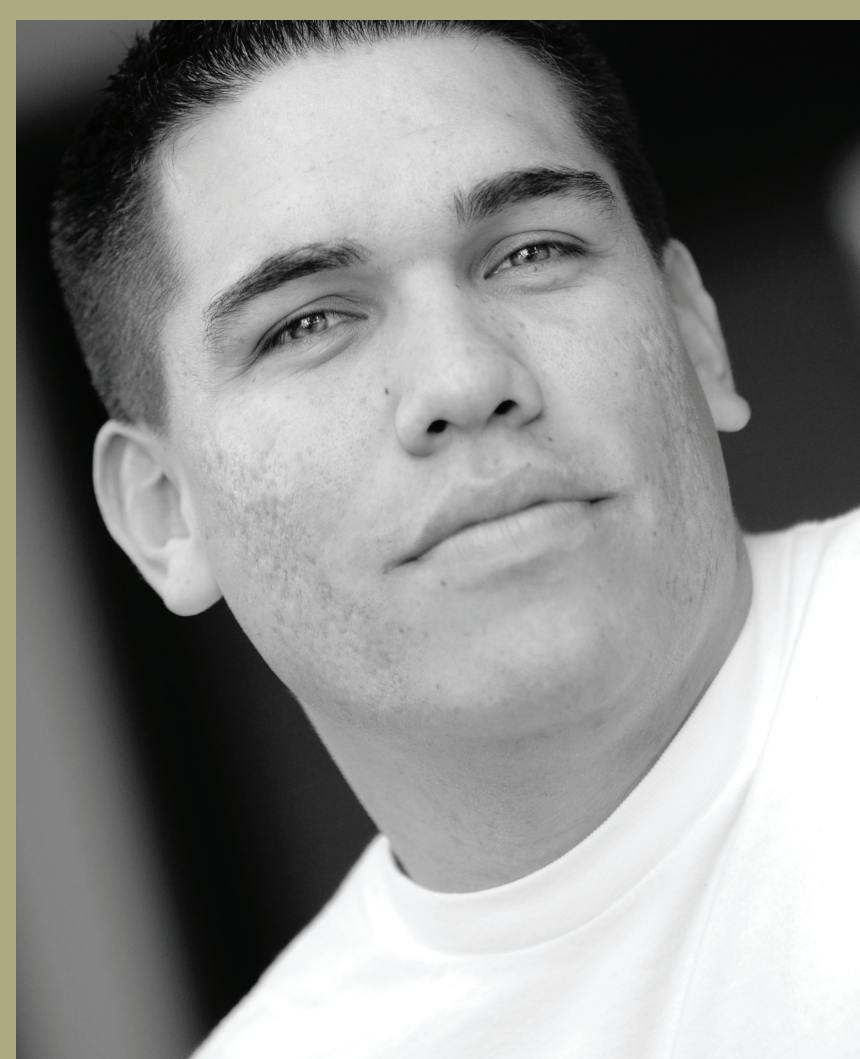




honor your Self

**“BE RESPONSIBLE AND BE PERSISTENT. DON’T EVER GIVE UP... EVERYTHING’S GOING TO TAKE WORK BUT THAT WORK IS GOING TO BE REWARDING. DON’T BE AFRAID OF IT.”**



Kenny Nicholson Jr. 28  
Gros Ventre/Cree  
Harlem High School  
Northwest College  
Graphic Designer

Kenny Nicholson started to develop his skills in fine arts when he was in high school. His uncle always told him to be proud of the special gift he had been given. “Don’t let it idle,” he told Kenny. “Take a hold of it and use it.” Kenny wasn’t sure how he could make a career out of his talent until an art teacher in high school suggested he look into graphic design. Kenny took his advice and went on to Northwest College in Wyoming, where he studied design. After college, he got an internship at the Smithsonian in Washington DC, where he worked on signage for exhibits at the National Museum of the American Indian. Today he works at an advertising and marketing firm in Billings. “The good thing about being involved in artwork all the time is that it’s everywhere. Ideas can come from anywhere.”

Kenny says it’s rewarding whenever he gets to work on a Native American business account. “Anytime I get to help out, it’s a good thing.” He also says that if he could change one thing in the Native community it would be to give kids more ambition. He thinks back to what his father told him when he was young. “Don’t quit unless you really have to. You have to think about it. You have to struggle with it. And if you stick with it, it’s always rewarding because it’s a challenge and you know you’ve worked through it.”

Kenny wants to be the best designer he can be. He loves his career and hopes to get some of his work into design magazines and award shows. “It’s a fun job,” he says, “but it’s not for someone with a thin skin. You’re always being critiqued and people tell you their honest opinions. But I love it.”

“I ENJOY WHAT I DO AND I WANT TO BE REALLY GOOD AT IT IN HOPES THAT YOUNGER NATIVES CAN SEE WHAT I’VE DONE AND KNOW THAT IF I’VE DONE IT, THEY CAN DO IT.”