

BIONEERS

REVOLUTION FROM THE HEART OF NATURE



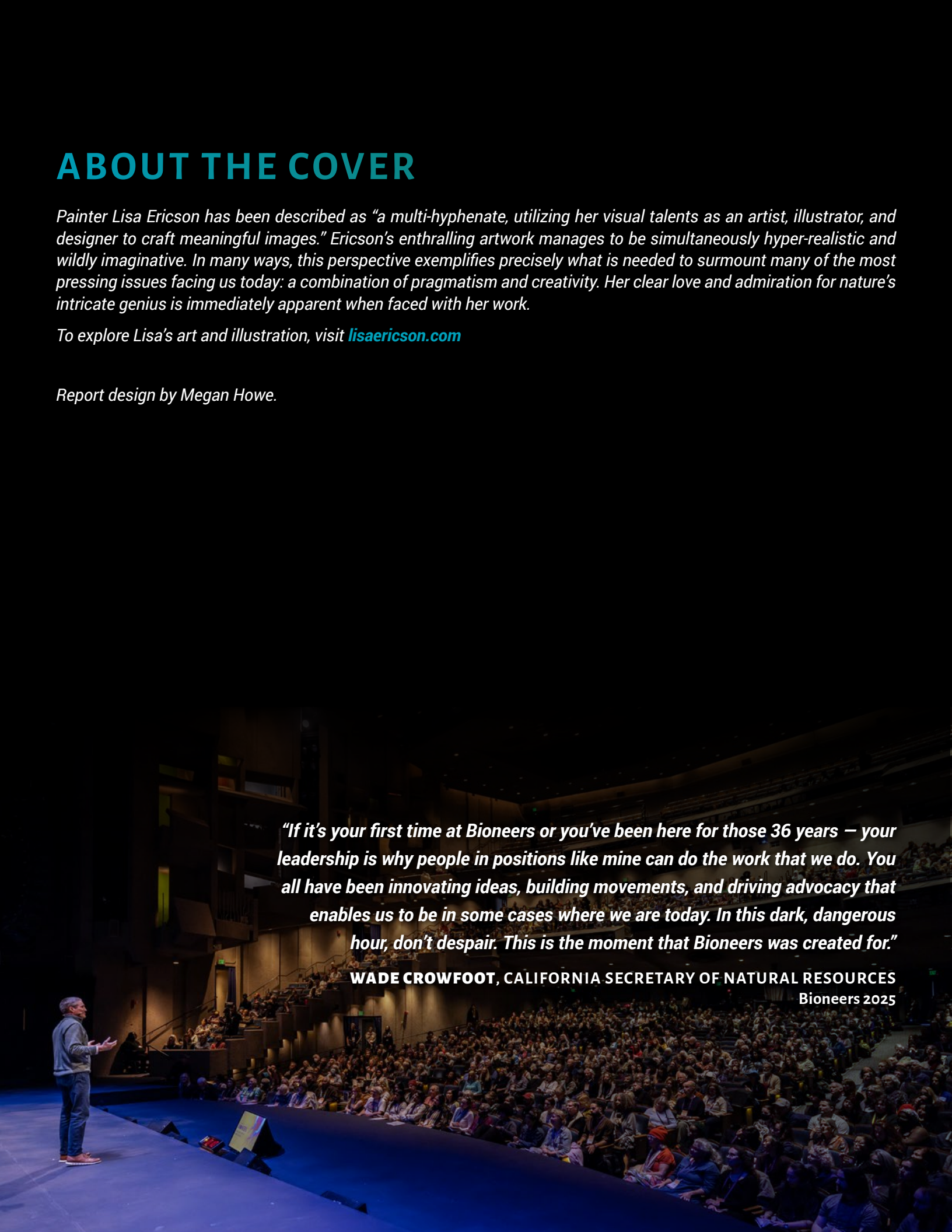
2025 REPORT

ABOUT THE COVER

Painter Lisa Ericson has been described as “a multi-hyphenate, utilizing her visual talents as an artist, illustrator, and designer to craft meaningful images.” Ericson’s enthralling artwork manages to be simultaneously hyper-realistic and wildly imaginative. In many ways, this perspective exemplifies precisely what is needed to surmount many of the most pressing issues facing us today: a combination of pragmatism and creativity. Her clear love and admiration for nature’s intricate genius is immediately apparent when faced with her work.

To explore Lisa’s art and illustration, visit lisaericson.com

Report design by Megan Howe.



“If it’s your first time at Bioneers or you’ve been here for those 36 years – your leadership is why people in positions like mine can do the work that we do. You all have been innovating ideas, building movements, and driving advocacy that enables us to be in some cases where we are today. In this dark, dangerous hour, don’t despair. This is the moment that Bioneers was created for.”

WADE CROWFOOT, CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bioneers 2025

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FOLLOW BIONEERS:



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Bioneers is a nonprofit educational organization that highlights breakthrough solutions for restoring people and planet. Since 1990, Bioneers has acted as a fertile hub of social and scientific innovators with practical and visionary solutions for the world's most pressing environmental and social crises. A celebration of the genius of nature and human ingenuity, Bioneers connects people with systemic, solve-the-whole-problem solutions and each other.

This past year marked 36 years of Bioneers. For more than three and a half decades, the organization has evolved and co-evolved with the world, and with our extended community. "Everything breathes together," as Greek philosopher Plotinus put it. We continue to inspire, and to realize a shift to live on Earth in ways that honor the web of life, each other, and future generations.

Our acclaimed annual national conference is complemented by extensive public education and media outreach, touching millions annually via: award-winning radio and book series, podcasts, TV broadcasts, and our Bioneers Learning platform—where people can engage directly with "education for action" within a community of leadership. Bioneers has inspired and contributed to diverse media projects over the years, including: Louie Schwartzberg's *Fantastic Fungi*, Michael Pollan's *How to Change Your Mind* and *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and Leonardo DiCaprio's *The Eleventh Hour*.

Since our inception in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Bioneers has been guided by Indigenous values, worldviews, and knowledge. Our Native-led Indigeneity program produces the acclaimed Indigenous Forum at the conference. The program's larger body of work includes advancing Native Youth Leadership and Rights of Nature governance practices — supporting Indigenous leadership, rights, and sovereignty — and encouraging the re-indigenization of all us earthlings.

Over the decades, the Bioneers community has cracked the code on countless transformative solutions while gaining vast practical experience. Grounded in a vision of interdependence and justice, Bioneers is a real-world showcase and pollinator garden of the "preferred state" of what's not only possible, but worlds better.

"Worldviews create worlds," as cultural historian Richard Tarnas says. As it becomes evident to vast numbers of people that the current paradigm is suicidal, they are searching for authentic, holistic solutions. An idea whose time has come is unstoppable, if we put our shoulder to the wheel in community and solidarity. Bioneers is right on cue.

Keep the faith, and please join with us in this revolution from the heart of nature and the human heart.

"Real change doesn't trickle down, it rises up. It begins with people who refuse to wait. It begins in communities where leaders are seeing a problem and deciding to do something about it, especially when the odds feel insurmountable."

AMIRA DIAMOND, MELINDA KRAMER, & KAHEA PACHECO, WOMEN'S EARTH ALLIANCE
Bioneers 2025

Opposite Page (clockwise from top left): Doria Robinson (Photo: Nikki Ritcher); Recycle Hawai'i Youth Convergence participants (Photo: 'Ōpio Film School/Easten Tanimoto); Thom Hartmann (Photo: Nikki Ritcher); Junior NAIWA Daughters (Eastern Band of Cherokee) (Photo: Kimberly Smith); Kenny Ausubel & Nina Simons (Photo: Nikki Ritcher); SambaFunk (Photo: Boris Zharkov)



BREAKING THE SPELL: A REGENERATIVE AWAKENING



A LETTER FROM KENNY AUSUBEL

They say great stories cast a spell, but the greatest stories break the spell. The spell of separation, fear and domination is breaking. A global awakening is revealing an existential reckoning of world-historic proportions that calls each of us to informed action. It's a revolution from the heart of nature and the human heart.

While the biosphere unravels at breakneck speed, here in the U.S. as we approach the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the Republic is in the throes of a hostile takeover by the same kinds of imperial monarchs and oligarchs the rebels fought to overthrow. The masks have come off. The oligarchs make it crystal clear their game is capitalism without democracy, a world of have-nots and have-a-lots — of terms and conditions rather than rights and responsibilities. It's Make Feudalism Great Again and the worldview is equally medieval.

