EMPOWERMENT $AGA

QUEST FOR A JOB

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2
The story begins with shape-shifters, four birds - Eagle, Raven, Hawk, and Owl - perched on telephone lines on the outskirts of the Native community. They are spiritual helpers to a group of teens - Shining Star, Theresa, Ranger, and Jay. These young teens learn financial resources as they embark on many adventures, and encounter intrigue in the process!

**Quest for a Job** uses the personal misadventures of Shining Star’s father, Bear, and of her grandmother, Light Woman, to teach the importance of saving and planning for financial responsibility.

**EAGLE**
Eagle is an ancient spirit: all knowing, all seeing. As a human, he transforms into a strong leader who guides others through their journeys. He wears a medicine bag.

**OWL**
Owl is a wise one, and beyond. As a human, she conveys wisdom to others about their life situations. Owl always carries her fringed purse.

**RAVEN**
Raven is the one who brings balance: all-encompassing of all the attributes of life. In human form, she evokes reasonable consideration of all facts. Raven wears a turquoise ring.

**HAWK**
Hawk is a hunter and a messenger, a patient observer with a quirky sense of humor. In human form, he is always physically fit and active. He constantly wears his bead and bone choker.
Somewhere in America, a small reservation is watched by a group of shapeshifting spirits.

Man, I thought the brakes were going to go out while I was driving. My uncle said I could use the truck, since he lost his license for too many dui’s but the brakes are going out, the heater guilt, the windshield wipers don’t work. When it rains, I have to put my hand out and make them wipe.

Outside shining stars house sits a beat-up 1976 chevy pickup truck.

The other day, Jay was with me and I made him hang out the side window and make them move.

Aahhnnn... It’s a major gas-guzzler. I thought I was going to run out before I got here.

I’m looking for cars now and I’m gonna make sure it works better than that!

For real? Seriously?

Ha ha ha.

Brave? Why brave?

That is really brave of you. Good luck with that!

Yeah, but I need one of my own. Besides, how hard can it be?

Well, how easy do you think it is to get one? And, haven’t you been using your dad’s car when you need it?

I guess you’ll find out.
I'm gonna need a car to get to and from work and college too. I can't expect to use my dad's, or friends', or relatives' cars all the time, and we don't have school buses or transit systems like the big cities.

Those prices are no joke!

Me too.

Well, maybe not two jobs, but a job. My uncle won't be needing his truck for a while. Did I mention he is in jail?

You really can't get much for a few hundred dollars, I'm going to need a job, maybe two.

Now I'm wondering who I can get to fix the brakes, and how am I going to pay for it.

Hey, I saw Theresa's uncle's pickup here.

Can you give me a lift?

Sure.

You have gas money?

You have three.

Okay.

Give it to me first.

Jay and Theresa climb into the pickup truck.

Jay, I heard you were picking on my little cousin yesterday in the gym.

Yeah, just a little. I was just playing.

Coach said you can't play basketball if you do. You're the best player on the team!

Jay can't see how he hurts others with his bullying. I don't know what to do.

They rode in silence to his house.
IN THE LIVING ROOM, BEAR IS PARKED ON THE COUCH LOOKING OVER HIS BILLS.

DAD, I WANT TO BUY A CAR - NOT NEW BUT USED.

I'M OLD ENOUGH, AND IT WILL HELP BOTH OF US OUT IF I HAVE ONE.

HOW WILL THIS HELP OUT, IF THERE ARE MORE EXPENSES? KNOW I JUST STARTED BACK TO WORK AFTER I WAS LAID OFF FOUR MONTHS AGO, AND I'M BEHIND ON EVERYTHING!

WHAT?? NO WAY! CARS ARE EXPENSIVE

OUT I CAN FIND A JOB.

AND I WILL PAY FOR IT MYSELF! I HAVE SOME MONEY SAVED FROM BABYSITTING. IF I HAD A CAR, I COULD WORK A LITTLE FURTHER OUT WHERE THE JOBS PAY MORE, AND IT WILL HELP ME GET TO AND FROM COLLEGE. MY CLASSES AREN'T GOING TO BE SCHEDULED AROUND YOUR WORK.

OR GRANDMOTHER'S, I WILL HAVE TO WORK AND GO TO SCHOOL AT THE SAME TIME, SO HAVING A CAR WILL HELP ME AND YOU!

