

## Cowboy Lifestyle Network

### Ak-Chin Indian Community member Sandra Shade earns Doctoral Degree Carolyn Sostrom by Carolyn Sostrom July 29, 2019

Ak-Chin Indian Community member Sandra Shade earns Doctoral Degree



This past spring, Ak-Chin Indian Community member Sandra Shade received her doctoral degree – and she’s the first person to do so in the Community. Congratulations to Dr. Slade!

Dr. Shade started her education at Casa Grande Union High School and attended Mesa Community College, earning an associate degree in Secretarial Studies. She earned both a bachelor’s degree in Political Science and a master’s degree in Public Administration from Arizona State University (ASU). Shade later earned a second master’s degree, this time in higher education, and completed the ASU Certified Public Manager’s program in June. These accolades and accomplishments led up to Dr. Shade, earning her Doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Grand Canyon University this spring.

Ak-Chin Indian Community member Sandra Shade earns Doctoral Degree

Dr. Sandra Shade with Ak-Chin Chairman Robert Miguel, Council members Delia Carlyle and Lisa Garcia, and Education adviser Pamela Velasquez during the blanket presentation. Photo courtesy of the Ak-Chin O’odham Runner Newspaper

Earlier in her career, Dr. Shade worked for the Gila River Indian Community as a Comprehensive Planner, according to an article in the Ak-Chin O'odham Runner newspaper. She eventually became the tribe's first Department of Transportation director. She held this position for eight years before working for the Ak-Chin Indian Community. Dr. Shade currently serves as Director of Planning and Development for the Ak-Chin Indian Community. She also holds a position on the Arizona Indian Gaming Association. This organization advocates, educates, partners, and promotes Tribal Gaming to benefit the Tribes of Arizona.

Dr. Shade served as the keynote speaker at The Ak-Chin Higher Education/GED Graduation banquet. According to the article in the Ak-Chin O'odham Runner, Shade always knew education would be valuable. She's the daughter and niece of teachers, and education was always a priority. During her address, Dr. Shade encouraged others to continue their education. "Education is powerful," she said during the event. "It helps you focus on life ... it helps you develop skills that you will use throughout your life." She then recognized her mother Lillian and Aunt Jeannie, who she says were her role models.

Ak-Chin Indian Community member Sandra Shade earns Doctoral Degree

As a traditional gift of recognition, Ak-Chin Indian Community Council members Delia Carlyle and Lisa Garcia, presented Dr. Shade with a beautiful Pendleton blanket. The Pendleton Blanket represents American tribes' beliefs and traditions since 1909 and it is an honor to receive one.

Congratulations to Dr. Sandra Shade for this honor — the first member of the Ak-Chin Indian Community to earn a doctoral degree!