MIWRC is honored to have been selected as a winner of the 2019 Bush Prize for Community Innovation. When we applied, we were grateful for the opportunity to take a deep breath, pause from the day-to-day sense of urgency and need, and contemplate what we do, how we do it, and more importantly, why. Too often we get caught up in the overwhelming needs in our community – homelessness, addiction, abuse, violence, and trauma – and we lose sight of our strengths and our true purpose.

MIWRC is guided by traditional Indigenous values. We gain Wisdom from our Elders Advisory Council and our Board of Directors. We use Truth and Compassion to challenge white supremacist hetero patriarchal systems to build understanding for genuine equity and indigenization. Respect and Love form the foundation of our Family Stabilization work. Compassion and Courage guide our Advocacy work. Humility and Trust are essential for our mental health and outpatient substance use disorder program. Wisdom and Generosity continue within our training programs. All of these values contribute to our support groups for Two Spirit people, survivors of violence, caregivers, Rule 25 assessments, legal clinic, and more. And at the core of it all is that we see each other as relatives; those who work here, those who seek services here, those who partner with us, those who came before us. It is through relationships that MIWRC builds its core strength.

MIWRC does not operate on an island or in a vacuum. We are grateful for our partnerships with Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID) organizations, as well as other non-profit and for-profit organizations, philanthropy, multiple levels of government, and for the shared strengths created by those partnerships.

MIWRC thanks the Bush Foundation for selecting it as a winner of the Bush Prize for Community Innovation and we extend our congratulations to the other winners: Hmong American Partnership, Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, Valley City-Barnes County Development Corporation, and Wokini Initiative of South Dakota State University.

Patina Park, J.D.
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