



My name is Jeshua Estes, and I come from the Kul Wicasa Oyate which meaning the “people that dwell below” also known as the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe. I owe a lot to my grandparents for always being there for me and instilling our Lakota beliefs. My life on the reservation was very difficult especially in my youth, but I feel we are a very resilient people.

Mary Sue Schneider was the Lower Brule Community College president at the time when started taking classes. She encouraged me to be Lakota teacher. She said “do you want a job” employment is very hard to come for a young and uneducated person on the reservation. So, I spent the next three years being Lakota language intern under Earl Bullhead and ended up with certificate to teach Lakota in State of South Dakota, and earned my associate degree.

I moved to Bismarck to go to college at United Tribes Technical College to further my education, graduated from there in 2011. I moved back and worked at the Lower Brule boys and girls club for few years before deciding to apply at any schools. St. Joseph Indian School hired me as a Lakota Studies Associate. I worked there for a year before taking a job at home as a Highschool Lakota Language teacher. It always was my dream to be a Lakota teacher and role model for community. I’m honored to be teaching Lakota language and culture to all ages.

I go around with the youth teaching them songs and culture in and out school. I feel you must get them to love their culture and language, and then it’s easier to teach and encourage them to learn it. I like to plan cultural camps and trips encourage all people to take an active role in our young people lives. I believe with parental involvement and making cultural communities we can bring back and restore our Lakota language, culture, and way of life for a healthier community.

Ohíyas’a Hemíye Wópila Tǎnka Ečíčapelo

Tǎthǎŋka íyotake ey’a

–“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.”