



**Identifying and Implementing Effective
Case Management Strategies
Denver, Colorado
April 14-15, 2010
Speaker Biographies**

Geene Felix, M.A., was involved in the planning, negotiation, and implementation of the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) TANF Program. She was also instrumental in the development and implementation of the SPIPA One Stop Career Center (WIA program). Ms. Felix has more than 23 years of experience in human services and has worked in the area of program development for 12 years. She specializes in mediation, domestic violence, and substance abuse. She is currently the program coordinator of client services for the SPIPA TANF Program.

Felicia Gaither is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program Manager in Region VIII of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance. Ms. Gaither is responsible for providing technical assistance and guidance to the states and tribes administering the TANF program in Region VIII. Ms. Gaither has years of experience working in human services. She has served in many capacities working for a variety of organizations at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Ms. Gaither received her B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Nebraska, earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from Wichita State University and is currently pursuing her Ph.D.

Clint R. Hackney, C.M.C., is a professional facilitator, trainer, and consultant who inspires and empowers people with his unique style that combines storytelling with proven strategies for personal, professional, corporate, and community transformation. As the owner of Hackney Interests, a 27-year old firm dedicated to transformational development and the development of human excellence, he has earned two Governor Awards in the state of Washington. Hackney's messages are filled with firsthand knowledge and experience from his extensive studies and work with corporate and government leadership, as well as Native spiritual and cultural teachers. His combination of Native and European descent provides him with a special perspective into both the traditional and contemporary worlds.

Dr. Dorry Larson has worked for over 10 years for the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (SWO). As the manager of the SWO Human Service Agency, Dr. Larson oversees the delivery of mental health counseling and chemical dependency services. The program also administers financial assistance as well as a daycare. In 2002, Dr. Larson and Joyce Country developed the Professional Empowerment Program (PEP) which was recognized by the Honoring Nations Program at Harvard University as an exemplary program.

Dr. Larson is a Licensed Psychologist and Level III Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor. He received his doctorate at the University of South Dakota and was awarded a Bush Fellowship to study Systems Theory at the Family Center, founded by Murray Bowen, at Georgetown University. During his career, Dr. Larson has worked at two community mental Health centers and was in private practice for 13 years in



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Brookings, South Dakota. He and his wife Nancy have four adult children and live on an acreage in northeast South Dakota, where they enjoy gardening, raising chickens, hunting, and fishing.

Lisa Washington-Thomas is Branch Chief of the Division of Self-Sufficiency in the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families. She has experience in a wide array of social services programs, such as TANF, AFDC, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills, Emergency Assistance Group, the Rapid Response to Technical Assistance Contract, Healthy Marriage Resource Center, and Community Planning Grants. Ms. Washington-Thomas earned a B.A. from Georgetown University.

Lisa Weiler has been the Executive Director of the Scotts Valley Tribal TANF program since its inception in 2008. Under the leadership and guiding hand, the Scotts Valley Tribal TANF program is expanding its outreach to Native American families living in Contra Costa County by serving more families and adding more services to better meet its goals and objectives. Along with job preparation and economic self-sufficiency, this TANF program also provides life skills such as CPR, nutrition, and computer and parenting classes.

This TANF program is a model program and Ms. Weiler has worked with other Native American Tribes to set up their own TANF programs in other Northern California counties. As a social service program, the main purposes are to provide assistance to needy families so children can be cared for in their homes or homes of relatives; end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; reduce the incidence of unmarried pregnancies; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two parent families.

Prior to Scotts Valley Tribal TANF, Ms. Weiler, served as the Regional Manager for a financial services company and also worked in the tourism and hospitality industry as an Event Coordinator and Design Consultant. She attended Empire College in Santa Rosa, California and had numerous certifications in marketing and sales management.



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Philip Belangie is the Entrepreneur Development Manager with the Montana Department of Commerce. He has a background of working with clients seeking economic independence. Mr. Belangie has worked as a case manager in the Job Training Partnership Act Program and as a liaison with the Office of Public Assistance/WORC programs. During his employment with JTPA, Mr. Belangie worked with teens in summer youth programs, single parents, pre-release inmates, and vocational rehabilitation clients. He also created a position as a liaison with the Office of Public Assistance to create an assessment process for clients on welfare seeking postsecondary education. In his current position, Mr. Belangie works with the Montana Indian Equity Fund, a state funded program assisting Native Entrepreneurs that need funding to get them off the ground. The fund is flexible and accommodates both new and growing businesses. It also leverages other monies to create the maximum benefit. Mr. Belangie is also on the Executive Committee of the Montana Indian Business Alliance and is on the Board of Directors of Rural Dynamics.