These hungry ghosts are devouring the only home we've got. It's not going well, for people or planet, and escalating numbers of citizens are mobilizing to stop this imperial coup in its tracks.

At this hinge moment when the climate emergency demands immediate civilizational overhaul, the prescription is actually pretty basic. Taking care of nature means taking care of people, and taking care of people means taking care of nature.

Our salvation depends on regenerating the vitality of the ecosystems on which all life depends. But that can be successful only by putting equity and justice at the center in a process that is never-ending. Our power and our healing lie in love, service, community, and humility. Never before has it been more important to gather in community to share solutions and vision — to build relationships, connections, networks and power.

As you'll see in these pages, Bioneers continues to gather people, showcase breakthrough solutions, spread the word far and wide, and build community and connection. Entering our 37th year, because of your big-hearted support, we're advancing our programs at new levels of impact and influence. We offer a deep bow of gratitude to all our inspired supporters, and we need you now more than ever.

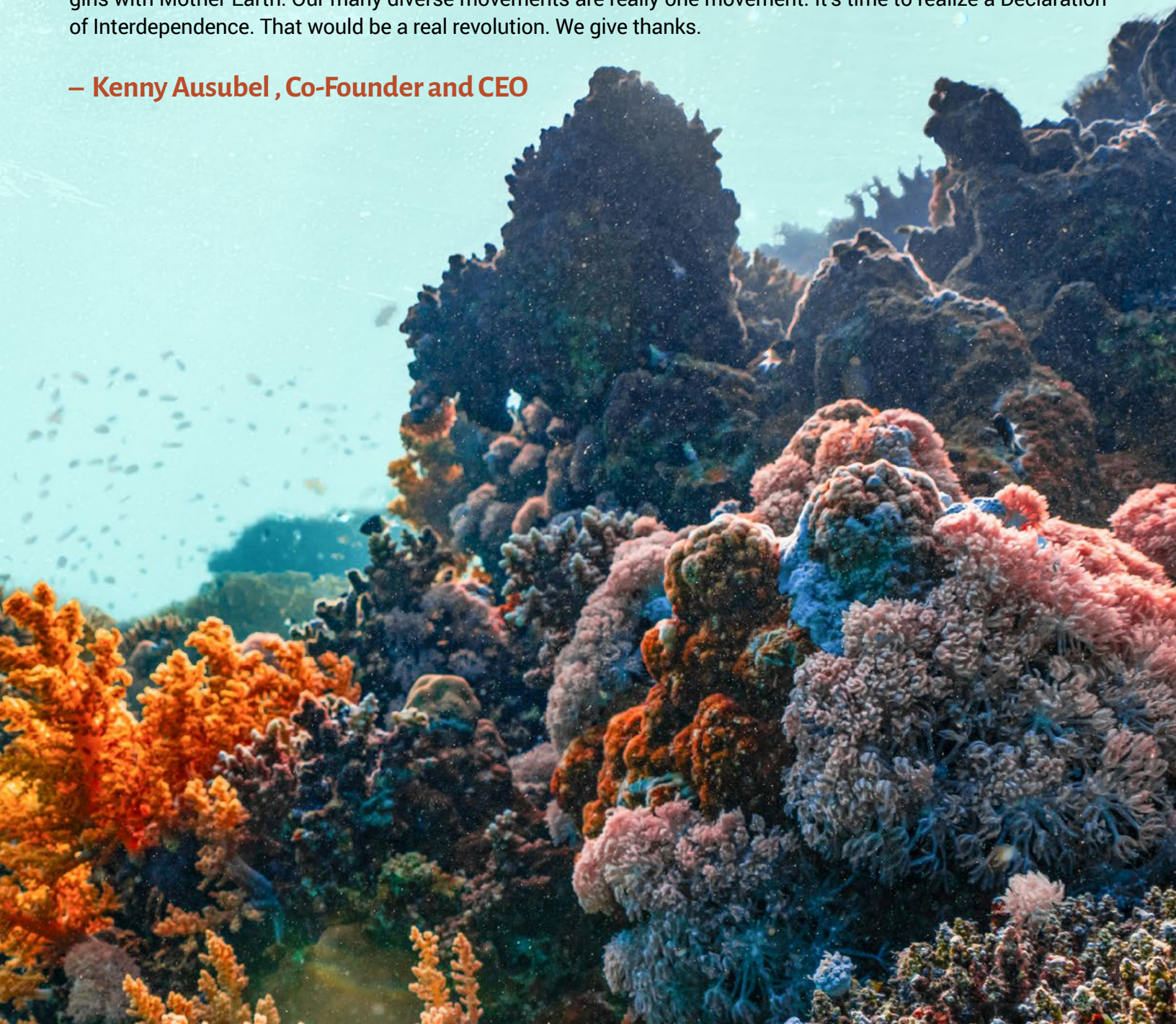
It's an original cornerstone of Bioneers that nature has a profound and mysterious capacity for healing. Given half a chance, nature regenerates with unfathomable power and genius. Adapting nature's operating instructions, we can act as healers by working with nature to heal nature. In that light, we're doubling down on ways to exponentially advance and scale the growing space of Regenerative Nature-based Solutions (RNbS).

The results will be exponential if we successfully elevate these “solve-the-whole-problem” nature-based solutions. Over the coming years, it’s imperative to put them front and center as actionable priorities in policy and practice. A recent landmark study estimates that regenerating the biological capabilities of just 30% of the Earth’s land area now considered deeply degraded has the potential to stabilize and eventually reverse not only climate change, but the whole constellation of related existential crises.

According to Brett KenCairn of Boulder’s Center for Regenerative Solutions: “With this approach, a *regenerative* nature-based paradigm of climate action offers a clear, accessible, and shovel-ready approach focused on mobilizing the massive and largely unrecognized regenerative capacity of the larger living world—and hundreds of thousands of human communities working with it. RNbS also have the potential to unlock the enormous potential of the countless people and human communities that have been alienated, marginalized, detained, incarcerated, confined to refugee camps or in multiple other ways disenfranchised from their innate capacity to contribute as part of meaningful living system regenerating efforts.”

As the spell breaks, one thing’s for sure. Either we stand together or we fall apart. Our common ground literally begins with Mother Earth. Our many diverse movements are really one movement. It’s time to realize a Declaration of Interdependence. That would be a real revolution. We give thanks.

– **Kenny Ausubel , Co-Founder and CEO**



CALLING IN THE WORLD WE WANT



A LETTER FROM NINA SIMONS

For me, curating and producing the conference is a sacred act of calling in the world we want — in community. It's a soul-nourishing constellation of insight, discovery, connection, and practical tools that weave nature, culture, and spirit into an exquisite living tapestry. It leads to collaborative, constructive action to repair the world. It's sacred activism, action that's grounded in dedication to the healthy, just, and regenerative world I'm devoted to co-creating.

Through my work with Bioneers and women's leadership, restoring the human qualities relegated to the "feminine" to greater balance and equity in society became a passion for me. Learning from brilliant, purposeful women with innovative, effective approaches to healing and justice inspired me to go deeper. I came to understand how vital and necessary women's leadership is—and how profoundly different it can be.

Virtually every social and ecological metric improves when women have real decision-making power and agency — from family to governance and world peace — and the data support it. The work of women produces multiple cascading benefits to their communities and societies. It's a shift so seismic that it has provoked the current backlash of misogyny and patriarchal domination. Nevertheless, the future is female, and it's on full display at Bioneers, woven throughout the work we do to restore the equilibrium.

Bioneers connected me directly to First Peoples, the original "bioneers." That close encounter opened up many worlds for me, for which I am profoundly, humbly grateful. We are honored to be of value to Indigenous Peoples and communities who are a guiding light of Bioneers and beyond.

We're all living through what my beloved mentor Joanna Macy named The Great Turning. It's a precarious time of severe trauma, shock, and grievous suffering. As social justice educator Valarie Kaur puts it: "The future is dark. What if this is not the darkness of the tomb — but the darkness of the womb?"

I believe we're living through a crisis of relationship that calls for *greater* connection and intimacy at every level. Nature designed us to be social creatures. We need connectivity, community, relational intelligence, and a shift from a "me" culture to a "we" culture — a whole-hearted celebration of our interdependence and kinship.

Bioneers is a joyful, embodied celebration of what Buckminster Fuller called the preferred state. Won't you join us?

