

Bio - Cecilia Fire Thunder

Cecelia Firethunder is a citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation; her clan is the Kiyaksa Tiospaye from the Pejuta Haka/Medicine Root District of Kyle, South Dakota. Her first Lakota name by the elders in her clan, which is Tawachin Waste Win (her will is good), and as an adult, in ceremony the grandfathers gave her the name of a grandmother, Mato Canali Win. Cecilia spoke only Lakota till age five until she attended catholic boarding school and learned English.

Cecila was the first and only women Tribal President of the Oglala Lakota Tribe. She now serves as President of the Oglala Lakota Nation Education Coalition, instrumental in securing federal health insurance for 133 tribal schools. She is on the Little Wound School Board and is a matriarch of *Tasunke Wakan Okolakiciye* (Medicine Horse Society), using Lakota healing for childhood trauma. A Certified Lakota Language teacher, she teaches at Oglala Lakota College, covering Lakota culture, art, psychology, and community organizing. She also co-created the *Lakota Philosophy Exhibit* at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. In her creative time, she sews, beads, and makes dolls.