



# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



VISION MAKER  
MEDIA

[visionmakermedia.org](http://visionmakermedia.org)

VISION MAKER MEDIA

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VISION MAKER MEDIA

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## INTRODUCTION

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A WORD FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SHIRLEY SNEVE

I am honored to present to you the 2018 Fiscal Year Annual Report from Vision Maker Media. We continue to fulfill our mission to empower and engage Native People to share stories. We envision a world changed and healed by understanding Native stories and the public conversations they generate.

We presented 12 titles (9.5 hours) to Public Broadcasting. Four of these featured Native leaders who made significant contributions to history, including Wilma Mankiller, Dr. Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa), Scott Momaday and his daughter, Jill; and Guy Dullknife and his son, George.

*Through the Repellent Fence* and *Skindigenous* explore contemporary and traditional arts. *Keep Talking* is a personal narrative about the importance of Native languages. *Lake of Betrayal* explores the history of water rights and a dam that continues to impact the Seneca Nation — 60 years later. *The Mayors of Shiprock* is a story about youth, their resilience and commitment to change in their Navajo community.

Vision Maker Media programs were broadcast more than 33,000 times last year, and seen by audiences in community screenings and film festivals all over the world.

The Biennial Vision Maker Film Festival brought 35 films and 42 filmmakers to Lincoln, Nebraska in April. Vision Maker Media also partnered with three film festivals in San Francisco, California, Omaha, Nebraska and Rapid City, South Dakota.

We started working on a Native Youth Media Project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Woods Charitable Fund, to develop curricula standards in conjunction with Migizi Communications from Minneapolis, Minnesota. We helped more than 40 Native filmmakers attend the Getting Real conference, sponsored by the Independent Documentary Association in Los Angeles, California in September.

Thank you,

Shirley K. Sneve  
Executive Director

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# OVERVIEW

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VISION MAKER MEDIA EMPOWERS AND ENGAGES NATIVE PEOPLE TO SHARE STORIES. WE ENVISION A WORLD CHANGED AND HEALED BY UNDERSTANDING NATIVE STORIES AND THE PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS THEY GENERATE.

## VALUES

1. Celebrating Native culture, heritage, wisdom, sacred stories, and the storyteller.
2. Educating current and future generations through candid stories that serve as a catalyst for change.
3. Encouraging creativity, quality and innovation.
4. Honoring traditional Native values--courage, respect, perseverance, generosity and integrity in our interactions.
5. Promoting diversity in cultures, peoples and programming.
6. Operating Vision Maker Media as a transparent, self-sustaining and strategic organization.
7. Inspiring the next generation of storytellers.

## GOALS

1. Increase awareness and impact of Vision Maker Media.
2. Strengthen and diversify Vision Maker Media program content.
3. Nurture and increase Vision Maker Media partnerships.
4. Enhance the Vision Maker Media supportive working environment.
5. Sustain and expand the Vision Maker Media funding base.



# OVERVIEW

VISION MAKER MEDIA AT A GLANCE



86

FILMS AVAILABLE  
ON DVD



34

FILMS IN  
PRODUCTION

36

FILMS IN  
BROADCAST

33,214

APPEARANCES  
ON PUBLIC TV



9

NEW FILMS SENT  
TO BROADCAST



69

FILMMAKERS  
TRAINED



369

FILMS PLAYED  
ON THE BIG  
SCREEN

51

FILMS AVAILABLE  
ONLINE



# OPERATIONS

## STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS



**Shirley Sneve**  
(Rosebud Sioux)  
Executive Director



**Rebekka Schlichting, MA**  
(Ioway Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska)  
Assistant Director



**Dawn Amory**  
Director of Marketing  
& Development



**Alyssa Ranard**  
Marketing &  
Communication Specialist



**Alana Stone**  
(Rosebud Sioux)  
Project Coordinator



**Mary Ann Koehler**  
Business & Projects  
Manager



**Stacy Price**  
Contract/Accounting  
Assistant



**Ann McKeighan**  
Department Assistant



## BOARD MEMBERS

**Mark Trahant**  
(Shoshone-Bannock)  
Chair (2014-2020)  
Editor, Indian Country Today

**Maya Solis-Austin**  
(Pascua Yaqui/Blackfeet)  
Vice Chair (2014-2020)  
Program Manager, Sundance Institute

**Roy Clem**  
(Eastern Band of Cherokee)  
Secretary (2015-2018)  
Executive Director, Alabama Public Television

**Randal P. Hansen**  
Treasurer (2011-2020)  
Assistant General Manager, NET

**Joni Buffalohead**  
(Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota)  
Member (2015-2018)  
Sr. Strategist for Tribal Health

