

# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025



<https://www.facebook.com/MMIRofColorado/>



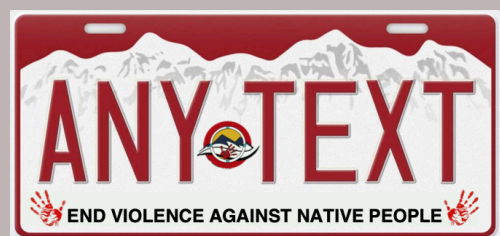
<http://mmirtaskforceco.com/>



## MMIR License Plate Legislation

Our Task Force approached potential sponsors a year ago to create a MMIR License Plate to financially benefit the state's Office of MMIR. Representative Elizabeth Velasco and Senator Jessie Danielson introduced HB25-1036 on January 8th. January 8th was also the birthday of Wanbli Black Elk Vigil, who was the the first Missing Indigenous Person Alert ever issued. Although that coincidence was not intentional, it does help us keep the memory of Wanbli in our hearts as we work to pass this bill. Proceeds from the sale of these license plates will directly support initiatives aimed at providing resources for missing and murdered Indigenous relatives, enhancing investigation efforts, and improving culturally competent victim support services.

This bill seeks to honor the lives of Indigenous individuals who have gone missing or been murdered and to ensure that their families receive the support they deserve. We participated in a press conference and testified in support of this bill in the House Finance Committee on February 3rd. There will be a community wide artist call for the final plate designs organized by Task Force member, Danielle SeeWalker. You can follow this bill at <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1036>



## CBI Missing Person Day

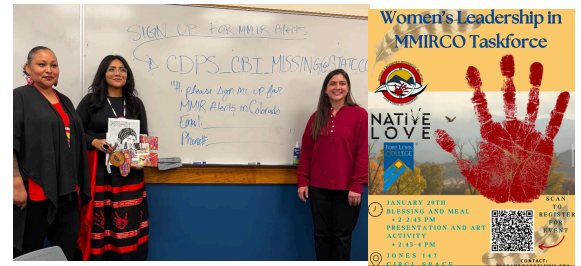
Colorado recognizes every February 4th as Missing Person Day. The Colorado Bureau of Investigation organizes an event at the Capital to honor the hundreds of people actively missing statewide. We requested that an amendment be added to the resolution to include the impact of the Missing Indigenous Person Alert. Our Task Force was invited to read the names of all the missing Native people in the state alongside the family of Marcie Fairchild who has been missing since May of 2024. As part of the public awareness of this event we were able to connect local media to the family of Francis Houle who has been missing since 1979, helping to put new attention to his case. Task Force President, Raven Payment, offered the closing statement, "Know that we will not stop until every person is safe. Until every missing relative is found. Until every family has justice. May we all stand together until this list is no longer needed."



2.1.1

Our Task Force is now listed on the 211 Colorado database. We are hoping this makes it even easier for families to connect with us.

## Fort Lewis Presentation



Task Force member, Daisy Bluestar, led a presentation at Fort Lewis College in Durango on January 29th. She presented the history of our Task Force, available online resources, and how to request a MIPA and how to receive the Missing Indigenous Person Alert.

## Community Outreach at Denver Indian Center

Our Task Force provided an information table at the Denver Indian Center's community dinner and town hall on February 28th. These are important opportunities for our community to learn more about we do, what to do if a loved one goes missing, and to provide information regarding MMIR we may not know about. We were so grateful to connect with local families directly impacted by the MMIR crisis. We were also able to provide co Director, Rick Waters, with a Denver MMIR poster to display at the center.



## Active Updates

**Houle:** Found potential previous landlord and employer not identified at the the time of disappearance. Notified CSPD to interview, assisted with new media coverage.