DAD, I KNOW ABOUT EXPENSES, OR I THINK I HAVE SOME IDEAS. REMEMBER LAST YEAR WHEN THE CAR BROKE DOWN? WE HAD TO WAIT TWO WEEKS BEFORE WE COULD GET THE PART. YOU HAD TO WAIT TO GET ANOTHER PAYCHECK WE ALL HAD TO FIND RIDES EVERYWHERE.

YES, I REMEMBER.

IF YOU GET A JOB, MAYBE YOU CAN HELP OUT WITH SOME OF THESE.
WHAT IF I HAVE TO GIVE IT ALL TO HIM?
THEN I WON'T BE ABLE TO SAVE.

YOU SAID THAT YOU DIDN'T WANT ME TO DEAL WITH WHAT YOU HAD TO AT MY AGE. YOU KNOW, YOU SAID YOU COULD NEVER HAVE ANYTHING, BECAUSE YOU HAD TO GIVE IT ALL TO THE FAMILY.

WELL, DAD, I CAN HELP, BUT I STILL HAVE TO SAVE FOR THE CAR, RIGHT?

GRANDPA EARNED, TAKING MONEY FROM THE WHOLE FAMILY. YOU SAID NO ONE TOLD YOU HOW TO PLAN OR THE IMPORTANCE AND THE VALUE WE HAVE TO PLACE ON MONEY.

WE CAN ONLY TAKE OUT OF THE ATM MACHINE WHAT WE ACTUALLY HAVE IN THE BANK. YOU TAUGHT ME THAT! THIS ISN'T LIKE THE DOLL I WANTED. I REMEMBER THINKING ALL YOU HAD TO DO IS GO TO THE ATM OR WRITE A CHECK. I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE NOW.

DAD, I REALLY WANT AND NEED A CAR!

YES, I KNOW, AND I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. AND NO, I DON'T WANT YOU TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH WHAT I HAD TO WHEN I WAS GROWING UP.
ONE DAY I WASN'T MUCH OLDER THAN YOU, AND ALTHOUGH I DON'T WANT TO MAKE YOU THINK I WASN'T A GOOD BOY, I WAS A BIT ON THE WILD SIDE.

I wanted to party with my money. I worked hard, so I felt like I deserved to spend my hard-earned money and have fun.

Anyway, I didn't think missing a few payments would make any difference. One day while I was at work at the sawmill, two men came and drove off in my car.

Me and my two buddies jumped in their pickup truck and chased after them. Who did those guys think they were, stealing my car?

There we were, chasing them down the dirt road, dust flying everywhere.

We pulled up next to them and ran them off the road. We were going to kick their butt! Then these two guys jumped out.

One stood 6'6", weighed 300 pounds, had long blond hair, and a burly mustache. He stood there like a mountain.

The other looked at least 7 feet tall! He weighed about the same, and his arms looked like Mr. Universe under his tank top.

The three of us just froze. My legs were shaking and so were my hands. We looked at each other, scared to death - we knew we were going to die.

The tall one asked, "Which one of you is billey?" So I stood forward. He said sternly, "You are four months behind on your payments, so now it goes back to the bank."

I was frustrated, and I kicked the dirt hard. The guy said, "You want some trouble? I'll give you some trouble!" He made a fist and glared at us.

I couldn't move. I had never met such giants before, and I knew these guys meant business.
SO WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

WELL, I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE. WE GOT IN THE TRUCK AND DROVE BACK TO THE MILL.

I WAS SO MAD AND EMBARRASED. IT WAS A REALLY HARD LESSON TO LEARN. I DIDN'T HAVE THE MONEY TO GET IT BACK SO, ALL THE MONEY I'D PUT INTO THE CAR WAS GONE. AND I HAD NO WHEELS ANYMORE.

THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. BUT MY GIRL, I KNOW YOU WOULDN'T BEHAVE LIKE I DID, BUT YOU CAN SEE WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T TAKE CARE OF YOUR FINANCES.

OH MY GOSH, YES! YOU NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT THAT! DAD, THAT IS AWSFUL!

YES, IT WAS DID YOU EVER THINK ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DIDN'T PAY FOR THE CAR?