— **Nina Simons**, Co-Founder and Chief Relationship Officer



“

In choosing our story, we not only cast our vote of influence over the kind of world future generations inherit, but we also affect our own lives in the here and now. When we find a good story and fully give ourselves to it, that story can act through us, breathing new life into everything we do.

When we move in a direction that touches our heart, we add to the momentum of deeper purpose that makes us feel more alive. A great story and a satisfying life share a vital element: a compelling plot that moves toward meaningful goals, where what is at stake is far larger than our personal gains and losses. The Great Turning is such a story.



JOANNA MACY

FIRST LADY OF DEEP RELATIONAL ECOLOGY
1929 – 2025

What a profound honor — to have known, loved, and learned so deeply from Joanna Macy, who mentored so many among the Bioneers community and beyond. Her Work That Reconnects and the widening circles of leaders she influenced radiate her love and wisdom, offering practices that help us to remember how to situate ourselves in deep time, and how to express, fully feel and act from our wild love for this world. We are her legacy, reminding us that we are not alone in visioning The Great Turning, but are strengthened by our ancestors, our Earth relatives, and the sacred power of Gaia herself.



THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE

The Bioneers Conference is a natural anti-depressant. It's a fountain of breakthrough solutions, visionary and practical; infused with experiential, interactive learning, and inspired performances. Nature-based solutions occupy the practical and philosophical center, influenced by Indigenous perspectives. Systems thinking is the lens, polished by the clear light of humility. Healing and justice guide our ethical compass and programming. The conference serves as a hatchery for a diverse community of leadership across disciplines and cultures. As in ecosystems, the edges where worlds meet are the most fertile and diverse. Over these 36 years, this holistic Bioneers framework continues to spawn rich innovation.

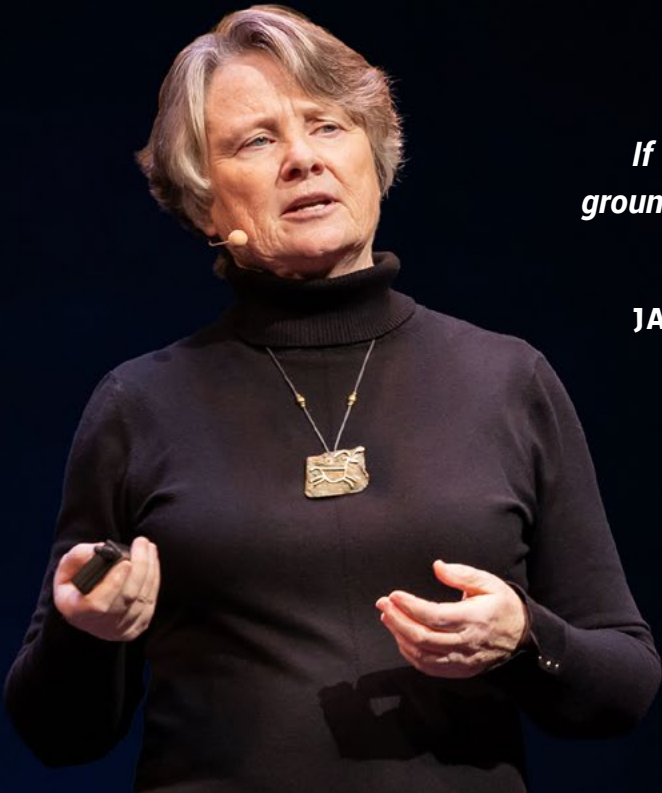
THE 2025 CONFERENCE

The 36th Annual Conference conjured a deep experience of community and communion. There's an intangible power in coming together around the council fire to share visions and models of the world we want and how to get there.

At a time when the world feels increasingly fractured and polarized, gathering has become a radical act. It can spark the transformation communities need to rekindle what's most essential: to meet, listen, imagine, organize together, and rebuild the connections our systems have forgotten how to hold. 2025 turned that spark into a hearth to gather around, with the shared belief that people, place, and possibility are deeply interwoven.

For many attendees, it was more than a conference. It was a homecoming. Kat Sitnikova of the Biomimicry Institute said, *"I'm still riding the wave of inspiration. You and your team crafted a space alive with connection, curiosity, and belonging. We came away energized, full of new ideas and collaborations—and truly at home."*

Photo: Nikki Ritcher



"This is a kind of seasonal ceremony, Bioneers. If we were migrating birds, this would be our staging ground, where we come and talk about what we hatched this year and what breeding was like."

JANINE BENYUS, CO-FOUNDER OF BIOMIMICRY 3.8
Bioneers 2025



Bioneers 2025 attendees (Photo: Nikki Ritcher); *Learn & Link: Cross-Pollinating & Seeding Collaborations* session (Photo: Jess Voss)

Our third year in Berkeley affirmed what we had hoped: the move was not only strategic, but transformative. The city and its institutions met us in genuine partnership, cultivating a gathering that felt rooted in place and vibrantly diverse. From the Berkeley Ecology Center and KPFA to the Othing & Belonging Institute, Visit Berkeley, and innumerable local businesses, the neighborhood's embrace continues.

Inspired by attendee feedback, we expanded opportunities for people to network, collaborate, and cross-pollinate across fields and backgrounds. These daily sessions — stewarded by Shilpa Jain, Community, Healing, and Conflict Facilitator and Former Executive Director of YES! — wove attendees into new networks rooted in authenticity, trust, and shared purpose.

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

- Almost 3,000 attendees (sold out)
- 71% first-time attendees
- 65% under age 55
- Ages 14–85+
- 34% attendees of color
- 92% left with new ideas, connections, or inspiration
- 83% made key professional or personal connections

THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE ROOM

In 2025, we piloted our “Right People in the Room” initiative. It’s a vision grounded in the conviction that strategic gatherings can catalyze systems-level change when the ecosystem of participants is intentionally curated and cultivated.

Thanks to the support of our community — including funders at all levels—we were able to provide various levels of scholarship access to nearly 1,000 individuals, including: youth scholars, Indigenous leaders, frontline communities, and key change-makers who bring essential and unique insight.

By collaborating with partners, aligned organizations and foundations, we expanded invitations to communities and geographies whose voices *must* be at the table to shape ecological and social transformation. The results were profound. A web of relationships sprung up. New alliances formed and novel strategies emerged. Participants left galvanized to weave, work together, and meet again at Bioneers next year.

We invite you to support the “Right People in the Room.” Gifts small and large have life-changing effects in growing the nexus of connection that leads to system change. give@bioneers.org | bioneers.org/donate



THE 2025 INDIGENOUS FORUM

Once again, Indigenous leadership and the world-renowned Indigenous Forum served as the North Star of the Bioneers Conference. The Forum — a Native-led space curated by our Indigenous Bioneers staff whose community relationships are deep, longstanding, and grounded in trust — provides a safe and generative space for Tribal leaders, activists, culture-bearers, and youth to learn, strategize, and build enduring relationships. The Indigenous Forum amplifies the voices of Indigenous leaders to connect people through shared wisdom, stories, practices, movements, and frontline solutions with an intergenerational and multicultural audience. Indigenous perspectives are central to Bioneers' mission and our capacity for creating safe spaces and conditions conducive to bringing diverse Indigenous perspectives to critical global dialogues strengthens each year. See page 15 for more information on Indigeneity. For a complete description of the program, see the 2025 Indigeneity Annual Report: bioneers.org/indigeneity-report



INDIGENEITY AT THE CONFERENCE:

- 8 Indigenous mainstage presentations
- 52 Indigenous presenters
- 294+ Indigenous community members
- 165+ distinct Tribal Nations represented
- Indigenous Forum at full capacity
- Topics included Indigenous Roots of Democracy, Rights of Fish and Aquatic Mammals, Art and Healing, Community-Building, and more



A RARE AND POWERFUL INTERGENERATIONAL COMMONS

One uncommon thing Bioneers does is to convene across generations in shared learning, mentorship, and kinship. In 2025, we saw a marked rise in younger attendees who came seeking fellowship, vision, and pathways into lifelong work for justice, land stewardship, and systems change.

At Bioneers, young people don't simply attend — they are embraced as essential participants, co-creators, and future leaders. Many youth shared that it was the first time they could see themselves having a place in the movements they're drawn to. Elders mirrored this feeling. The next generations' presence sharpened their clarity, deepened their commitment, and filled their hearts to overflowing. This rare, intergenerational gathering creates a living biome of learning, lineage, and constructive action. Together, generations forge bonds that ripple outward long after the conference concludes.



