

## **LEANDER R. McDONALD *Brief Bio***

### **LEANDER “RUSS” McDONALD**

Dr. Leander “Russ” McDonald is President of United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, North Dakota. He was selected in October 2014 to lead the organization, which is considered one of the nation’s premier Tribal Colleges.

Most recently, he served as chairman of the Spirit Lake (Dakota) Nation. During his tenure he advocated for child safety legislation, pursued reforms in the organizational structure of tribal government, and pushed for equity in the tribe’s compensation system. Previously he was Vice President of Academic Affairs at Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) at Spirit Lake and was an assistant professor at the University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Dr. McDonald’s academic work involved teaching and guest lecturing, administering grants, and conducting research at UND. He served in the Sociology Department, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Center for Rural Health, and the National Resource Center on Native American Aging.

His higher education training began at his tribe’s community college, CCCC, with an Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts in 1993. He earned another associate degree in Business Administration from UND Lake Region in 1997, followed by bachelors and masters degrees in Sociology from UND. His PhD, also from UND, is in Educational Foundations and Research.

Much of the published research Dr. McDonald was involved with revolves around Native health care on the Northern Plains. He has studied traditional foods, quality of life, diet and exercise, American Indian veterans, Native elders’ health risks and disparities, cancer screening, and barriers to health care.

Dr. McDonald has experience in national Native organizations. In particular, his position as the Great Plains Area vice president for the National Congress of American Indians is instrumental in forming budgets and advocating for Great Plains-area tribes.

Dr. McDonald is a veteran of the U.S. Army. His father is Dakota from the Spirit Lake Nation and his mother is Arikara and Hidatsa from the Mandan-Hidatsa-Arikara Nation.

<><><><><>