Sandell named RCA award and budget officer

Rebecca Sandell has accepted the position of award and budget officer on the RCA sponsored programs administration team. In this role, Rebecca will assist faculty with proposal budget review, negotiate certain awards, and provide guidance and support for post-award changes including project extensions, PI changes, and re-budgeting. Rebecca has more than six years of experience working with grants at both NDSU and Sanford Health and, before serving as an RCA award intake officer, was a grant/business coordinator in the NDSU college of science and mathematics.

“We are excited to have Becca move to this new role on our team,” said SPA Associate Vice President Val Kettner. “She has broad experience with the whole grant administration process and will add additional support to both the proposal and award process as we continue to enhance our service and business processes.”

Research leadership pilot program

The Research and Creative Activity office is piloting a professional development program for up to twelve (12) mid-career faculty interested in leading multidisciplinary research programs. The program will include an 8-session research
leadership course led by the AtKisson Training Group (ATG), which begins October 3, 2022. Applications and/or nominations are due Friday, August 26, 2022. Learn more >>

RCA Opportunities

- Looking for support for an undergraduate researcher this fall? Learn more about the NDSU Undergraduate Biomedical Research Program.
- Planning a proposal to USDA-AFRI? Learn more about the USDA-AFRI Preproposal Review Pilot Program.
- Recently served on a USDA Review Panel? Volunteer to be part of the USDA Expert Bank at NDSU.
- Share what you’re doing in your research space by hosting a lab tour for your NDSU colleagues and Vice President Fitzgerald.

Upcoming Events

- SAVE THE DATE: Summer Undergraduate Research Programs Poster Session
  August 5, 2022; 10am-12pm / A.Glenn Hill Center
- Webinar: Understanding the New NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy
  August 11, 2022; 12:30-2:30pm / Learn more >>
- NIH Grant Writing Webinar Series for Institutions Building Research and Research Training Capacity
  August 16, September 26, and November 1; 1-2:15pm / Learn more >>
- REGISTRATION OPEN: DARPA Forward Regional Events on National Security Innovation
  August-December, 2022 / Learn more >>
- Webinar: Diving Deeper into the New NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy
  September 22, 2022; 12:30-2:30pm / Learn more >>
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. **BWF: Climate Change and Human Health Seed Grants**
2. **CDMRP: Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health**
3. **DOE NOI: Funding Opportunity in Support of the Hydrogen Shot and a University Research Consortium on Grid Resilience**
4. **DOE: Advancing Equity through Workforce Partnerships**
5. **Gerber Foundation: Research Grants**
6. **NAS: Prize in Food & Agriculture Sciences**
7. **ND EPSCoR: STEM Research, Education, and Outreach**
8. **NEH: Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations**
9. **NIH: HEAL Initiative: Research Studies to Develop and Implement Interventions to Prevent Opioid Misuse in Community Health Centers**
10. **NIH: NCI Outstanding Investigator**
11. **NIST: Professional Research Experience Program**
12. **NSF: Dynamics of Integrated Socio-Environmental Systems**
13. **NSF: Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases**
14. **NSF: Formal Methods in the Field**
15. **NSF: Research on Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning**
16. **USDA-AFRI: Education and Workforce Development**
17. **USDA-AFRI: Foundational and Applied Science**
18. **Wenner-Gren Foundation: Anthropology**

Upcoming Limited Submission Program Deadlines

**Limited submission grant programs** are those that indicate a limit on the number of proposals that may be submitted by an institution for a particular deadline. A selection process becomes necessary if more applicants express interest in applying than NDSU is allowed to submit to the grant program. Email notifications of interest to ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu by close of business on the notification deadline.

If you identify a limited submission opportunity that is not on the list below, please notify ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu.

- **Johnson & Johnson: Women in STEM2D**
  Notification Deadline: 08/02/2022
- **NIH: Collaborative Program Grant for Multidisciplinary Teams**
  Notification Deadline: 09/15/2022
- **NSF: Scholarships in STEM (S-STEM) Program**
  Notification Deadline: 09/15/2022
There are a number of limited submission grant programs with upcoming agency deadlines for which we did not receive any notifications of interest. A full list of those programs is available on the Limited Submissions page. For these programs, marked “First to Notify,” approval to move forward with a full proposal submission to the funder will be given on a first come, first served basis. Email notifications of interest to ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu.