Biomimicry and Social Innovation participants (Photo: Jess Voss)

IMPACT STORY

BEYOND BENIGN: GOOD CHEMISTRY

Dr. Amy Cannon's passion to apply chemistry in service of sustainability has been transforming chemistry education for almost two decades. She holds the world's first Ph.D. in Green Chemistry and has devoted her research to sustainable chemistry solutions, both in academia and business. In 2007, she co-founded Beyond Benign with her husband, Dr. John Warner, a world renowned green chemist and co-founder of the field.

When Amy arrived at the 2010 Bioneers Conference, her organization was still young. She came to share her vision for revamping chemistry education, but what she encountered at Bioneers marked a turning point.

On a panel about eco-literacy, Amy joined leaders including Dr. Anthony Cortese, whose work organizing the Presidents' Climate Leadership

Commitments had mobilized hundreds of universities to adopt bold climate goals. Hearing how a shared commitment could accelerate institutional change, Amy felt the power of collective action that emerges when people gather with purpose.

Their conversation continued after the panel. That seed became the Green Chemistry Commitment, launched by Beyond Benign in 2013 as a global network of colleges and universities pledging to integrate green chemistry into their programs.

Today, Beyond Benign's GCC Program is in 264 universities worldwide — from the University of Michigan to Brown University — reaching over 1.7M students each year. In the U.S., ~16% of the 20,000 chemists that graduate annually are from GCC-signing institutions, representing a critical mass that is revolutionizing chemistry education.

Opposite Page (clockwise from top left): Display by The Cultural Conservancy; Indigenous Forum Attendees; Indigenous Forum Attendees; Ras K'dee (Pomo-African) tabling for "Seventh Native American Generation"; The Cultural Conservancy Native Seed Library packets; Jade Begay (Tesuque Pueblo and Diné) (Photos: Boris Zharkov)

CHANGING THE MINDSCAPE

BIONEERS MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

When stories change, the world changes. Our original goal for Bioneers was to change the story by spreading breakthrough solutions for our most pressing environmental and social crises. Today, in partnership with hundreds of world-class leaders who speak at the annual conference, we inspire and inform millions of people through powerful solutions-based media, including highlighting gravely under-reported issues and raising under-represented voices.

We focus on three meta-themes that fill gaping holes in the corporate media landscape: 1) Solutions-based storytelling, 2) Whole-systems and interdisciplinary breakthroughs, and 3) In-depth, sophisticated perspectives on a diversity of critical issues. Bioneers has become a trusted source for insight, innovation, and actionable ideas.

Along with award-winning radio and podcast series, videos, and newsletters, we distribute articles, interviews, and book excerpts on our website and through allied media outlets. We license content for public events, curricula, books, and documentaries. Bioneers “pollinator” conferences are held annually in Detroit and San Luis Obispo, featuring select keynotes and public discussions.

We publish anthologies, e-readers, and books on a variety of topics, including nature’s genius, Indigenous knowledge, women’s leadership, and psychedelics (which we’ve highlighted since 1991). We also serve as a primary resource and platform for journalists, authors, and media-makers to share their work. At the 2025 Conference, we hosted 15 book signings, including authors Joy Harjo, Janine Benyus, and Paris Marx.

We screened eight films to full-house audiences, including *Resident Orca*, Oscar-winner *No Other Land*, and Oscar-nominated *Sugarcane*, directed by past keynote speaker Julian Brave NoiseCat. The screenings were accompanied by Q&A sessions with dynamic leaders such as Jade Begay and Raynell Morris.

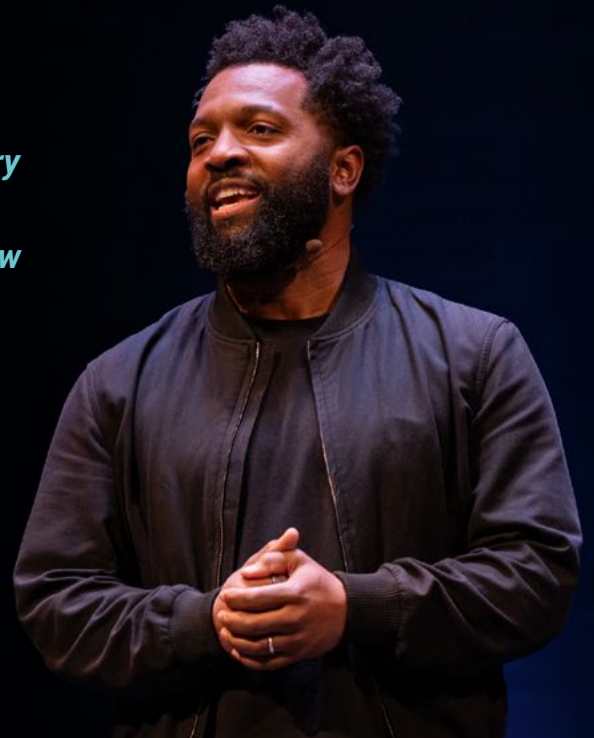
We work regularly and in grateful collaboration with publishers and media partners ranging from Chelsea Green to Harper Collins, Atmos, Island Press, and Sierra Magazine.

Bioneers’ media constellation is for those seeking stories of possibility, innovation, and regenerative solutions. Engagement continues to grow, reflecting a thirst for solutions-focused stories.

Photo: Nikki Ritcher

“They speak of ‘I,’ we speak of ‘we.’ They speak of less, we speak of more. The future we want is already here. The story we need, we’re embedded within. We must tell it again and again and again. That’s how we make things true. That’s how we manifest it into being. That’s the task.”

BARATUNDE THURSTON
WRITER, PRODUCER, AND PROUD EARTHLING
Bioneers 2025



REACH AND DISTRIBUTION

700,000+
IMPRESSIONS/MONTH
ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS

14.8 MILLION
TOTAL BIONEERS
VIDEO VIEWS

4 MILLION
REGULAR AUDIENCE VIA
FREE SPEECH TV

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Instagram: followers increased 60%; reach increased 215%
- Facebook: reach increased 830%
- YouTube: viewership increased 185%; subscribers growing by 1,000/month
- LinkedIn: followers increased 24%; reach increased 200%

RADIO SERIES AND PODCASTS

- Broadcasting to 100+ communities nationwide
- Potential radio listenership of 8 million
- Podcast downloads increased by 43%

NEWSLETTERS

“Earthlings shares cutting-edge research articles, uplifting and enriching content, and a variety of sources and perspectives.”

EARTHLINGS SUBSCRIBER

Bioneers has cultivated a thriving newsletter ecosystem. Given the hall of mirrors, click-bait algorithms, and insatiable monetization of social media platforms, our richly informative newsletters provide a sophisticated complement to independent journalism. They're layered with a multiplicity of perspectives:



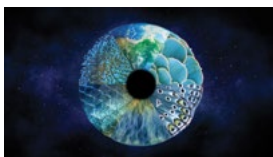
THE PULSE

Our general-interest flagship newsletter opens up a wide-angle aperture to hold a kaleidoscope of topics and solutions



THE FOOD WEB

Celebrates the people who build local food systems and embed ecological stewardship into agricultural practices



EARTHLINGS

A groundbreaking newsletter dedicated to exploring the mind-blowing intelligence inherent in animals, plants, fungi and the web of life



LEADING FROM THE FEMININE

Features inspiring women re-inventing leadership across domains by integrating relational intelligence, shared power, deep listening, heart, devotion, and empathy

RADIO AND PODCAST SERIES

In 2025, we produced 12 shows of our ongoing “mother ship” series, *Bioneers: Revolution from the Heart of Nature*, which is distributed freely to radio stations and listeners via our podcast on all platforms, including YouTube. Key areas of focus included Indigeneity, Justice, and Democracy, including: *Poetic Justice: Joy Harjo’s Artistic Journey in the Story Field* and *Supreme Oligarchy: How Billionaires and the Supreme Court Are Betraying the Promise of America* with broadcaster Thom Hartmann.

In February 2025, we released our new podcast mini-series, *Nature’s Genius*. It is pure Bioneers. Each half-hour episode illuminates the wondrous intelligence of nature, elegant practical solutions embedded in living systems, and real-world applications of Regenerative Nature-based Solutions for human infrastructure and ecological restoration.

