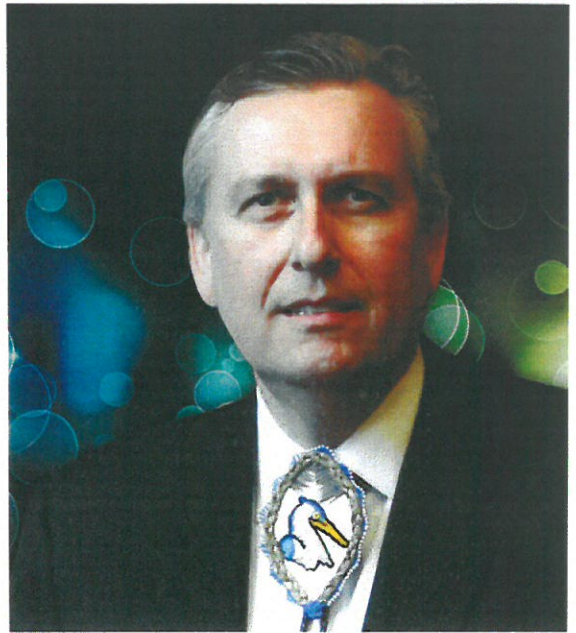


Building Your Path To A Better Tomorrow!

Seneca Nation President Robert Odawi Porter

Build Your Future, Don't Wait For It. As Native leaders we deal with a unique imperative to blend our old, traditional ways with the dynamic changes and influences that occur every day. It can be a delicate balancing act, but for Native leaders it is necessary to tune in the past and consider the future as we move forward. The Seneca Nation of Indians has faced numerous challenges and has never buckled in the face of adversity. In my own life, I draw my strength and principles from what I have witnessed over the years, having watched past Presidents such as Cal Lay and George Heron never waiver from defending our lands, resources and treaty rights.



Build Forward Through Remembering Your Heritage. American Indian communities across the country are coping with historical trauma. Our nation has a history of struggle, a history of our land being taken away. In the early 1960s, the federal government broke a 170-year old treaty, forcibly removed our people from our lands, burned down our homes and flooded 10,000 acres of land after constructing the Kinzua Dam. Following this devastation, most families simply survived and accessed government programs to put food on the table. But we're not going away. We will continue to persevere and rebuild our nation for generations to come. We believe that we must live, learn, heal, and move onward. Through our efforts to build a strong Seneca Nation, we will ensure that a situation like Kinzua will never happen again.

Build Emerging Revenue Streams. The Seneca Nation has undergone dramatic and unprecedented economic expansion in the last decade. The Seneca economy has grown considerably, and it is diversifying beyond the staples of tobacco and gas that took root 25 years ago. The greatest contributor to the Nation's growth, however, has been the establishment of Class III gaming facilities, namely the Seneca Niagara Casino, the Seneca Allegany Casino, and the Buffalo Creek Casino. Even in the face of a lingering recession, and a struggling western New York (WNY) economy, the Nation has continuously employed more than 5,000 people and generates nearly \$700 million in annual revenues. In combination with

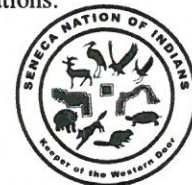
Seneca's government programs, services, and enterprises, the Nation generates more than \$1 billion in annual economic impact in WNY, and is the region's fifth largest employer.

Build Alliances. I firmly believe sharing success and wisdom from our experiences is paramount to creating a positive future. On a regular basis Native nations must reach out to other nations, local leaders, county executives, legislators, business people and developers to talk about creating partnerships and business opportunities. Our membership with organizations like United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) is a prime example of how we should be united to create strength and draw strength from each other. All these relationships have proven advantageous.

Build infrastructure. The Seneca Nation territories have burst with new state-of-the-art administration buildings, health and wellness centers, community centers, early childhood centers, and water treatment facilities. What is often overlooked, ignored, or discounted is the significant contribution the Seneca make to the region. The Nation is rooted to WNY and committed to continued growth and prosperity both for our 8,000 Seneca people and our neighbors whom we employ and do business with. A strong Seneca Nation has resulted in a stronger New York and a stronger America.

Build Your Destiny. The Seneca Nation is robust and able to provide for its people. In our recent history the Seneca Nation

has met and overcome challenges. The difference today, unlike times past, is that we are dictating the terms and we are no longer being at the short end of someone else's decision. We are charting our own course. As a Native nation we are engaged in a constant education and awareness process when advancing our ideas with leaders at the state and federal levels. It is all part of protecting and preserving our inherent sovereign rights, our lands, our right to free trade and commerce, economic justice and creating a better future for the next generations.



(New York) Robert Odawi Porter is the President of the Seneca Nation of Indians. Currently he is on leave as a Professor of Law and Dean's Research Scholar of Indigenous Nations Law at Syracuse University. He is also the founder and director of the Center for Indigenous Law, Governance & Citizenship and formerly the Senior Associate Dean for Research at the Syracuse University College of Law. He has taught and written extensively on Indigenous sovereignty and colonialism, tribal law and governance, and federal Indian regulatory law, including over 20 scholarly articles in leading law journals and a book, *SOVEREIGNTY, COLONIALISM & THE INDIGENOUS NATIONS*. President Porter is a 1986 graduate of Syracuse University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and economics magna cum laude and Harvard Law School where he received his Juris Doctorate degree in 1989.