**Unidentified:** We are working on identifying multiple Jane and John Doe's with a Forensic Genealogist.

**Waciyampi:** Sent all Lakota and SD related cases to their Task Force for collaboration.

**Arguello:** New leads and evidence are being investigated by Thornton PD.

**NamUs-** We entered multiple cases into their database that law enforcement had not

**Seawalker:** Sentencing coming soon regarding the perpetrator in her homicide.

**Long:** Arrest made.

**Thompson:** Settlement paid to surviving family

**Yazzie:** Elder found safe after three years.

**Clarke:** Working with CBI and law enforcement to obtain records on microfilm.

**MMDNR:** Sent all Diné related cases for assistance in obtaining more info.

**St John:** Connected with Bent Sheriff Dept to help obtain additional resources & coordinate search efforts.





## City of Denver Unidentified Persons Page

In 2023, while doing regular research for potential MMIRs, we came across the story of how Denver identified two John Does. One of them was a man named Arnis Iron Necklace. He was not an MMIR but it still bothered us that the media reduced this man's entire existence to a John Doe found near I-70 and a photo of a suitcase he had with him. They essentially erased him. He was identified and returned home to his family in Minnesota in 2022 but when we were doing research again this year, he was still listed on the city of Denver's Unidentified Person's page.

We were able to connect with Denver City Councilwoman, Stacy Gilmore, to address this as a dignity issue, not just for Native people, but for everyone who has been identified that is still listed online. She agreed that the City should do better to respect grieving families. Within just a few days, Councilwoman Gilmore was able to connect with other city officials and they have since completely overhauled their website. They now remove graphic coroner photos and investigative language regarding the circumstances surrounding an individual's death as soon as someone is identified. Our Task Force was then able to connect again with the Iron Necklace family to let them know that because of Arnis' case, the City enacted to changes to better respect all individuals who tragically may ever be listed on that database. We have a video of Arnis, created by his brother on our Facebook page.



## Missing Woman Identified

We are heartbroken to share that Marcie Fairchild was identified on February 7th as a Jane Doe found in in Denver in October. We will share updates on the investigation as more information is released. Marcie's daughters participated in CBI's Missing Person Day just days before the notification.



## CSPD and Veteran Administration Training

Our Task Force frequently presents to other organizations and agencies regarding the MMIR crisis. In January we trained with both the Colorado Springs Police Cadet Academy and the Veterans Health Administration. We are looking forward to continued outreach with these agencies as we already have additional training dates scheduled with them.



Veterans Health  
Administration



**FEB  
14th**

**NATIONAL DAY OF  
MMIR ACTION AND  
AWARENESS**

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

- SHARE LOCAL MMIR FLYERS AND TAG LAW ENFORCEMENT ASKING THEM TO INVESTIGATE COLD CASES
- CALL OR EMAIL YOUR LEGISLATORS TO TELL THEM TO SUPPORT THE MMIR LICENSE PLATE BILL
- DONATE TO ORGANIZATIONS DOING MMIR WORK & CONFIRM THEIR WORK
- ORGANIZE A CANDLE LIGHT VIGIL FOR MMIR CASES IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- SPEAK UP IF YOU KNOW SOMETHING
- BELIEVE SURVIVORS AND EDUCATE YOURSELF ON THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, TRAFFICKING, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND MMIR
- LOOK FOR RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE
- USE SOCIAL MEDIA TAGS:

#MMIR #MMIRACTIONNOW  
#NOMORESTOLENRELATIVES  
#JUSTICEFORMMIR



Task Force member Monycka Snowbird, has been participating in a multi week panel community conversation with the Minnesota Indian Women Sexual Assault Coalition's Healing and Response Team (HRT) Special Initiative. These community conversations are open spaces for discussion and sharing to help create an interactive toolkit in response to Missing or Murdered Indigenous Relatives



Task Force Member, Daisy Bluestar, was featured in media coverage on KOAT Action News regarding the MMIR Crisis, specifically in southern Colorado. You can watch this story here <https://www.koat.com/article/colorado-mmip-advocates-more-work-needed/63516866>



## Financial Assistance

We were honored to be able to financially assist the families of two MMIR victims in January and February. Our website also lists other resources for victim's assistance available statewide.



Tocabe is currently the only American Indian owned and operated restaurant in Colorado specializing in Native American cuisine. Co-owner Ben Jacobs, agreed to display a poster featuring the flyers of all the Denver MMIR cases at their location at 3536 West 44th Avenue. We are thankful for this collaboration to help bring awareness.



