



Speaker Biosketches



Jamie Awonohopay, TANF Case Manager, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Jamie Awonohopay is a TANF Caseworker with the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. She has been with TANF for 12 years and is a veteran and a mother.



Melissa Bocash, Benefit Program Administrator, Vermont Economic Services Division, Vermont Agency of Human Services

Melissa Bocash, BA, serves as a Benefit Program Assistant Administrator of Reach Up, Vermont's TANF program. Ms. Bocash has worked for the Reach Up program for over 10 years. She oversees the Good News Garage and Post-Secondary Education program.

Ms. Bocash holds a BA in Psychology from Norwich University. She lives in St. Albans, Vermont with her husband, son, and dog.



Nicole Bossard, Ph.D., Consultant and Positivity Strategist, ICF Consultant

Dr. Nicole Bossard's vision of a perfect world includes thriving communities overflowing with bodacious people and dynamic organizations actively working together to turn great ideas into great futures! Equipped with a Ph.D. in Leadership and Change and infectious enthusiasm, Dr. Bossard leverages the power of purpose and positivity to initiate, plan, and sustain system change initiatives with organizations and communities across the country. She creates engaging and safe learning environments where groups can identify what they really want more of, uncover innate strengths and drivers of success often hidden in plain sight, and create innovative solutions to achieve real outcomes that matter. Her clients report renewed passion for their work, greater trust amongst staff, stakeholders, and partners, strengthened resourcefulness and resilience, and improved clarity and shared accountability.

With over 25 years' experience consulting, Dr. Bossard has helped community and social service agencies align organizational values and business practices, strengthen accountability processes, improve collaborative partnerships, improve employee engagement, and dramatically expand leadership capacity throughout the agency or partnership. Her client list includes the Tanana Chiefs Conference

Client Development Division, Mesa County Workforce Center, Action for a Better Community, Adams County Human Services Department, The Workplace, Montefiore Health Profession Opportunity Grants Program, Central State University, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, New York City Administration for Children's Services, the Office of Family Assistance, Colorado Office of Economic Security, and Climb Wyoming.

Scott Boyle, Director, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria Tribal TANF of Sonoma & Marin

For the past 8 years, Scott Boyle has served as the Director of Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria Tribal TANF and has developed programs and services that empower the Native communities of Marin and Sonoma counties. Annually, the TANF program has provided over 500 Native Youth with back-to-school supplies, transported over 50 Native Youth to college campus tours, and provided access to after school programming for over 50 Native Youth. The adults in the TANF cash-aid program have been so successful that an annual honoring dinner has been established in celebration of their achievements towards financial and family security. They have obtained college degrees, vocational certificates, and careers through their determination and the support of Tribal TANF.

Mr. Boyle's educational background is in the interdependent connection between the mind and body, specifically in overcoming barriers. His passion is in facilitating opportunities for people that address generational trauma and institutional barriers that hinder their potential.

Katy Ciotti, TANF Director, Morongo Band of Mission Indians

Katy Ciotti has over 10 years of professional experience in Tribal Administration with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. She has served as the Director for the Morongo Tribal TANF Program for the past six years, and prior to that served as the Job Development Specialist for two years. In that time, Ms. Ciotti was responsible for the development and implementation of various career advancement and job training programs, including the subsidized employment program and community outreach. Her professional background in marketing and public relations has allowed her to help promote Native American self-reliance through her work with Tribal TANF in two of the largest counties in Southern California.

As a graduate of California State University, San Bernardino, Ms. Ciotti's degree in psychology and interest in child development helped foster a commitment to serving families in her local community.