Season 2 features biomimicry innovator Janine Benyus, regenerative agriculturist Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin on bioregional food systems, Yurok attorney Amy Bowers Cordalis on undamming the Klamath River, Harvard scholar Rachael Petersen on plants and consciousness, human rights scholar César Rodríguez-Garavito on the rights of nature, and more. *Nature’s Genius* is produced in collaboration with Catherine Edwards, an award-winning audio producer and writer with 12+ years of experience creating programs focused on science, health, and technology.

Amidst requests from radio stations to increase our production, our focus is to cut through the media distortion field and utilize innovative pathways to reach both more people *and* the right people.

NATURE’S GENIUS EPISODES



The Universe Beneath Our Feet: Mapping the Mycelial Web of Life

Merlin Sheldrake and Toby Kiers



Seeing the Forests for the Trees

Suzanne Simard and Teresa Ryan



Urban Forests: A Nature-Based Solution to Climate Breakdown and Inequality

Brett KenCairn and Samira Malone



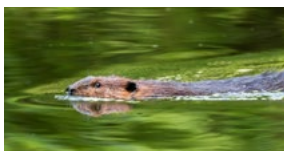
What Does Water Want?

Erica Gies



The Language of Nature and the Nature of Language

Jeannette Armstrong and Rowen White



Beaver Believers: How to Restore Planet Water

Brock Dolman and Kate Lundquist



An excellent, thought-evoking podcast. If we all listened and took actions, climate change would be a memory, not the ongoing threat it is.

BIONEERS: REVOLUTION FROM THE HEART OF NATURE PODCAST LISTENER



"A lesson I learned from working with Yurok elders is that to create change, you have to see it, you have to believe in it first... Revolution starts with a change in consciousness."

AMY BOWERS CORDALIS
CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RIDGES TO RIFFLES
INDIGENOUS CONSERVATION GROUP
Bioneers 2025

Photo: Nikki Ritcher

POPULAR AND NOTABLE 2025 CONTENT



4-PART ARTICLE SERIES
**AI and the Ecocidal
Hubris of Silicon Valley**



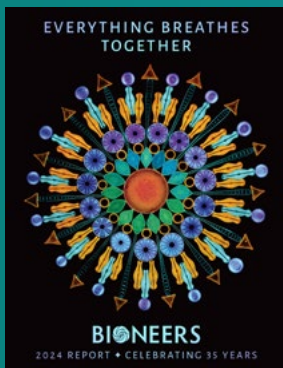
ARTICLE
**How Elephants Call
Each Other by Name**



PODCAST
**When No News is Bad
News: The Struggle to
Save Local Journalism**



VIDEO
**Amy Bowers Cordalis
Keynote: "The Water
Remembers: Year Zero"**



CELEBRATING 35 YEARS: EVERYTHING BREATHES TOGETHER

In 2025, we released *Everything Breathes Together: Celebrating 35 Years*, a 10-year retrospective report. It's a rich distillation of Bioneers' recent history, impact, and whole-systems approach. Many supporters told us it helped to reveal the full scope of our work. It's a panoramic journey into world-views, worlds, and guidance for the road ahead.

ROI: RETURN ON INFLUENCE AND IMPACT

For Bioneers, our "ROI" doesn't mean Return on Investment. It means Return on Influence and Return on Impact. Especially in these times of media monopoly, disinformation, misinformation, and censorship, it's imperative that we support independent media! Your generous support allows us to expand our reach and influence. Help us change the story to change the world. give@bioneers.org | bioneers.org/donate

INDIGENEITY

PROGRAM

Since our inception, Bioneers has been fundamentally shaped and guided by Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, participants, and partners. The Native-led Indigeneity Program promotes Indigenous approaches to solving Earth's most pressing environmental and social crises while weaving networks and partnerships among all peoples.

Along with contributing to the programming of the Bioneers Conference, the Indigeneity team produces the renowned Indigenous Forum within the conference. The Forum has become an annual touchstone for Native leaders and Indigenous youth to connect with each other and non-Native allies. To support the leadership and rights of First Peoples, we facilitate and nurture strategic alliances, while highlighting breakthrough projects arising in Indigenous communities and movements. We produce live events, media, curriculum, the Indigenous Rights of Nature (IRoN) initiative, and the Native Youth Leadership Program.

More and more, people are recognizing that "Indigenous issues" are issues we all share, and that Indigenous pathways to community, spiritual, and ecological restoration have the power to help solve our biggest global crises.

INDIGENOUS FORUM

In 2025, the 18th annual Indigenous Forum saw 26 Native presenters participating in six standing-room-only sessions, in addition to five main-stage Indigenous keynotes to the entire audience. About 300 Indigenous attendees from 164 Tribal nations joined the conference, including a significant increase in Native youth. The numbers speak for themselves: Indigenous attendees have tripled since 2022 *and* represent nearly 200% growth in Native attendance since the conference moved from San Rafael to Berkeley. And all conference goers, regardless of background, leave feeling inspired and equipped with knowledge to support Indigenous-led solutions. To read more on the Indigenous Forum, see p. 9.

Haudenosaunee Chief Oren Lyons (Joagquisho); Joy Harjo (Member of the Muscogee Nation) and Cara Romero (Chemehuevi) (Photos: Boris Zharkov)





From left to right: Haley Rapada (Lummi), Wykeklyaa CurleyBear (Quinalt), and Santana Rabang (Lummi) (Photo: Roy Nicol)

INDIGENOUS MEDIA AND CURRICULUM

We leverage conference content to produce media that are a leading source of accurate, contemporary and evergreen information on Indigenous environmental practices, ethics, social justice struggles, and the rights of nature *and* people. Over 36 years, Bioneers has built a priceless archive of Indigenous content—Native voices speaking for, among, and about their own communities. This unique multimedia ark includes videos, podcasts, radio shows, and articles, all distributed with the free, prior and informed consent of contributors.

At the 2025 conference, we partnered with Children of the Setting Sun Productions to set up a Young and Indigenous Podcast Studio. We produced 16 interviews with Indigenous leaders and movement makers, collaboratively released throughout 2025-26. We also released an Indigeneity Newsletter, along with Indigenous content year-round in our other newsletters.

To bring this information into classrooms, we produce Indigeneity curriculum. These original materials reach thousands of people each year, replacing erasure and stereotypes with accurate portrayals of Indigenous Peoples, histories, cultures, and sciences. Aligned to Common Core standards, our curriculum “bundles” include teacher instructions, activities, assessments, and extensions.

To meet the requests of lifelong learners, we also offer courses through Bioneers Learning (see p. 23). Classes offered include “Being a Good Relative: Allyship with Indigenous Peoples” and “Indigenizing the Law: Tribal Sovereignty & the Rights of Nature.” We are currently developing a Youth Leadership Course to support youth bringing solutions to life through community action and advocacy and an Allyship Workbook on Bioneers Learning to accompany our 2026 allyship course.

NATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

We know that youth are the most powerful advocates for change. Our Native Youth Leadership Program (NYLP) supports young people year-round via virtual and in-person opportunities to develop leadership skills, build networks, and participate meaningfully in the Bioneers Conference. NYLP includes two initiatives: Intercultural Conversations (see p. 21) and the Native Youth Ambassadors Program (see p. 18).

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS OF NATURE INITIATIVE (IRoN)

What might happen if Tribal Nations across the U.S enacted laws and constitutions that codify their traditional knowledge, honor the rights of nature, and affirm their right to protect and advocate for their ancestral homelands? It could be a game-changer, reversing the legal paradigm from nature as property to nature as rights-bearing.

Rights of Nature governance is now a global movement spreading across Indian Country to protect our lands and natural resources for generations to come by recognizing nature with legal standing and rights. The philosophy is rooted in Indigenous knowledge that nature has a right to exist, thrive and evolve, and that, as human beings, we have a responsibility to act as guardians and “good relatives.”

Since 2017, Bioneers’ Indigeneity team has partnered with U.S. Tribes to develop and implement Rights of Nature laws. Following our 2023 Intertribal IRoN Gathering—attended by 225 Native participants from 79 Tribes across the country—we’ve shared diverse educational media with Tribes interested in exploring Rights of Nature. In 2025, we made ten presentations and have distributed 1,500+ Rights of Nature guides since the initiative’s inception. We presented on Indigenous Sovereignty at major gatherings, including events at Loyola University New Orleans, the Economic Futures Summit, the Blue Dot Institute, Mashpee Wampanoag Rights of Nature Symposium, and Recycle Hawai‘i’s Interisland Youth Convergence.

