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National Youth Leadership Council
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Local Youth Program Coordinator Receives National Award

St. Paul, Minn. — Local youth program coordinator Lynn F. LaPointe, who works at the American Indian Family Center in St. Paul, Minn., has been selected to receive the “Stellar” award, for his work as a community activist and teacher. The award is given by the National Youth Leadership Council in memory of Stella Raudenbush who was a Michigan-based educator, spiritual seeker, and early pioneer in service-learning.

The award is given by the St. Paul-based National Youth Leadership Council and will be presented on March 26 at the 21st Annual National Service-Learning Conference the organization hosts in San Jose, Calif.

For the past 10 years, LaPointe has designed two-week long social justice-based, cultural and historical experiences in Minnesota and South Dakota for indigenous youth from across the country “to interactively, and respectfully experience the beauty and struggle of the American Indian from a Lakota perspective,” says LaPointe.

LaPointe, whose given Lakota name is *Wicahpi Sapa*, meaning Black Star, is *Sicangu Lakota* from the Rosebud Reservation of South Dakota. He has been a Youth Development Director for the YMCA of Minneapolis as well as President of the Natives, Africans, Asians, Latinos(as) and Allies (NAALA) professional group of the Association for Experiential Education.

His experience as a program manager for cultural and tribal-based service-learning and experiential education programming serving both urban and reservation American Indian communities with NYLC and the University of Minnesota, helped provide the basis of his youth program design ideals and educational philosophy on the reintroduction and strengthening of indigenous land-based knowledge.

“I extend my respect for those within NYLC over the past two decades who have allowed a Lakota boy from the reservation to grow and prospect, as a student and as a service-learning educator,” said LaPointe.

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About Service-learning

Service-learning is a teaching method that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools and communities, and integrating the service with established learning objectives. It emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving, and tackles real issues such as hunger, ecological concerns and diversity.

About NYLC

NYLC has been at the center of community service and service-learning programs and policy development since 1983. It annually convenes The National Service-Learning Conference, which includes participants from all 50 states and numerous other countries. NYLC also offers adult and youth trainings, runs model programs and develops service-learning curricula.

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