



# MHA Women's History Month 2019

## Bernadine Young Bird



Bernadine (Lone Bear) Young Bird is a member of the Maxo Adi Clan-Alkali Lodge. Her Hidatsa name is Cedar Woman. Her mother is Martha Fox and father is Benjamin Lone Bear, Sr. She is the eldest of 8 siblings. She married Robert Young Bird, Sr. whom she greatly respected as a Vietnam War hero. She is a loving mother and grandmother of her three sons, 4 grandsons and one beautiful granddaughter.

Bernadine entered public school speaking Hidatsa as her first language. She also went to an Indian boarding school where she was punished for speaking Hidatsa. She learned how to speak, read and write her second language-English- at age five. Later she earned a college degree. As an American Indian educator she became an advocate to re-learn and revitalize the Hidatsa language but also her other tribal languages, the Nueta and Sahnish. She has been actively engaged in many different levels of teaching and educational administration in the state of ND, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (federal) and the Three Affiliated Tribes, currently the MHA Nation. Bernadine was the first tribal Education Administrator of the newly established 638 contracted Office of Indian Education Program (OIEP). She was also the first Exceptional Education Director for the tribe.

She served on many tribal, state and national committees and boards in education, special education, vocational education, early childhood, and other human services. She was the first Native American city council member of the city of New Town.

In addition, Bernadine tirelessly works with any who ask for assistance in the Hidatsa language and culture. She believes we have to help each other to become stronger as a people and a nation. She practices what she preaches by seeking help and consulting with others, including her family and relatives. She believes in lifelong learning. She constantly reminds herself and her students not to judge but to help those who are seeking knowledge. "We are here to help, support and encourage each other, so we can all become stronger!" is one of her mottos.

Currently, she is enjoying being a Faculty in Native American Studies at the Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College again after 20 plus years of administration. She teaches language, culture, history, traditional and contemporary gardening, and continues to learn more to share with others.