NO, NOT REALLY.

BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I COULDN'T PAY FOR IT.
GO SEE IF YOU CAN GET A JOB, AND WE WILL SEE IF YOU CAN AFFORD TO GET A CAR. CHECK WITH MR. LEWIS AT THE GENERAL STORE - I HEARD WILLIS HAD TO LEAVE AND GO BACK TO SCHOOL, SO HE NEEDS SOMEONE NOW.

BE SURE AND WEAR A NICE SHIRT, AND NOT THAT T-SHIRT YOU HAVE ON! AND YOU NEED TO GET DOWN THERE FAST. IT WON'T BE LONG UNTIL EVERYONE IN TOWN KNOWS, AND THE COMPETITION WILL BE TOUGH.

WHAT'S WRONG, DAD?

Uh, well, I'm out of gas. I don't have any cash, can you loan me ten bucks until I can get some cash from the bank?

Sure, you're good for it, so I guess you aren't perfect, huh?

Eagle and Hawk are gathered in conversation.

We have to help her find a job, and maybe a bit more.
Wearing a black shirt, Shining Star comes flying out of her door.

She skip-runs toward Main Street, watched all along by her overhead escort, Eagle.

Eagle lands around the corner of the general store.

Eagle shape-shifts into an elder man carrying groceries.

Raven and Hawk transform into teenage skaters.
They speed down the street toward the elder man.

Hawk slams into the elder man, knocking the bags out of his arms. Cartons and cans fly into the air, and the old man barely catches himself.

I'm so sorry! Are you okay?

Who are you? I've never seen you or your friend around here.

We're just passing through. That other one who didn't stop is my brother. Our parents are at the courthouse, getting some papers filed, or something like that.

You damn kids! Why don't you watch where you are going?!

No? So what are you going to do about this?

Wow, I am sooo sorry. And, and... I don't have any money to replace your groceries.

Well, I can ask my parents to pay for this for you.

My grandma would have their hides, and she would have run after that other one. These guys are not from these parts, that's for sure.

Do your parents always bail you out when you're in trouble?

Well, uh no, but maybe my brother and I can work it off.
THE ELDER SLOWLY TURNS TO RAVEN, AS THEY EXCHANGE INFORMATION QUIETLY.

SHINING STAR CAN'T HEAR, BUT SHE CAN SEE THEY ARE WORKING IT OUT.

YOU'RE WELCOME. I WAS JUST ABOUT TO GO INTO THE STORE AND APPLY FOR A JOB.

A JOB? THAT IS A GOOD THING.

YEAH, I WANT TO SAVE UP AND BUY A CAR.

CARS ARE EXPENSIVE.

I KNOW. THAT'S WHAT I HEAR.

BUT I'M WILLING TO DO MY BEST TO TAKE CARE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO OWN ONE.

NOTHING, I CAN'T DO ANYTHING IF I DON'T. I HAVE TO HAVE A JOB.

I'M HOPING TO GET THE ONE AT THE STORE HERE. I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE ELSE TO LOOK.

YOU KNOW, I WAS JUST AT THE CAR PARTS STORE ON THE EDGE OF TOWN. I HAD TO STOP OFF AND GET A HEADLIGHT. WHILE I WAS THERE, THE OWNER SAID HE NEEDED SOMEONE FLEXIBLE AND ONLY PART TIME FOR THE STOCK ROOM AND COUNTER. I DON'T THINK ANYONE ELSE HAS HEARD ABOUT THIS YET.

REALLY? OKAY, I WILL GO OVER THERE RIGHT AFTER I SPEAK TO MR. LEWIS!

I HAVE TO GO NOW. GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR JOB HUNT.

HELLO MR. LEWIS, HOW ARE YOU TODAY?

AT THE GENERAL STORE, A FEW CUSTOMERS WALK AROUND THE AISLES.
GOOD. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, SHINING STAR?

WELL, I'M WONDERING IF YOU ARE HIRING?
I HEARD YOU LOST YOUR HELP THIS WEEK.

YOU INTERESTED?

WELL, GET IN LINE! I'VE GOT SIX OTHERS WHO CAME IN TODAY.

EACH ONE SAYS THEY NEED THE JOB. THERE IS A SIGN UP SHEET AT THE REGISTER. PUT DOWN YOUR NAME AND NUMBER. I WILL CALL YOU WHEN I START TO INTERVIEW.

