

## BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

### CANDIDATES MEMORANDUM-Denver American Indian Commission

To	Denver City Council
From	Mayor's Office of Boards & Commissions
Date	06/08/2026

#### BOARD PURPOSE

The Denver American Indian (DAIC) is tasked with advising the Agency for Human Rights & Community Partnerships Executive Director and the Mayor on issues and concerns that impact and are of importance to the American Indian community.

#### APPOINTMENT CANDIDATE PROFILES

**Term Dates:** July 3, 2026- July 3, 2029

**Bio:**

My name is Starlene Naranjo, I am a Full-blooded Southern Ute Tribal Elder. I reside in Denver Colo, been here for 13 years. I am a great grandmother, grandmother, mother, sister, auntie, cousin, niece and granddaughter. I come from a long line of strong Ute women who value tradition and knowledge of our culture. I am 61 yrs young. I am applying to join this commission because I feel that maybe just maybe I can help join in the fight to make this a better place for our Indigenous people here in the city of Denver and across Indian Country. I am the daughter of the late Alden B. Naranjo jr. (a gap) and the late Dorothy M. Naranjo-frost. I feel that by working together we can understand what is needed for our people and the communities we all live in. I would like to be a voice for all Indigenous people so we are forgotten people and the communities we all live in. I would like to be a voice for all Indigenous people so we are forgotten

**Statement of Support:**

With a restructure of the American Indian Commission all candidates interviewed are moving forward to support and engage the entire American Indian/Alaskan Native and Indigenous community.

**Candidate Answers to Additional Screener Questions:**

*Describe a previous experience that demonstrates how you would approach your role.*

How do you describe knowledge? For me knowledge comes from your life experiences. All the things you were taught, shown, experienced and lived. Knowledge is something we all learn not always through school or college; it is called life.

We experience it everyday through all we do we are always learning new things from meeting people, smells, taste, sometimes we may not understand it but it is there for us to learn knowledge is what is how you approach things or people you will learn how they think, move, talk, this is knowledge.

You may not like some of the things people say but you will need to understand that not everything will go your way because we all do not think the same act the same or even live the same. Sometimes there is going to be a need to think outside the box and so you will need to learn to listen with your eyes your ears your heart and then maybe you will understand how we as Indigenous people think what their needs are their wants their dreams for a better future for our children because they are our future so we need to pave a way for them to remind them of where

they come from.. We as a community as a board will need to find ways to help our Indigenous communities become strong again to come together to help each others instead of tearing each other apart we are ONE we are NATIVE we are PEOPLE not STATISTICS OR NUMBERS.

As a member of the Denver Indian Commission I would go out there to the Native communities and talk with the people hold general meeting, mingle with them get to know who you representing because we are there for them and the children who will need to know how things are done for their future. I have experienced through life that our Native people struggle for housing and all the guidelines through Federal government that has prevented some from gaining housing on or off the reservation. My example for this is my own saughter she is a hadicapped person and has struggled with housing on our reservation herein Colorado, because of some red tape she is unable to have her animal with her because it goes against federal guidelines. Even though she has clearance fro =m her doctors stating her animal is a support animal she is still being denided housing. So one of my hopes is that one day this will be understood that no matter what we as Native people will have better housing, better health care and better futures for all Indian Country.

*Describe what goals or actions of this Mayoral administration align with your personal priorities for the City.*

If elected to this board I would act accordingly to help Indigenous people here, throughout Colorado, and even beyond our state to understand that we as Native people are here and we are not going anywhere. I would go out among the people and sit down to understand how they feel. My goal is for us to come together as a community and a city partnership to help us through actions, not just words, because "actions speak louder than words." I would like better communication among us, and for everyone to feel comfortable speaking up for us. I want this city and other non-native communities to form a better, healthier relationship. I would represent my State My HOME as proudly as I can because I am Southern Ute and I am proud of where I come from... Colorado. We all need to represent ourselves the best way we can and know how to do so. One goal is to have a voice to speak up for us in any involvement with the city and atate of Colorado. To ensure our cultures and ways do not go unnoticed or unrecognized, we must not let them be "swept under the rug," so to speak. We need a partnership that will allow progress toward making the City and State better—a partnership aiming for the same goal: a better State for all to call home.

**Reappointment?** No

**Term Number:** Term One

**For New Appointments:**

Filling an Open Seat? Yes

Replacing an Expiring Seat: Name of current serving member, if applicable

**Appointment Process for Seat:** (b) Mayoral Appointment, Council Confirmation