- **DOE: Clean Energy Manufacturing Innovation Institute for Industrial Decarbonization through Electrification of Process Heating**
  Deadline: 08/09/2022
- **DOE: RENEW - High Energy Physics**
  Deadline: 08/15/2022
- **Templeton Foundation: Spiritual Yearning Research Initiative**
  Letter of Inquiry Deadline: 08/19/2022
- **NIH: Director's Early Independence Award**
  Deadline: 09/02/2022
- **HRSA: Strengthen Evidence for Maternal and Child Health Programs**
  Notification Deadline: 09/08/2022
- **NIH: Bridges to the Baccalaureate**
  Deadline: 09/26/2022
- **NIH: Bridges to the Doctorate**
  Deadline: 09/27/2022
- **NEH: Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants**
  Deadline: 09/27/2022
- **LOC: Connecting Communities Digital Initiative**
  Deadline: 09/30/2022
- **NSF: Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation - STEM Pathways Implementation-Only**
  Deadline: 11/18/2022

Looking for more funding opportunities?

RCA subscribes to SPIN by InfoEd Global, a database of more than 40,000 funding opportunities. Through this subscription, SPIN is free for current NDSU faculty, staff, and students.

For more information and to access this database, visit the SPIN page on the RCA website. If you have questions, please contact ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu.
Burroughs Wellcome Fund: Climate Change and Human Health Seed Grants

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF) aims to stimulate the growth of new connections between scholars working in largely disconnected fields who together might change the course of climate change’s impact on human health.

To that end, BWF will award small, early-stage grants between $2,500 and $50,000 to promote growth of new connections between scholars, practitioners, educators, and/or communicators working to understand, spread the word about, and mitigate the impacts of climate change on human health. Topics of interest include linking basic/early biomedical science to climate-focused thinking; sustainability in healthcare systems, healthcare delivery outside institutions, and biomedical research; health impacts and health systems impacts of extreme weather events and other crises; and outreach, communication, and education around climate and human health.

The Fund is particularly but not exclusively interested in activities that build connections between basic/early biomedical scientific approaches and ecological, environmental, geological, geographic, and planetary-scale thinking, and population-focused fields including epidemiology and public health demography, economics, and urban planning. Also of interest is work to launch new approaches or interactions toward reducing the impact of health-centered activities, for example, developing more sustainable systems for health care, care delivery, and biomedical research systems. Another area of interest is preparing for the impacts of extreme weather and other crises that can drive large scale disruptions that will immediately impact human health and delivery of health care. Public outreach, climate communication, and education efforts focused on the intersection of climate and health are also appropriate for this call.

Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis with quarterly review through August 30, 2023.

CDMRP: Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health
The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health Research Program (TBIPHRP) has a number of open funding opportunities.

**Deadlines vary by opportunity.**

**DOE NOI: Funding Opportunity in Support of the Hydrogen Shot and a University Research Consortium on Grid Resilience**

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) entitled “Funding Opportunity in Support of the Hydrogen Shot and a University Research Consortium on Grid Resilience,” that will address two unique areas of interest: one with topic areas focused on supporting the DOE Hydrogen Shot on behalf of the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office and a second EERE-wide topic area focused on grid resilience through a university research consortium. EERE anticipates that the FOA may include the following five topics under two Areas of Interest, as follows:

**Area of Interest 1:** Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies in Support of Hydrogen Shot

Topic 1) HydroGEN: Solar Fuels from Photoelectrochemical and Solar Thermochemical Water Splitting
Topic 2) Development and Validation of Sensor Technology for Monitoring and Measuring Hydrogen Losses
Topic 3) Materials-based H2 Storage Demonstrations
Topic 4) M2FCT: High Performing, Durable, and Low-PGM Catalysts/Membrane Electrode Assemblies (MEAs) for Medium- and Heavy-duty Applications

**Area of Interest 2:** Improving Electricity Grid Resilience

Topic 5: University Research Consortium on Grid Resilience

EERE plans to issue the FOA on or about August 2022 via the EERE eXCHANGE website [https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/](https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/).

**DOE: Advancing Equity through Workforce Partnerships**
The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) is issuing, on behalf of the Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO), this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) [DE-FOA-0002769]. The activities to be funded under this FOA support the broader government-wide approach to addressing the climate crisis and maximize the benefits of the clean energy transition as the nation works to curb the climate crisis, empower workers, and advance environmental justice. This FOA supports the administration goals laid out above by supporting the development of workforce programs and partnerships that will facilitate the continued deployment of solar energy technologies, while supporting an inclusive workforce with opportunities for career advancement, including through union membership. As part of the whole-of-government approach to advance equity and encourage worker organizing and collective bargaining, this FOA and any related activities will seek to encourage meaningful engagement and participation of labor unions and underserved communities and underrepresented groups, including consultation with Tribal Nations. SETO will consider and evaluate a variety of multi-stakeholder high-road training partnership proposals under this FOA. Projects should primarily relate to PV solar deployment and associated careers including in installation, system design, operations and maintenance (O&M), electrical work, project management, sales, and business operations. Proposals focused on manufacturing for solar PV modules and other equipment will be considered, but is not expected to be the primary area of focus for the funding program. Proposals related to CSP or other solar-thermal heating systems will not be considered.