Sandy Cloer, Division Director, Tribal Child Support Services & TANF, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Sandy Cloer is the Division Director for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) Tribal Child Support, TANF, and Representative Payee Programs. Ms. Cloer oversees 19 employees, including a process server and court clerk to the Cherokee Tribal Court. Following an 18-year career in Child Support with the State of North Carolina, she joined EBCI in 2009 in helping them develop their child support program. As a child support agent for the state, her caseload was the EBCI Boundary. Having worked with the people and their cultures of the EBCI and working in the Cherokee Tribal Court enabled her to help with the development of EBCI's programs. In 2012, EBCI developed its own Tribal TANF Program. The Representative Payee Program for EBCI was implemented in November 2015.

Ms. Cloer is a member of the North Carolina Child Support Council, having served for 6 years on the Board of Directors. She currently serves as Secretary for the National Tribal Child Support Directors Association and is the Vice President of the National Tribal Child Support Association.

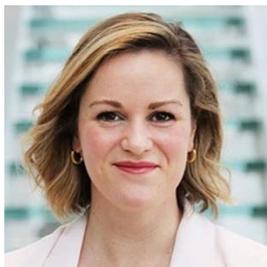
Ms. Cloer is a graduate of Winsalm College with a degree in Business. She is the mother of two children, Michelle and James.



Jonathan Crittenden, TANF Program Manager, Cherokee Nation Career Services

Jonathan Crittenden currently serves as the JOBS/Tribal TANF Program Manager with Cherokee Nation Career Services. He was instrumental in establishing the TANF Program within the Cherokee Nation while developing the program to meet Cherokee Nation tribal standards. Mr. Crittenden has been employed with the Cherokee Nation for 10 years, where he first served in the capacity of Career Specialist and then was promoted to a Program Coordinator for the tribe's Career Services Employment and Training related programs. Currently, Mr. Crittenden continues to serve as Vice-Chair for Region 4 of the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act/Public Law 102-477 Tribal Grantees and also serves as a board member for Golden Rule Industries of Muskogee, Inc., a non-profit organization that supports the lives of people with disabilities as they seek meaningful work in their local communities. Mr. Crittenden thrives on making a difference for those he serves through the Cherokee Nation.

Mr. Crittenden graduated Magna Cum Laude from Northeastern State University with a Bachelor's in Business Administration and he is also a U.S. Department of Labor Certified Public Law 102-477 Case Manager.



Kathryn de Wit, Manager, Broadband Research Initiative, Pew Charitable Trusts

Kathryn de Wit manages Pew's broadband research initiative, which examines efforts to connect millions of Americans to high-speed, reliable internet. In addition to assessing how states are approaching this challenge, Ms. de Wit's work also includes addressing research gaps and bringing together stakeholders for data-driven discussions about how to close the connectivity gap.

Before joining Pew, Ms. de Wit was an associate with Booz Allen Hamilton, where she focused on telecommunications issues. Before her work at Booz Allen Hamilton, she was a senior fellow with the Heinz Endowments.

Ms. de Wit holds bachelor's degrees in communications and sociology from Penn State University and a master's in public administration from the University of Pittsburgh.



George Gogleye, Human Services Director, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

George Gogleye is currently the Human Services Director for the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, Cass Lake, Minnesota. Previous assignments include Indian Education Director for Walker Hackensack Akeley Public School District #113, Assistant Gaming Director, and Casino General Manager for Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Gaming Division.

He also served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe-Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, where he assisted in implementing strategic goals and objectives to achieve the Tribe's philosophy, mission, and strategy by giving direction and leadership.

Mr. Gogleye is an Honorably Discharged Veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the Minnesota School of Business, Waite Park, Minnesota.



Samantha Hansen, Senior Manager, Cook Inlet Tribal Council

Samantha Hansen is a Senior Manager for Cook Inlet Tribal Council's Employment and Training Services Department. She grew up in and currently resides in Eagle River, Alaska. She manages a diverse team dedicated to serving Alaska Natives and American Indians who reside in the Anchorage and Matsu Area.

Ms. Hansen's team is composed of Youth Services, Case Managers, and Education and Training Services. She knows that the work her team does is impactful and is making a positive change in the community. She believes in serving others and helping them reach their potential by training and education. She also believes that effective training for staff is needed to produce the best service possible for those served.

Before working in social services, Ms. Hansen worked in for-profit higher education as an Admissions Advisor, Instructor, and eventually Dean of Students. She holds a bachelor's degree in Project Management and a master's degree in Organization Leadership.

Ms. Hansen enjoys Alaska during the summer time and spends most of the summer hiking and fishing. She loves to travel during the winter months when it is cold and dark in Alaska, and her favorite trip so far has been to Egypt.

Crystal Hottowe, Grants Writer, Makah Tribe

Crystal Hottowe is a member of the Makah Tribe, located in Washington State. She has spent over ten years working in her tribe's Community Planning and Economic Development Department as the Grants Writer, with a focus on federal and state grant proposals. Since 2013, she led the Makah Tech Team, which addressed the slow internet service on the Reservation through their own wireless network construction plan, providing broadband to government offices and the school campus within a year. By negotiating with major telecommunication firms, she was able to upgrade the internet infrastructure twice, bring cellular service to her community and is planning for the construction of towers for emergency services. Ms. Hottowe has served on the FCC Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP)

Native Nations Communications Task Force since 2014. She is the co-chair of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indian's (ATNI) Telecommunications & Technology Committee, a regional group of tribes that advocate for positive policy impact and is the ATNI representative on the Washington State Interoperability Executive Committee (WA SIEC). In 2019, Ms. Hottowe added two more board seats to the growing stack: in May, she was appointed to the Clallam County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors and as the ATNI Representative to the FirstNet Tribal Working Group (TWG), a team of tribal representatives from across the United States that advises FirstNet on policy regarding deployment strategies on tribal lands.

In addition to these duties, Ms. Hottowe also serves as a butler, maid, chauffeur, and coach for her busy teenage daughter, upon whom the sun rises and sets in Ms. Hottowe's eyes.



Mona "Koko" Lowe, Muscogee Creek Nation

Mona "Koko" Lowe is the mother of four children, grandmother of 13 grandchildren and great-grandmother of one great-granddaughter and one on the way. She loves to sew baby quilts in her spare time. She is a member of the Arbeka Indian Baptist Church in Bryant, Oklahoma. She is fluent in the Mvskoke Language and a member of the Arbeka Ceremonial Grounds. Mvskoke Language Program is her work place, and her title is Administrative Assistant. She has been

married to a wonderful Christian man for 25 years.



Mark Pendergrass, Program Manager, TANF, Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Mark Pendergrass is the manager of the Tribal TANF Program of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. He has worked for the Nation for more than 15 years, 13 of those with the Tribal TANF Program. Mr. Pendergrass gained experience and knowledge of the TANF program by assuming many different roles and assisting TANF clients to meet their goals. Being manager for the past 5 years, he is passionate about helping the program's clients to be financially independent, self-sufficient, and confident knowing they can provide for themselves and their families.

Outside of work, Mr. Pendergrass is a helpmate to his husband and a father to their daughter and spends most of his time with his family and extended family. He is an active church and community member and has served as vice chairman of the Twin Hills Indian Community for 9 years.



Barbara Pierce, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Social Work at Indiana University, Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar Fellow

Barbara Pierce, Ph.D., LCSW is an Associate Professor of Social Work at the Indiana University School of Social Work where she coordinates the children, youth, and families practice area. She is also Chair-Elect of the Title IV-E Child Welfare Track for the Council on Social Work Education. She has over 35 years of experience as a clinical social worker and 20 years' experience teaching and mentoring students. Her research centers on children, youth, and families with regard to safety,

permanency, wellbeing, and the child welfare workforce. She has served as the Principal Investigator of several studies including the Indiana Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project, Kinship Navigator project, Peer Recover Coach project, and a grant under the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute.