IRoN is now seeing unprecedented momentum following years of patient community organizing, legal research, and the creation of professional educational resources.

KEY 2025 INITIATIVES

- Expansion of the Native Youth Ambassador Program, including two youth-led, place-based Rights of Nature Summits
- Widespread use of our toolkit: [A Guide to Rights of Nature in Indian Country](#), deployed in campaigns nationwide, including recent actions around the Colorado River and in the Great Smoky Mountains
- Continued partnership with the Center for Democratic and Environmental Rights to advance a bioregional ecosystem-based mapping app to scale the movement
- Ongoing collaborations with the Earth Law Center, Children of the Setting Sun Productions, Movement Rights, Global Alliance on the Rights of Nature Youth program and others

Below and on opposite page: Hawai‘i Zero Waste Youth Convergence Beach Clean-Up (Photos: ‘Ōpio Film School/Easten Tanimoto)



THE NATIVE YOUTH AMBASSADORS PROGRAM (NYAP)

Our youth are activated to engage in paradigm-shifting legal movements because they will inherit the catastrophic failures of our current system. As a result, we've refocused our core IRoN strategy to center, engage and support Indigenous Youth on the frontlines. Each Ambassador's cohort receives grants, travel support, and educational and organizing resources to advance Rights of Nature initiatives in their own communities.

In 2025, we:

- Brought nearly 70 Indigenous youth and elders from 11 Tribes and 7 organizations from diverse bioregions across Turtle Island to the Bioneers Conference
- Awarded five \$10,000 community organizing grants
- Launched our second NYAP cohort, representing 10 Tribal Nations
- Supported eight Rights of Nature initiatives—from Indigenous Land Conservation, Composting and Cardboard Recycling Initiatives, to Constitutional Adoption for RoN
- Supported an Eastern Band of Cherokee NYAP youth cohort who led a community-led drafting of the “Rights of the Longperson Resolution,” which will be the second youth-drafted-and-led RoN law passed in Indian Country
- Collaborated with Mashpee Wampanoag and Recycle Hawai'i NYAP cohorts to host regional Rights of Nature gatherings and seed a RoN movement in their communities

2025 NATIVE YOUTH AMBASSADOR GROUPS

- Eastern Band of Cherokee, in partnership with Junior North American Indian Women's Association, NC
- Ealae, Kohala, HI
- Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, Cape Cod, MA
- Ho-Chunk Young Leaders Protecting Mother Earth Group, WI & NB
- Hui Ho'auhuli, Hilo, HI
- Kanaka Maoli Youth from Oahu & Big Island, HI, in collaboration with Recycle Hawai'i & Hanai Kai'ulu
- Lummi Nation, in partnership with Children of the Setting Sun Productions, WA
- Mashpee Wampanoag, in partnership with Mashpee Native Environmental Ambassadors, Cape Cod, MA
- Native Health in Native Hands, CA
- Cahuilla, Pueblo, Fort Yuma Quechan, and Chemehuevi, in partnership with Native American Land Conservancy, Southern California
- Ponca Nation with Movement Rights, OK
- Yésah Earth Keepers—Youth Group with 7 Directions of Service, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Yésah, NC

INDIGENIZE THE LAW

Mashpee Wampanoag Youth and the Rise of a Rights of Nature Movement

In 2023, Bioneers invited nine Mashpee Wampanoag youth to a Rights of Nature (RoN) “Herring Camp” in Sitka, Alaska, where a Tribally led effort to protect Pacific herring has long been underway. Bioneers also offered Mashpee youth an honorarium to host community events — a pilot of our Native Youth Ambassadors Program. In response, the youth formed the Native Environmental Ambassadors (NEA). Their mission: to advocate for their ancestral lands and waters and protect Atlantic herring, a critically endangered keystone species along the Eastern Seaboard.

During their time on the land and water in Sitka, youth participated in workshops where they drafted a groundbreaking emergency declaration affirming the Rights of the Herring to exist, persist, and thrive, as well as the Tribe’s inherent right to protect its ecosystems. One month later, they brought the resolution to their Tribal Council, where it passed unanimously.



Mashpee Wampanoag tribal members completing Nemasket River Paddle (Photo: Talia Landry)

Since then, this youth-led initiative has organized river cleanups, paddles, and educational days at their Tribal headquarters. They have spoken across the United States, including at Bioneers Conferences, and have emerged as some of the most inspiring youth organizers advancing Rights of Nature and community-driven environmental protection.

In August 2025, with support from Bioneers, the NEA coordinated an Intertribal Rights of Nature Symposium in Mashpee, Massachusetts. It was a landmark gathering that drew elders, youth, and RoN leaders. Prominent Indigenous environmental advocates—including Frank Bibeau, Sammy Gensaw, and Casey Camp-Horinek—presented on food sovereignty, land stewardship, ecological restoration, and other critical issues.



Crystal Cavalier, Casey Camp-Horinek, Isabella Zizi, and Serena Horinek (Photo: Ciara Oakley-Robbins)

A central aim was to inspire other youth to “Indigenize the Law.” Since the 2023 pilot, 13 youth groups representing 21 Tribes have formed a growing coalition to defend ecosystems coast-to-coast, guided by the Bioneers Indigenous Rights of Nature team. As NEA member Ciara Oakley-Robbins shared:

“I hope they take home the idea that we’re making a change, that we can do this... that we can impact future generations, not let our water get sick, not let our marine, plant, and bird relatives become extinct.”

This movement represents a long-term, youth-led strategy to carry Rights of Nature deeper into the heart of Indian Country. Legal paradigms don’t shift overnight, and the capitalist framework that defines nature as property won’t loosen its grip without sustained, collective effort. The Native Youth Ambassador Program exists to provide Indigenous youth with resources, transformative experiences, and a powerful network of allies — because with visionary support and catalytic funding, youth can rewrite both the future and the law itself.

YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAM

Our Young Leaders Program educates, inspires, and connects youth while offering them the tools and capacity to step into leadership. It catalyzes personal agency within collective action to build a more just and regenerative world. Along with annual conference participation, year-round activities and leadership pathways are offered through our Native Youth Leadership Program. Youth overwhelmingly say the experience is “life changing.”

“Combating climate change is a daunting task, and progress can feel slow when there is so much change that needs to happen. I have a secret weapon that keeps me inspired. This place [the Bioneers Conference] is where I first discovered that I could become an environmental leader and spokesperson for my generation. It is my annual hope-replenishment pitstop.”

YOUTH SCHOLAR EMILY KUHN

AT THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE

In 2025, we offered 20 interactive sessions rooted in learning, creativity, and mutual respect within our youth-led and youth-centered space. Workshops included: restorative justice; nonviolent resistance; BIPOC and LGBTQ+ affinity circles; intergenerational and peer-to-peer “Community of Mentors” sessions; beat lab, printmaking, collaborative artmaking, and an Open Mic. We’re deeply grateful to our esteemed partners, including Weaving Earth and Jada Imani, who collaborated skillfully on design and production.

Bioneers elevates youth voices — giving them main stage exposure with an audience of up to 2,000 via keynotes and performances. Our youth keynotes illuminate what’s possible when young people lead with knowledge, courage and imagination. They inspire their peers to step forward and remind our wider community that the future is already being shaped by bold new visions.

Photos: Nikki Ritcher

2025 YOUTH KEYNOTES

ASA MILLER

H.S. student and marine conservationist initiating coral reef restoration in Cuba

MAHJABIN KHANZADA

fled the Taliban to begin a new life in the U.S. and advocate for Afghan women’s rights

SHREYA CHAUDHURI

UC Berkeley senior, Climate Action Fellow, “decolonizing environmental education” campus leader



YOUNG LEADERS BY THE NUMBERS

Youth represent the single most diverse constituency within our Bioneers community. We prioritize the participation of young people from low-income backgrounds, communities of color, and Indigenous heritage. Every year, we provide full and partial scholarships to ensure that cost never excludes vital young voices and young emergent leaders.

465	73%	358	36
YOUTH ATTENDEES	YOUTH OF COLOR (OF THESE, 33% INDIGENOUS)	YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS (UP 40% FROM 2024)	ORGANIZATIONS AND SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

NATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Native Youth Leadership Program (NYLP) creates opportunities for Native Youth to participate in, network at, and be empowered by the annual conference. We also provide year-round curated events, such as gathering for Indigenous Peoples’ Day on Alcatraz Island. NYLP coordinates two initiatives:

INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

Facilitates cross-cultural exchange between Native and multicultural youth, focusing on Indigenous-centered discussions and original curricula developed by culture-bearers. In 2025, we partnered with seven groups serving a total of 42 youth across the nation—Georgia, Louisiana, Hawaii, Alaska, and California – supporting a total of 400 youth over ten cohorts.

