

AMBER ALERT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

TRIBAL PROSECUTOR NOW LEADING FIGHT TO HELP RECOVER ABDUCTED INDIAN CHILDREN



Hedi Bogda has a unique, perhaps unparalleled perspective on Native American culture and law. She is a tribal prosecutor, tribal judge and an enrolled member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. Her background and skills are now being

used to train prosecutors, judges and law enforcement officers handling child abduction cases in Indian Country.

“Safety of children is my number one priority,” said Bogda. “Keep them safe and free from harm.”

The AMBER Alert Initiative in Indian Country asked Bogda to lead training efforts involving child abductions, exploitation and violence in tribal communities.

“She is truly an advocate for Indian Country and a great resource to address the challenges they face in protecting children,” said Jim Walters, Program Director, AMBER Alert Training & Technical Assistance. “She is humble, but is honestly the most impressive legal mind I know and is a true gift to Indian Country.”

Bogda said her father taught her how to argue when she was growing up and she always wanted to be an attorney. After getting her law degree from the University of North Dakota, she became a federal prosecutor who focused on crimes in Indian Country. She is currently working as a tribal prosecutor and a judge but plans to give her all to AMBER Alert training.

“One of the biggest strengths of the AMBER Alert in tribal communities is that you are working together for a child,” said Bogda. “The community as a whole takes care of their children and the AMBER Alert is a way to get tribes to band together to protect their children.”

However, she said many tribal communities still have a lack of awareness, resources and training about the AMBER Alert. “The remoteness of the Indian reservations creates a problem,” she added. “We need to get the tribe and the elders educated so everyone can work together.”

Bogda said her training will also be filtered by the fact she has a son and daughter in their teens. “From day one I was always trying to teach them safety words, how to be cautious about strangers and how to protect themselves on the computers,” she said. “It is scary having kids.”

But Indian Country now has a prosecutor, judge and mom making sure they are safe. 🍷