Letter of Intent Deadline: September 13, 2022

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**Gerber Foundation: Research Grant**

The mission of [The Gerber Foundation](#) is to enhance the quality of life of infants and young children in nutrition, care, and development. Accordingly, priority is given to projects whose primary beneficiaries are young children from birth to three years of age. The primary focus of the Foundation’s grantmaking is applied research focused on health and nutritional issues affecting infants and young children. Research projects aimed at finding solutions to common everyday issues and problems regarding children’s health and nutrition are sought. Of particular interest are those offering a substantial promise of meaningful advances in prevention and treatment of diseases and those with broad applicability to the general population.
NAS: Prize in Food & Agriculture Sciences

In partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) established the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Prize in Food & Agriculture Sciences in 2017. The award recognizes extraordinary contributions to agriculture and understanding the biology of species important to food and agriculture production. The NAS Prize elevates food and agriculture research and highlights the critical need for scientists working toward more productive, sustainable agriculture. The prize recognizes mid-career scientists at US institutions working in scientific fields applicable to agriculture, including plant and animal sciences, microbiology, nutrition and food science, soil science, entomology, veterinary medicine and agricultural economics. 

Nominations are due October 3, 2022.

ND EPSCoR: STEM Research, Education, and Outreach

The ND EPSCoR State Office’s mission is to support efforts of participating institutions of higher education across the state that result in increased STEM research capacity and competitiveness; a stronger STEM pathway that produces our next generation workforce, educators, and researchers; and, an informed citizenry that values the STEM ecosystem and economy.

Thus, the ND EPSCoR State Office is now accepting proposals to fund STEM activities at EPSCoR participating institutions: research universities (RUs; NDSU and UND), master’s college / university (MCU; Minot State University), primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs; Dickinson, Mayville, and Valley City State Universities), and the tribal colleges/universities (TCUs; Cankdeska Cikana Community College, Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, Sitting Bull College, Turtle Mountain Community College, and United Tribes Technical College). For details, see the Request for Proposals.

Deadline: Noon, September 30, 2022
NEH: Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations

The Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations program provides grants to organizations to support collaborative teams who are editing, annotating, and translating foundational humanities texts that are vital to learning and research but are currently inaccessible or are available only in inadequate editions or translations. Typically, the texts are significant literary, philosophical, and historical materials, but other types of work, such as musical notation, may also be the subject of an edition.

The program supports continuous full-time or part-time activities during the periods of performance of one to three years. Projects must be undertaken by at least two scholars working collaboratively. While international collaboration is permitted, projects must maintain an equitable balance between scholars at U.S. institutions and scholars at non-U.S. institutions. In addition to supporting long-term editorial projects, the program also encourages applications for short-term projects and for projects that are at a planning stage.

Note: the new application guidelines will be available September 30, 2022. For now, the 2021 application guidelines are available for reference.

Deadline: November 30, 2022

NIH: HEAL Initiative: Research Studies to Develop and Implement Interventions to Prevent Opioid Misuse in Community Health Centers (R61/R33 Clinical Trial Required)

This funding opportunity announcement (FOA) [RFA-DA-23-048] is part of the Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Prevention Initiative, a portfolio of research focused on the prevention of opioid misuse and opioid use disorder funded under NIH’s HEAL Initiative. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) seeks to address the urgency and magnitude of the opioid crisis by developing and testing new or adapted interventions to prevent opioid misuse among patients served by community health centers (CHCs), and/or developing and testing implementation strategies for screening and referral to preventive interventions for misuse of opioids and other substances among patients served by CHCs. Research will be supported through exploratory / developmental phase awards (R61/R33) that may not exceed 5 years, allocating up to two years of funding for
development of the project and up to four years for a full test of the research aims.

*Deadline: November 8, 2022*

**NIH: National Cancer Institute (NCI) Outstanding Investigator Award (R35 Clinical Trial Optional)**

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) [RFA-CA-22-045] invites grant applications for the Outstanding Investigator Award (R35) in any area of cancer research.

The objective of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Outstanding Investigator Award (OIA) is to provide long-term support to accomplished investigators with outstanding records of cancer research accomplishments who propose to conduct exceptional research. The OIA is intended to allow investigators the opportunity to take greater risks, be more adventurous in their lines of inquiry, or take the time to develop new techniques.

