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FROM COMMUNITY TO CAREER: HOW AISES
INFLUENCED SERRA HOAGLAND'S WORK IN FORESTRY

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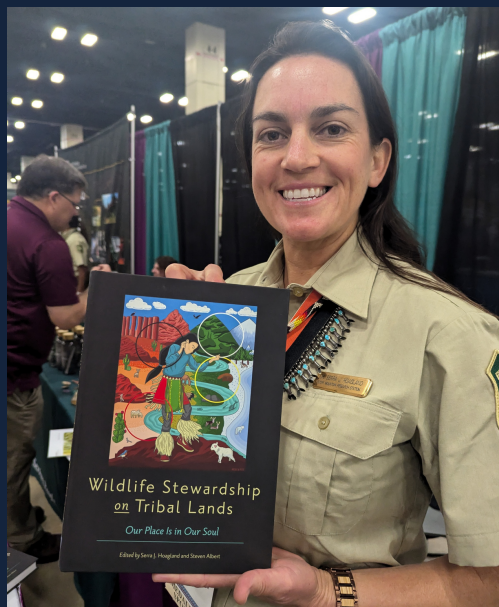
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American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)

The American Indian Science and Engineering Society is a national nonprofit organization committed to increasing the representation of Indigenous peoples in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Founded in 1977, AISES supports Native students and professionals through scholarships, leadership opportunities, internships, and national conferences that foster holistic, culturally grounded gatherings and provide space for connection, networking and professional development. By partnering with tribes, universities, corporations, and federal agencies, the organization helps create meaningful pathways into STEM careers. At its heart, AISES centers community, belonging, and the understanding that Indigenous perspectives and knowledge systems strengthen science, natural resource professions, and the future of environmental stewardship.

Meet Dr. Serra Hoagland!



Serra Hoagland (Pueblo of Laguna) serves as the National Program Lead for Tribal Research for the U.S. Forest Service, where she focuses on strengthening partnerships with Tribes, mentoring students, and advancing research that brings together scientific inquiry and Indigenous knowledge. Her work reflects a deep commitment to natural resource stewardship and to supporting the next generation of Indigenous leaders in forestry and STEM.

A Meaningful Connection

Serra Hoagland's connection with AISES has been an important part of her journey as a Native scientist and leader in forestry and natural resources. The organization's mission to create pathways and increase representation in STEM closely reflects the importance of Indigenous presence and leadership in fields that are deeply connected to land and community. Her story illustrates how professional growth and cultural identity do not exist separately, but instead can inform and strengthen one another.

Through AISES, Serra found a space where Indigenous scientists are visible and supported. Experiences such as attending national conferences and engaging with mentors helped open doors to internships and career opportunities that shaped her path in the U.S. Forest Service and beyond. She has shared how meaningful it was to be surrounded by other Native professionals in STEM, reinforcing the sense that she belonged in these spaces.



Community, Mentorship, and Representation

Community and mentorship remain central themes in Serra's connection to AISES. The organization creates environments where Indigenous students and professionals can connect, support one another, and see themselves reflected in scientific careers. For Serra, this network has offered encouragement, guidance, and professional insight, including support that encouraged her to pursue graduate education and continue advancing in her field.

Her involvement also reflects the importance of visibility. Seeing Indigenous scientists in leadership roles can be transformative for students who are considering careers in STEM. Serra's presence within AISES contributes to that sense of possibility and affirms that Indigenous knowledge, lived experience, and leadership are valued within scientific communities.

Bridging Knowledge and Stewardship

Serra's professional work demonstrates how Indigenous perspectives and Western scientific approaches can complement one another. In forestry and wildlife research, she has emphasized the value of integrating traditional ecological knowledge with scientific practice. This approach reflects a broader understanding of stewardship, one that recognizes the deep relationships Indigenous communities have long held with the land.

AISES supports this kind of holistic leadership by encouraging students and professionals to bring their full identities into their work. In fields such as forestry and natural resource management, where culture and ecology often intersect, this integration strengthens both community relationships and long term sustainability.



Strengthening Pathways Forward

There is meaningful opportunity for the forest sector to engage with organizations like AISES in ways that are collaborative and respectful. Mentorship, internships, and partnerships can help create clearer pathways for Indigenous students entering forestry and natural resource careers. At the same time, the forestry sector benefits from authentic relationships with Indigenous professionals and from learning alongside knowledge systems that have informed land stewardship for generations.

To read more about Serra's involvement with AISES, visit:

<https://aises.org/we-are-all-scientists/>