**Robin Butterfield**  
(Winnebago/Chippewa)  
Member (2011-2020)

**Brian Gunn**  
(Colville)  
Member (2015-2018)  
Principal, Powers Plyes Sutter & Verville PC

**Franz Joachim**  
Member (2016-2019)  
General Manager & CEO, New Mexico PBS

**Mary Kathryn Nagle**  
(Cherokee Nation)  
Member (2013-2020)  
Partner, Pipestem Law

**Joely Proudfit**  
(Luiseño)  
Member (2017-2020)  
Director, California Indian Culture & Sovereignty Center

**Elizabeth Weatherford**  
Member (2017-2020)  
Indigenous Media Initiatives

VISION MAKER MEDIA

# OPERATIONS

FILMS IN BROADCAST



## RETURN TO RAINY MOUNTAIN

Distributor: New Mexico PBS  
Release Date: 10/26/2017  
Produced by: Jill Momaday

*Return to Rainy Mountain* is a feature length documentary film that tells the story of N. Scott Momaday. It is a personal account of his life and legacy told in his own voice, and in the voice of his daughter Jill. Momaday speaks of his Kiowa roots, family, literature, oral tradition, nature, identity, and the sacred and important things that have shaped his life.

This biographical film explores the life of poet and author N. Scott Momaday, raised by his Kiowa father and Cherokee mixed-blood mother on Indian reservations in New Mexico and Arizona, who was honored with a Guggenheim Fellowship, Academy of American Poets Prize, Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, National Medal of Arts and election into the Kiowa Gourd Dance Clan.



## LAKE OF BETRAYAL

Distributor: NETA  
Release Date: 10/28/2017  
Produced by: Paul D. Lamont, Scott Sackett

When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers attempts to take their land to build Kinzua Dam, the Seneca people stand up to the government and prevailing political forces of the 1950s and 60s to save their culture, their sovereignty, and their way of life to preserve their future. This film explores the history of Kinzua Dam on the Allegheny River in Pennsylvania and its impact on the Seneca Nation. Completed in 1965, it was originally proposed to help mitigate flooding in the City of Pittsburgh—200 miles downriver, but the 27-mile reservoir that formed behind it inundated vast tracts of the Seneca Indians' ancestral lands, forcing their removal in breach of the United States' oldest treaty still in effect.

*Lake of Betrayal* looks at the Seneca Nation's fight to protect its sovereignty against a backdrop of a federal Indian Termination policy, pork-barrel politics, and undisclosed plans for private hydro-power generation. The documentary takes a long view of the imposed changes on the Seneca's way of life that have led to major economic benefits and irreplaceable cultural losses.



## THE MAYORS OF SHIPROCK

Distributor: Local USA  
Release Date: 11/06/2017  
Produced by: Ramona Emerson

In the town of Shiprock, New Mexico, poverty and corruption have long been a struggle, and as the Navajo Nation looks for leadership, it is met with scandal. To make a change, a young group of men and women are taking back their community—led by 21-year-old Graham Beyale. This is the story of how one will make a difference and inspire a generation of leaders to make changes in their own communities.

# OPERATIONS

FILMS IN BROADCAST



## ON A KNIFE EDGE

Distributor: America ReFramed, ITVS, World  
Release Date: 11/07/2017  
Produced by: Eli Cane

A stunning coming-of-age journey set on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Set against a background of rising tension and protest, a Lakota teenager learns first-hand what it means to lead a new generation and enter adulthood in a world where the odds are stacked against him. Filmed over a five-year period, *On a Knife Edge* provides a privileged view into the interior world of George Dull Knife as he becomes politically active with the American Indian Movement, confronts the challenges of growing up on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and wrestles with accepting leadership of his storied family from his aging father.



