

Joy Harjo and Valorie Johnson Join  
the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Board of Directors

(Vancouver, Wash.) – The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) announced that it has added Valorie Johnson, a consultant, lifelong human rights activist and former Program Officer at the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Joy Harjo, an award winning poet, author and musician and one of NACF's founding board members, to serve on the national non-profit's Board of Directors.

Valorie Johnson (Seneca-Cayuga-Eastern Cherokee) began her career as a human rights executive with the National Education Association in Washington, D.C. After earning her doctorate in educational administration, her career encompassed leading roles in public service including as director of Native American Affairs for the State of Michigan's department of social services, counseling at the Institute of American Indians Arts in Santa Fe and the Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii. Over nearly 24 years, her program portfolio at W. K. Kellogg focused mainly on grassroots community organizations and educational institutions across the nation and leadership in the Native American Higher Education Initiative as well as the Minority-Serving Institutions' Leadership Development.

Johnson has also served on several boards, such as, the Americans for Indian Opportunity, the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian and the Nokomis Learning Center. "It gives me great joy to have been selected to join NACF's Board of Directors", said Johnson. "I am honored and excited to lend my experience in philanthropy and my lifetime work and advocacy with and for Native communities to serve this outstanding organization. I wholeheartedly support NACF's powerful mission to promote and support Native artists and Native cultures, and look forward to participating in furthering the organization's reach and efforts."

Joy Harjo (Mvskoke Nation) holds the John C. Hodges Chair of Excellence at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and is a co-founder of the Mvskoke Arts Association. She has written eight books of poetry and received the prestigious Academy of American Poets Wallace Stevens award in 2015 and the Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Arts in 2014 for her achievements.

Harjo received the PEN USA Literary Award in Creative Non Fiction for a memoir, *Crazy Brave*, and is the author of two award-winning children's books, several screenplays, two plays, and an anthology of North American Native Women's writing. She has also produced and performed on several award-winning CD's of original music. "I am pleased to announce my return to the NACF Board", Harjo stated. "It is almost ten years since we incorporated, to fulfill a dream brought forth from many generations of native artists and supporters from all over the country. What a gift to have been part of that dynamic team to get it started, and to see how far NACF has come from those early years. Many communities and artists have been renewed by the support of NACF. I am honored to return to continue serving this fine legacy of Native arts and cultures support and look forward to the next chapter."

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