Dear Friends,

Twenty five years ago, Tribal Link was founded on the principle that we must respond to the urgent needs of indigenous communities before that moment of urgency is lost. Today, we remain deeply committed to that philosophy, which has helped shape our work with education and capacity building for communities worldwide. Without your contributions, Tribal Link could not have accomplished all that we did in 2018.

This year brought many opportunities to highlight Tribal Link's work. We partnered with Céline Cousteau and her Tribes on the Edge impact campaign to put a spotlight on the Javari Valley in the Brazilian Amazon, home to 6 contacted tribes and over 14 different groups of uncontacted tribes – the largest concentration of peoples living in voluntary isolation in South America. At the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), we co-organized a side event, Tribes On The Edge: Land Rights, Health Crisis, And The Future Of Uncontacted Peoples. Also during the UNPFII, we worked with Project Access alumna and mentor Mikaela Jade to organize a luncheon with Microsoft focusing on indigenous peoples’ perspectives on technology. We also hosted, together with Sub Rosa, an edition of Indigenous Voices featuring award-winning photojournalist and author Scott Wallace, who presented in vivid detail one of his expeditions in the Brazilian Amazon – in that very same part we focused on at the UNPFII side event – the Javari Valley.

Our main programs, Project Access Capacity Building Training and East African Young Women’s Education and Leadership Initiative, continue to make progress on the global level. This year we had 21 Project Access participants from 16 countries. Many of them had the opportunity to make a statement from the floor of the UN, putting in practice what they learned in the training. Our connection with the Alumni, who are part of the Tribal Link family, is one that is based on a mutual desire to support the indigenous peoples of the world. This to me is a life-long commitment.

We hope you enjoy the stories in this newsletter and that they give you a glimpse into the world of indigenous peoples and the communities and indigenous leaders Tribal Link works with. Without your contributions, Tribal Link could not accomplish all that we do for indigenous communities worldwide.

To donate, please visit triballink.org/take-action/

Best Wishes,

Pamela Kraft
Executive Director
In 2018, Tribal Link Foundation partnered with Céline Cousteau to support her Tribes on the Edge impact campaign to help indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon. In 2007 Céline Cousteau led a filming expedition into the Javari Valley indigenous territory in the Brazilian Amazon 25 years after her grandfather first filmed this region. Spanning 85,000 Sq km, it is home to 6 recognized tribes and the largest concentration of uncontacted tribes living in the Brazilian Amazon. Desperate for help, the tribes asked Céline to tell the story of their struggles and make their presence known to the world.


The screening was followed by a presentation by Beto Marúbo, an indigenous leader from the Marúbo tribe, who gave a first-hand account of the reality on the ground and his work protecting the uncontacted peoples. As part of the film’s impact campaign, Tribal Link Foundation shared the importance of supporting indigenous peoples with training to effectively participate in UN fora.

Beto Marúbo participated in Project Access 2018, our training for indigenous leaders from around the world to be able to effectively participate and advocate at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Beto represents UNIVAJA – the Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley – the organization that unites representatives of the six contacted tribes living on the territory and works to protect their uncontacted neighbors. While in New York, Beto participated in presentations at the UNPFII and wrote and delivered a statement from the floor of the UN, calling for the urgent need to protect the uncontacted tribes and their territories. It was here that he realized that, in order to be as effective as possible as an international leader, he would need to learn English, and requested our support in doing so.

We were able to raise a small amount of funds to enable Beto to begin studying English in Brazil.

**Indigenous Voices** On March 1, 2018

Sub Rosa and Tribal Link Foundation organized a presentation by Scott Wallace, award-winning author and photojournalist.