## THROUGH THE REPELLENT FENCE

Distributor: America ReFramed  
Release Date: 04/24/2018  
Produced by: Sam Wainwright Douglas,  
Julianna Brannum

*Through the Repellent Fence* follows art collective Postcommodity as they construct Repellent Fence, a two-mile long outdoor artwork that straddled the U.S.-Mexico border. Postcommodity consists of three Native American artists who put land art in a tribal context. In 2015 the artists worked with communities on both sides to install a series of 28 huge inflatable spheres emblazoned with an insignia known as the "open eye" that has existed in Indigenous cultures from South America to Canada for thousands of years. The artwork crossed the border a mile in each direction and symbolized a suture stitching back together cultures that have inhabited the land long before borders were drawn.



## MANKILLER

Distributor: PBS Plus  
Release Date: 03/01/2018  
Produced by: Valerie Red-Horse, Gale Anne Hurd

*MANKILLER* explores the life of Wilma Mankiller, the first woman Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation who led her people in building one of the strongest Indian Tribes in America. More than a biography, the program delivers an empowering message.

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# OPERATIONS

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FILMS IN BROADCAST



## OHIYESA: THE SOUL OF AN INDIAN

Distributor: NETA  
Release Date: 06/02/2018  
Produced by: Syd Beane

This documentary follows Kate Beane, a young Dakota woman, as she examines the extraordinary life of her celebrated relative, Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa). Biography and journey come together as Kate traces Eastman's path—from traditional Dakota boyhood, through education at Dartmouth College, and in later roles as physician, author, lecturer, and Native American advocate.



## KEEP TALKING

Distributor: PBS Plus  
Release Date: 07/02/2018  
Produced by: Karen Lynn Weinberg

*Keep Talking* follows four Alaska Native women fighting to save Kodiak Alutiiq, a critically endangered language with only 41 fluent Elders remaining. At language immersion camp, young Sadie is inspired. Over the course of the film, Sadie evolves from painful shyness into a powerful young woman with a strong connection to her culture. "Sadie's journey demonstrates the powerful impact language revitalization can have on a young person's sense of self," says director Karen Weinberg. Alutiiq learner/teacher Marya Halvorsen explains: "There are things that don't translate... I imagine that everybody has part of themselves that would make more sense if you could say it in your language." Marya is one of the four Alutiiq language teachers featured in the film; her tribal affiliation is with the Sun'aq tribe of Kodiak. Armed with incredible determination and grit, these women become community leaders and activists forging new pathways towards sustainable education. Over five years they set their sights on a bright future that may be just over the horizon.



## SKINDIGENOUS

Distributor: APT  
Release Date: 09/06/2018  
Produced by: Jason Brennan

*Skindigenous* is a 13-part documentary series exploring the art of tattooing as practiced by Indigenous peoples around the world. The art of the tattoo is the lens through which we discover this people's unique perspective on the world. Each episode features a master tattoo artist who will reveal the secrets of their art. By following a master and one of his or her clients in the process of creating a new tattoo piece, *Skindigenous* brings us into the origins and purpose that are ascribed to this form of body art in their culture. Episodes document the process of making a tattoo from conception to completion, covering each step of the way from how pigments are made from natural materials to how the ink is injected into the skin using traditional methods. *Skindigenous* offers an opportunity to explore one indigenous people's unique cultural life as well as its spiritual beliefs, worldview, and connection with the environment.