It is expected that the OIA would provide extended funding stability and encourage investigators to embark on projects of unusual potential in cancer research. The research projects should break new ground or extend previous discoveries toward new directions or applications that may lead to a breakthrough that will advance biomedical, behavioral, or clinical cancer research.

*Deadline: November 8, 2022*

**NIST: Professional Research Experience Program (PREP)**

NIST PREP [2022-NIST-PREP-01] is seeking applications from eligible institutions of higher education in the U.S. and its territories that offer two- or four- year degrees in academic science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines to establish and manage a program to support collaborative research relationships in the NIST labs. Eligible applicants may apply to establish and manage a program at the relevant NIST campuses in Boulder, Colorado (CO) (PREP Boulder), Gaithersburg, Maryland (MD) (PREP Gaithersburg), and / or Charleston, South Carolina (SC) (PREP Gaithersburg).

*Deadline: September 30, 2022*
**NSF: Dynamics of Integrated Socio-Environmental Systems (DISES)**

The DISES Program [NSF 20-579](https://www.nsf.gov) supports research projects that advance basic scientific understanding of integrated socio-environmental systems and the complex interactions (dynamics, processes, and feedbacks) within and among the environmental (biological, physical and chemical) and human (“socio”) (economic, social, political, or behavioral) components of such a system. The program seeks proposals that emphasize the truly integrated nature of a socio-environmental system versus two discrete systems (a natural one and a human one) that are coupled. DISES projects must explore a connected and integrated socio-environmental system that includes explicit analysis of the processes and dynamics between the environmental and human components of the system.

PIs are encouraged to develop proposals that push conceptual boundaries and build new theoretical framing of the understanding of socio-environmental systems. Additionally, we encourage the exploration of multi-scalar dynamics, processes and feedbacks between and within the socio-environmental system.

*Deadline: November 15, 2022*

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**NSF: Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases**

The multi-agency Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases program [NSF 22-620](https://www.nsf.gov) supports research on the ecological, evolutionary, organismal, and social drivers that influence the transmission dynamics of infectious diseases. The central theme of submitted projects must be the quantitative, mathematical, or computational understanding of pathogen transmission dynamics. The intent is discovery of principles of infectious disease (re)emergence and transmission and testing mathematical or computational models that elucidate infectious disease systems. Projects should be broad, interdisciplinary efforts that go beyond the scope of typical studies. They should focus on the determinants and interactions of (re)emergence and transmission among any host species, including but not limited to humans, non-human animals, and / or plants. This includes, for example, the spread of pathogens; the influence of environmental factors such as climate; the population dynamics and genetics of vectors and reservoir
species or hosts; how the physiology or behavior of the pathogen, vector, or host species biology affects transmission dynamics; the feedback between ecological transmission and evolutionary dynamics; and the cultural, social, behavioral, and economic dimensions of pathogen transmission and disease. Research may be on zoonotic, environmentally-borne, vector-borne, enteric, or respiratory pathogens of either terrestrial or aquatic systems and organisms, including diseases of animals and plants, at any scale from specific pathogens to inclusive environmental systems. Proposals for research on disease systems of public health concern to Low- or Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) are strongly encouraged, as are disease systems of concern in agricultural systems. Investigators are encouraged to develop the appropriate multidisciplinary team, including for example, anthropologists, modelers, ecologists, bioinformaticians, genomics researchers, social scientists, economists, oceanographers, mathematical scientists, behaviorists, epidemiologists, evolutionary biologists, entomologists, immunologists, parasitologists, microbiologists, bacteriologists, virologists, pathologists or veterinarians, with the goal of integrating knowledge across disciplines to enhance our ability to predict and control infectious diseases.

Deadline: November 16, 2022

**NSF: Formal Methods in the Field**

The Formal Methods in the Field (FMitF) program [NSF 22-618](#) aims to bring together researchers in formal methods with researchers in other areas of computer and information science and engineering to jointly develop rigorous and reproducible methodologies for designing and implementing correct-by-construction systems and applications with provable guarantees. FMitF encourages close collaboration between two groups of researchers. The first group consists of researchers in the area of formal methods, which, for the purposes of this solicitation, is broadly defined as principled approaches based on mathematics and logic to system modeling, specification, design, analysis, verification, and synthesis. The second group consists of researchers in the “field,” which, for the purposes of this solicitation, is defined as any area within computer and information science and engineering that currently does not benefit from having established communities already developing and applying formal methods in their research. All proposals must make a strong case for why formal methods is appropriate for the field area, and why it is one that does not currently benefit from formal methods.
The FMitF program solicits two classes of proposals:

- **Track I: Research proposals**: Each proposal must have at least one Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI with expertise in formal methods and at least one with expertise in the field area. Proposals are expected to address fundamental contributions to both formal methods and the respective field(s) and should include a proof of concept in the field along with a detailed evaluation plan that discusses intended scope of applicability, trade-offs, and limitations. Track I proposals must contain a detailed collaboration plan that clearly highlights and justifies the complementary expertise of the PIs/co-PIs in the designated areas and describes the mechanisms for continuous bi-directional interaction. Projects are limited to $750,000 in total budget, with durations of up to four years.