Lesa Evers is an Economic Development Specialist for the Montana Governor's Office of Economic Development. She focuses primarily on economic development in Indian Country. Previously, Ms. Evers worked for the Montana Department of Commerce as the Indian Country Economic Development program manager. Prior to that position, she was employed as the Executive Assistant to the Director of the Montana Department of Agriculture, worked for the Blackfeet Higher Education Program, State of Alaska, and the Alaska Job Corps Center. Ms. Evers serves on several committees including the State Tribal Economic Development Commission.

Ms. Evers was born on the Blackfeet reservation in Browning, Montana, is of Blackfeet descent and is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewas. She attended college at Montana State University in Bozeman and Matuanuska Susitna College in Palmer, Alaska. She and her son, Elliott, currently reside in Helena.

Felicia Gaither is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program Manager in Region VIII of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance. Ms. Gaither is responsible for providing technical assistance and guidance to the states and Tribes administering the TANF program in Region VIII. Ms. Gaither has years of experience working in human services. She has served in many capacities working for a variety of organizations at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Ms. Gaither received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Nebraska, earned a master's degree in Public Administration from Wichita State University and is currently pursuing her PhD.



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Robert Gough is an attorney with graduate degrees in Sociology and Cultural Anthropology specializing in cultural ecology. He has worked with American Indian Tribes on cultural and natural resource issues over the past 30 years. He currently serves as Secretary of the Intertribal Council on Utility Policy (Intertribal COUP) created to provide information on rights and resources for utility services on Tribal lands with respect to regulatory authority, legislation, policy, and economic opportunity in telecommunications and energy development. In addition he also maintains a private law practice on indigenous rights and conducts outreach activities to the Native Alaskan and American Indian communities on behalf of the federal Wind Powering America program.

Gough co-chaired the USGCRP's "Native Peoples/Native Homelands Climate Change Workshop" held in 1998, and co-directs the NativeWind.org, supporting partnerships between ICLEI-Cities for Climate Protection and COUP tribes to build sustainable reservation economies based upon renewable energy. He sits on the Western Governors' Association's Clean and Diversified Energy Advisory Committee seeking to develop 30,000 MWs of clean energy by 2015 in 18 western states. Gough is a co-producer of "Wind Powering Native America" (2003) and the "Native Wind" PSA (2005) and is one of the architects of the Rosebud/COUP Intertribal Wind Energy Plan, which includes a federal environmental justice demonstration project for intertribal wind development arrayed along the federal hydropower grid and the SAFE Homes (Sustainable, Affordable and Efficient) straw bale construction initiative, that recently received the inaugural World Clean Energy Award.

David Hansell is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, within the Department of Health and Human Services.

Mr. Hansell served from 2007-2009 as Commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the state agency charged with oversight of support programs and economic assistance for low-income New Yorkers. From 2002-2006, Mr. Hansell served as Chief of Staff of the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA). From 1997-2001, he was the Associate Commissioner for HIV Services at the New York City Department of Health, and subsequently served as Associate Commissioner for Planning and Program Implementation.

Prior to his government experience, Mr. Hansell served in a range of positions at Gay Men's Health Crisis, including Director of Legal Services and Deputy Director for Government and Public Affairs. From 2000-2006, he was an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the New York University Wagner School of Public Service. He has also been a consultant on health policy and social services issues to a wide range of governmental and non-profit organizations.

Mr. Hansell is a graduate of Haverford College and Yale Law School. Among other honors, he is a recipient of an Outstanding Public Service Award from the New York County Lawyers' Association, and a State Leadership Award from the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty.



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R. Carol Harvey is the Executive Secretary of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs (CCIA).

Ms. Harvey is committed to facilitating communications between the Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribes and other Native American organizations, state agencies and affiliated groups. As an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, Ms. Harvey is passionate about positively impacting the lives of Coloradan Native Americans and communities.

She earned her Bachelor's Degree with a dual major in Economics and Political Science (Phi Beta Kappa), her Master's in Business and her Juris Doctorate degree at The University of Denver. Ms. Harvey started her twenty-eight-year domestic and international oil and gas legal career with Conoco Inc. in Denver. Her recent experience includes working with the Nordhaus Law Firm, serving American Indian entities. She is a member of the legal Bar of six states, including Colorado.