VISION MAKER MEDIA

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# OPERATIONS

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ACTIVE FILMS

## NEW MEDIA

- Indigenous with Stacey Thunder
- Injunuity 2
- A Kayak to Carry Us
- Rematriation
- Native Music VR Trilogy

## R&D

- Ancestors in the Archives
- Drowned Land
- K'eh
- Violence Against Women Act
- Zuni Eagles

## PRODUCTION

- Words from a Bear: The Enigmatic Life of author N. Scott Momaday
- Chasing Voices
- Searching for Sequoyah
- The Seven Generation River
- Without a Whisper
- Daughter of a Lost Bird
- Blood Memory
- The Blackfeet Flood
- Home from School
- Rez Metal

## POST PRODUCTION

- ATTLA
- And Now We Rise
- DAWNLAND
- The People's Protectors
- Almost an Island
- Arming Sisters
- Moroni for President
- Warrior Women
- Growing Native

## INDEPENDENT CONTRACTS

- 4TH World Indigenous Media Lab

## BROADCAST

- MANKILLER
- Return to Rainy Mountain
- Lake of Betrayal
- The Mayors of Shiprock
- On a Knife Edge
- Through the Repellent Fence: A Land Art Film
- RUMBLE
- Keep Talking
- Ohiyesa: The Soul of an Indian
- Skindigenous

DEVELOPMENT

VISION MAKER FILM FESTIVAL



2018 Vision Maker Film Festival Poster

2018 Guest Speaker Buffy Sainte-Marie

481  
TICKETS SOLD

"We Are All Related" was the theme of the seventh biennial Vision Maker Film Festival. The theme is a conceptual translation from the Lakota language—Mitakuye Oyasin—a commonly used expression indicating the Lakota's relationships to each other and in the world.

Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree) and Harriett Skye, Ph.D. (Hunkpapa Lakota) recieved the Frank Blythe Award for Media Excellence. Ms. Sainte-Marie was present, and Jessica Skye Paul (Nez Perce/Lakota) accepted the award on her mother's behalf. Dr. Skye passed away on January 20, 2018.

The reception was followed by *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World*, which features a significant interview with Ms. Sainte-Marie. A Q&A with Executive Director Shirley Sneve and Ms. Sainte-Marie followed the screening.



LINE UP

- RUMBLE: The Indians who Rocked the World
- When They Awake
- Big Sky Native Filmmakers Doc Challenge Shorts
- In the Beginning was Water & Sky
- A Redemption Story
- On a Knife Edge
- The Violence of a Civilization Without Secrets
- INAATE/SE/
- Return to Rainy Mountain
- Ohiyesa: The Soul of an Indian
- Through the Repellent Fence
- Kayak to Klemtu
- Keep Talking
- Family Ingredients: Winconsin
- Growing Native: Oklahoma Dawnland
- Street Cred
- The Mayors of Shiprock
- Growing Native: Northwest
- New Muslim Cool
- Maria
- Out of State
- More Than a Word
- Mele Murals
- Skindigenous: Hawaii
- ANTI-ETHNOGRAPHY
- Dodging Bullets
- Waru
- Skindigenous: Alaska
- We Breathe Again
- Metal Road
- Moroni for President
- Sweet Country

VISION MAKER MEDIA  
DEVELOPMENT

PRODUCER TRAINING

NATIONAL MINORITY CONSORTIA  
PRODUCERS LAB

This year, Vision Maker Media expanded our annual producers training to include the National Minority Consortia (NMC). Twelve sessions were held with 16 presenters. Forty-two people attended the lab including the NMC, NMC master filmmakers and fellows, VMM producers and others.

GETTING REAL 2018

Vision Maker Media sent 27 producers and three team members to attend the International Documentary Associations's Getting Real '18 Conference in Los Angeles, California.

