

# Indigenous Steward Highlight: *Dr. Felina Cordova-Marks*

By: Micaryn Begay



Felina Cordova-Marks is a member of the Hopi Tribe. She grew up in Flagstaff and Tucson, Arizona. Outside of her busy days at the University of Arizona, she spends most of her time volunteering to give back to the community. Despite her busy schedule, she still has time for her favorite hobbies, which include knitting, reading, hiking and attending movie theaters (pre-pandemic). Dr. Cordova-Marks graduated from the University of Arizona and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology. After she finished her undergraduate degree, she pursued a masters degree at University of Arizona in Public Health, and a doctorate in Public Health. When asked what she hopes to do with her degrees and educational experience, Dr. Cordova-Marks responded “I hope to create translational research that can improve the health of American Indian communities”.



*Dr. Cordova-Marks picking up garbage for a Trash Tag event for her volunteer group*

*Felina Cordova-Marks, DrPH, MPH*

these communities continue to face. Dr. Cordova-Marks aspires to eventually pursue a career at the National Institute of Health (NIH) or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Her decision to pursue a career at the national level is an interest of hers because she hopes that she can incite change for her community and other tribal communities at the national level.

Currently, Dr. Cordova-Marks is a newly appointed Assistant Professor at UArizona College of Public Health. Prior, she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Arizona Cancer Center. She is a mixed-methods researcher that has also spent equal amounts of training in both biological and social sciences. In addition to being faculty, she is also the founder of the Indigenous Volunteers and Tucson Volunteers. She founded these organizations “to increase volunteerism and show on social media all the great ways that American Indians/Indigenous People give back to their communities.”

Dr. Cordova-Marks is a well-known member of the Tucson community where she has been recognized for her contributions and hard work. She was recently named Tucson’s Woman of the Year-40 Under 40 from the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; National Native American 40 Under 40 from the National Center for American Indian Economic Development, and the University of Arizona Centennial Award. Her most cherished accomplishments outside of her community work are her first publications, which were primarily biology focused. Her first peer-reviewed journal publication was titled “Leptin’s Regulation of Obesity-Induced Cardiac Extracellular Matrix Remodeling” and was published in the Journal of Cardiovascular Toxicology.



*Dr. Cordova-Marks helping a Native family in need for the Annual Present Drive*