

## WILMA PEARL MANKILLER

Wilma Mankiller is an author, lecturer and former principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. She has presented more than 100 lectures at colleges and universities on issues ranging from contemporary issues of Native Americans to community development and women in leadership. Her leadership lectures draw on her experience meeting with world class leaders such as Presidents Clinton and Bush, Sr. as well as U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton, U. N. Secretary Kofi Annan and South African leader Nelson Mandela.

Wilma was the founding director of the Cherokee Nation Community Development Department, which received several national awards for innovative use of self-help in housing and water projects in low-income Cherokee communities. Then in 1983, she was elected the first female deputy chief of the Cherokee Nation, and president of the tribal council. In 1987, she was elected to serve as the first female principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, and was overwhelmingly re-elected in 1991. She chose not to seek re-election in 1995.

During Ms. Mankiller's tenure she and Navajo Nation President Peterson Zah co-chaired a national conference between tribal leaders and cabinet members which helped facilitate the establishment of an Office of Indian Justice within the U.S. Department of Justice. Wilma's tenure was also marked by a great deal of new development, including several free-standing primary care health clinics, an \$11 million Job Corps Center, and greatly expanded services for children and youth. She led the team that developed the core businesses which comprise Cherokee Nation Enterprises.

She has been honored with many awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She has published several works, including, *Every Day is a Good Day*, Fulcrum Publishing 2004, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People*, co-authored, St. Martin's Press 1993, *A Reader's Companion to the History of Women in the U.S.*, co-edited, Houghton-Mifflin 1998. She has also contributed to other publications, including an essay for *Native Universe*, the inaugural publication of the National Museum of the American Indian. Wilma Mankiller lives on the Mankiller family allotment in the Cherokee Nation with her husband, Charlie Soap. They have five children and ten grandchildren.

Board Experience. She has served on several philanthropic boards, including the Seventh Generation Fund, the Ms. Foundation for Women and served for twelve years on the board of trustees of the Ford Foundation, where she served on the membership, ethics, human rights and assets committees. In that capacity she visited projects in South Africa, Brazil, China and numerous projects throughout the United States.

She currently serves on the board of trustees of the Freedom Forum, formerly the Gannett Foundation as well as its subsidiary, the Newseum, a museum which opened on April 11, 2008 on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. The Newseum provides a comprehensive history of journalism and promote First Amendment Rights. She is also a member of the external Diversity and Inclusion Council for Merrill Lynch and an advisor to the Women's Center at Spelman College in Atlanta. In the fall of 2005 she served as the Wayne Morse Professor at the University of Oregon where she and Dr. Rennard Strickland taught a class on tribal government, law and life.

Education: Bachelor of Science degree in social sciences, graduate work in community planning.

Honorary Doctorate Degrees:

Yale University  
Dartmouth College  
Smith College  
Mills College  
Northern Arizona University  
University of Oklahoma  
Oklahoma City University  
Oklahoma State University  
Tulsa University  
Drury College  
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods  
Rhode Island College  
New England University  
Willamette College

Honors:

Presidential Medal of Freedom  
Montgomery Fellowship, Dartmouth College  
Chubb Fellowship, Timothy Dwight College, Yale University  
San Francisco State University, Hall of Fame  
San Francisco State Alumna of the Year (1988)  
International Women of Distinction Award, Alpha Delta Kappa  
Oklahoma Hall of Fame  
Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame  
National Women's Hall of Fame  
International Women's Forum Hall of Fame  
Minority Business Hall of Fame  
Women of the Year, Oklahoma Federation of Indian Women

Woman of the Year, Ms. Magazine  
Celebration of Heroes, Newsweek Cover Story  
ABC Person of the Week, ABC Nightly News  
National Racial Justice Award  
Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award, Oklahoma State University  
John W. Gardner Leadership Award, Independent Sector  
United States Public Health Service Leadership Award  
Humanitarian Award, National Conference of Christians and Jews  
The Dorothy Height Lifetime Achievement Award  
The Elizabeth Blackwell Award  
Oklahoma Humanities Council Centennial Award  
50 Most Influential People of the Century, in Oklahoma  
50 Most Important People in the U.S., Who's Who  
Hero, Glamour Magazine  
Tulsa Press Club Headliner Award  
Native Voice Media Award