IT DOESN'T PAY A LOT - JUST SEVEN DOLLARS AN HOUR. IF YOU GET THE JOB, YOU CAN WORK A FEW HOURS AFTER SCHOOL AND ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS.

OKAY, BUT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE JOB?

SLOWLY SHE WALKS OUT OF THE STORE. OUTSIDE SHE SEES AN EAGLE FLYING TOWARD THE GROVE OF TREES.

SHE REMEMBERS THE CONVERSATION WITH THE ELDER SHE MET EARLIER.

HEY MR. SMITH.

I HEARD YOU WERE IN NEED OF SOMEONE IN THE STOCK ROOM.

REALLY, HOW DID YOU KNOW?
I HAVEN'T TOLD A SOUL.

AN ELDER TOLD ME, HE SAID HE'D STOPPED BY TO BUY A HEADLIGHT.
MOM, I DON'T RECALL ANYONE LIKE THAT— OR FOR THAT MATTER, SELLING A HEADLIGHT TODAY, BUT NEVERMIND. YES, I AM LOOKING FOR SOMEONE. DO YOU HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE WITH STOOGES?

NO, BUT I USED TO HELP MRS. CLARK AT SCHOOL WHEN SUPPLIES CAME IN. I HELPED HER PUT THEM ON THE SHELVES IN THE ORDER SHE WANTED THEM.

WELL, I DON'T FEEL LIKE ADVERTISING, AND I KNOW YOUR DAD AND UNCLE. I CAN TELL YOU HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE, AND YOU SEEM VERY INTERESTED. I WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE. YOU WILL STAY FOR A WHILE, RIGHT?

ABSOLUTELY!

I NEED THIS JOB. I WANT TO BUY A CAR.

WELL, THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO BUY ONE. WE GET ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN HERE—CARS ARE BOTTED AND SOLD ALL THE TIME RIGHT HERE IN THIS STORE.

BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST. FILL OUT THIS W-2, AND THIS ONE PAGE APPLICATION. WHEN CAN YOU START?

TOMORROW THE SOONER THE BETTER!

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN ASKED HOW MUCH YOU WILL MAKE.

OKAY, HOW MUCH? IT'S A JOB, AND ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN NOTHING, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING.

I'LL START YOU OFF AT $6.50 AN HOUR, AND IF YOU ARE GOOD—NOT LATE, DON'T MAKE TOO MANY MISTAKES—I WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER $.50 IN A MONTH.

YESSSSSSSS!
SHINING STAR RUSHES IN THE FRONT DOOR AND INTO THE KITCHEN WHERE HER GRANDMOTHER, LIGHT WOMAN, IS STITCHING A SILK STAR QUILT.

GRANDMA! GRANDMA! I GOT A JOB!

THAT IS WONDERFUL NEWS, MY GIRL! YOUR VERY FIRST JOB. I'M SO PROUD OF YOU!

OH MY GOODNESS, A CAR? WELL, YOU SHOULD REALLY THINK ABOUT HOW YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR THIS. DID YOUR DAD TELL YOU ABOUT THE...

REPO STORY? YES! I'M NOT GOING TO MISS MY PAYMENTS. I HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT. GRANDMA

OH REALLY, SO WHAT IS YOUR PLAN?

GET A JOB, GET A CAR, AND MAKE MY PAYMENTS...

THERE IS LOT TO THIS CAR BUSINESS, YOU KNOW, MY GIRL?

SHE PAUSES, LOOKS UP, AND BEGINS TO WEAVER A TAPE OF QUILTING: THE VALUE OF PLANNING, THE WORK AND MATERIALS INVOLVED, AND THE REWARDS OF COMPLETION AND MONETARY COMPENSATION.

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS QUILT FOR WEEKS. IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO PICK OUT THE RIGHT COLORS - I HAD TO FIND WHERE I COULD GET THE MATERIAL.

