

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Imagining a Future that Doubles Our Impact
Campaign to Transform Gibbs Farm

CHAD P. ROBERTS, PAGE 35



A Sacred Dakhóta Site Inspires Community Renewal

**From Lower Phalen Creek Project
to Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi**

DANIEL W. MCGUINNESS, WITH MAGGIE LORENZ, PAGE 1

By the Numbers . . .

In the 1970s, land below St. Paul's white bluffs along Phalen Creek to the Mississippi was a mess: toxic soils, polluted water, an abandoned dump site—all on what is sacred Dakhóta land. East Side activists assembled as the Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP), and with help from other organizations, created a community vision to transform the site, daylight sections of the creek, and build the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. Along the way, members better understood the sacred and historical importance of the land around them. They connected with and listened to Dakhóta community members and invited Dakhóta leaders to the board. Under Dakhóta leadership, the vision of the group transformed, as did the organization's name—Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi (WTA). Daniel W. McGuiness, an early member of LPCP, and Maggie Lorenz, executive director of WTA, share this history in "A Sacred Dakhóta Site Inspires Community Renewal: From Lower Phalen Creek Project to Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi" on page 1. Below are a few facts about WTA in 2022:

Events hosted by Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi:

- 18** Urban Restoration & Conservation
- 26** Cultural Connections & Healing
- 29** Environmental Education

Volunteers and volunteer hours:

442/1,299

Funds raised to daylight a section of Phalen Creek:

\$3.3 million

Funds raised to build Wakan Tipi Center:

\$13.2 million

Native trees/shrubs planted:

72

Trash removed:

2,500+ pounds

SOURCE: Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi, 2022 *Annual Report*, August 2023.

ON THE COVER



Lower Phalen Creek Project transformed a toxic site into a nature sanctuary. Soon, the organization now known as Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi will build its long-planned Wakan Tipi Center. Here, Mishaila Bowman, with longtime ties to LPCP/WTA, leads a group of bird watchers through the sanctuary. *Courtesy of Lower Phalen Creek Project and Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi.*

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Message from the Editorial Board

As part of environmental reclamation, a process called daylighting brings waterways previously channeled through underground pipes above ground. It returns water to its natural state, restoring ecological balance. Daylighting can appropriately describe this issue of *Ramsey County History*, as we present articles by and about Dakhóta people and their sacred connection between land and language (iápi)—what has been lost and what has been brought back into light.

In the Dayton's Bluff area, neighbors sought to reclaim Phalen Creek from the damage wrought by human impact. As this group revived the creek, they learned more about its meaning to Dakhóta people and how it is a corridor to the Mississippi and flows by a sacred meeting place—Wakan Tipi. Working patiently to overcome pollution, neglect, and the history of conflict and loss, what started out as a creek reclamation project transformed into something bigger. Dakhóta iápi was nearly *another* casualty of westward expansion. In Dakhóta tradition, land and language go hand in hand, and much like the land of the Dakhóta, their language began to disappear. A young generation of Dakhóta language learners and scholars show us what it means to care for their spoken and written word. Our everyday language in Minnesota includes many Dakhóta place names, words we say without thinking of their meaning. We have the capacity to learn much more about the land and language of Mnísota Makhóche—the place we all call home.

Anne Field
Chair, Editorial Board

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Dakhotá Iápi: A Brief History in Three Parts

