

PRESS RELEASE

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FORD FOUNDATION PRESIDENT RECEIVES IFIP AWARD *Susan Berresford Recognized For Increasing Support To Indigenous Communities*

FREDERICKSBURG, VA — On April 9th, Ford Foundation President Susan Berresford became the very first recipient of the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples Award for her leadership in increasing philanthropic support for international Indigenous development projects and communities. The award was presented at a special reception at the San Diego Marriot Marina during the Council on Foundations Annual Conference and was attended by more than 50 national and international funders.

“I am proud to have been at the Ford Foundation for over three decades in which several generations of staff and leadership all enthusiastically supported the voice and action of Indigenous Peoples around the world,” said Berresford in receiving the award. She added, “The [IFIP] award is a treasured recognition that many other donors will feel proud to accept over the coming years.”

Rebecca Adamson, President of First Nations Development Institute presented the award, a soap sculpture called “Transition.” An original piece created by Oneida artist Cheyanne Doxtador from Akwesasne, the sculpture symbolizes a woman’s strength and journey through life.

In presenting the award, Adamson recognized the work of the Ford Foundation and its role as the leading donor to Native projects and communities.

Adamson stated that the Ford Foundation is, “the number one donor in Native giving and it has continued to be the number one donor for the past 14 years.” She continued, “Susan’s leadership, insight, commitment and integrity has been critical in supporting Indigenous Peoples.”

Anthony Pico, Chairman of the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians and a sponsor of the IFIP reception, performed a ceremonial blessing and presented Berresford with a beautiful Pendleton blanket called “Awakening.” He explained that it symbolizes the profound respect and gratitude his people have for Ford’s leadership in assisting Indigenous Peoples.

IFIP Director Evelyn Arce-White also commended Berresford and spoke about IFIP’s

accomplishments during the past year and it's upcoming annual conference on May 19 & 20 in NYC. She also gave special recognition to several sustaining members that include — Levi Strauss Foundation and The Christensen Fund.

During the event, Berresford acknowledged IFIP's efforts in becoming an independent organization, stating, "I am pleased that IFIP is seeking 501c3 status and is working to bring more donors to this area." She noted, "I am impressed with the new *Indigenous Peoples Funders and Resource Guide* and know that IFIP will continue to produce important and quality work."

In concluding the event's proceedings, Arce-White remarked, "IFIP is truly a unique organization in that it is the only one focused specifically on increasing philanthropic support for Indigenous Peoples around the world." She added, "The inaugural award represents another milestone for IFIP and, in particular, recognizes the work of a leading supporter of Indigenous Peoples."

For more info on IFIP see www.internationalfunders.org