- **Track II: Transition to Practice (TTP) proposals**: The objective of this track is to support the ongoing development of extensible and robust formal-methods research prototypes/tools to facilitate usability and accessibility to a larger and more diverse community of users. These proposals are expected to support the development, implementation, and deployment of later-stage successful formal methods research and tools into operational environments in order to bridge the gap between research and practice. A TTP proposal must include a project plan that addresses major tasks and system development milestones as well as an evaluation plan for the working system. Proposals are expected to identify a target user community or organization that will serve as an early adopter of the technology. Collaborations with industry are strongly encouraged. Projects are limited to $100,000 in total budget, with durations of up to 18 months.

*Deadline: February 15, 2023*

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**NSF: Research on Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning**

The purpose of the Research on Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning (RETTL) program [NSF 20-612](https://www.nsf.gov/dyna/funding.jsp?program=20612) is to fund exploratory and synergistic research in emerging technologies (to include, but not limited to, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and immersive or augmenting technologies) for teaching and learning in the future. The program accepts proposals that focus on learning, teaching, or a combination of both. The scope of the program is broad, with special interest in diverse learner / educator populations, contexts, and content, including teaching and learning in science,
technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and in foundational areas that enable STEM (e.g., self-regulation, literacy, communication, collaboration, creativity, and socio-emotional skills). Research in this program should be informed by the convergence (synthesis) of multiple disciplines: e.g., learning sciences; discipline-based education research; computer and information science and engineering; design; and cognitive, behavioral, and social sciences. Within this broad scope, the program also encourages projects that investigate teaching and learning related to futuristic and highly technological work environments.

Deadline: October 17, 2022

USDA-AFRI: Education and Workforce Development

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) - Education and Workforce Development (EWD) program focuses on developing the next generation of research, education, and extension professionals in the food and agricultural sciences. In 2022, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) requests applications for the AFRI’s Education and Workforce Development program areas to support:

1. professional development opportunities for K-14 educational professionals;
2. non-formal education that cultivates food and agricultural interest in youth;
3. workforce training at community, junior, and technical colleges;
4. training of undergraduate students in research and extension;
5. fellowships for predoctoral candidates and postdoctoral scholars; and
6. special workforce development topics.

Deadlines vary by program area.

USDA-AFRI: Foundational and Applied Science

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundational and Applied Science Program supports grants in six AFRI priority areas to advance knowledge in both fundamental and applied sciences important to agriculture:

1. Plant Health and Production and Plant Products;
3. Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health;
4. Bioenergy, Natural Resources, and Environment;
5. Agriculture Systems and Technology; and
6. Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities.

*Deadlines vary by program area.*

**Wenner-Gren Foundation: Post-Ph.D. Research Grants in Anthropology**

*Post-Ph.D. Research Grants* are awarded to individuals holding a Ph.D. or equivalent degree to support individual research projects. The program contributes to the Foundation’s overall mission to support basic research in anthropology and to ensure that the discipline continues to be a source of vibrant and significant work that furthers our understanding of humanity's cultural and biological origins, development, and variation. The Foundation supports research that demonstrates a clear link to anthropological theory and debates, and promises to make a solid contribution to advancing these ideas. There is no preference for any methodology, research location, or subfield. The Foundation particularly welcomes proposals that employ a comparative perspective, can generate innovative approaches or ideas, and / or integrate two or more subfields.

The maximum amount of the Post-Ph.D. Research Grant is US $20,000.

*Deadline: November 1, 2022*

Have questions, ideas, or suggestions for the RCA Update?

[Contact Us]
The Office of Research and Creative Activity (RCA) sends weekly emails to NDSU faculty and staff to provide current information on various topics including funding opportunities, grant program changes, research resources, deadlines, notices, and training.
You are receiving this notification through the NDSU official employee listserv or sub-list. The official listserv refreshes after each pay period.

North Dakota State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to: Equal Opportunity Specialist, Old Main 201, 701-231-7708 or Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 102, 701-231-6409.

We collectively acknowledge that we gather at NDSU, a land grant institution, on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how to live in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.