised leases, it's about \$20 an acre.

Male Voice: That's including grassland?

Scott McCorkle: That's the mixed tracts. We have a terrible time with our appraisals. We're getting them from the Office of

the Special Trustee at the Office of Appraisal Services. And what they're giving us is basically something we could get from done [sounds like] or the extension that is a range of value. Actually, our conservationists, they have gone out there and appraised that resource, the quality of the grass or the yields on the cropland.

Jerry McPeak: Mark, I bet you that sounds high [sounds like]. I figure it out, is that right?

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. I think [indiscernible].

Jerry McPeak: I assume for us that \$20, I'm surprised because - - but you also are about [indiscernible] the situation with the drought you have where regardless of how well you manage, you'll have some damage, particularly native grass and [indiscernible] to carry later on. I bet you're going to have some damaged patches not going [indiscernible] carrying capacity [indiscernible] acres.

Scott McCorkle: My good friend, Paul [indiscernible], was here. Again, I consider him the senior conservationist for our region. He's a range management [indiscernible]. He came up. We've got enclosures, 8x8 enclosures. Out west, we're having a terrible time. We've had to ask one of our operators to allow the grass to rest. And that's affected our prices some. But it's kind of amazing how much the prices held because we do have his mix.

Male Voice: The cattle price you've had didn't [indiscernible]?

Scott McCorkle: On the cropland side, we get \$35 an acre or something like this [indiscernible] before it goes to an acre of wheat. We did grass or maybe some of the native stuff that's granting maybe \$3 to \$4.

Male Voice: What is your pasture leases?

Scott McCorkle: Pardon me?

Male Voice: Your pasture leases?

Scott McCorkle: In a group, \$14.

Male Voice: That's cheap.

Male Voice: Do you realize on your reservation any of the CRP programs?

Scott McCorkle: Yes. CRP, EQIP. We were partners of the USDA. A lot of the EQIP programs were department --

Male Voice: Under the CRP, is that going straight to your landowners or is it being paid to producers [indiscernible]?

Scott McCorkle: If there's not a lease, it's going to the landowner. If it's lease, it's going to the operator. Like I said, most of our tracts are dynamic because we will have cropland with different pasture, improved pasture, native pasture, all in the same court.

Mark Wadsworth: The reason why I'm saying this is that we used to have a [indiscernible] farm acreage that the producers are an Indian re-leasing and in some cases, it's low as \$4 an acre to some cases, \$12 an acre. When we came in with the CRP program,

the non-Indian producers that were all in our land were leasing it for \$12 an acre. Yet, within CRP program, they were getting close to \$52 an acre. And we said we need to stop that because they are basically using that landowner, that allottee used to share because that's their -- that's kind of I'm just wondering what kind of CRP rates did you guys give or was that on the \$100?

Scott McCorkle: Almost all those contracts are expired. Some of the longest ones were for ten years.

Sarah Vogel: Do you have any idea of how many of the operators are members of local tribes?

Scott McCorkle: The Indian operators, we have two that we --

Sarah Vogel: Two Indian operators?

Scott McCorkle: They're not really not two. But for farming and ranching, they lease them, and then they run the horses on them. Or the other guy brings in a contract cattle and they [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: Do the tribes play any role in deciding who gets to lease or not?

Scott McCorkle: No. There's no preference in the leasing. Any of these folks could come to our sale and lease.

Sarah Vogel: Where I am from, I did a fair amount of work with grazing associations and ranchers of the [indiscernible]. They

are mostly the tribes that the [indiscernible]. The BIA sets up the grazing units. These are all [indiscernible].

Male Voice: We don't have grazing units in Oklahoma?

Sarah Vogel: What?

Male Voice: We don't have grazing units in Oklahoma?

Sarah Vogel: You don't?

Male Voice: You're talking about the reservation, in Oklahoma doesn't have reservations?

Sarah Vogel: I know.

Male Voice: But you would think you would have a Native American preference there, or tribal member preference. The tribal nation, I guess, the tribal nations preference.

Male Voice: You would think but no, because like they're saying, it's setup under a different structure because of like you said, the Fox and [indiscernible] tribe, they have [indiscernible] which took in the capital of Oklahoma. Oklahoma is totally different than anywhere else.

Male Voice: I would assume Southern Plain is general [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: Anyway, I guess, I know that it's called the Great Plains region headquartered in --

Male Voice: Aberdeen.

Sarah Vogel: Aberdeen, yeah. And that operates in many respects under different policies in the BIA region in Montana. So is there any [indiscernible] of BIA practices?

Male Voice: There again as we discussed it in with Scott, it certainly came up. He did a great [indiscernible]. It's different on the west. You just have to square it if you have different treaties [indiscernible]. Now some rules are the same from state to state, tribe to tribe, but the law is not.

Sarah Vogel: So the CFR rules are -- I would use to go by the grazing rules in CFR. And you're saying that they would not be applicable?

Male Voice: They may not. I'm not saying they wouldn't be. I can give you an example here. For example, the eastern side for the Osage Nation, they have separate CFR section.

