

## John Gritts

Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

Artist and Career Public Servant for Tribal Universities and Students



# Invocation

John Gritts is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. He currently resides in Golden, CO with his wife Page Lambert. His entire work career has been with or about higher education. Among other positions he was the Director of Financial Aid at Black Hills State University for 18 years. John then worked for nine years at the American Indian College Fund as a Program Officer. Two years at the Institute of American Indian Arts as the Director of Admissions, Recruitment Records and Financial Aid. Then nine years with the United States Department of Education, Federal Student Aid.

He has been honored as the National Indian Education Male Elder of the Year, an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Bacone College, Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Indian College Fund and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium for his work with the tribal colleges and the Zenith Award from Federal Student Aid for his vision, leadership and commitment to FSA. Recently John was honored with an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Sinte Gleska University and recognized by the Chief of the Cherokee Nation with the 2018 Cherokee National Community Leadership Individual Award.

John has had a number of art shows in New York City, South Dakota and North Dakota. He studied painting under Fritz Scholder and Dr. Richard West. He personally presented President Jimmy Carter in the Oval Office one of his drawings on behalf of the State of South Dakota. This year he won first place in the Graphics Division of the Trail of Tears Show in Tahlequah, OK.

John attended the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM, Bacone College in Muskogee, OK and Sioux Falls College, Sioux Falls, SD. He majored in Art and Art Education.