



LOUISE MATSON

Executive Director, Division of Indian Work

EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

All youth deserve the opportunity to become adults with the capabilities and education to earn a living wage. That's why Greater Twin Cities United Way works to ensure all youth have the skills, relationships and mindsets to choose and direct their own future success. We partner with youth-serving nonprofits aligned with young people's developmental and cultural strengths and creating opportunities for youth to use their voices to lead.

For more than 70 years, the Division of Indian Work (DIW) has supported the Native community in the Twin Cities through culturally based education, leadership development and traditional healing approaches. Their multigenerational approach engages all ages to honor Native culture, strengthen families and provide basic needs. One example is the Youth Leadership Development Program, which empowers Native youth by combining rigorous academic support with cultural enrichment, including learning about language, ceremony and arts and crafts.

United Way's multiyear Community Investments grantmaking provides DIW with critical unrestricted funding that supports the organization's staffing, programming and other operational needs. Flexible funding provides stability that allows DIW to quickly address emerging community needs and maintain essential services.

"[United Way] has been a long-time partner. And that's really important because it's hard for us when we see support come and go... but United Way is a steadfast presence that I know I can count on," said Louise Matson, executive director of the Division of Indian Work.

Whether it's help preparing a strategic plan or advocating for important legislation, DIW finds the additional technical assistance and advocacy support it receives through its partnership with United Way are invaluable resources for the organization.