NOW THAT I'M ALMOST FINISHED, I WILL PRICE THE QUILT. I HAVE WORKED MANY HOURS, AND MY HAND HAS STITCHED EVERY INCH. MY LOVE FOR THIS WORK IS MORE THAN THE DOLLARS I WILL EARN. YET, I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY WORTH IS NOT CHEAP WHEN IT COMES TO MY STAR QUILTS, IT IS MORE THAN A QUILT - IT IS SPECIAL PIECE OF ART THAT I PLANNED, LABORED OVER, AND NOW I'M READY TO REAP THE REWARDS.

SILK COLORS AREN'T THAT EASY TO FIND, I HAD TO SPECIAL-ORDER. THERE ARE ALSO DIFFERENT TYPES OF STAR QUILTS AS WELL. DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN DO IT, DIFFERENT PATTERNS. I HAD TO BE INSPIRED, IT TOOK PLANNING, RIGHT?

YEAH, SURE, I GUESS.
OK, SO WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME GETTING A CAR AGAIN?

YOU HAVE TO PLAN FOR YOUR CAR, FIND OUT ALL THE DETAILS YOU NEED TO KEEP IT LEGAL, AND SAFE. YOUR JOB IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF ALL THAT YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR DREAM OF OWNING YOUR CAR COME TRUE.

JUST THE BEGINNING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD DO NEXT?

HMMMM... MAYBE FIGURE OUT HOW MUCH I CAN SPEND ON A CAR?

OKAY.

SO YOU WILL NEED TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH AN AFFORDABLE BUT DEPENDABLE CAR WILL COST. FIGURE OUT HOW MANY WEEKS OF WORK IT WILL TAKE YOU TO SAVE FOR THE CAR ITSELF. THEN YOU WILL ALSO HAVE TO CONSIDER THE GASOLINE, UPKEEP, AND INSURANCE.

WELL, MAKE IT EASY FOR YOURSELF. JUST TRACK IT BY PUTTING IT IN YOUR CELL PHONE NOTE THING. YOU SHOULD OPEN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT AS WELL.

REALLY?

YES, REALLY, MY GIRL...

WRITE DOWN EVERY DOLLAR YOU BRING IN, AND EVERY DOLLAR YOU SPEND, I HAVE TO DO THAT FOR MY MATERIAL COST AND MY LABOR.

THIS ALL SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF WORK!

GOOD IDEA GRANDMA! THANK YOU YOU'RE THE BEST!

SHINING STAR VISITS THE USED CAR LOT AT THE EDGE OF TOWN. THERE ARE ONLY 30 CARS IN ALL, MOSTLY OLDER ONES, AND A FEW NEWER ONES.

I CAN'T WAIT TO START LOOKING FOR A CAR!

NEW CARS

USED CARS

NO ONE IS THERE, UNTIL EAGLE TAKES THE FORM OF A USED CAR SALESMAN.

HI THERE, YOUNG LADY, IN THE MARKET FOR A CAR?

YES SIR, I'M JUST LOOKING AROUND, GETTING AN IDEA OF PRICES.

WELL YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE YOUNG LADY. I HAVE THE BEST PRICES IN TOWN.
WOW, THIS IS AWESOME!

YES, SHE IS A BEAUTY, BUT IT'S PRETTY PRICEY... HOW WILL YOU PAY FOR IT?

I JUST GOT A JOB, I'LL BE SAVING FOR IT AT FIRST.

OH I SEE - YOUR FIRST JOB, YOUR FIRST CAR.
WELL THIS IS A BEAUTY, AND I CAN GET YOU IN IT FOR A GREAT PRICE!

WHAT HAPPENS IF I CAN'T PAY FOR IT? DO YOU SEND A COUPLE OF GOONS TO MY HOUSE TO GET IT?

WELL IT WOULD BEST NOT TO LET IT GET THAT FAR OUT OF HAND. IF YOU CAN'T PAY CASH FOR THE CAR, AND YOU GET A LOAN, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO KEEP YOUR PAYMENTS CURRENT.

IF YOU DON'T MIND MY ASKING, HOW MUCH DO YOU HAVE SAVED NOW?

$100!

I MEAN UH... OKAY... WELL, GOOD FOR YOU!

THAT'S FROM BABYSITTING. I WILL HAVE MORE THOUGH. I JUST GOT A SECOND JOB.

Yeah, my grandma and my dad both told me about how to keep track of what I bring in, and to have a plan on saving. Eventually, I can buy a car. My first one may not be what I really want, but it will be some wheels for sure.

LOOKS LIKE YOU MAY HAVE TO WAIT A WHILE, BUT I'D SAY IF YOU HAVE A PLAN FOR WHAT YOU WANT, YOU CAN DO ANYTHING. GOOD FOR YOU - DREAMIN' BIG! GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO ARE PATIENT.
This is a start, but now I have to think about a savings or checking account.

I need to check this out ASAP.

Man oh man, I never want that to happen to me!

Wanna ride?

Sure where’s Jay?

What's he suspended for?

At his house, he got suspended so he can’t play on the team. The coach is not happy.

Bullying: This time it was the principal’s kid, wrong person to pick on.

What is wrong with him?

As they drive off, Shining Star tells Theresa about her new job.

I think that was a good idea about the groceries. Do you think they got it?

Yeah, maybe.

Man, I had to get the heck out of Dodge! I thought Eagle was going to hit me with the left over milk carton if I stuck around.

Yeah, well, I might have, now that you mention it... I am glad she listened to me though, and came here to get the job.

Yes, I know, that’s another story, and, who knows, maybe we can help.

In the distance, a train whistle blows. The dust from the tires flies as the old green pickup drives down the road.

Savings account... Hmm how to do that?

Now, windows down, music blaring as Theresa and Shining Star head toward Shining Star’s house.

The four birds spread their wings, soar up into the sky, and disappear into the clouds. They all screech at the same time, thunder can be heard and lightning shoots through the heavens as the light slowly fades.
Rose Red Elk (Sioux/Assiniboine)

Author of the Empowerment $aga series of stories, Rose is an international performing arts entertainer, also known by her Native American traditional and stage name, Red Feather Woman. An accomplished award winning recording artist, storyteller, singer, songwriter and author from the Fort Peck Reservation in Poplar, Montana, and an enrolled member of the Sioux/Assiniboine Tribes, Rose continues to discover the realms of spiritual awareness through the gift of storytelling, in written, oral and musical forms. Her fiction is themed with traditional values, blended with ancient stories from the past.

www.redfeatherwoman.com

Matthew Barkhausen

Matthew worked with the Native American and woman owned small business Circuit Media as an illustrator for the Empowerment $aga series of stories. His artwork for this and other projects focuses on Native American culture. He has provided artwork to the Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce and other Native American organizations. Matthew is of Cherokee and Tuscarora heritage. He has a B.A. in interactive media design from the Art Institute of Colorado.

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Other Circuit Media illustrators who contributed greatly to the project were Jon Hormachea, creative design director, Abby McMillen, illustrator, and Ali Bibbo, graphic designer.

Joseph Arnold

Working as a freelancer for a Denver based company, Joe created the original images of the characters. His artwork reflects his philosophy that dedication and practice are critical aspects of being an artist. After serving five years active duty with the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne and three years with the Colorado National Guard, Joe completed his education in June 2102 at The Art Institute of Colorado with a bachelor's degree in media arts and animation. He has worked for Disney Online Studios Boulder and 12-6 Studios in Denver.

Original concept by J.P. Barham
Creating the Empowerment Saga

The Empowerment Saga is a series of stories to engage youth 14-18 years of age in developing basic financial skills so they will learn how to build and preserve their own financial wealth. These stories, offered in colorful comic-style graphics, are reservation-based in order to bring “home” to Native youth the message of handling their finances from an early age.

Recognizing the importance of financial knowledge to IIM account holders, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) has been working for years to bring financial skills training to account holders of all ages. OST has partnered with other government agencies, Native community development financial institutions, Native organizations, and others to offer culturally sensitive financial education.

The Empowerment Saga is another opportunity to expand financial skills training in Indian Country by encouraging youth-to-youth and multi-generational discussions about this topic. The stories highlight the value of knowing these financial skills, and illustrate the challenging consequences when this knowledge is not known or used properly.

The characters and stories of the Empowerment Saga series are wholly-owned by the government of the United States and cannot be used without the written consent of the government. For more information regarding financial education opportunities in Indian Country, please contact:

OST’s Director of Financial Education
brian_ross@ost.doi.gov

or

Trust Beneficiary Call Center
1-888-678-6836

To contact your Fiduciary Trust Officer please visit:
http://www.doi.gov/ost/fto

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