Scott Wallace joined us to share his experience with the vanishing cultures and the conflict over land and resources in the world’s volatile frontier regions. His New York Times bestselling book, The Unconquered: In search of the Amazon’s Last Contacted Tribes, recounts his trek with a Brazilian government expedition through the land of an isolated tribe in the Amazon, and is widely recognized as one of the most authoritative works on the issue of isolated and uncontacted tribes. He has written about illegal logging in Peru, the expansion of the oil frontier in Ecuador, and deforestation wrought by industrial agriculture in Brazil’s central Amazon. His latest feature on the Awá peoples of the Amazon was just published in National Geographic.
The 14th annual session of PROJECT ACCESS facilitated the participation of 21 indigenous peoples’ representatives from 16 countries in a 3-day intensive training workshop, and at the 17th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). The UNPFII was held in New York from 16-27 April 2018 and provided a platform for Indigenous Peoples to raise the visibility of challenges faced by their communities; lobby their proposed solutions to representatives of governments and others; outreach to relevant UN agencies for support; and raise further awareness about their cultures. To ensure more effective participation at the UNPFII, Tribal Link organized the training program preceding the Forum session held at UN Headquarters. The program also included an evaluation session with participants on 20 April 2018 and a side event with Microsoft Philanthropies. Four Project Access alumni returned as mentors for the new participants, further enhancing participant experience. Tribal Link also facilitated opportunities to engage with several UN agencies, departments, and programs.


“Water has a central place in the practices and beliefs of many religions for two main reasons. One is that water cleanses, water washes away impurities and pollutants, it can make an object look as good as new and wipe away any signs of previous defilement. Water makes also a person clean externally or spiritually, ready to come into the present of a person’s focus of worship. Secondly, water is a primary building block of life. Without water, there is no life.”

– Elizabeth Lemiso, Kenya

Participant Comments:

• Daisee Francour: “Without this training I don’t think I would have been able to navigate this space effectively as I did.”

• Elizabeth Lemiso: “The training has really been of great benefit to me, I have learned a lot and hope to go and help my indigenous community too. I think I am now a defender of the rights of my community.”

• Elvir Sahirman: “Words can’t describe how thankful I am. It was both enjoyable and informative. The knowledge and experience gained will help me in my work to protect the rights of the indigenous Crimean Tatar people.”

• Sandra Miriam del Carmen: “I could see that a family really formed among us, that it lasts and we are in contact. Undoubtedly, a great experience, and just started!”

• Hiparidi Dzutsi wa Toptiro: “It was good because it was possible to meet other relatives. Knowing the history of UN processes was also important. Seeing the situation similar to ours in other indigenous peoples of the world was interesting. And it was also good to meet the indigenous academics and know how they are preparing for the world.”

• Darell Naden: “I would suggest a short course (2-3 hours) just before the UNPFII began for those who cannot participate in the 3-day course.”

• Gertrude Kabusimbi Kenyangi: “I participated in drafting the statement. I spoke on the rights of indigenous women in an interactive session at the forum from the floor.

• Carson Kiburo: “I’m looking forward to passing this knowledge at the community level.”
Victor Lopez-Carmen, Project Access alum and mentor, visited another alumni, indigenous community leader and former Kalinago Chief, Irvince Auguste, in beautiful Kalinago Indigenous territory in Dominica, a small Caribbean Island. Irvince’s village was hit last year by a category 5 hurricane Maria, which left only five houses standing in the village. Irvince’s vision is to rebuild the community with traditional architecture that withstands hurricanes, using a design his ancestors used for thousands of years. Victor helped Irvince prepare and launch a GoFundMe campaign to help raise funds for the community.

www.gofundme.com/help-rebuild-the-kalinago-way

Tribal Link’s mission is to support the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples worldwide by building their capacity to protect their ways of life and preserve their sacred lands and knowledge for the betterment of humanity.

Indigenous Youth: Through Their Eyes, a book collaboration between the UN Global Indigenous Youth Caucus and Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights, and co-sponsored by Tribal Link Foundation, is coming in 2019. The book will be co-edited by Project Access alumni Carson Kiburo Kibett – who was selected as Global Indigenous Youth Caucus co-chair during his initial participation at the UNPFII – was also selected to attend the Advanced Human Rights Courses on Indigenous Peoples’ Rights at Pretoria University. Tribal Link Foundation provided a small grant to enable his participation at the Course, where he made a special presentation on the state of Indigenous Peoples in Kenya.

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During the UNPFII, Tribal Link co-organized a luncheon together with Project Access alumna and mentor Mikaela Jade, her company, Indigital Storytelling, and Microsoft, with a focus on indigenous peoples’ perspectives on technology. Six representatives from around the world shared their experiences as leaders in the digital space.

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