

HISTORY OF THE ITCHE SHIAKAKE SCHOLARSHIP

When the late 1970s and early 1980s the TERO program was first getting started, the program was attacked from all sides by entities trying to kill it – contractors, unions, Federal contracting offices, state governments, and others. The primary reason the program survived those attacks and has gone on to flourish for 45 years were the special talents of the first generation of TERO directors. They were smart, strategic, courageous and deeply dedicated to helping their people. They included Carl “Buckles” Shilt from Blackfeet, Bobbie Minnis from Colville, Larry Brown from Spokane, and of course Conrad Edward from Colville and John Navarro from Tohono O’Odham, and probably others whose names I have forgotten.

Thirty years later I began to get concerned that there was now a whole new generation of TERO directors who did not know that they were standing on the shoulders of these giants who fought to make the TERO program a reality. At the same time, I realized how big a role the TERO program played in my life, through the satisfaction that came from being one of the founders of this program. Plus, the TERO program help me launch my successful legal career as an attorney for tribes and I wanted to share a portion of my success.

After talking about it, my wife Joyce and I decided to create a scholarship program for graduating high school seniors who were nominated by their Tribe’s TERO. The scholarship program was created in memory of founding TERO directors described above and is to be awarded to students who demonstrate the qualities of those directors – courage, intelligence, and dedication to helping their people. A few years after the program began, Conrad decided to give it the name that my Crow family gave to me when they adopted me in 1966, Itche Shikaka, which I was told translates as “outstanding young man”. I was named for my clan uncle who was an outstanding basketball player.

In subsequent years, the money my wife and I donate to the scholarship has been supplemented and in fact exceeded by money CTER raises from the raffle tickets it sells at the CTER conferences. When awarding the scholarship to the deserving young person during the TERO conferences, I have always tied it back to the qualities and the struggles of the founding TERO directors, so the new generation of directors can learn on whose shoulders they stand. I encourage others who will be awarding the scholarship in the future when I am not there to please continue this practice so that the memory of the extraordinary qualities the founding directors fortunately brought to the TERO program will continue to guide the program as it approaches the half-century mark.

Respectfully

Daniel S. Press