

Message from the Chief...

This is a special time for DINAP — and it's my favorite part of my job as the Division Chief — because it is an opportunity for us to recognize the hard work of our grantees, and our colleagues. If it were not for the work that you are doing, we would not be here today and if it were not for the clients that we serve, none of us would be here. I have been blessed because I have the opportunity to work with all of you — and we need to recognize people for their achievements. Most of us are not in the business of making money or getting rich — we are in the business because we provide a service and we care - about our communities, and about our people.

DINAP has gone through many changes over the years; some for the better, and some by kicking and screaming... As some of you may recall, we started a true partnership with our Indian and Native American grantees in 1995; and initiated the recognition of outstanding grantees, selected by the Federal Project Officers who are most familiar with not only the performance and numbers, but more importantly, by the work accomplished behind the scenes. They take into account stories of directors and staff who work after hours, who sometimes even put in out of pocket to help clients, who use their own cars and gas to take clients to jobs or classes, who knock on the doors of clients to find out if they are okay. And sometimes it is a thankless job.

Fed Reps are the frontline staff of the Department. They are usually the sounding board when grantees have issues and when they are pleased and displeased. The grantees also keep the FPOs mindful of the local environments and challenges out there in Indian Country. In DINAP, we balance our roles and responsibilities between being an advocate for Indian Programs and carrying out the responsibilities of the Federal Government.

So recognizing outstanding grantees has become an important part of these conferences. It is important to recognize your achievements and give yourselves credit for the work you are doing by sharing your experiences and accomplishments — because by doing so, you are providing motivation and educating people out there who often do not understand our work, our communities, our clients and our culture.

I know that there is no way possible to recognize all the good work out there — but I want you to know that it is always an honor to work with such dedicated programs across the country.

*Athena R. Brown, Chief
Division of Indian and Native American Programs
Office of Workforce Investment
Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor*