

**For Immediate Release**

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# Media Release

## **Pulse of CCSD – CCSD celebrates Jacob Garreau - a Native American “royal”**

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**Charleston, SC** – If Native Americans had any conception of monarchy, Jacob Garreau would be considered a member of one of the royal families of the Western Plains.

Born on the Cheyenne Sioux Reservation in Eagle Butte, SD, Garreau is a direct descendent of four Sioux Chiefs - Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Yellow Hawk, and War Eagle.

Native American and Indigenous Heritage Month (NAIHM) is celebrated in November and in recognition of that, Charleston County School District (CCSD) pays tribute to Garreau, who is an Information Technology Support Technician.

### **Heritage and culture**

The Sioux are a confederacy of several tribes that speak three different dialects, the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota. Today, an estimated 150,000 Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota live in the United States and an additional 10,000 live in Canada. The Lakota, also called the Teton Sioux, are composed of seven tribal bands (Seven Council Fires) and are the largest and most western of the three groups, occupying lands in both North and South Dakota.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation on which Jacob was raised is similar to many towns located in central and western South Dakota. Many of the residents Indian and non-Indian, are familiar with ranching, farming, rodeos, powwows, and other cultural activities.

Garreau and his brother enjoyed a typical childhood, packed full of playing outside, hunting, fishing, swimming in the river, picking wild berries and plums, digging up wild turnips, learning to drive pickup trucks, and a host of other activities. Some of his enjoyable memories growing up were making bow and arrows out of the willow trees that grew in town, sleeping in a [tipi](#), and enjoying wojapi (a sweet pudding made from the picked berries) and his mom’s fry bread, a Sioux favorite.

In the Sioux culture, it is traditional that descendant’s names are passed down to other family members. This helps keep their character and accomplishments fresh in the memory.

"My mother's name is a generational name that has been passed down from family member to family member," said Garreau. "Her grandmother gave permission for the name to go to my mother. Her name is from a warrior that rode alongside Crazy Horse in the Battle of Greasy Grass or as we know it the Battle of Little Bighorn (Custer's Last Stand). My father, younger brother, and I were given first generational names from a respected elder of the tribe. We were named in respect to my father's military service."

Garreau said he was always aware of whom he descended from (Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull on his mother's side and Yellow Hawk and War Eagle on his father's side).

"As a child, on the rare occasion I spoke about it, people and my teachers never believed me," said Garreau. "My parents had documented proof and the community elders had the knowledge of family history."

Garreau's mother, Karen, is full-blood Lakota and his father is half-Lakota. Garreau and his brother, Beau, are both 82 percent Sioux, which is rare. As per the Sioux culture, the bloodline is carefully chronicled, and Jacob's three children are enrolled tribal members. The direct descending family line comes from his mother's side of the family. Within the culture, names are indicators of character as set forth by the deeds of their ancestors.

### **Rooted in survival**

Sioux Indians are known for their strength, courage, and resilience.

"Those traits are carried through the bloodline, generation, after generation," said Karen. "I see those qualities in our sons and are being passed along to our grandchildren, and to those that we serve."

Garreau said it is important to him that people know about and are aware of his culture.

"Traditions have evolved through the years, but the core values of virtue, honesty, generosity, and truth remain the same within family and community members," said Garreau. "These are the values that I strive to emulate before my family, friends, and coworkers."

Garreau enjoys wearing Native American jewelry and appreciates it when people notice and ask him about it. He is willing to share his knowledge to educate others.

True-to-life examples of the Sioux are depicted in video format and highlight various aspects of the culture. They include:

- A 1970's western movie, "[A Man called Horse](#)", depicts spiritual practices that are still held annually.
- The 1983 movie, "Running Brave", the [Billy Mills](#) story, about an athlete from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He is famous for becoming the first and is still the only American athlete to ever win an Olympic gold medal for the 10,000 meters footrace. His win was an upset.
- The 1990 movie starring Kevin Costner, "[Dances with Wolves](#)" was a romantic depiction of Sioux lifestyle. A few of Garreau's family members were extras in the movie and Garreau actually fed the horse (Buck) that Costner rode on in the movie. The movie dialogue was spoken in Lakota with English subtitles. The Lakota language was Garreau's mother's family's first language.

Nothing compares to real-life experience, though. Garreau's children recently spent a month on the reservation with their grandparents hanging out in the country, fishing, canoeing, learning to drive, and enjoying a slower pace of life.

"It is harder to do that in the South," explained Garreau. "There are not a lot of Native American tribes left in South Carolina but my children and I have attended a powwow of South Carolina's Natchez Tribe located primarily in Ridgeville."

### **The values that guide him**

While his father was in the military, Garreau was fortunate to travel and experience various communities and lifestyles which helped him obtain a greater appreciation of the opportunities that are available off the reservation. They lived in Colorado Springs, CO, El Paso, TX, Olympia, WA, and St. Joseph, MO, Albuquerque, NM, before returning to Dupree, SD.

Garreau was the Salutatorian in his graduating high school class and went to school in Albuquerque to study as an automotive technician. From there he moved to Denver, CO and earned his CDL Class A designation, and drove a tractor-trailer for seven years.

After visiting family members in South Carolina, Garreau fell in love with the area.

"I always wanted to live near the ocean and I had never been to the East Coast before," said Garreau. "It was new and exciting for my children and I love it here."

When Garreau arrived in the Lowcountry, he put himself back through school and earned his associate degree in Computer Science from Trident Technical College. After earning his degree, Garreau was hired by CCSD as a Help Desk contractor.

Nine months later a Technician II position became available, and he applied and assumed the position. Garreau worked as a field technician in North Charleston until being promoted to the Technician III position where he serves the needs of the office staff at the 75 Calhoun main district offices, Buist Academy, Charleston Progressive Academy, James Simmons Montessori School, and Memminger Elementary School.

"I love my job," said Garreau. "There is not a day that I don't want to go to work."

While Garreau works in the service of children in an indirect way, he is no stranger to the field of education. His parents have been employed within the school system for 28 years. Karen is a Read Right tutor and his father is the Behavior Coordinator/Data Manager and acting secretary at a credit recovery school in Eagle Butte. Garreau is proud of the work he can provide to CCSD and admires what his parents do for the children back home.

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#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.