Data collected during the Waiver project is now included in Family Centered Treatment, which is now a well-supported intervention cited in the Federal Title IV-E Prevention Clearinghouse. Most recently, she was a selectee for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Fellowship and recipient of the 2020 SOGIE award as part of a team of researchers led by Dr. Richard Brandon-Friedman, for whom Dr. Pierce was chair of the doctoral committee.

Jennifer Rackliff (Cherokee Nation), Impact Strategist, Stratem Consulting

Jennifer Rackliff is an impact strategist and entrepreneur. She advises executives and social impact leaders in strategic growth, leadership, and performance development. She is the founder of Stratem Consulting, a strategy consulting agency. Ms. Rackliff has dedicated her life and career to empowering underserved communities and marginalized populations from grassroots to the board room. She is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and lives on a ranch outside of Tulsa, Oklahoma with her 5-year-old daughter.



Matthew Rantanen, Director of Technology, Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association

Matthew R. Rantanen is Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association’s (SCTCA) Director of Technology and Tribal Digital Village Network’s (TDVNet) Director since 2001, designing and deploying wireless networking with tribal communities of Southern California. He helps 20 SCTCA member tribes in technology development and strategy, bringing nations to a current level of communications.

Mr. Rantanen is the Director of Partnering and Business Development of Arcadian Infracom (arcadianinfra.com), a fiber infrastructure company, building long-haul fiber assets to serve the needs of the companies driving the demand, dragging fiber through small-town USA and Indian Country, providing opportunity to the unserved and underserved in rural America.

Of Cree (First Nations, Canada), Finnish, and Norwegian descent, Mr. Rantanen a "cyber warrior for community networking" and is considered an expert on community/Tribal wireless networking. He is an advocate for net-neutrality, broadband for everyone, and opening more spectrum for public consumption, always looking out for the unconnected.

Mr. Rantanen is appointed Co-Chair of the Tech and Telecom Subcommittee of the National Congress of American Indians, drafting telecom policy and promoting better opportunities with Tribes, engaging the Federal Government. He was named to the FCC Native Nations Broadband Task Force by the FCC Chairman in 2011 and then reappointed in 2014, serving two full terms. He was also named to the Communications Security, Reliability & Interoperability Council's 4 (CSRIC4) at the FCC in June 2013. He served as (2-term) Chairman of the Board at Native Public Media (NPM), and 3 years as Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

Mr. Rantanen is a guest subject matter expert speaker on community networking and grassroots efforts to support unserved and underserved communities, with an emphasis on tribal communities, speaking to local and state governments and to Federal government departments and agencies. He has had international speaking engagements and has participated in ICANN, the Internet Governance Forum

(UN), and the Indigenous Connectivity Summit (ISOC) and has testified at hearings at the FCC, GAO, and California Public Utilities Commission.



Delia Smith, Community Economic Support Director, Oneida Tribal TANF and NEW

Delia Smith is a member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin and is Director of the Nation’s Economic Support Department, overseeing 13 programs including TANF and NEW. She has been an employee of Oneida Nation since 2006, with experience in Higher Education, Economic Support Case Manager, Tribal TANF, Child Care Assistance, and Child Support.

She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and Native American Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 2001 and master’s degree in May 2016, earning an MS in Cultural Foundations of Education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



Bill Travitz, Technology Director, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Bill Travitz is a 36-year IT veteran having served the Enterprise and Small and Medium Business (SMB) as well as Federal and State Governments. He has worked in network engineering, software development, IT Security, and management in various stages of his career. For 20 plus years, he was President at Elant Systems, Inc., a provider of outsourced IT for SMB’s. Currently, he is the Director of the Office of Information Technology at the Eastern Band of

Cherokee Indians Tribal Government in Western North Carolina.



Ashley Waupekenay Recruitment and Training Coordinator, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

Ashley Waupekenay has been working for the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Community Resource Center for almost 12 years. She has been in a few positions within the building, starting at the front desk receptions, then a TANF caseworker, and now is the Recruitment and Training Coordinator.