

# JEFFERSON PARISH DIVERSITY & INCLUSION BOARD POSTER

NOVEMBER 2021



## Roy Parfait (1943 - present)

Roy is a member of the Houma Indian tribe, a French-speaking people and the largest surviving Native group in Louisiana. He was born and raised in Dulac, along Grand Caillou Bayou, in Terrebonne Parish. He grew up around the tradition of carving wood. Roy began carving in 1976, making small wooden animals and miniature pirogues. He found that he was especially interested in carving animals, and he is well known today for his long-necked geese, ducks, beavers, rabbits, birds, fish, turtles, panthers, pelicans, and frogs. He recently also makes raccoons and owls, although he says that getting the owls' beak right is a challenge. Mr. Parfait tries to use local woods like cypress, willow, and tupelo gum for his carvings as often as possible. Fluent in English and French, Roy Parfait often serves as a spokesperson for his tribe's culture and history, a contact for Houma craftspeople, and an interpreter for those who speak little English.



## Nora Naranjo Morse (1953 - present)

A Native American potter and poet. She currently resides in Espanola, New Mexico, just north of Santa Fe. Her work can be found in several museum collections. Her hand-built sculpture piece, *Always Becoming*, was selected from more than 55 entries submitted by Native artists as the winner of an outdoor sculpture competition held in 2005. In 2014, she was honored with a NACF Artist Fellowship for Visual Arts.



## Lawrence Moot Billiot (1916 - 1998)

Today, when most people want a boat, they go to a marina or boat dealer and purchase a fiberglass or metal boat. But for a larger craft, hand-crafted from wood, one has to look a little harder for the skilled boat builders who can do the job. In the recent past, an individual could go to Mr. Billiot for such a project. He was a skilled boat builder born 1916 in Dulac, Louisiana. Mr. Billiot, a French speaker, attested to his French background. Mr. Billiot built boats without the assistance of blueprints, using only the extensive knowledge stored in his head and the tools in his hands.

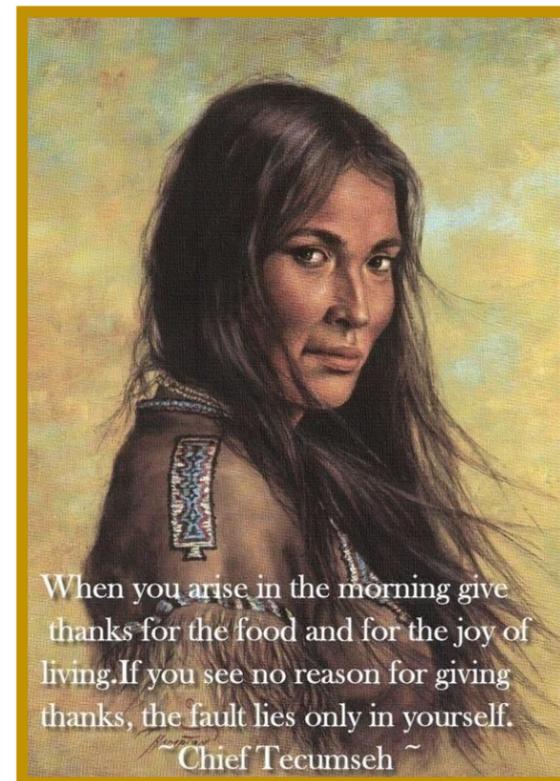
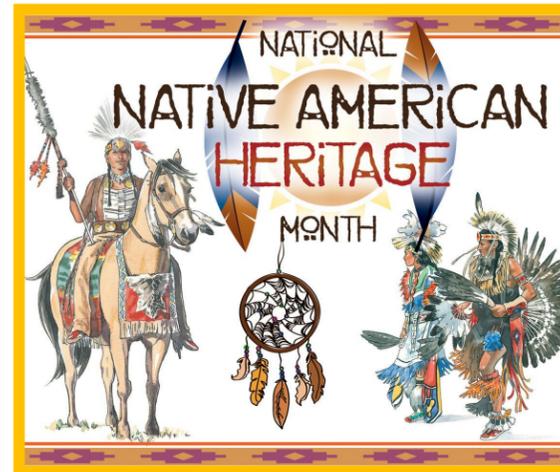


## Susan LaFlesche Picotte (1865 - 1915)

An Omaha Native American doctor and reformer in the late 19th century. She is widely acknowledged as the first Native American to earn a medical degree.<sup>[1]</sup> She campaigned for public health and for the formal, legal allotment of land to members of the Omaha tribe. Picotte was an active social reformer as well as a physician. She worked to discourage drinking on the reservation where she worked as the physician, as part of the temperance movement of the 19th century. Picotte also campaigned to prevent and treat tuberculosis, which then had no cure, as part of a public health campaign on the reservation. She also worked to help other Omaha navigate the bureaucracy of the Office of Indian Affairs and receive the money owed to them for the sale of their land.



JEFFERSON PARISH  
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION BOARD



Chief Tecumseh



## Sacheen Littlefeather (1946 - present)

Littlefeather was born in Salinas, California. Her ancestry is Apache, Yaqui, and Pueblo on her father's side, while her mother is of French, German, and Dutch descent. She claims that her father was from the White Mountain Apache and Yaqui tribes of Arizona and that "Cruz" is her father's recognized tribal name. A Native American actress and activist for Native American civil rights. She gave a speech at the 45th Academy Awards ceremony on March 27, 1973, for actor Marlon Brando, to decline the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in *The Godfather*. The speech was a protest at the treatment of Native Americans by the film and television industry.



## Benjamin George Bratt (1963 - present)

An American actor. The middle of five children, Bratt hails from a close-knit family. His mother, an indigenous Quechua Peruvian from Lima, moved to the U.S. at age 14. He grew up in San Francisco. On television, Bratt portrayed NYPD Detective Rey Curtis on the NBC drama series *Law & Order* (for which he was nominated for the 1999 Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series), Dr. Jake Reilly on ABC's *Private Practice* (2011–2013), and Steve Navarro on Fox's *24: Live Another Day* (2014).



## Maria Tallchief (1925—2013)

Elizabeth Maire "Betty" Tall Chief was an American ballerina. She was considered America's first major prima ballerina, and was the first Native American to hold the rank. Born to Alexander Joseph Tall Chief a member of the Osage Nation and Ruth of Scottish-Irish descent. In 1947 Maria began dancing with the New York City Ballet until her retirement in 1965. After retiring from dancing, Tallchief moved to Chicago and served as director of ballet for the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1973 to 1979. In 1974 she founded Lyric Opera's ballet school, where she taught the Balanchine technique. In 1981 she founded Chicago City Ballet with her sister Marjorie. In December 2012, Tallchief broke her hip. She died on April 11, 2013 from complications stemming from the injury.



## Will Rogers (1879 - 1935)

William Penn Adair "Will" Rogers was a sage and motion picture actor, vaudeville performer, American cowboy, humorist, newspaper columnist, and social commentator. Known as "Oklahoma's Favorite Son", Rogers was born to a prominent Cherokee Nation family in Indian Territory (now part of Oklahoma). He traveled around the world three times, made 71 movies (50 silent films and 21 "talkies"), and wrote more than 4,000 nationally syndicated newspaper columns. By the mid 1930's the American people adored Rogers. He was the leading political wit of his time, and was the highest paid Hollywood film star. Rogers died in 1935 with aviator Wiley Post, when their small airplane crashed in northern Alaska.