Editor's Note

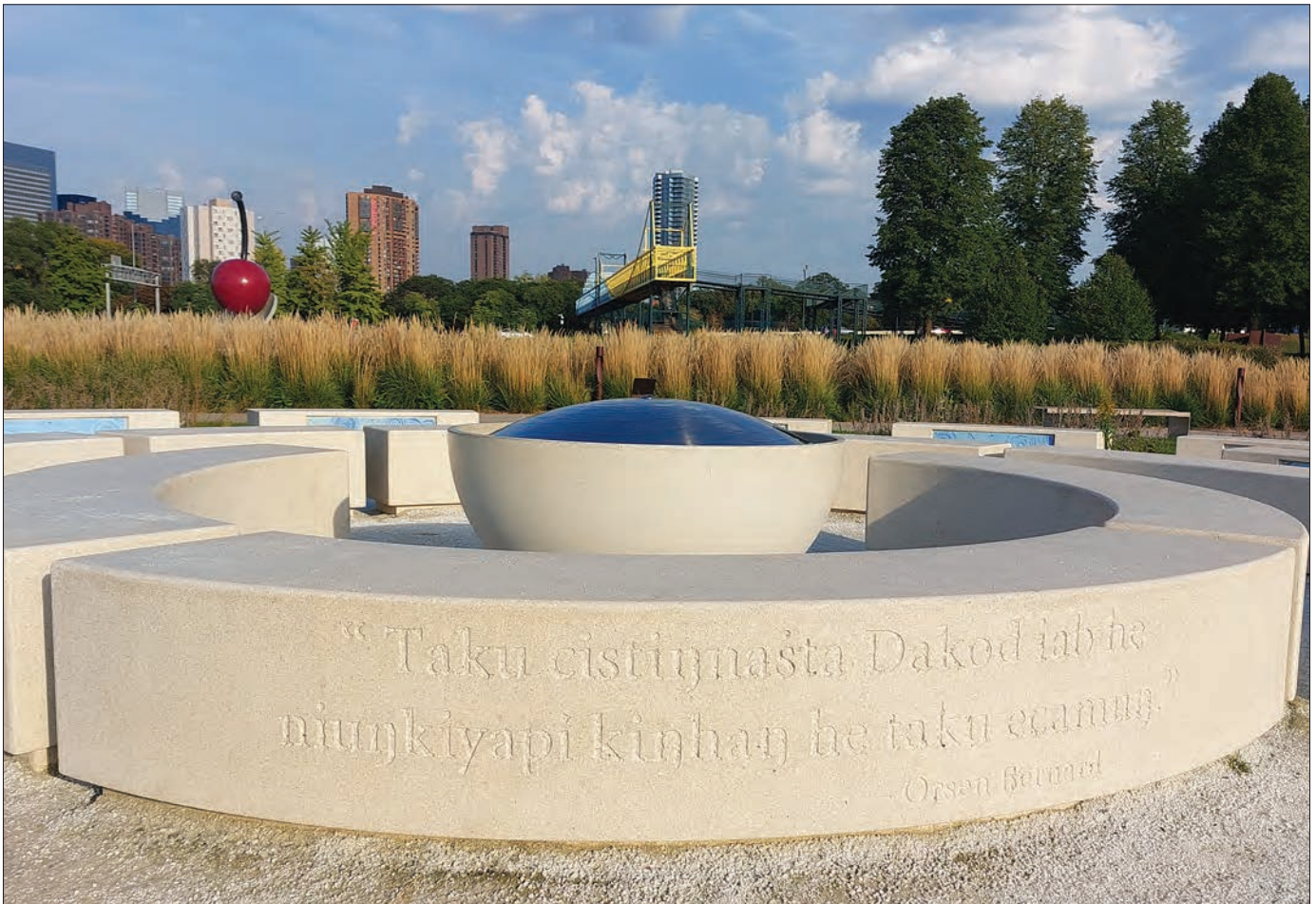
The following is a brief, three-part history of the Dakhóta language written by five University of Minnesota students who are studying the language through the school's Department of American Indian Studies. In their work, they have incorporated important concepts and constructs recognized and advanced by Native scholars, community members, and elders that illustrate and define Dakhóta history.

Also, we've included many Dakhóta words in the text with English translations. However, we have not translated everything and encourage readers to use the new Dakhóta dictionary mobile app—Dakhód Iápi Wičhóie Wówapi. In a state with an incredible number of place names derived from the Dakhóta language, this

app can help you translate and may inspire you to learn more about the language and culture. We invite you to scan a QR code below, download the free app to your phone, and look up definitions as you read.



Download the free Dakhóta dictionary app using QR codes (left: iOS; right: android).



Okkiyapi translates to "help one another." It is the title of a public art installation at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. Angela Two Stars highlights the relationship between Dakhóta language and culture across Minnesota. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

Dakhoṭa íapi Today

EILEEN BASS, JUSTIS BROKENROPE, AND AVA GRACE,
WITH DEACON DEBOER

... I do what I do so that I can go to any Dakhoṭa place and speak Dakhoṭa with children and actually have a conversation. So, whatever it takes to get to that: one idea amongst many is creating community. If you want to learn German, you can go to Germany. But if you want to learn Dakhoṭa, there's no land base ... where that's the only thing you see, hear, and experience. But, we can create that. Whether it's a mobile community, whether it's in our homes, whether it's in a classroom. ... It'd really be nice just to have a place to shoot the breeze in Dakhoṭa.¹

This reflection by Čhaṅtémaza (Neil McKay), a University of Minnesota language instructor, illustrates the hunger of many Dakhoṭa in the Twin Cities to hear their language spoken while walking around town; see it written on street, park, and business signs; find it celebrated in the arts and literature; and understand that their sacred language is being strengthened by a growing number of second-language learners. This is crucial because—the reality is—there is just ONE first-language speaker still living in Minnesota. Without action, the threat exists that Dakhoṭa íapi (language) could someday disappear.²

First-Language Speakers/ Second-Language Learners

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and even until recently, some scholars and Native speakers believed Dakhoṭa íapi could face extinction through proselytism by Euro-Americans, forced removal from tribal lands, and mandated residential schooling.³ In the early to mid-twentieth century, many first-language speakers purposely chose not to teach it to their children out of fear of punishment or added trauma. As a result, many youngsters grew up knowing little about their native tongue.

In the last fifty years, however, interest in Dakhoṭa íapi has blossomed, as youth and their

relatives become more involved with initiatives core to identity building across Mnísota Makhóčhe and the incorporation of Dakhoṭa wičhóh'an (lifeways) and values into their daily lives.

Čhaṅtémaza, University of Minnesota

Čhaṅtémaza (Bdewákhahṅthunwan Dakhoṭa and a citizen of Spirit Lake Nation) is the senior Dakhoṭa language instructor in the University of Minnesota's Department of American Indian Studies. Since 2000, he's taught American Indian history and Dakhoṭa linguistics and language and has compiled a book of Dakhoṭa verbs with Harlan LaFontaine, with another on the way.⁴

Like most Dakhoṭa speakers today, Čhaṅtémaza began learning the language in earnest as a young adult. He explains: "So, '95 is when I started becoming conversational ... when I started taking [classes] at the U. . . , I wasn't aware of anything else going on in the Twin Cities." But, in fact, since the 1970s, the University of Minnesota (UMN) has offered Dakhoṭa language classes within the American Indian Studies department, and language revitalization efforts continued to grow—slowly—over the next two decades.⁵

By the mid-1990s, about forty fluent, first-language Dakhoṭa speakers lived in Minnesota. A handful were sharing their knowledge with

others. For example, Čhaŋtémaza, remembers Franklin Firesteel (Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakhóta) taught at the university, and Jerry Dearly taught language classes in the late 1990s in and around St. Paul. Today, the Lakhóta elder is well-known as a favorite emcee at wačhípi (powwow).⁶

Šišókaduta, Dakhóta lápi Okhódakičhiye

Joe Bendickson grew up in St. Paul and attended Central High School. He was one of a handful of Native American students there. As a child, he knew some Dakhóta words. After he asked his grandfather for a Dakhóta name—Šišókaduta—his interest in the language intensified. As a twenty-year-old, he attended a Dakhóta language table with his mother. Čhaŋtémaza, the instructor, encouraged the young man to apply to the University of Minnesota. In the fall of 1999, Šišókaduta began his formal learning journey. Čhaŋtémaza was, again, the instructor.⁷

Šišókadúta later taught at UMN—for fourteen years, recently stepping down to work on a book with first-language speaker Dr. Rev. Clifford Canku. While teaching, Šišókadúta worked with Čhaŋtémaza and others to add more Dakhóta classes to the syllabus and helped increase enrollment in these classes by 150%, eventually resulting in the addition of a Dakhóta language major. Last year, he partnered with University Housing to create a Dakhóta Language House trial program that ran through the 2022-2023 school year and may be adopted permanently in the future.⁸

Šišókaduta believes Dakhóta language should be taught at every UMN campus:

It is a part of Dakhóta heritage, and Dakhóta learners should be able to pass it on. . . . Teaching, in a way, is its own art form. Hopefully, . . . people will become teachers and fill more positions. . . . That's kind of how you have to grow it.⁹

Thomas Draskovic, American Indian Magnet School

One student who became a teacher is Thomas Draskovic (Húnkpapha Lakhóta and Waǰpé Khuté Dakhóta). He has taught K-4 Lakhóta language and American Indian Studies (AIS) to students through eighth grade for twenty-one years

at the American Indian Magnet School (AIMS) at 1075 Third Street East (built 1925 in St. Paul as the original Harding High School).¹⁰

AIMS, which opened in 1992, is part of St. Paul Public Schools and is located on the city's East Side in a building once shared with a K-8 World Cultures Magnet School. Educators, community members, and elders created the AIMS program “to provide an American Indian perspective . . . rooted in American Indian culture, traditions, values, history, and art . . . and to welcome students of all backgrounds to a diverse school community.”¹¹

In its first year, American Indian enrollment was 37.3% of 209 students. Enrollment peaked in 2009 at 42.2% (136 of 332). When the World School closed several years ago, AIMS absorbed most of its students, increasing overall enrollment to 626 students. In 2022, thanks, in part, to COVID-19, enrollment dropped to 524, with fifty-nine American Indian students (11%); 31% Asian; 21% Hispanic; 17% two or more races; 14% African American; and 6% white. Most students live in the Dayton's Bluff area and attend the school based on location. Some students are bussed from around the Twin Cities.¹²

One focus of the school is its language emphasis: “Incoming students have the option of taking Dakhóta/Lakhóta or Ojibwe classes, as these are the historical languages of the original stewards of this land,” Draskovic says. The students participate in powwows, drum and dance circles, and cultural fairs, including an All-Indigenous Nations fair, which celebrates the diversity of students and staff:

Indigenous doesn't just mean Native. It means [we all] originated from somewhere. We celebrate that because we are all related. Our school provides a place that lives the thought of a circle universe. We teach students about the sacred hoop of life with no beginning, no end, and unbreakable bonds. The more people who are in that circle, the more strength through the greater collection to learn and succeed together.¹³

Not long ago, a Hmong student gave Mr. D, as kids call Draskovic, a new name—Teng (*Toob*), which translates to “the light.” Their teacher

tries to provide light to his students—offering encouragement as they move from his Lakḥóta classes to Dakḥóta instruction in the upper grades. School administration encourages students to continue American Indian language classes at Harding High School. If they do, they may earn AIS certification upon graduation. A few students pursue more language in college.¹⁴

Draskovic knows it can be challenging to learn a new language. He describes his knowledge as a youth as “passively fluent.” His mother and aunts spoke Lakḥóta. He understood them, but, “as an adult, I felt shameful—not worthy—to speak the language—I was afraid to make mistakes.” His mother, Grace Draskovic, encouraged him:

How else will you learn if you don't say it? Of course, I will correct you; that's the only way you will learn. Be vulnerable. Be humble. Remember your virtues. Be brave. Step into a space knowing I'm here to help you.¹⁵

Draskovic smiles. “That's what she taught me and what I try to teach my students.”¹⁶

Dakḥóta Ojibwe Language Revitalization and Preservation

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Minnesota Legislature convened a group to study and address the reality that Indigenous languages central to Minnesota could die out. The committee consulted with eleven tribal nations, educators, legislators, first-language speakers, second-language learners—including Šišókadúta—and others to better understand the issues and develop answers toward a Dakḥóta Ojibwe Language Revitalization and Preservation plan. Findings were presented in a 2011 report.¹⁷

The group spent years conducting interviews, visiting immersion schools, creating and analyzing surveys, and reviewing laws, statistics, and educational pedagogy. From this work emerged a clearer understanding of the need for language revitalization, best practices, current and future roadblocks, and recommended steps forward. The team found that dozens of language tables and classes at high schools and higher education institutions existed, but there were few licensed and trained fluent teachers;



nor were there solid curricula or proven frameworks in place.¹⁸

The team did uncover examples of successful immersion programs that helped revive Indigenous languages in New Zealand and Hawaii. This information inspired Šišókadúta to create an immersion class for preschoolers. Funding took years to manifest, as did locating a physical space. Other local immersion centers, including Wičhóie Nandagikendan and Bdote Learning Center, shared valuable insights. Ultimately, the University of Minnesota Child Development Laboratory School provided a space for Dakḥód'iapi Wahóḥpi (Dakḥóta Language Nest), beginning in 2022.¹⁹ Šišókadúta reflects:

All you have to do is get it started. If you keep the door open every year, you can make it better and better. Maybe . . . thirty years from now, we can [say] ‘remember when we started a language nest in 2022?’ We'll be telling stories about it.²⁰

Brenda Toscano, Dakḥód'iapi Wahóḥpi

Dakḥód'iapi Wahóḥpi, affectionately called “The Nest” and designed for the youngest of language learners, is beginning its second year—more than doubling from five to eleven students. Brenda Toscano, a Lakḥóta first speaker with training in Dakḥóta, is the lead teacher. She's assisted by recent UMN graduate Justis Brokenrope and interns, who, themselves, are learning the language as they work with the littles.²¹

Thomas Draskovic teaches at the American Indian Magnet School and works with Interfaith Action's Department of Indian Work Youth Enrichment Program. He is a board member at Wakan Tipi Awanyanjapi and a guitarist and lead vocalist with the local Native American *Pretendians Band*. Courtesy of Thomas Draskovic, Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul, and St. Paul Public Schools.

Each morning at Dakhód'íapi Wahóǰpi, Circle Time begins with prayer and smudging, singing and dancing, and listening to stories. Here, lead teacher Brenda Toscano (Pine Ridge Indian Reservation) helps a child count in Dakhóta. Teacher Justis Brokenrope (*bottom left foreground*) and intern Eileen Bass (*seated, far right*) also take turns instructing before the youngsters eagerly head to the gym. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

Toscano, at the end of a busy Monday, appeared a bit tired after spending part of the day in the light rain. “The school is nature-based,” she explains. “The kids learn outside as much as possible—speaking, playing, making leaf collages—no matter the weather.” Yet, every morning, Toscano is rejuvenated when smiling, eager preschoolers tumble into the classroom, happy to see her and Brokenrope. She believes this semester should be easier now that she, Brokenrope, and their supervisors have learned what works and what doesn’t.²²

Also, last March, the two traveled to Hawaii to observe immersion language classes that have developed and improved over decades. The instructors returned home inspired and with new ideas—repetitive lessons, consistent schedules, and plans to encourage students to converse and serve others during lunch—a practice that can carry over to their families.²³



The teachers at Dakhód'íapi Wahóǰpi are seeing progress. Last year, one student grew frustrated over a hand-washing exercise. He could have protested in English, emotions taking over. But he shared his feelings in Dakhóta. In another instance, two boys bickered over a toy, arguing in Dakota íapi. “Justis and I looked at each other,” Toscano recalls. “Should we break up the fight?” They did not. Instead, they encouraged the children to solve the dispute using their Dakhóta words.²⁴

Thinking back to the Hawaii trip, Toscano remembers a teacher who had been a first-language student at that same school years ago. That’s Toscano’s dream for her students. “I want to help develop more teachers—first-language speakers who can keep Dakhóta íapi going—because it really is a race against time.”²⁵

Tales of Two Wínyanj

Tanaǰidan To Win, Businesswoman and Author

Tanaǰidan To Win (Tara Perron) understands the important and complicated concept of hdukíni (revival) as it pertains to Dakhóta íapi. Tanaǰidan To Win, whose name translates to Blue Hummingbird Woman, has studied Indigenous languages as an adult at Metro State University and incorporates them into daily life. “I had to let go of processing life, thought, and emotions through the English language all together, which seemed much harder as an adult.”

I believe my biggest sacrifice was comfort . . . I had to learn patience with myself. It was important to continuously remind myself I didn’t need to know everything right away. In learning and using Dakhóta íapi in everyday life, I noticed there was an emotional attachment to every word that left my mouth. There was more connection to the world around me. I spoke with intention and gratitude.²⁶

Despite Tanaǰidan To Win’s efforts and those of other second-language learners, it’s easy to become discouraged, especially upon realizing that there are so few first-language speakers to converse with new students so they can hear

how words should sound with their original accent and inflection.

And that is a key issue. Šišókaduta emphasized that “one of the problems we have to overcome as people who didn’t grow up speaking the Dakhóta language is that we sound like English speakers. And Dakhóta people have a different accent. . . . Younger people come to the University, they learn here, and then they try to talk and it sounds like they’re speaking from a book.” That is why Šišókaduta, along with Raine Cloud—a Dakhóta language documentation journalist—and a group of interns, began work a few years ago on a UMN/Sisseton Wahpeton College collaboration—the Dakhóta Audio Language Journal. When it eventually goes online, learners will be able to hear the words and the singing of elders. The journal will preserve their voices, their experiences, their thoughts on their language, and their advice.²⁷

This journal is a valuable tool for language learners, but one might wonder, why bother learning a language that very few speak? Tanaǵidan To Win answers:

In the beginning . . . , I would speak to my sons, pets, even to my father once he took his [final earthly] journey. Even if it was a few words. [These Dakhóta words] gave me strength, faith, and hope. They felt carried in many ways. I knew my Até could hear me through the language.

Later in my language journey, I realized how powerful, and alive our language is. . . . It has deepened my connection to the world around me. I think before



Tanaǵidan To Win (Tara Perron), a Dakhóta and Ojibwe mother of two boys, owns Blue Hummingbird Woman, a St. Paul gift shop that reflects her Dakhóta name. She’s also a children’s book author. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

I speak, because our language is alive, and I want to bring my good energy to the life and strength of the language. I gift that when I speak to my relatives.²⁸

She also gifts her growing knowledge of the language to others as a children’s book author. Tanaǵidan To Win’s books, *Takóža: Walks with the Blue Moon Girl* (2019) and *Animals of Khéya Wíta (Turtle Island)* (2022, with a second similar book in Ojibwe), tell educational stories in English, while incorporating Native words. The opportunity to see children’s books written in Dakhóta and Ojibwe brings hope to the arduous process of breathing life into the language.²⁹

Advice to Second-Language Learners

One of the most important things is to love each other. There are several ways to express that. Úŋšíkičhidakab. Waštékičhidakab. A lot of times, we get lost in ourselves, so we don’t understand what other people are going through. It’s hard to learn the language especially with the anxieties that come with that. Just have love for each other. If you do that, then when people are learning the language . . . it’s going to be easier to create new speakers of the language. Some are going to be teachers, but not everyone is going to be a (formal) teacher. If we love each

other, we’ll let people do what they’re good at. But if they can speak the language when they have kids, hopefully they’ll teach their kids the language.

We’re human; we’re imperfect. If we love each other, we’ll forgive each other. If we love each other, we’ll respect each other for what we’re good at. To all the people out there, help each other, take care of each other, love each other, and if you do these things in a good way, then it’s just going to keep growing and get better every year.^a

—Šišókaduta

Angela Two Stars, Artist and Curator

Artist Angela Two Stars (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyáte), also a second-language learner, has, since 2014, taken the lessons she has learned and “[incorporated] Dakhóta phrases into her artwork . . . to draw awareness to the plight of Native American languages and the current efforts being made to revitalize them. . . . [She uses] the power of art to create positive change and raise awareness of the endangered status of Indigenous languages.”³⁰

In 2020, the insistent efforts of Očhéthi Šakówinj community members Syd Beane, his daughters Dr. Kate Beane and Carly Bad Heart Bull, and other language activists and allies, with local government support, renamed Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis. It is now Bdé Makhá Ská. Soon, a callout to create public art that would highlight the original site of Ĥeyáta Othúnjwe and honor Maḥpíya Wičhašta led to a collaboration by Mona Smith, Sandy Spieler, and Two Stars.³¹

To complement a welcoming, decorative railing featuring native crops, circles, and Dakhóta words, Two Stars, director of All My Relations Arts, designed simple, stamped images of a bear, an eagle, a bison, rice, and other Dakhóta relatives along a cement path. As she developed her ideas, she considered the public using the site and space. She thought about the daily visitors who would be exposed to the Dakhóta language through her art.³²

I wanted people to be able to say simple Dakhóta words based off the visual that

Artist Angela Two Stars' bison is one of many stamped sidewalk images that walkers see when they pass the Native American public art installation at the edge of Bdé Makhá Ská. Courtesy of Angela Two Stars.



they're seeing. I saw this guy walking with some friends, and he looked up and said, 'Hey, waḅbdí (eagle).' So, I was like, yes! I got you to speak the Dakhóta language. It doesn't need to be the Native-specific audiences to appreciate Dakhóta art.³³

In 2021, Two Stars installed her work, *Okciyapi*, in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden outside the Walker Art Center. It is a nod to the Dakhóta water relative. Divided in seven sections to represent the Očhéthi Šakówinj, the piece resembles an expanding ripple across a calm lake and incorporates Dakhóta values as a way to move language revitalization forward and help Two Stars and others heal.³⁴

My grandpa (Orsen Bernard) told me that okciyapi stands for 'help each other.' That's the advice he gave whenever he was asked, 'What would you tell people. . . [who] are trying to learn the language?' He'd always say, 'Help each other.'³⁵

Elevating Language Through Technology

Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye

In 2014, several members of the Dakhóta community founded Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye (Dakota Language Society or DIO), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on developing Dakhóta language materials “. . . for easily accessible language learning.” Its purpose: help second-language learners gain proficiency with the assistance of multilevel, written *Dakhóta iá Wóhdaka Po! Speak Dakota* textbooks and audio CDs. They collaborated in their endeavors with The Language Conservancy (TLC), an Indiana-based nonprofit that works with Native communities to combat language loss. DIO developed weekend family immersion camps and a Dakhóta Language Summer Institute, and they began to think about how technology could assist them in their efforts.³⁶

In 2021, DIO leaders, including Šišókaduta—the organization's linguistic director—worked with TLC to launch the long-awaited Dakhód Iápi Wičhóie Wówapi, an online dictionary app featuring 28,699 Dakhóta words and definitions, along with a downloadable Dakhóta keyboard.

With funding assistance from the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, it took six years to compile the words and definitions and partner with female and male first-language speakers, including Dr. Rev. Canku, to create precise audio recordings of each word to accelerate learning. The app debuted in February 2023. “We’re using modern technology to save our ancient languages,” Šišókaduta said in an interview with *MPR News*.³⁷ The organization is now looking to launch an e-learning platform in the years to come.

Dawí (Huhá Mazá) and Marlena Myles, Innovators

Of the many Dakhóta values, Dawí (Huhá Mazá), a descendant of Santee Dakhóta, believes wóinina (silence and stillness), is the most important. Without it, one cannot attain other virtues. And, so, the Dakhóta language media producer has listened. Then, he has acted—to literally give voice to the language through digital technology and media content, most recently in collaboration with St. Paul-based artist Marlena Myles.³⁸

Myles (Spirit Lake Dakhóta, Mohegan, Muscogee) is a digital artist and illustrator known throughout Minnesota and beyond for her innovative animations, book illustrations, fabric fashion design, educational and historical community murals, and augmented reality work.³⁹

With Pixel Farm and Todd Boss, Myles created the GPS-based *Dakota Spirit Walk*, available on the Revelo AR app. The walk at the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is an augmented reality public art installation using 3D animation and shares oral traditions of the sacred places there. Dawí voiced the parts of the spirits Wakínyan (thunder being), Ínyan (Grandfather Stone), and Uŋktéhi (water serpent). He did the voice acting for Myles’ *Dakota Sacred Hoop Walk* at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska, as well.⁴⁰

Dawí, who studied at UMN and has taught the language and collaborated with DIO on a number of projects, also works with Myles to produce Dakhóta language content for her new Wíyouŋkihipi (We Are Capable) Productions company—a publishing platform for Očhéti Šakówiŋ artists and writers.

A lot of Marlena’s projects . . . coloring books, the digital media on her website, or



on the Wíyouŋkihipi Productions website, [most] everything’s accessible and free—there’s free audio, the app for the augmented reality’s free . . . , that has an immense impact on accessibility, which is one of the main issues that we face with language learners. We have a population that’s exploded to ten times the amount of people since colonization. So, the . . . way we can reach thousands of people without having large grants is through online digital media.⁴¹

Dawí is especially proud of the collaborative work he did as a language researcher and audio producer on Myles’ Dakhóta Land Map series, which includes maps of Minneapolis and St. Paul; the Minnesota River Valley; and Prairie Island, Red Wing, and Winona. The colorful maps incorporate Dakhóta place names from 1861—the year philosopher and naturalist Henry David Thoreau visited the state from Massachusetts—along with familiar landmarks people will recognize in 2023. On the Marlena Myles website, visitors can not only explore these maps but also hear Dawí pronounce the names in Dakhóta. According to Dawí, the maps

The Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye (Dakota Language Society) introduced its new language dictionary app to the public in 2023. Courtesy of Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye.