[Indiscernible] no other tribe in the United States.

Sarah Vogel: And a compendium, is there -- maybe I should ask this of Kathryn.

Kathryn Isom-Clause: [Indiscernible] not quite sure. Maybe you'd feel like the department's annual, there are more guidance. But I think there's guidance for each individual --

Sarah Vogel: [Indiscernible] one of the purposes of the council is to remove barriers in the USDA practices to access to land. We want to do this sort of grow farmers and ranchers not necessarily just [indiscernible] crops and so on. But one way

it is to reconnect the tribal members with the tribal land. Up in the Dakotas they have what they call the big leaves. The whole reservation is joined to [indiscernible]. All of the big leaves. They must have followed them. The big leaves. Our [indiscernible] was a big leaves, standing around was a big leaves. With many, many, many farms that is the one with case. But it's always been curious in trying to figure out what practices of the BIA were. We're trying to get a national view here or at least from the states where all the states have their [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: So Tyrone [sounds like], Oklahoma, any trust lands that are up for bid, it can be pasture mixing and farm mixing or whatever may be, because they'll pay through the current system?

Male Voice: Yes.

Female Voice: And it just opened up non-native American programs?

Male Voice: The only Native American preference that you can do is it the tribe owns 100 percent of that tract. And then the tribe has the decision of showing preference to its Native American [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: But I know that many, many tracts have multiple owners and not just tribes.

Male Voice: See, we have that mixture in our reservation, which we have range units. It could be 40 percent tribal, 60 percent allotted. And we can give preference to 40 percent of that cattle on that range to our native people. But when it comes to allotted land, we have to get the best price possible for the individual allottees, because the landowner deserves the right to get the biggest dollar they could possibly get off of their land.

Sarah Vogel: Aberdeen does it a little different than that.

Male Voice: Really, if the tribe cannot tell a tribal member, they own land within their reservations. No, you're only going to get \$5 because we [indiscernible] that.

Sarah Vogel: One more question. The American Indian Agricultural Research Management Act, is that applicable to the BIA or is that just applicable to [indiscernible]?

Male Voice: The whole tribe had to take advantage of coming up with their own [indiscernible] and pretty much taking over the management or [indiscernible] they have reserved the management of their own tribally owned land. It's just about 10,000 acres, and I'm not so sure how they're doing with that.

Male Voice: Fight for the ARMP or the IRMP, to me, that's sort of BIA's --

Male Voice: I know I've participated in that.

Male Voice: Really?

Male Voice: Whose tribe is it?

Male Voice: Cheyenne and Arapaho. I think another USDA outfit was out there today along with the Rural Development.

Jerry McPeak: Does [indiscernible] have a government now?

Male Voice: I don't read the papers.

Jerry McPeak: But you all may not know, they've had some difficulty having a government that really can tell who's in charge, so they can't do it themselves. They really have their [indiscernible] with anyone else. Is that fair?

Male Voice: Yeah, that's pretty fair.

Sarah Vogel: It is for reference purposes when the BIA is asking [indiscernible], where would somebody go look for what are the rules and guidelines that govern how you do it?

Male Voice: If I'm not mistaken, 169 has most of the grazing provisions. We don't need that at all.

Male Voice: 166 is grazing.

Male Voice: Both R to R.

Male Voice: 169 is part of it, I think.

Male Voice: Yes, that's a part of it. Title 25 of the United States code and regulations, 169, that's for grazing. We use 162 for surplus leasing which includes business leases valid and included.

Male Voice: You have to look closely. No big extensions if you look there in the 25 CFR. There might be exceptions on everybody but x, y and z. This is [indiscernible].

Male Voice: Maybe certain tribes that they'll --

Sarah Vogel: I work mostly with the grazing and very little with farming. So I think you guys are definitely mostly farming, very little grazing.

Male Voice: That's on the western side. On the eastern side, we do grazing. We don't do much. The most of the farm and leasing done is on the allotments of the Chickasaw Nation which [indiscernible] same time. But for the majority, there is no reason of [indiscernible].

Male Voice: What happens when you can't approve the lease? Appraisal and adjunct of such, do you go into negotiations or just the transaction is dead? What happens?

Male Voice: Generally just like now, where we begin in the appraisal information would have been in the same registers so maybe the questions we have and look at what the price of services and have [indiscernible] look at it. Really, we don't have any commercial leases because we have got some signboard leases. Basically, ours are farm and oil and gas. Not being able to reach an agreement on a lease is very rare.

Kathryn Isom-Clause: You know, we have an MOU in the shared appraisal.

Male Voice: Right. I know we have.

Kathryn Isom-Clause: We do that.

Male Voice: I thought that would be great. I don't know that USDA will have anything comparable to what they're working with. But if you're talking about grazing, the closest there maybe is the Black Kettle National Grassland.

Male Voice: And most of our appraisals are not for income and not business. It would be simple value.

Female Voice: Uh-huh.

Male Voice: So you guys do these appraisals year after year after year? You did all of them every year?

