



OJ Semans, Sr., Co-Executive Director, Four Directions

Oliver (OJ) Semans, is married to Barbara Semans (Dillon) both enrolled members of the Sicangu Oyate and have 7 children. Both OJ and Barb received their Honorary Doctorate Degrees from the Clairmont Graduate University.

OJ is Co-Executive Director of Four Directions Inc., a non-partisan voting rights advocacy organization that has successfully litigated Federal Voting Rights Law Suits on Montana, Nevada and South Dakota working with Tribes and Tribal members.

OJ is the Executive Director of the Coalition of Large Tribes which consist of Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nations, the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the Crow Tribe of Montana, the Navajo Nation, the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, the Blackfeet Tribe of Montana, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and the Spokane Tribe of Washington.

In 1982, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter founded The Carter Center, a nongovernmental organization guided by a fundamental commitment to human rights and the alleviation of human suffering and OJ is part of the Carter Center as an International Observer.

Barb & OJ helped form Four Directions, Inc., after leading the historic Native vote project in South Dakota's 2002 U.S. Senate race. For that effort, the 21st Century Democrats awarded Barb and OJ the 2003 Paul Wellstone Grassroots Award. Since then, Barb and OJ have continued to lead nonpartisan Native voter engagement, empowerment, protection and voting rights work across the country. In 2005, OJ Semans testified before the National Commission on the Voting Rights Act before the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act in 2006, and in 2014 he testified again before the National Commission on the Voting Rights Act. OJ filed a friend-of-the-court brief in *Shelby County (Ala.) v. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder*. Barb and OJ have also been involved in Voting Rights Act litigation in South Dakota and Montana. Working with Minnesota Tribes in 2014, they established satellite voting offices on the three largest Indian reservations without litigation. OJ's opinion editorials have been featured in *Indian Country Today Media Network*, and he's been an invited speaker at several voting rights conferences. Barb and OJ have seven grown children. They live in South Antelope on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota.