

Speaker Biographies

Robyn Cenizal, CFLE, is the Project Director for the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families. She was previously the Project Director for the TANF/Faith-based and Community Organizations Collaboration Institute, a research to practice project, which focused on developing and strengthening public/private partnerships to build capacity of TANF Agencies to meet the diverse needs of their clients. In addition to her work in the healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood fields, she also brings with her over 26 years of government experience specializing in strategic public/private partnerships to address community issues including broad expertise with family strengthening, child welfare, workforce development, domestic violence and poverty reduction.

Bonnie DeWeaver has worked in the Indian and Native American workforce field for more than 30 years. Her work history includes a JTPA program in Alaska as well as providing technical assistance training in the administration of employment, training and education program for tribes. Ms. DeWeaver is a member of the Fort Yuma Quechan Tribe in Southern California.

David Madison, MPA, is currently employed by the Administration for Children and Families as a Budget and Program Management Analyst. He manages all of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants for Region IX. Mr. Madison previously worked 15 years for the Corporation for National and Community Service as a Grants Management Specialist.

He graduated from Golden Gate University in 1971 with a Masters in Public Administration. Mr. Madison truly enjoys working with the Tribes.

Theda New Breast, MPH, is a Montana born Blackfeet Indian, and she is one of the pioneers in the Native training field in addition to being one of the original committee members for the Men's and Women's Wellness gatherings. She has more than 30 years of professional experience in providing healing and training workshops centered on mental health issues related to alcohol and other drug use prevention. She just completed an appointment as an expert consultant to Dr. Nelba Chavez, for SAMHSA in 1999 and was presented with the Hammer Award by Vice President Albert Gore for increasing government efficiency for her success in providing assistance to Tribes.

Ms. New Breast is the founder and lead writer of the GONA curriculum. She has facilitated over 600 GONA's into 2012. The GONA was selected as one of the Ten Effective Practices and Models in Communities of Color. Adolescents and Families of Color in October 2005. Ms. New Breast has been a Board member and Master Trainer/Facilitator to the Native Wellness Institute (NWI) since 2000. NWI has successfully launched the Leading the Next Generation (LNG) Healthy Relationship curriculum; a culturally based process approved as promising practices from the Administration of Native Americans. In April of 2012 Theda was part of a team to launch the Teen Healthy Relationship curriculum to work with National Native American Teens to prevent Violence, Sexual Assault, and Promote self-esteem, and resilient cultural identity to coping strategies for the future.

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Lucy A. Rubi is currently the Policy Specialist and Tribal Liaison for the Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS) under the Department of Economic Security (DES). This division includes the Employment Administration (EA), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Child Care Administration (CCA), and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. She has been with the State of Arizona DES for nearly 18 years. Ms. Rubi grew up in Winslow, which is in Northeastern Arizona, and came to know the Hopi and Navajo cultures through the many Native friends.

Ms. Rubi began her work with DES in the Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility with the Family Assistance Administration (FAA) where she interviewed applicants and made determinations for those applying for TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid (Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System-AHCCCS). After six years with FAA, she moved on to the Employment Administration Jobs Program working with TANF recipients and assisting them toward their journey to employment and self-sufficiency by removing barriers and/or referring them to community agencies to help with barrier removal. After 4 years with the Jobs Program, Ms. Rubi moved into the Food Stamp Employment & Training Program (now the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Employment & Training Program) where she assisted Food Stamp/SNAP recipients in finding employment and referred them to community agencies to help with barrier removal.

Ms. Rubi began with the EA Support Unit in August 2011 and shortly thereafter became the Tribal Liaison. She looks forward to the opportunity to guide and assist the Arizona tribes as issues and concerns may arise relating to the programs under DERS.

Rich Slay has worked for the State of Arizona for 14 years. Started as an Eligibility Worker, then became a Trainer, a Supervisor, a Local Office Manager, and currently serves as a Policy Specialist. He has worked directly with the Tribal TANF Programs for six years.

Sierra Solomon is a Senior Associate at ICF International with six years of experience with community development, asset building, and the Assets for Independence program. In her work with the AFI Resource Center, she designs and delivers asset building training, provides technical assistance to grantees, and produces the AFI newsletter. She currently works with the ACF Region IX office on the ASSET Initiative, organizing community outreach in order to develop and foster potential grantees in Region IX. Previously, as a resource coordinator for HHS Region IX, she regularly engaged with all AFI grantees in California, Nevada, and Arizona, serving as their first point of contact and supporting the growth of strong programs. Ms. Solomon has won two ACF Honor Awards for her work with the AFI program - an "HHS Partnering for Excellence" award for her work coordinating an outreach event in Sacramento, California, and the Contractor of the Year award in 2011.

Karen Thorne has been involved in the Indian and Native American workforce field for over 30 years. She serves on multiple workforce investment boards in Arizona and also is a trainer for the DOL New Director sessions. Ms. Thorne is a member of the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona.

Damon Waters, MA/MPP, is a technical assistance and capacity building provider, policy analyst, and program evaluation specialist with more than a decade of experience in the successful planning, implementing, managing, and evaluation of research/program activities focusing on preventative healthcare, higher education, political empowerment, economic self-sufficiency, and public policy. He has authored 12 public health, education and political empowerment curricula; developed grant proposals and program announcements; facilitated dozens of workshops; and coordinated technical assistance to potential grantees and community stakeholders.

Mr. Waters earned his M.A. in political science, M.P.P. and B.A. in political science, public policy and African American studies from Howard University.