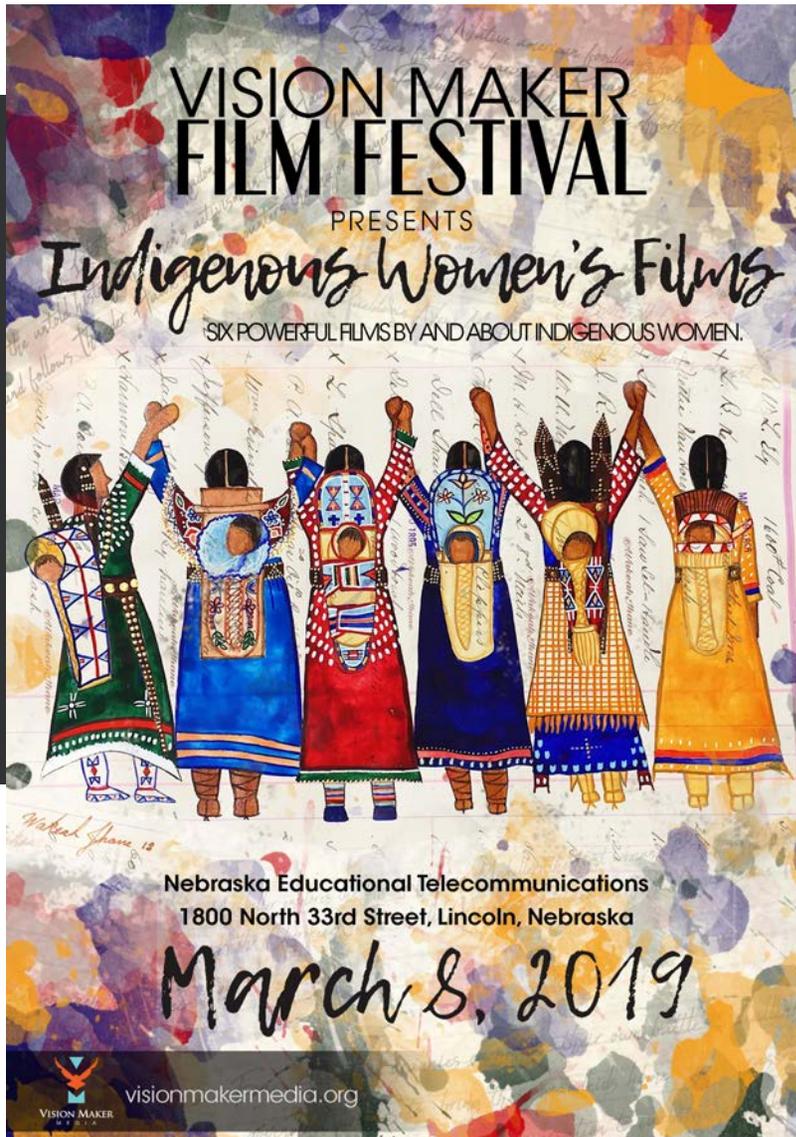


"We learned so much and our heads are stuffed to bursting with information and ideas and thoughts."  
-Arming Sisters



We appreciated the opportunity for peer interaction, new inspiration, meeting the VMM filmmakers and team and so much more!"  
-Mary Katzke, *And Now We Rise*





VISION MAKER FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS  
INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S FILMS

MARCH 8, 2019

As part of our Native Youth Media Project and Touring Film Festival, VMM is planning to host an Indigenous Women's Film Festival at NET on March 8, 2019. We have curated six films that have Indigenous women leads and were made by Native women filmmakers. The films are *RETURN: Reclaiming Native American Foodways for Health and Spirit*, *Daughter of a Lost Bird*, *After the Apology*, *MANKILLER*, *Ohero:kon Under the Husk*, and *Warrior Women*. We plan to have Brooke Pepion Swaney and Kendra Mylnechuk from *Daughter of a Lost Bird* in attendance, as well as, Elizabeth Castle and Marcella Gilbert in attendance for Q&A's.

