

## **OGLALA SIOUX PRESIDENT JOHN YELLOW BIRD STEELE BIOGRAPHY**

President John Yellow Bird Steele is currently serving his seventh non-consecutive term as President of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. His current term commenced in December 2014. President Steele previously served as President for the following terms: 1992-1994, 1996-1998, 2000-2002, 2002-2004, and for 2006-2008. His long list of political service to the Oglala Sioux Tribe also includes serving as Vice-President of the Tribe for two terms: 1982-1984 and 1984-1986. Previously, he served as Tribal Council Representative from the Wounded Knee District from 1978-1980 and 1980-1982. President Steele has also been employed in various tribal positions including employment for the District of Wounded Knee, and has been active in many different capacities of tribal government, tribal education, tribal law and order, and as an advocate for the Black Hills Treaty Council.

President Steele is committed to raising the quality of life of Oglala Sioux Tribal Members, the exercise and protection of the Oglala Sioux Tribe's sovereignty and ensuring that the United States honors and adheres to its treaty obligations and federal trust responsibility. He has testified before the United States Congress many times. He serves as the Chairman of the Great Plains Tribal Leaders Association and participates in the Coalition of Large Tribes on behalf of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. He is also active on behalf of the Tribe in other national and regional organizations whose purposes are to protect tribal sovereignty and advocate for the needs of Indian people. When in Washington, D.C., he is never without words to convey the Tribe's needs as a Treaty Tribe and to reiterate the Sioux Nation Treaties to Congressional Members and other officials of the United States.

President Steele is an active advocate for health care, education, land, housing, water and treaty issues. He is particularly mindful, too, of the care that Oglala Sioux Tribal Elders receive, keeping their safety and health foremost on his mind. He regularly advocates for the elderly and voices his concern over their unmet needs, particularly with regard to nutrition and shelter. President Steele is also a strong supporter of the Tribal Youth. He is a champion for programs that assist young Tribal Members and promote youth activities. He makes a point to recognize youth who have achieved accomplishments for themselves while representing the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

President Steele was born and raised in Rockyford on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. He graduated from Marquette University High School in 1965 and attended Marquette University. He is a Vietnam War veteran; he served from 1969 to 1971 as an E-5. Upon returning from the war, he worked as an EMT and a carpenter prior to running for office. President Steele also attended the Oglala Lakota College on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and later served as a member of the Board of Trustees. He continually advocates for education.

President Steele is married to Anna Little Dog from the Manderson District. They have 9 children and 23 grandchildren. He and his wife make their home in Manderson on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which is 8 miles north of Wounded Knee.