

August 10, 2020

A Statement from the Sovereign Bodies Institute Board of Directors:

As a board of all Indigenous women with over 100 years of combined experience advocating for Indigenous women and tribal communities, we endorse, embrace, and thank Executive Director Annita Lucchesi and the staff of SBI who we confirm are also all Indigenous women and two-spirit people. Annita has dedicated the last five years of her life to building the MMIWG2 database and being of service to survivors and their families. The majority of her work has been unpaid. Throughout the duration of 2019, Annita worked full-time at half pay. Seven months ago, we were finally able to start paying Annita full-pay in her role as Executive Director and were able to hire more support staff. All of our staff are paid at competitive rates with other area nonprofits and part of our role as Board Members is to help sustain this important work long-term. We especially want to recognize and honor the role of the SBI Survivors' Leadership Council, a group of Indigenous survivors of trafficking and survival sex work from across North America. Their bravery and commitment to social justice inspires us every day.

MMIWG2 data belong to the families first and foremost. The MMIWG2 database is always in progress as new data are submitted by families and community members, and retrieved from newspapers, social media, historical archives, public records, and missing persons databases. We have a transparent process for free data access that respects the privacy and the deep grief many families are still navigating. All tribal nations and Indigenous service providers are provided free access to the data relevant to their service area. Indigenous women's collectives, Indigenous advocacy organizations, Indigenous grassroots activists, and Indigenous scholars may have access to data relevant to their service area or research aims, provided they meet

the standards set forth in the Data Sharing Protocols as established by the Board, which is posted on the SBI website. Other organizations, including policy entities and the press, may not access raw data, but may be provided aggregate numbers or statistics upon request. We affirm Annita's leadership and continue to build a shared vision for Sovereign Bodies Institute that amplifies MMIWG2 cases and addresses structural barriers that harm Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit peoples.

We thank the families and survivors who have trusted SBI with their stories and allowed us to walk with them in their journeys for healing and justice.

Sarah Deer (Mvskoke)

Theda NewBreast (Amskapipikuni (Blackfeet) of The Blackfoot Confederacy)

Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear (Northern Cheyenne)

Claudette White (Quechan)