

NCAI Policy Research Center

Biography Terry L. Cross

Terry L. Cross, MSW, ACSW, LCWS, is an enrolled member of the Seneca Nation. He is a member of the Bear Clan and carries the Seneca name Hah ne gah no. He attended Grove City College in Pennsylvania, where he graduated cum laude majoring in Political Science and Sociology. Terry went on to receive a Masters Degree in Social Work from Portland State University in Oregon and returned to work on the reservation for a short time. He is the developer, founder and executive director of National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA). His highest honor has been to be initiated into the Kenai Chiefton Society, by the Blood Tribe of Canada. He was also honored by Vice President Al Gore with an award for improving government, one of the few non-federal employees to receive such an award. In 1999 he was selected as Portland State University, Alumni of the year. He is the author of the *Heritage and Helping* and *Positive Indian Parenting* curricula, as well as *Cross-Cultural Skills in Indian Child Welfare*. He also co-authored "Toward a Culturally Competent System of Care" published by Georgetown University, Child Development Center and has contributed numerous articles, chapters and reports to the Indian social work literature.

His life and work in both Indian and non-Indian settings and his academic background give him unique skills and perspectives on management and leadership. He has 33 years of experience in child welfare, including 10 years working directly with children and families. He served on the faculty of Portland State University School of Social Work for 15 years. He has served on the board of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse and has been an advisor to the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. He has directed the NICWA since its founding in 1983 and has traveled to make presentations internationally in relation to child welfare work. Terry is experienced in evaluation design and policy related research, non-profit management, fundraising, community and organizational development as well as governmental affairs and advocacy. He has made several visits to the White House to advocate for Indian children and regularly walks the halls of Congress speaking out for Indian families and

tribal services. He has organized culturally specific technical assistance programs for over 15 years and developed culturally based models for social services, research and organizational development.