FEATURED FILMS

*RETURN: Reclaiming Native American Foodways for Health and Spirit*

*Daughter of a Lost Bird*

*After the Apology*

*MANKILLER*

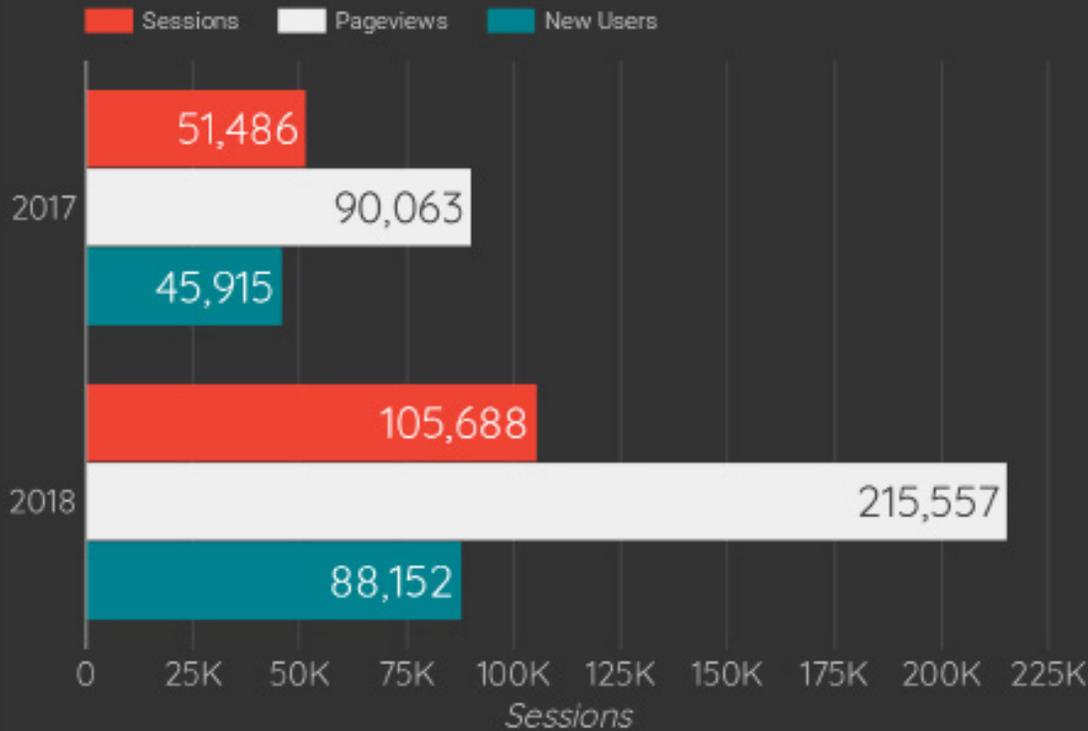
*Ohero:kon - Under the Husk*

*Warrior Women*

# DEVELOPMENT

2018 MEDIA EXPANSION

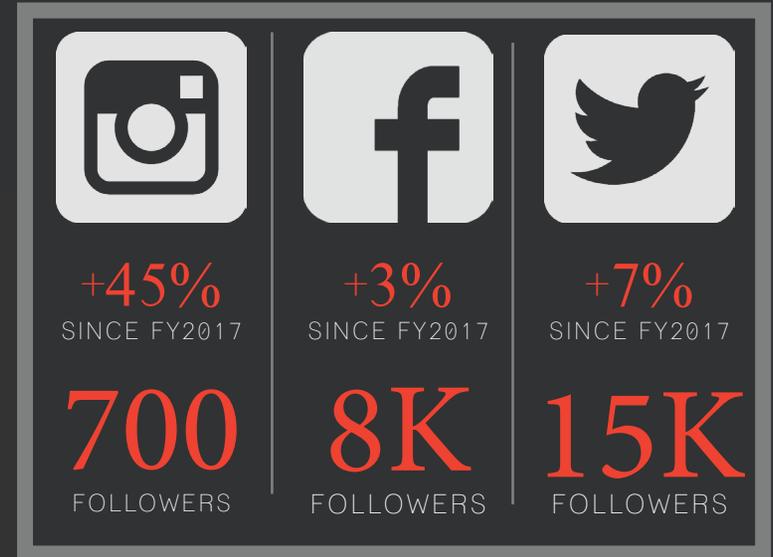
## WEBSITE TRAFFIC GROWTH



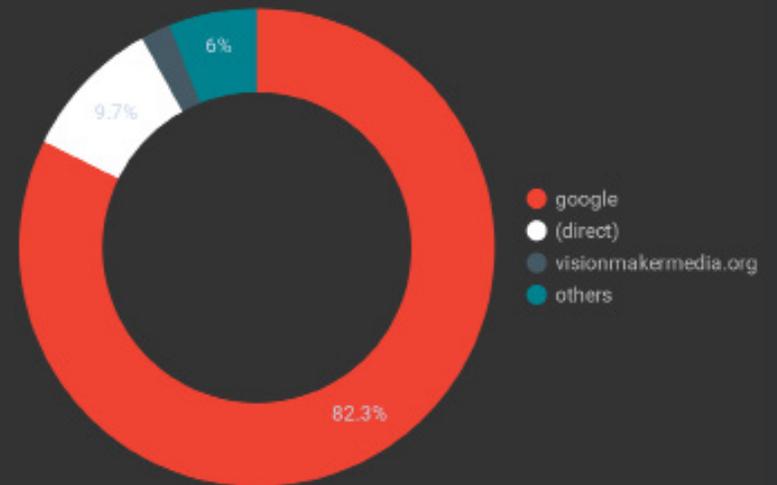
**7,611**

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE  
VISION MAKER MEDIA  
E-NEWSLETTER

## SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH



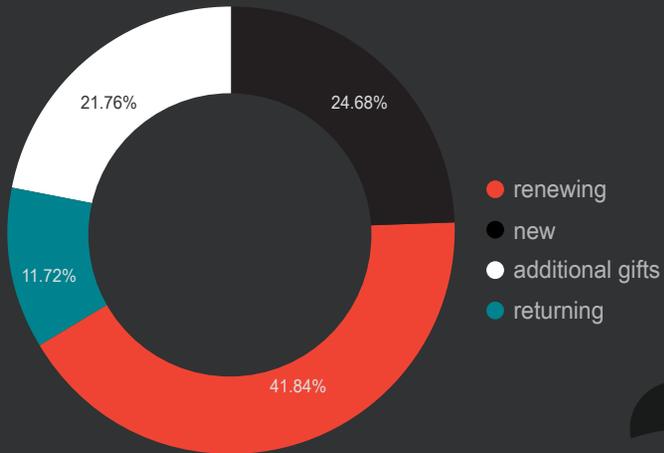
## WEBSITE TRAFFIC SOURCES



# DEVELOPMENT

FUNDRAISING & GRANTS

## DONOR DEMOGRAPHICS



## FUNDRAISING



## GRANTS RECEIVED



## UNDERWRITING RECEIVED



# DEVELOPMENT

## GRANTS & DONATIONS RECEIVED

Generous support for this fiscal year was provided by the following. If you would like to support more Native stories by Native people, please visit [visionmakermedia.org](http://visionmakermedia.org).

### GRANTS RECEIVED

- Acton Family Giving
- Cooper Foundation
- Humanities Nebraska
- Lincoln Arts Council
- Lincoln Community Foundation
- Woods Charitable Fund
- National Endowment for the Arts
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- Nebraska Arts Council
- NoVo Foundation
- South Dakota Humanities Council