Ms. Harvey's skills, experience, training, and interests also include teaching small business formation and development and government procurement classes. She earned her Federal Contractor Certification, Level I, this past year from the U.S. Veterans' Administration.

Ms. Harvey cherishes her husband of 19 years and is blessed with two adult sons and five grandchildren. She remains an active volunteer with a particular interest in literacy given her background as a storyteller. Her son, D.J. Bird Bear, is a DU basketball scholarship alumnus. He played for the DU Pioneers as a power forward where he holds the Field Goal Percentage record (.628). Her son, Aaron, is the past American Indian Services Adviser at the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he is currently working on a master's degree. He is the narrator of a documentary, *UW Cultural Landscapes: First Nations*, which he helped produce and which aired on PBS last year. His online high school class on First Americans of the Great Lakes Region is currently aired on Wisconsin Public Television.

Karen Heisler is the Director of the Asset Development Department of Rural Dynamics Inc. which serves Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota with programs and partnerships to "help youth, individuals, and families achieve economic independence." The Asset Development Department focuses on increasing consumer assets to move consumers toward economic independence. Some of the department's initiatives include Tax Help Montana Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites, research and planning for the economic independence of individuals living in the Northern Plains states, a First Peoples Native Entrepreneurship Camp, Bridge to Benefits, a Web tool linking individuals and families to social service programs, and other programs which directly build the assets of consumers such as individual development accounts. The Asset Development Department also works with the Northern Plains Initiative, a partnership between rural northern plains tribes and communities in Montana, Northern Wyoming, and Western North and South Dakota. Through the Northern Plains Initiative, money is re-granted to community organization throughout the region to promote asset building initiatives. Housed within the Asset



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Development Department is Tax Help Montana, a collaborative effort of many Montana organizations to provide Earned Income Tax Credit outreach and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites to their local communities. In the past four years, this program has increased from two sites and 190 tax returns filed to 28 sites and over 5,000 tax returns filed. Tax Help Montana not only prepares tax returns for low-income individuals and families, but works to link asset building to the sites. Financial education, resource libraries, individual development accounts, credit reports, and counseling are examples of programs that are offered at the tax sites.

Gordan Isaac is the President of KEYA Earth. He is a Dineh veteran (USMC), from the community of Tonalea. Mr. Isaac has 15 years of experience with custom carpentry, home/office renovations, and furniture/cabinetry making. Through his work he envisions quality “smart” homes, active communities, and stronger families for the Dineh Nation. In his words, “we all need to rethink the way we build homes and set the example for our future generations.”

Irene Kawanabe serves as the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the State-Tribal Institute at the National Conference of State Legislatures. Irene researches and writes publications in the areas of Indian Law, health disparities in communities of color, Native Hawaiian self-determination, and other matters. Irene serves as the NCSL liaison to the National Asian Pacific American Caucus of State Legislators, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Caucus of Native American State Legislators, and the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators.

Ms. Kawanabe received her bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary, her master's degree from the University of Colorado at Denver, and her law degree from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

David Lester (Muscogee Creek) has served as the Executive Director of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT), based in Denver, Colorado, since 1982.

Prior to joining CERT, Mr. Lester served as Commissioner for Native Americans in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, appointed under President Carter in 1978 and re-appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1980. While in ANA, he restructured its program of “core administration” for Tribes and urban centers into a development agency funding projects that implement Tribally developed social and economic development strategies (SEDS).

In 1970, Mr. Lester became the founding president of the United Indian Development Association in Los Angeles, the predecessor organization to the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, the leading Indian business ownership program in North America, assisting thousands of Indian business owners in obtaining financing and contracts with large companies and government agencies. Mr. Lester



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continues to serve on the board for the National Center. The National Center is known for its Las Vegas RES conference and trade show where billions of dollars of business has been transacted by Indian Tribal businesses.

Mr. Lester graduated from Brigham Young University in 1967 with a degree in political science after serving a mission for his church in South America. He joined the California Federal Savings and Loan and in 1968-1969 he served as Economic Development Specialist for the National Congress of American Indians and the First Nations Development Institute.

Mr. Lester has served on numerous boards and committees, including serving as a trustee for the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico and as a board member of Americans for Indian Opportunity, and as a member of the National Coal Council.

