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***Ruth Buffalo, First Native Woman Elected as North Dakota Legislator,
to Keynote Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations' 2019 Facing Race
Awards Program***

St. Paul, Minn. – August 6, 2019 – [The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations](#) (the Foundations) today announced that North Dakota Rep. Ruth Buffalo will be the keynote speaker at its 2019 Facing Race Awards program Sept. 19 at the InterContinental Riverfront Hotel in St. Paul.

In 2018, Buffalo became the first Native American Democratic woman elected to North Dakota's legislature, representing south Fargo (District 27). A descendant of the Chiricahua Apache and a citizen of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation, Buffalo previously chaired the North Dakota Human Rights Coalition where she led efforts to introduce legislation to curb human trafficking and protect the most vulnerable. She also has worked as a political healer, community organizer, public health professional and educator.

"We are honored to have Ruth Buffalo join us as keynote speaker for this year's Facing Race Awards. Her work is an inspiration to people and organizations, such as ours, who strive to create equitable communities," said Eric J. Jolly, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations. "Ruth's wisdom and perspective on the power of our stories is a benefit to our community as much as her own."

Established in 2006, the Foundations' Facing Race Awards honor Minnesota's anti-racism activists who work tirelessly to change the narrative on race and create communities where everyone feels safe, valued and respected. Again this year, two individuals will be selected by a panel of community judges. Award recipients will receive a \$15,000 grant that they will designate to a nonprofit of their choosing.

"Throughout my career, I have been a community advocate for all people, and one committed to creating safe and healthy communities," said Buffalo. "Now as a state legislator, I want to make certain that people are informed of electoral and legislative processes while helping them understand how all of us can and must have a voice. I am delighted to be part of this year's Facing Race Awards program as it recognizes Minnesotans working to change how we think and talk about race in order to create safe, inclusive communities for generations to come."

Founded in St. Paul in 1940, the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations is Minnesota's largest community foundation and the partner of choice for thousands of donors, professional advisors, nonprofits and community organizations. The Foundations support more than 2,000 charitable organizations and donor funds and manage nearly \$1.5 billion in assets, including F. R. Bigelow Foundation and Mardag Foundation.

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The Foundations' impact is broad. Last year, in partnership with donors, the Foundations made nearly 8,300 grants to support community needs in 71 of 87 Minnesota counties. Additionally, the Foundations support 17 affiliate community foundations—from Hibbing to Waseca—which provide regional granting strategies and local donor involvement opportunities.

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About Ruth Buffalo

Ruth Buffalo was elected in 2018 to serve North Dakota as a Representative for District 27 in south Fargo. She is a public health professional, educator and volunteer for local, state and national boards focused on improving the quality of life for all people. Additionally, Buffalo has served on advisory councils focused on women's health, women's leadership and local food systems. She is the former Chair of the North Dakota Human Rights Coalition and recipient of the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development's 40 under 40 leadership award. The Fargo Inforum newspaper named her among local leaders to watch in 2019. Her consultant and independent contract work has included: the ACLU of North Dakota, Honor the Earth, Sacred Pipe Resource Center, MHA Nation and First Nations Women's Alliance. Her work includes research and advocacy, community capacity-building and continued reconciliation efforts through education.

Buffalo earned a bachelor of science degree in Criminal Justice and masters' degrees in Management, Business Administration and Public Health. She is a descendant of the Chiricahua Apache and a citizen of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation

Originally from Mandaree, N.D., Buffalo currently resides in south Fargo with her husband and four children.

About the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations

The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations believe in the best of Minnesota and the power of its communities. With roots in Saint Paul and partners across the state, it is Minnesota's largest community foundation and the partner of choice for thousands of donors, nonprofits and community organizations. The Foundations inspire generosity to make Minnesota better for all who call it home. Learn more at spmcf.org.