NATIVE YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Provides leadership opportunities for Indigenous youth to bring the Rights of Nature movement to their communities (see p.18).

Both programs provide a thoughtfully curated youth conference track designed to nurture experiential learning, friendship, and networks to build future leadership.

This Page: *East Bay Solidarity Tour* participants led by Ethnic Ties (Photo: Arnaldo James)
Opposite Page (Photos by ‘Ōpio Film School/Easten Tanimoto except where noted; clockwise from top left): Recycle Hawai‘i attendees; Recycle Hawai‘i Youth Convergence participants; Youth coordinator, Kayla Douglass and Youth open mic host, Jada Imani (Photo: Jan Mangan); Relief printmaking workshop participant (Photo: Jan Mangan); Ashley Gaignard, Executive Director of Rural Roots LA; Community Conversation participants



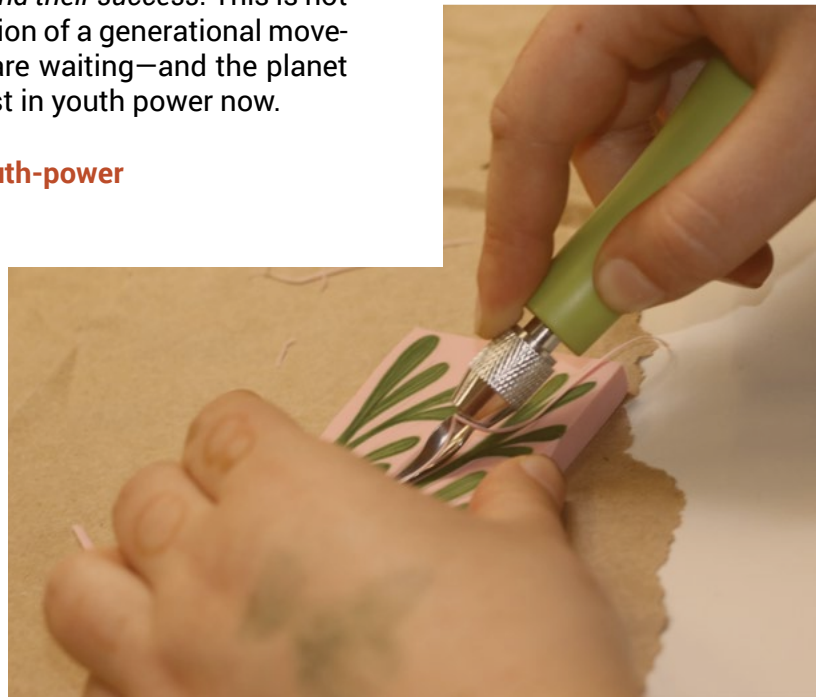


SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION OF YOUNG LEADERS

As we celebrate 25 years of the Young Leaders Program, we honor the vision of the youth we serve in the long struggle for ecological wellbeing, justice, and peace. While the challenges and traumas they face can feel overwhelming, our youth alumni are remarkable and resilient. They're organizing river cleanups, starting food justice programs, and advocating for environmental policies that address ecosystem protection and social equity. They're building the future we want to live in. And they come back year after year because this community inspires and cultivates them to grow into their vision and power.

From urban Oakland to tribal territories, our young leaders understand they can organize, advocate, and build movements that honor both environmental *and* community health. What they need is sustained investment in their leadership development. *It is our responsibility and our joy to fund their success.* This is not a one-off — it's the foundation of a generational movement. Join us: The youth are waiting—and the planet can't wait any longer. Invest in youth power now.

bioneers.org/invest-in-youth-power



BIONEERS LEARNING

EDUCATION FOR ACTION WITH A COMMUNITY OF LEADERSHIP

"Bioneers Learning offers a living curriculum of visionary ideas and grounded practices, which illuminate both the human-caused environmental disruptions that threaten health and the thoughtful, creative, community-based solutions that are emerging. These conversations invite our student communities to reimagine leadership and professional practice as relational, regenerative, and grounded in care for the living world."

HEIDI HONEGGER ROGERS

Associate Professor, University of New Mexico College of Nursing

Bioneers Learning is a potent way to engage with Bioneers year-round on issues you care most about. Together with our media and annual conference, it completes a circular organizational ecology of providing knowledge, tools, and networks to meet others who share your vision for change. Each year more Bioneers Learners attend our annual conference, bridging the gap between virtual and in-person gathering to deepen connection to the community and the work.

Bioneers Learning courses are designed for lifelong engaged citizens, including those new to a topic or seeking deeper professional development. You'll find pathways to equip you with hands-on practical solutions along with transformative inner work essential to personal leadership and for navigating these traumatic times in healthy ways.

Bioneers Learning has now delivered five seasons of "education for action" to a rapidly growing community. Faculty and learners consistently report the platform expands their ability to learn, connect, and act effectively.

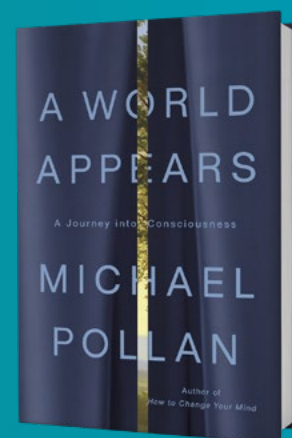
IN 2025:

- 2,000 learners served
- 16 live online events, including [live and self-paced courses and seminars](#), such as: Rights of Nature Governance, Biomimicry, Regenerative Agriculture, and Sacred Activism
- 2 Book Clubs: *We Will Be Jaguars*, by Nemonte Nenquimo, and Robert Macfarlane's NYT Bestseller *Is a River Alive?*

SNEAK PREVIEW FOR 2026

Our **2026 Book Club** — which brings our community together around impactful works aligned with key Bioneers' topics and values — will feature long-time Bioneer Michael Pollan and his ambitious new work on the grand mystery of consciousness, including the other-than-human world: *A World Appears: A Journey into Consciousness*.

And through a salient course on Media and Information Literacy, we'll help learners recognize and address dis- and mis-information, sharpen analytical tools, and sort out truth from fiction.



RESTORATIVE FOOD SYSTEMS PROGRAM

The Restorative Food Systems Program (RFS) works to transform the dominant, exploitative, industrial food system to one that is ecologically based, climate-friendly, humane, and equitable. We do this by: spreading food literacy from seed to table; advancing regenerative, local and sovereign food systems; and spotlighting diverse visionaries, breakthrough practices, and viable alternative models seldom reported in the mainstream media.

COURSES AND MEDIA

Regenerative Agriculture is finally becoming widely recognized as a key pillar of climate drawdown. This year we offered a free preview of our six-part, self-paced Bioneers Learning course, [Regenerative Agriculture: Nourishing the Soil, Healing the Planet](#).

Our monthly newsletter [Food Web: Sharing stories, exploring issues and celebrating the people of the food system](#) keeps people up to date on critical and often under-reported food systems issues, including: agroecology, greenwashing, farmer and farmworker equity, and the Indigenous origins of regeneration.

IMPACT STORY

CHOCOLATE JUSTICE

In 2025, Laura Sweitzer from TCHO Chocolate and Gillian Goddard of Chocolate Rebellion met for the first time during their Bioneers workshop: *Chocolate: Health, Happiness and a New Way to Do Business*. It was a match made in chocolate heaven that linked a group supporting small cacao farmers with research and value-added tips to an international network of chocolate micro-enterprises. A global collaboration was born to offset one of the most exploitative, environmentally illiterate industries on the planet. Sweitzer sent equipment to the Dominican Republic so that Goddard could train a group in neighboring Haiti. An exploratory collaboration for shipping cargo internationally is underway as they seek to create a fair-trade business model and supply chain to support thousands of small producers who are at the base of the industry.