To link directly to the Dakhóta Land Map series, go to <https://marlenamyl.es/project/dakota-land-map/>.

and coloring pages “are resources that [parents] can introduce to their children” to learn about the past and present day.⁴²

On a more serious note, the Dakhóta land maps are especially important when looking back at the history of the language and the culture of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Oyáte. Mapping has historically served as a critical tool for imposing non-Native authority over Indigenous spaces. Early maps created by settler colonists not only shaped public histories but settler senses of belonging in lands that were gained through treaty-breaking, land grabs, and ethnic cleansing. Indigenous forms of remapping and renaming assume that language and place are intertwined. It is only through recovering and restoring Dakhóta and Lakšóta place names and histories that historical truths about Očhéthi Šakówiŋ presence and settler erasures of that presence can be told.⁴³

Illustrator Marlena Myles partnered with Dawí on this Dakhóta land map of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The map identifies sacred Dakhóta sites and villages and important geological landmarks such as lakes and rivers in addition to today’s popular sports arenas, the airport, the zoo, the Minnesota State Capitol, and more. *Courtesy of Illustrator Marlena Myles and Translator Dawí.*

We Are All Relatives: Sharing Dakhóta Iápi

For the Dakhóta people, the history and future of Mnísota Makhóče is rooted in Dakhóta iápi—thanks to the many Dakhóta iápi ikíčhize wíchásta (Dakota language warriors). That is the role Čhantémaza, Šišókaduta, Thomas Draskovic, Brenda Toscano, Tanağidan To Wiŋ, Angela Two Stars, Dawí, Marlena Myles, and first-language speakers and second-language learners in the Twin Cities’ Dakhóta community have taken on to ensure their language doesn’t perish. With funding, training, additional teachers, ally support, continued implementation of new technologies, and more, it is hoped Dakhóta iápi will strengthen, grow, and become part of the everyday lives of the next generations of Dakhóta children and adults and extend into the larger community through

Dakhóta Thamákhoče
Bde Óta Othúŋwe & Imnízaska Othúŋwe
Minneapolis & Saint Paul

We are on Dakota homelands.

This map tells the story of the past, present and future of Dakota people and Dakota language in the Twin Cities.

Historic Dakota Villages & Sacred Sites	Rivers, Lakes & Other Bodies of Water
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Řeyáta Othúŋwe (Village) Kap óža Othúŋwe (Village) Wakpá Tháŋka (Spirit Cave) Ořéyawahe (Pilot Knob) Bdóte (Confluence) Igyagá (Red Rock) Mařpiya Řóta Wiŋ Wite (Grey Cloud [Woman] Island) Wite Tháŋka (Pike Island) Wite Wašté (Nicollet Island) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wite Tópa Bde (Lake of the Isles) Bde Makhá Ska Bde Umán (Lake Harriet) Mni íd Tháŋka (Lake Minnetonka) Mniřařa Wakpádan (Minnehaha Creek) Wakpá Tháŋka (Mississippi River) Mni Iřpáyedan (Marquette Falls) Mniéwe Sní (Coldwater Springs) Mniřota Wakpá (Minnesota River) Owámniyomni (St. Anthony Falls)

Other Locations

Thabákta Otkád Thipi (Bostertall Arena), Odéwag Thipi (Concert Hall), Thabákhořapi Otkád Makhéče (Football Field), Bde Óta Othúŋwe Wákeže Owépaže Thipi (Minneapolis Institute of Art), Mnísota Wáugepa Wáđantuya (University of MN), Mnísota Makháštape Thúŋkádídayanpi Thipi (Minnesota Capitol Building), Čhalkázo Thakáštá Otkád Thipi (Hockey Arena), Thab'áhořapi Otkád Makhéče (Baseball Field), Iđaghánka Akichita Thipi (Fort Snelling), Iđaghánka Mazáphiya Tháŋka (Largest Shopping Mall), Wátakiyag Otnažig (Airport), Wamánita Otkáke Thipi (Zoo), Othúŋwe Řemáni thathó (Green Line Train), Othúŋwe Řemáni Thá (Blue Line Train)

Bde Óta Othúŋwe (Minneapolis, Village of Many Lakes)
Imnízaska Othúŋwe (St Paul, Village along the White Cliffs)

Ehágna Wícháhápi (Burial Mounds)

There are over 12,000 burial mounds ranging from a hundred to several thousand years old in the state of Minnesota. Many are located in the Twin Cities including at Ořéyawahe (Pilot Knob), Mound Springs Park, Indian Burial Mounds Park, Mařpiya Řóta Wiŋ Wite (Grey Cloud Island) & surrounding Mni íd Tháŋka (Lake Minnetonka).

*Makhá Thó Otkéwíthayapi Wákíksaye - Every December, Dakota and allies honor through memorial runs & horse rides the 38+2 warriors who were hanged in Mankato, MN on Dec. 26, 1862.

Illustrated by Marlena Myles | Translations by Dawí

continued cultural diversification, education, and recognition. Čhaŋtémaza's wish as stated at the beginning of this piece could then become reality.

Hello my relatives. My name is Eileen Bass. I'm Húŋkpapha Lak'hóta, Sac and Fox, and Mvskoke Creek. I'm enrolled as Sac and Fox of Oklahoma. I study Dakhóta language because I live in Minnesota.

Hello my relatives. My name is Justis Brokenrope. I grew up in Nebraska, have lived in Minneapolis for the last eight years, and am an enrolled member of the Síčhánġu Lak'hóta tribe. Currently, I am a teacher at the Dakhód'iapi Wahóŋpi—the Dakhóta Language Nest.

