



U.S. Department of the Interior Indian Affairs

Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Education

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Biographical Statement of Wizipan Garriott Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs U.S. Department of the Interior

Wizipan (*Wee-zee-pan*) Little Elk Garriott, an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota, is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior. He was appointed to this role by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland in October 2021.

The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs serves as the first assistant and principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs in the development and interpretation of policies affecting Indian Affairs bureaus, offices, and programs.

Prior to his appointment, Mr. Garriott served as chief executive officer from 2012 to 2021 of the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO), an ecosystem of Tribal organizations serving the Rosebud Indian Reservation. In this capacity, Mr. Garriott led and started businesses and community-based programs, including a Native language immersion school and 1,500-head buffalo herd.

Mr. Garriott's previous federal service included serving under the leadership of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk from 2009 to 2011.

Mr. Garriott was born and raised on the Rosebud Indian Reservation where he attended St. Francis Indian School, a Bureau of Indian Affairs (now Bureau of Indian Education) facility. In 1998 he received the National Indian School Board Association's Student of the Year Award.

Following high school, Mr. Garriott became the first BIA student to attend and graduate from Yale University, where he also was the first student to use an Indigenous language – Lakota – to complete a foreign language graduation requirement. In 2003, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies.

In August 2003, Mr. Garriott joined the Washington, D.C., office of then-Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota as a staff assistant. He went on to serve as Special Assistant for Indian Affairs and Economic Development, advising on various issues impacting Tribal communities including agriculture, health care, housing, and renewable energy development.

Mr. Garriott received his Juris Doctor degree in 2008 from the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College.

Mr. Garriott is part of the Aske Gluwipi Tiyospaye (*They Wrap Their Hair*) family clan of the Sicangu Oyate (*See-con-zhu Oh-yah-tay*) or Rosebud Sioux Tribe. His name, from his grandfather who lived six generations before him, has three meanings: a parfleche to carry sacred objects, a great burden or life calling, and the sacred Black Hills of the Lakota. Mr. Garriott lives on the homelands of the Sicangu with his wife and four children.

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