

Final

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c.c. Jan Iverson, janice.iverson@stu.bmcc.cuny.edu, (760) 707-9634

Re.: In Support of Vanguard Semi-Finalist Jan Iverson, Animation and Motion Graphics, BMCC

Vanguard Award finalists are asked to complete an essay of **200 words** about the importance of the career they are pursuing addressing the following questions:

- **What motivated you to consider the career you are pursuing? What specific elements attracted you to that occupation?**
- **What barriers did you face, if any, and how did you overcome those barriers?**

My hands were created to draw. As the Apache proverb states, "It is better to have less thunder in the mouth and more lightning in the hand!" It is my passion and in my blood to be a great storyteller through visual art. I am a member of the Kiowa and Apache Tribes of Oklahoma and I've combined our traditional art forms with technology in my pursuit of a career in Animation to tell stories in new ways, specifically through animated shorts and games.¹ Native Americans make up only 0.09 percent of video game characters.² So, for me, visibility is another prime motivator—not only to challenge unfavorable Native narratives, but also to take a leadership role in digital production, where indigenous women are barely visible.³ In violation of The Indian Children Welfare Act of 1978, I became a ward of the court in Oklahoma as a toddler and was subsequently adopted and raised in England, only to then fight for my Native birthright as an adult in an Oklahoma court, and win. I continue to use my determination to open doors for all women to be visible in careers in motion art. -Jan Iverson (193)

¹#notinvisible social campaign – My original digital animation with sound.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/wyy4q24fh dof03l/Jan_Iverson_notinvisible_Animation_Edited.mp4?dl=0

²Leavitt, Peter A., et al. "'Frozen in Time': The Impact of Native American Media Representations on Identity and Self-Understanding." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 71, 2015,

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/josi.12095>

³"A Day in the Life of a SI Leader" – My work mentoring BMCC students in Contemporary Media.

https://youtu.be/5-P3_U-9sRg