My name is Ava Grace. I am Oglála Lak'hóta from Pine Ridge. I was born in Minneapolis and have lived here all of my seventeen years. I attend the University of Minnesota, studying Dakhóta language and journalism.

NOTES

1. Čhaŋtémaza, interview with Justis Brokenrope, June 6, 2023.

2. Diane Wilson, "Carrolynn (Carrie) Schommer: Dakota First-Language Speaker and Educator," Phillips Indian Educators website, http://pieducators.com/wisdom/carrie_schommer; Brenda Toscano, interview with editor, September 26, 2023. According to Brenda Toscano, who is a first-language Lak'hóta speaker, it is believed the only living first-language Dakhóta speaker still living in Minnesota as of November 2023 is Carolyann (Carrie) Schommer, who taught at the University of Minnesota and continues to promote language revitalization programs. See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpYJNY9kh8I> to hear reflections by Schommer.

3. "Status of Dakota Language," Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye website, <https://dakhota.org/status-of-dakota-language/>. Additional information provided by Ava Grace.

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5. Čhaŋtémaza/Brokenrope interview.

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munity, Church of All Nations, Anishinabe Academy, and the Minneapolis American Indian Center.

8. Nguyen; "250220217–Dakota Language B.A.," University of Minnesota Programs, <https://umtc.catalog.prod.coursedog.com/programs/250220217>; Šišókaduta/Bass interview; Sarah Weissman, "Living in the Language," Inside Higher Ed website, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/09/16/university-minnesota-offers-ojibwe-and-dakota-housing>; Author Deacon DeBoer was one of two students who participated as a resident in the Dakhóta House trial.

9. Šišókaduta/Bass interview.

10. Thomas Draskovic, interview with editor, September 21, 2023.

11. "About Our School," American Indian Magnet School website, <https://www.spps.org/domain/6834>; Draskovic/editor interview.

12. "Enrollment information for American Indian Magnet School," School Digger website, original source: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept of Education.

13. Draskovic/editor interview.

14. Draskovic/editor interview.

15. Grace Draskovic, as remembered by Thomas Draskovic, in Draskovic/editor interview.

16. Draskovic/editor interview.

17. Šišókaduta/Bass interview; *Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization in Minnesota*, report, Volunteer Working Group on Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization and Preservation, presented to Minnesota Legislature, February 15, 2011, 3.

18. *Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization in Minnesota*, report.

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20. Šišókaduta/Bass interview.

21. Toscano/editor interview. Justis Brokenrope is also one of the authors of this article.

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25. Toscano/editor interview.
26. Tanaǵidan To Win, interview with Ava Grace, May 17, 2023.
27. Nguyen; “About the Dakota Language Audio Journal,” Dakhóta Iápi Okhódakičhiye webpage, <http://dakotalanguagejournal.com/>.
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Note for sidebar on page 25

- a. Šišókaduta, interview with Eileen Bass, August 15, 2023.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) strives to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community; deliver inspiring history programming; and incorporate local history in education.

The Society was established in 1949 to preserve the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the original programs told the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, RCHS also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, now telling the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Ĥeyáta Othújwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 and rededicated in 2016 as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. The Society serves more than 15,000 students annually on field trips or through school outreach. Programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion

RCHS is committed to ensuring it preserves and presents our county's history. As we continue our work to incorporate more culturally diverse histories, we have made a commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion that is based on this core idea: RCHS exists to serve ALL who call Ramsey County home. To learn more, please see www.rchs.com/about.

Acknowledging This Sacred Dakota Land

Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. RCHS acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

RCHS is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

Find our full Land Acknowledgment Statement on our website, www.rchs.com. This includes actionable ways in which RCHS pledges to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche.



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Wednesday,
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Saturday,
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12:00-3:00pm



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Dakhóta lápi: A Brief History in Three Parts

This year, Dakhóta language scholars from the University of Minnesota—Eileen Bass, Justis Brokenrope, Deacon DeBoer, Ava Grace, and Heather Menefee, with their instructor Šišókaduta (Joe Bendickson)—have worked with Ramsey County Historical Society to write about Dakhóta lápi (Dakota language). The piece begins on pages 12 and 13 with an early history of the language following settler colonization and extending through the boarding school era. It continues with a collaborative segment highlighting current language initiatives and the positive effects these have for both the Dakhóta and non-Indigenous communities in establishing themselves in Mnísota Makhóche history. The article culminates with words of encouragement to Dakhóta language teachers and second-language learners from Dr. Rev. Clifford Canku, one of the few remaining first-language Dakhóta speakers and a holder of traditional knowledge.

—Deacon DeBoer



Dakhóta language is present and celebrated throughout the Twin Cities at parks and in public art—as seen at Bdé Makhá Ská through work created by Mona Smith, Sandy Spieler, and Angela Two Stars; at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden installation, *Okciyapi*, also by Two Stars; and at the newly opened Unći Makhá Park (Grandmother Earth Park) in St. Paul. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*