



Photo by Diane Rodriguez

2014 Elders Council officers include (l to r) Ilene Somes, vice chairman; Kathryn Dick, chairman; Kay Steele, treasurer; Elena Cordts, secretary; and Cooke Fernandez, treasurer.

INSPIRE offers look at Native politics, American political system interaction

The INSPIRE Initiative is spearheaded by the Native American Political Leadership Program at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

The INSPIRE Pre-College Program is a fully funded opportunity open to American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian junior and senior high school students who want to spend three weeks on the George Washington University campus to learn about intergovernmental relations between Tribal governments and the federal government.

The program will include opportunities for students to meet influential Native advocates and participate in a full-day experiential undergraduate course focused on Native politics and the American political system.

The INSPIRE initiative scholarship covers the cost of room and board, airfare, all required textbooks, local travel and one course in Native politics and the American political system.



Application materials include:

- 350-word essay on why you are interested in the program
- High school transcript
- Proof of Tribal enrollment or ancestry
- One recommendation form completed by a teacher or counselor

Application deadline: March 1, 2014

Program dates: July 6-25, 2014

For more information or to apply online, visit inspire.naplp.gwu.edu/inspire-pre-college-application.



Forrest Joseph Gerard – 1925-2013

From the Albuquerque Journal, published Jan. 1, 2014

Forrest Joseph Gerard passed away on Dec. 28, 2013, in Albuquerque, N.M. He was born on Jan. 15, 1925, on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. He is a citizen of the Blackfeet Tribe of Montana.

Gerard is survived by Kay, his wife of 65 years; daughters Patricia, Margaret, Rebecca and Jennifer; and son Stanley. He was preceded in death by his parents, Frederick Gerard Sr. and Rose Douglas Gerard; and siblings Frederick Jr., Charles, Mary, Hazel, Lyda, James and John.

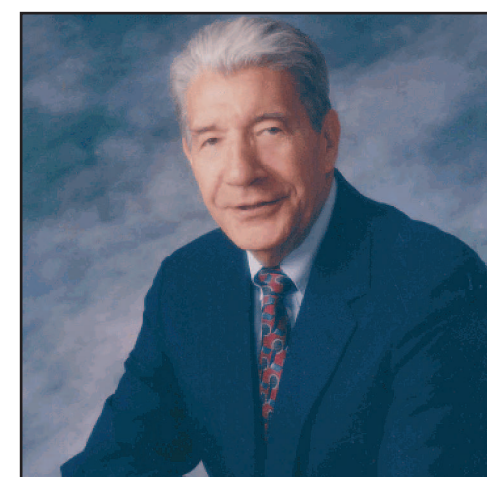
Gerard is highly respected and revered by many throughout Indian Country and federal government circles because of the leadership role he played in empowering Tribal communities through the transformation of federal Indian policy. In fact, it is not possible to have an informed conversation regarding Native American issues such as self-governance, self-determination, health and education without his name being prominently mentioned.

After graduation from Browning High School in 1943, Gerard enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp and served with the 15th Air Force in southern Italy, where he flew 35 missions as an engineer and gunner. He returned from military service in 1945 and earned a bachelor's degree in 1949 from what is now the University of Montana.

Gerard entered public service with the Montana State Department of Public Instruction and advanced into positions with the Montana Tuberculosis Association and Wyoming Tuberculosis and Health Association. In 1957 he moved on to Washington, D.C., where he became the Tribal affairs officer for the newly created Indian Health Service.

After being selected for a coveted Congressional Fellowship in 1966, he moved to Capitol Hill and worked on Indian issues first with Rep. Al Ullman from Oregon and later for Sen. George McGovern from South Dakota. He then served as the legislative liaison officer in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as director of the Office for Indian Progress at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

In 1971, Gerard became a professional staff member on the U.S. Senate's Com-



Courtesy photo from Native News Network

Forrest Joseph Gerard

mittee on Interior and Insular Affairs. It was in this post that he drafted some of the most significant pieces of legislation in the 20th century, including the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Indian Financing Act and the Indian Health Care and Improvement Act.

In 1976, he established a lobbying firm to represent Tribal interests in the federal arena. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter nominated him to be the first assistant secretary for Indian Affairs. He was confirmed by the Senate and served until 1980, when he returned to private lobbying practice in Washington, D.C.

Many prominent professional people proudly refer to Gerard as their mentor and credit him with having been a major influence in their lives. He was the subject of the book *The Last Great Battle of the Indian Wars* that chronicled his contributions to history.

In 1992, he and Kay moved to Albuquerque and enjoyed their time with family and friends, cultural activities, traveling and all the beauty of New Mexico.

A Celebration of Life will be held Friday, Jan. 3, 2014, 2 p.m., at FRENCH Wyoming. Friends may visit beginning at 1 p.m. Memorials may be made to the United Tribes Technical College at www.my.uttcc.edu or the National Museum of the American Indian at www.nmaistore.si.edu.

Please visit our online guestbook for Forrest at www.FrenchFunerals.com, FRENCH Wyoming 7121 Wyoming Blvd. NE, (505) 823-9400.