AT THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE

In 2025, we programmed leading-edge RFS speakers and special events:

- An Urban Foodscape Tour: Innovators Nourishing the East Bay
- Two films, played to a full house: *Common Ground* and *Food Justice in LA*
- Tree-Range Farms: Stewarding a Regenerative Future
- Chocolate Rebellion: Creating a Global Value Chain Based on Economic Justice
- The Delicious Allure of Chocolate: a sold-out chocolate tasting event



EVERYWOMAN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Everywoman's Leadership program inspires, strengthens and connects the leadership of women across the many differences which have often divided us, which is essential to facilitating the systemic transformation needed to shift our cultures, societies, and organizations.

Founded and led by Bioneers Co-Founder Nina Simons, the program seeks to catalyze a balanced integration of archetypally feminine and masculine qualities in our institutions, economy, and leadership. We invite collaboration with men and non-binary allies, and work at the nexus of gender equity, racial justice, ecological and cultural diversity, and consciousness.

AT THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE

In 2025, we curated five afternoon sessions from *Thriving Together: How Women-Led, Community-Based Solutions Will Transform Our Planet* to *Queering Kinship: Widening the Lens of Liberation and Belonging*. We also produced 16 interactive sessions, including *Practicing Joy and Grief in Challenging Times* and *Modern Matriarchy: Remembering Our Kinship with the Earth*, which supported inner development, blended leadership, skill-building, and hands-on engagement.



Queering Kinship: Kristin Rothballer, Sarah Crowell, Sonali Sangeeta Balajee, and Willow Defebaugh (Photo: JR Sheetz)

COURSES AND MEDIA

Everywoman's Leadership also draws on Nina's 20+ years of work with women leaders and her award-winning book *Nature, Culture and the Sacred*. Courses such as *Sacred Activism*, co-facilitated with Deborah Eden Tull, help participants move beyond ego toward relationally based, mindful leadership. Our *Leading from the Feminine* newsletter, co-authored by Anneke Campbell, features inspiring stories and media of diverse women transforming leadership by centering care, relational intelligence, and shared power.

Artwork: *The Rains Deepen* by Andrea Durfee

EVERYWOMAN'S LEADERSHIP REGRANTING FUND

"For me and my community of elders, the Everywoman's Leadership Regranting Fund has been a lifeline. So many times, the funds came when the truck that delivers water needed repair. When wood for heat was needed, an electric bill had to be paid, or gas to get to a doctor's appointment...and sometimes, just ice cream for the kids."

SUNNY DOOLEY

Diné Blessing Way Storyteller/Community Caregiver

In partnership with the Indigeneity Program, our Regranting Fund distributed more than \$45,000 to 65 organizations, and ten individuals and community caregivers through small grants and fellowships in 2025. Created during the pandemic, the fund has remained literally lifesaving for many, and continues to flow to women-led, Black, Indigenous, and other underserved communities. (Note: The Fund is not available by application, although we gratefully welcome contributions large and small.)

BIONEERS

A SOCIAL CORAL REEF

By supporting Bioneers, you're supporting an entire community of leadership

Over the decades, Bioneers has grown into a social coral reef — a network of networks and a nexus of movements. We've long been a confluence of civil society groups; professionals and visionary start-ups; nature-inspired scientists and artists; Indigenous leaders; public servants; activists across diverse movements; food system revolutionaries; public health and healing arts innovators; educators and students; women leaders; youth and elders; social entrepreneurs, green business pathfinders, and philanthropists; and engaged citizens of all ages.

Our annual in-person conference yields countless benefits:

- Invaluable exposure for critical little-known work by the “greatest people you’ve never heard of”
- Inspired introductions which lead to game-changing new projects and collaborations, funding, and media exposure
- Powerful connections and cross-pollination across disciplines, movements and ideas

Your support allows us to:

- Amplify the voices of under-represented breakthrough projects and voices
- Elevate Indigenous youth, wisdom keepers, and communities through our Native-led Indigenous Forum and corresponding media
- Create a rare intercultural setting of respect and fertility
- Showcase systemic, solve-the-whole-problem solutions centered on healing and justice



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Entering our 37th year, Bioneers remains a singular community space where “it’s all connected.” It has taken decades to get here, working at the speed of trust. As in nature, there are great soloists, but at the end of the day it’s about the symphony.

We give thanks for this great gift of the Bioneers community of leadership. ***And we invite you to help us keep making a difference that really makes a difference.***

This page includes elements from *Carrier* and *Bloom* by Lisa Ericson



BIONEERS STAFF

We offer unspeakable gratitude to our devoted, high-performance staff. About half our staff have been with us from 10 to 37 years, and three quarters have been with us for over five years.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Kenny Ausubel, CEO (Chief Existential Officer) and Co-Founder

Nina Simons, CRO (Chief Relationship Officer) and Co-Founder

Cara Romero, Executive Director and Indigeneity Program Co-Director

Teo Grossman, President

Jeffrey Vasterling, Vice President of Finance

Nikki Spangenburg, Chief Administrative Officer

STAFF

Theo Badashi, Media Strategist and Producer

Kelli Barr, Conference Project Manager

Nazshonnii Brown-Almaweri, Indigeneity Program Manager

Alexis Bunten, Indigeneity Program Co-Director

Genie Cartier, Arts Hub and Office Manager

Britt Gondolfi, Indigeneity Special Programs Coordinator

JP Harpignies, Senior Producer

Emily Harris, Media Producer

patience kamau, Bioneers Learning Program Director

Asha Kohli, Executive Assistant to Co-Founder & CRO

Arty Mangan, Youth Leadership & Restorative Food Systems Program Director

Tyson Russell, IT and Media Administrator

Patricia Spangenburg, Executive Assistant

Stephanie Welch, Senior Radio and Media Producer

Sharon Zetter, Development Manager



Jeffrey at Bioneers 2017 (Photo: Republic of Light)

IN MEMORIAM: JEFFREY VASTERLING

In November 2025, our beloved colleague and friend Jeffrey Vasterling unexpectedly passed away of natural causes. There are no words to describe our grief, and our hearts go out to his family and his huge network of Bioneers friends. Since 1999, Jeffrey worked side by side with us on finance, administration and countless other relational pathways, ultimately serving formally as VP of Finance, but so much more. His life was a model of devotion, both to Bioneers and to the endless circles of people to whom he unfailingly offered an inexhaustible stream of kindnesses. Jeffrey's heartfelt mantra was "keep the positive energy flowing." In that spirit, we're dedicating the 2026 Bioneers Conference to Jeffrey, whose loving spirit and bottomless generosity touched every fiber of our work and our beings.

THE BIONEERS BOARD

Inspired by the Governance as Leadership model, over the past few years we set out to create a high-value Board by constellating a circle of visionaries with both feet on the ground who, above all, think well together. As a vision-driven organization, we start with sense-making.

Today's world is bedeviled by "wicked problems" for which there are no easy fixes or answers, and whose complexity is far bigger than any one individual can possibly address. Our Board members bring a rich diversity of perspectives, vantage points, skill sets, ways of knowing and life experiences. Their bodies of work are varied, yet closely aligned with the core of Bioneers' work. They expand our growing edges and spheres of connection, knowledge, influence and impact. We're profoundly grateful to our Board members for their time, attention, wise counsel and passionate engagement.

We're excited to announce that Baratunde Thurston — writer, speaker, and Emmy-nominated host — will join the Bioneers Board in 2026.

OFFICERS



CHAIR

Eriel Tchekwie Deranger, Founder and President, The Woven Project; Co-Founder, Indigenous Climate Action; Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation



TREASURER

Anita Sanchez, Entrepreneur and Author; Founder, Sanchez Tennis & Associates LLC; Nahua (Aztec), Toltec and Mexican American



VICE-CHAIR

Ginny McGinn, Senior Strategist, Center for Whole Communities; Principal, Practice for Change



SECRETARY

Nina Simons, Chief Relationship Officer and Co-Founder, Bioneers

MEMBERS



Kenny Ausubel, CEO and Co-Founder, Bioneers



Will Peterffy, Founder and CEO, One Small Planet



Sonali Sangeeta Balajee, Founder and Co-Lead, Spiritual Social Medicinal Apothecary (SSoMA)



Colette Pichon Battle, Esq., Partner, Vision and Initiatives, Taproot Earth



Jade Begay, Co-Founder, AGENCY, Tesuque Pueblo, Diné and Southern Ute lineage



Samantha Skenandore, Founding Partner, Skenandore Wilson, LLP, Ho-Chunk/Oneida



Thomas Linzey, Senior Legal Counsel, Center for Democratic and Environmental Rights



Justin Winters, Founder and Executive Director, One Earth

It's all

{
alive
intelligent
connected
relatives

