



# INDIGENOUS LEADERS BIOS

**GEO COVID-19 HACKATHON 2020 JUNE 5-7**

CLAUDINETE COLE' DE SOUZA, QUILOMBOLA | BRAZIL

JAMES RATTLING LEAF SR., ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE | SOUTH DAKOTA, USA

LEO CERDA, KICHWA NATION | ECUADORIAN AMAZON

MARIO VARGAS SHAKAIM, SHUAR NATION | ECUADORIAN AMAZON

CHIEF ALMIR NARAYOMOGA SURUI | THE PATIER SURUI PEOPLE |

BRAZILIAN AMAZON

TITUS LETAAPO, SAMBURU TRIBE | KENYA







## CLAUDINETE COLÉ DE SOUZA

### **QUILOMBOLA, BOA VISTA COMMUNITY, BRAZIL**

Claudinete Colé self-identifies as Quilombola, a self-declared ethno-racial group. Quilombolas were African slaves who escaped and formed independent settlements in Brazil. Today, the term applies to both their direct descendants and to those who inhabit remaining settlement territories, or quilombos. She is a member of the Boa Vista community, a remnant quilombo settlement in the municipality of Oriximiná, in the state of Pará. Claudinete has two degrees from technical school: one in environmental affairs and one in agriculture and cattle ranching. Currently, she is studying for her bachelor's degree in information systems. Claudinete has been involved with the Associação das Comunidades Remanescentes de Quilombos do Município de Oriximiná (Association of Remaining Quilombo Communities of the Municipality of Oriximiná, or ARQMO) for seventeen years, participating in workshops and lectures. For the past three years, she has served as ARQMO's Executive Coordinator, and was the first woman in her position.





## JAMES RATTLING LEAF SR.

**ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE, SOUTH DAKOTA, UNITED STATES**

James Rattling Leaf, Sr., currently serves as a Cultural Intelligence Consultant. He was born on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. He specializes in developing programmes that utilize the interface between Indigenous People's Traditional Knowledge and Earth System Science. Rattling Leaf shares his Tribal heritage to strengthen his Tribe through education, focusing on community, economic and human development and to teach while preserving the Lakota values and heritage. He works with students to enhance their geoscience experience by developing funding, finding scholarships, and providing mentoring and internships. His higher education comes from Sinte Gleska University. James is a founding member of the GEO Indigenous Alliance that was established at GEO Week 2019 in Canberra, Australia to foster a continued, effective, respectful, and reciprocal relationship with GEO and representatives of indigenous communities from around the world.





LEO CERDA

**KICHWA NATION, ECUADORIAN AMAZON**

My name is Leo Cerda from the Kichwa community of Serena in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I consider myself to be a climate activist and indigenous rights defender focusing on efforts to build a more just and sustainable society. Like many indigenous people at a young age I had no choice but to learn about the struggles of my people so, I started working with local grassroots organizations to create awareness about the environmental and cultural impacts caused by the oil industry. I am the Founder of the HAKHU Project, a young organization that supports community-based economic initiatives as a way to fight against exploitative oil and mining development in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I currently serve and work with many organizations locally and internationally bridging indigenous community initiatives and international support.





# MARIO VARGAS SHAKAIM

## SHUAR NATION, ECUADORIAN AMAZON

Mario Vargas (Shakaim) is an Indigenous Shuar from the Ecuadorian Amazon who has been defending nature since he was a young boy. He has been the leader and technician of the Shuar Federation of Pastaza, supporting the formulation of a community broadcaster that disseminates information on the rights of the people. Mario is a founding member of the GEO Indigenous Alliance that was established at GEO Week 2019 in Canberra, Australia to foster a continued, effective, respectful, and reciprocal relationship with GEO and representatives of indigenous communities from around the world. He is a member of the Network of Climate Finance Specialists, as a representative of South America, and currently works at The Coordinator of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), as Technical Coordinator of the environmental monitoring project “All Eyes on the Amazon” (TOA).





# CHIEF ALMIR NARAYOMOCA SURUI

## THE PAITER SURUI PEOPLE, BRAZILIAN AMAZON

An environmentalist, political activist and tribal chief, Almir Narayamoga Surui, has been fighting to save both his Surui tribe and the Amazon rainforest for more than 20 years. Almir's efforts are credited with almost single-handedly bringing his tribe back from the brink of extinction. Most notably, his ability to bring his people and partners together in favor of finding solutions to making living forests worth more alive than dead has brought him recognition from around the world and in 2009 made him one of Brazil's 100 most influential persons according to a leading Brazilian news magazine. As Almir told Smithsonian magazine in a March 2007 profile, "I rely on the spirit of the forest to protect me." Almir's political successes in the rainforest are considerable. Education and medical care are two of the vital issues confronting the indigenous people of the Amazon.





## TITUS LETAAPO

### **SAMBURU TRIBE, KENYA**

Titus holds a diploma in Conservation Education from Kent University in the UK, and another diploma in Natural Resource Management from the South African Wildlife College. He is Chief Programmes Officer at The Northern Rangelands Trust ,a community conservancy membership organisation, bringing a wealth of knowledge with over 17 years' experience in community development, management of natural resources for community development, conflict resolution and management of resource-based conflicts in Samburu, Isiolo, Lamu, Tana Delta, Garissa, Baringo and Marsabit Counties. Titus is a founding member of the GEO Indigenous Alliance.