Brent R. Orrell is a Senior Fellow at ICF International. Mr. Orrell worked in the Legislative and Executive Branches of the U.S. government for over 20 years, developing broad experience and extensive knowledge in a wide-range of policy areas including workforce and talent development, prisoner re-entry, faith-based and community initiatives, refugee resettlement, welfare and human services, child welfare and emergency preparedness and response.

Most recently, Mr. Orrell served as Acting Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA). In this role, he oversaw the nation's \$10 billion Workforce Investment Act (WIA) system that includes programming in workforce development, unemployment insurance, foreign labor certification, and youth employment. A particular focus of his tenure at ETA was to seek ways to improve coordination of services between WIA and those funded by the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Under his leadership, the two agencies were able to complete an assessment of promising integration practices at the state and local level and establish a federal-level working group to drive policy improvements in agency coordination. Mr. Orrell will provide an overview of the Green Jobs Act of 2007, and the green job training funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the outlook for funding in this area for Fiscal Year 2010.

Michael E. Rawley has specialized, for the past five years, in Native Entrepreneurship Development and the establishment of a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) to enable Native Business people access to start-up and expansion capital. He is also a commercial fisherman. Mr. Rawley is Chairman and Treasurer of the 13th Regional Corporation(ANC), Member of the Western Coalition of Alaska Natives, Member of the Alaska Federation of Natives, and member of the Board of Regents for the Ho'oulu Lahui Hawaiian Traditional School. He is a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran.

Michael Rawley received his associate's degree from Northwest Indian College in Bellingham Washington in Public Administration; his bachelor's degree at Western Washington University in Bellingham



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Washington in Business Administration; and an advanced certificate from the American Institute of Banking.

Jack Tweedie is the Director of the Children and Families Program at the National Conference of State Legislatures. As director, he oversees NCSL's assistance to state legislatures on welfare and poverty, child welfare, early education and child care, and youth.

Dr. Tweedie's current efforts focus on state TANF flexibility and state strategies to reduce child and family poverty. He works with a number of states to help them develop collaborative projects within human services, emphasizing the importance of engaging community resources and focusing on outcomes for children and families. He works extensively in providing technical assistance to states as they consider policy changes in TANF and poverty programs. He has helped the states maintain their successful existing programs and services, improve key outcomes such as job retention and advancement for parents leaving work for welfare, while meeting the higher federal work participation rates. He also works with states to help them identify additional TANF funds under the TANF Contingency and TANF Emergency Funds. He is leading NCSL's effort to help states develop broad-based strategies to reduce family poverty and reduce the effects of children growing up in poverty. He also works with state officials on strengthening supports for low-income working families, collaboration between human services and other agencies, the effects of tight state budgets on human service programs and efforts to strengthen marriage and fatherhood.

Prior to coming to NCSL, Dr. Tweedie taught political science and public policy at the University of Denver and the State University of New York at Binghamton. He has a B.A. in political science from Washington State University and a Ph.D. and a law degree from the University of California at Berkeley.

Lisa Washington-Thomas is Branch Chief of the Division of Self-Sufficiency in the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families. She has experience in a wide array of social services programs, such as TANF, AFDC, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills, Emergency Assistance Group, the Rapid Response to Technical Assistance Contract, Healthy Marriage Resource Center, and Community Planning Grants. Ms. Washington-Thomas earned a B.A. from Georgetown University.

Johnny Weiss is Cofounder and Executive Director of Solar Energy International. Johnny is a solar educator, consultant, certified Industrial Trainer and solar building professional. He has over twenty years experience teaching the practical applications of the renewable energy (RE) technologies of solar, wind and water power. As an Associate Professor for ten years at the Colorado Mountain College, he helped develop and teach a hands-on vocational training program in solar thermal, photovoltaics, energy efficiency, and construction skills. Johnny has extensive practical experience as a natural house builder and licensed general contractor. He is knowledgeable in the environmental building technologies of earth and straw bale construction. Johnny regularly works with Native Americans RE training programs. Johnny works in



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international sustainable development programs and projects helping transfer renewable energy technologies to the developing world.

Gabriel Yaiva is currently the Marketing Specialist for KEYA Earth. Mr. Yaiva is Dine' and Hopi, a father, the director of Peace and Balance, a substance abuse prevention project working with Native youth in the southwest, community activist and a graduate of Northern Arizona University with a B.S. in Applied Indigenous Studies. He is also the owner and founder of 4th World Entertainment, specializing in independent music releases, promotion, and marketing.