Scott McCorkley: A lease term is generally five years. So that cycle come around and we'll need those tracts reappraised. Like the other day, we found one lease for \$3,400 a year five years ago. And the new range of value we got is \$1,300 to \$3,000. That's not right.

Male Voice: It could be with the drought and the depletion of grass in going.

Male Voice: We have to see that though. We have the oil and gas in Western Oklahoma. So our operators are either they'll lease property just to compete with each in a community. Or we've got folks that need the leased property to put into their business plan that have enough acres to make their cash flow. And we've talked to a lot of bankers after our sales sometimes,

and some of that information we work with appraisers. Plus the bankers says, I won't allow you to pay that much money because here's what we know. And we do our best to really keep that stuff in production. I'd say we've got 94 percent of our surface acres leased and fenced.

So we've got a lot of barbwire. We provide the wire and the post. We could get the operator to provide the labor. That's worked out really well. It raises the value of those properties because most of ours, the only way to make money on lease sometimes is the pasture, so it is hard to pasture if you don't have a fence. And the oil and gas folks have been good to help us drill wells and provide livestock with water.

Jerry McPeak: Who has?

Scott McCorkle: The oil and gas industry.

Jerry McPeak: I'm glad you get along with the bastards.

Scott McCorkle: It's either you kind of got to play along with them or you're going lose it along with it. Not so much with this new technique of horizontal drilling, with the amount of water they need there, we haven't participated with them as much as they like for us to there.

Jerry McPeak: Were your folks back from Oklahoma. There's a strange thing that caps us in agriculture. The oil and gas guy can go in there and drill and get permission like that, to drill a well for water, to run this deal. But as in agriculture man,

I get no permission to drill that damn well and it take me six fucking months to get permission to drill a well. And my cattle are kind of starving to death out in Oklahoma. And I can't get any water. They're never run water down to that [indiscernible] down the section line ditch. That ditch pump that dad-gum wells. So if you are the one of the Ag who get mad, I mean that stuff I place and kept. It's just crazy.

Male Voice: You need 20,000 to 40,000 gallons a day to frack a well. I mean, how many cattle you can water on 20,000 to 40,000 a day.

Jerry McPeak: I'm glad you get along with them, because for our Ag. When our county commissioner --

Male Voice: We never drill well for water like that in Texas, ten months to get a permit.

Male Voice: Something is not right here. I don't know.

Male Voice: You have a Water Resources Board.

Male Voice: Oh yeah, there's a board for everything in Oklahoma.

Jerry McPeak: When everything's [indiscernible] you just said about [indiscernible] a day to rainfall. Yeah, we got that much this weekend.

Male Voice: Yeah

Male Voice: Yeah. If there's no [indiscernible] availability to the tribe as well, one tribe, can they do it?

Scott McCorkle: Yeah. I think they just have to do it. It [indiscernible] southern pine side they can do that.

Mark Wadsworth: We'll sure appreciate that. Did you have another question?

Female Voice: No. I asked the question. I was just waiting for the answer.

Male Voice: Okay. The tribe wants to pursue them on it.

Female Voice: Does that remove part of what you do from what you do or do you completely remove it?

Male Voice: Not as much. It's more for their internal approvals, not they're getting, like we've said, the tribe and our tribal leaders really [indiscernible] tribes not tell what they can do [indiscernible] tract so that the heart of that which is [indiscernible].

Female Voice: It's the flip side or just the approval process that we all have been pushing a hard time for because it pushes the approval of the lease with the sale or transfer or the asset down to the product that at least I'm rather actually out it.

Male Voice: For internal when it's tribal land, 95 percent of the property that we oversee in our [indiscernible].

Female Voice: Okay.

Mark Wadsworth: So do you require NEPA on any of your improvements?

Male Voice: On the improvements?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes.

Male Voice: No.

Mark Wadsworth: For drilling well?

Male Voice: We usually, it will be an exclusion [sounds like] on the existing use on some of the grazing uses. We do the same as Southern Plain, in that working on the improvement values of the lease because that's usually worth more than the actual dollars. If you can get [indiscernible]. I think you get them to do things like maybe possible clearings. We had a horrible problem with [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: I appreciate it.

Male Voice: Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah, thank you.

Jerry McPeak: I think we mentioned something we haven't get early in our dialogue that the BIA is missing it, and that was something we just get the blank [indiscernible] that was made.

Male Voice: Not because your BIA though, for that reason.

Female Voice: Thank you. [Indiscernible] pretty well.

Male Voice: It's probably getting late, you know. Oh, wow.

Male Voice: Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes?

Male Voice: I'd like to motion to adjourn this meeting.

Mark Wadsworth: There's been a motion that we adjourn, and seconded.

Jerry McPeak: I've got some [indiscernible]. The chairman of the Comanche is probably going to be here tomorrow. [Cross-talking]

Mark Wadsworth: I appreciate. All those in favor of adjournment, raise your hands. Tomorrow at 8:30.

[End of file]

[End of transcript]