## National Day of MMIR Action in Colorado Springs

The Task Force partnered with the Haseya Advocate Program on February 14th to send flyers for the Colorado Springs active MMIR cases to CSPD, City Council, Mayor's Office, and because two of the unsolved homicides are of unhoused relatives, we also sent them to the Housing and Homelessness Response Office, the CSPD Homeless Outreach Team, most of the unhoused advocacy orgs like PPCOC, Catholic Charities, and the shelters. Flyers were hung in the neighborhood where Francis Houle was living at the time of his disappearance and around the location of where Joseph Talahytewa was attacked.






# January and February Anniversaries

These are the ongoing MMIRs for each month. We will honor and remember our missing and murdered relatives by sharing their flyers on social media throughout the year, marking the anniversary of when they were last seen or taken too soon.

**MURDERED  
INDIGENOUS PERSON  
- UNSOLVED -**



**Donald Mustache**

DOB: 08/11/1972  
Murdered: 02/16/1997  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Tribal Affiliation: Ojibwe/Diné

On February 16, 1997, officers responded to the 1400 block of Elmira Street on a report of a shooting. It was reported that an individual had been shot and was transported to a local hospital by relatives. The victim succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. In the investigation, it was revealed the victim became aware of a physical altercation involving a relative and had responded to his aid. The suspect(s) responsible for the death of Donald Mustache have yet to be identified.

PLEASE CONTACT AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT WITH ANY INFO  
303-739-1800  
Case #97-8085

**MURDERED  
INDIGENOUS PERSON  
- UNSOLVED -**



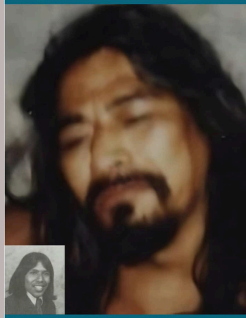
**Harley Jay Frost**

DOB: 10/29/1957  
Murdered: Jan 8 2007  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Tribal Affiliation: Ute Mtn Ute

The family states they were told Harley was at a party and went outside where he was strangled by an unknown assailant. A family member spoke to the BIA and was told Harley's neck was broken. The medical reports show there was a fracture of the cervical spine and cranial cerebral trauma but the FBI will not share any information on the status of his case.

PLEASE CONTACT THE FBI WITH ANY INFO  
303-629-7171

**MURDERED  
INDIGENOUS PERSON  
- UNSOLVED -**



**Joseph Talahytewa**


DOB: 11/10/1955  
Murdered: 02/12/1996  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Tribal Affiliation: Hopi

Early morning on Feb. 8, 1996, officers responded to reports of an assault near Pikes Peak Avenue and Wasatch Avenue. An investigation discovered that the victim, 40-year-old Joseph Talahytewa, was involved in a fight behind a liquor store that was in the area, the night before. Hours after undergoing surgery, Talahytewa went into a coma and never regained consciousness. Talahytewa died on Feb. 12, per CSPD. Before he lost consciousness, Talahytewa told witnesses that three men hit him in the head with a 2x4. Police said one of the suspects may have sustained injuries during the fight.

PLEASE CONTACT THE COLORADO SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT WITH ANY INFO  
719-444-7000  
CASE 396-5342



**MISSING  
INDIGENOUS  
PERSON COLORADO**



**AARON MOSUS STANDING BEAR**

Height: 5'9"  
Weight: 180 lbs  
DOB: 1946  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Last Seen: 01/01/1984  
Tribal Affiliation: Lakota


Aaron left a foster home when he turned 18 and was thought to be traveling from Denver, Colorado to California. He has not been heard from since.

PLEASE CALL DENVER POLICE WITH ANY INFO AT  
720-913-1311 CASE #23-59592

NAMUS #MP32839

CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBAL POLICE #CRA-16-19

**MISSING  
INDIGENOUS  
RELATIVE  
COLORADO**



**JAMES WILLIAMS**

Height: 5'2  
Weight: 130 lbs  
Age: 71  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Last Seen: January 1 2013  
Tribal Affiliation: Not recorded by law enforcement

James Williams last had contact with family in 2013 and has not been heard from since.

PLEASE CALL CORTEZ POLICE DEPARTMENT WITH ANY INFO  
970-565-8441  
CASE # 12302208