### DONATIONS RECEIVED

- Nadema Agard
- AmazonSmile
- Dawn Amory
- Gwen Archer
- Catharine Axley
- Mary Barber
- Rebecca Barker
- Sandra Beasley
- Marty Becktell
- James Berthet
- Melissa Bisagni
- Kenneth Blume
- Frank Blythe
- Gerda Bolhuis
- Freddy Bosco
- David Braff
- Bernard Bredbenner
- Janet Brown
- Tamzin Brown
- Joni Buffalohead
- Brian & Margaret Bull
- Robin A. Butterfield
- Janet Carlson
- Elizabeth Cheng
- David Ciotti
- Roy Clem
- Tristan Clum
- Alana Cole
- Margaret Conlin
- Elinore Cumings
- Jo Anna Dale
- Anita Davis
- Phyllis Deal
- George Dech
- Jan Deeds
- David C. Dister
- Jill Doerfler
- Dennis Dohner
- Terry Dugas
- Jean L. Eden
- Judy Eggleston
- Rae Ann Engdahl
- Franklin Falcon
- G Steven Ferris
- Susan Field Waite
- Nancy Finken Ernst
- Bobbi Firebush
- Marguerite Fitch
- Kenneth Flanders
- Lawrence Forte
- Katsitsionni Fox
- Jeffre Frontz
- Jacqueline Gaess
- Judi gaiashkibos
- Patricia Gallimore
- Tina Garnanez
- Lydia Garvey
- Margaret Gerard
- Mark Giese
- Louis Goldich
- Erminio Gonzalez
- Glennon Graham
- Tia Graham
- Roberta Grossman
- Nancy J. Guelich
- Chereeze Hall
- Hampson-Medina Family Fund
- Thom Harney
- Susan Hartmann
- Richard Hartzen
- Meg Hayes
- Joanna Hearne
- Heather B. Henson
- Denise Hinds
- Elizabeth Horikawa
- Andrea Horner
- Jack Hoyer
- Ron Hull
- Robert Hungate
- Walter F. Hunter
- Marc Imlay
- Margaret Jacobs
- Jim James
- Franz Joachim
- Irene Kao
- Charles Kapela
- Simon Kilmurry
- Jake Kirkland Jr.
- Torsten Kjell
- Mary Koehler
- Ramona Kohrs
- Elizabeth Koopman
- Jamielle Kort
- Katie Koskenmaki
- Theodora Kramer
- Danny & Margaret Ladely
- Paul Lamont
- Norbert Larson
- Max Licher
- Aesha Lorenz Al-Saeed
- Jennifer Machiorlatti
- Duncan H. Maitland
- Hayley Marama Cavino
- Kate Mathias
- MATCH-E-BE-NASH-SHE-WISH Band of Pattawatomi Indians
- Angela Maves
- Vivian Mazzella
- Mark McCloud
- Ann McKeighan
- Joseph Meduna
- Malcom Miles
- Tillie M. Mizrahi
- Alice Nash
- Lynee Neel
- Barbara Nieveen
- Johnny Perna
- Jack M. Perry
- Wilma Jeanne Perry-Jones
- Martha Pessaro-Mikmaq
- Jan P. Peterson
- Mary Ann Peterson
- Penelope Phillips
- Frederick Pomper
- Stacy Price
- Charles Queffenne, Jr.
- Lucian Read
- Jane Renner Hood
- Adam Rhoads
- Laurie Richards
- Patricia A. Rickers
- Henry Rikkers
- Kari Ritter
- Ward Romer
- Channette Romero
- Bill & Carla Rowley
- Jeanne Rubin
- Jess Rustad
- Kathleen Rutledge
- Mary Santulli
- Rebekka Schlichting
- Lucy Schmeidler
- Hal F. Schulte III
- Julie Semp
- Kathryn D. Sette
- Jonathan Skurnik
- Bonnie Smith
- Shirley Sneve
- Vance & Virginia Sneve
- Mark Snyder
- Legia L. Spicer
- Ann Sprayegen
- Martha Stampfer
- Georgia Stevens
- Kay Stone
- Steven Swanson
- Brooke Sween-McGloin
- Rashmi Tambe
- Blake Thurman
- Ruth Tonachel
- Adam Trahant
- Celeste Tremel
- Marie Tymrak
- Kasandra VerBruggen
- Joyce Vincent
- Lois Voseen
- Raymond L. Wager
- Larry Wainblat
- Al & Rhetta Walter
- Elizabeth Weatherford
- Natalie Welch
- Emily White Hat
- Martin Wieland
- Jerry & Norma Wilson
- Sonja Wingard
- Lisa Wolf Johnson
- LauraLee Woodruff
- Patrick Yack
- Dennis Yonemura
- Zucchini Toast



VISION MAKER  
M E D I A

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND BREAKDOWN

The following is a summary of financial information for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2018 based on the audited financial statements.

### REVENUE & SUPPORT

CPB Grant Revenue.....	\$1,358,591
Other Grants & Contributions.....	\$570,680
Earned Income.....	\$213,634
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Support.....</b>	<b>\$2,142,905</b>

### EXPENSES

Programming.....	\$1,859,330
Management & General.....	\$365,191
Fundraising.....	\$34,046
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>\$2,258,567</b>
<b>Net Assets Beginning of Fiscal Year.....</b>	<b>\$1,883,418</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets.....</b>	<b>\$-115,662</b>

### BREAKDOWN OF NET ASSETS, END OF FISCAL YEAR

Unrestricted.....	\$1,434,153
Temporary Restricted.....	\$333,603
<b>Total Net Assets.....</b>	<b>\$1,767,756</b>