



# Region X Tribal TANF Conference

## Speaker and Facilitator Biographies

**Ramona Beltran, MSW, PhD** is a member of the (Mexico/Yaqui) Tribe. Dr. Beltran completed her doctorate in Social Welfare at the University of Washington in 2010. Her scholarship focuses on the intersections of historical trauma, embodiment, and environmental/social determinants of health as they affect health and risk behaviors in indigenous communities. Dr. Beltran specializes in applying decolonizing theories and methodologies, with an emphasis on qualitative and innovative geo-spatial and photographic technologies. As a Post-doctoral Trainee in Alcohol Research (PTAR) at the University of Washington Department of Psychiatry, Center for Study of Health and Risk Behaviors (CSHRB) and affiliate of the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute (IWRI), Dr. Beltran is focusing on problem drinking behaviors as well as strengths and resiliencies in indigenous communities, specifically American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) populations.

**Deborah Collier** is the Family Assistance Program Manager for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe and has held this position since the Tribe started its own TANF Program in September of 1998. Ms. Collier supervises the Family Assistance Program, the Food Stamp and Medicaid Eligibility Project, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP), and oversees the Tribal Food Bank for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. Overall, Ms. Collier's experience is varied as she works as an educator, a customer service specialist, and a social worker. Ms. Collier earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education with a double major in Social Studies and Music from Western Washington University, a Masters in Music from Western Washington University, and a certificate in Social Work from the University of Washington.

**Kathy Deserly** is a graduate of San Diego State University Native Teacher Training Project and has worked in the field of child welfare in Native communities since 1974. Ms. Deserly is currently a Technical Assistance Specialist for the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA). Ms. Deserly has provided extensive training and technical assistance to Native and non-Native programs related to tribal child welfare and Native disproportionality issues. Before her position as technical assistance specialist, Ms. Deserly was an Indian Child Welfare Act specialist for Montana Child and Family Services as well as an Assistant Director of a Native American foster and adoption agency. In 2004, Ms. Deserly co-founded the Indian Child and Family Resource Center (ICFRC), a technical assistance center for Tribal social service programs. ICFRC is a partner in the new National Resource Center for Tribes where Kathy also serves as associate director.

**Nicole Earls** is the TANF Coordinator for the Quileute Tribe. She has worked for the Quileute Tribe for the last seven years, with both Head Start and TANF. Ms. Earls is most interested in teen pregnancy and high school graduation rates for Native Americans and has committed a good deal of time and energy to effecting positive change in those areas on the Quileute Reservation. In September of 2009 Ms. Earls completed her Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling from City University. Ms. Earls earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of Puget Sound. After Ms. Earls' undergraduate graduation, and before her position with the Quileute Tribe, Ms. Earls served for two years as a Teach for America corps member teaching special education in Weslaco, Texas. Ms. Earls currently resides with her husband and three children.



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**Dana Eisenberg** is a Senior Communications Specialist at BLH Technologies, Inc., and provides communications strategy, research, and planning for the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She serves as a member of the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Team, providing training and technical assistance support services to States, counties, localities, Tribal organizations, and community-based organizations. Ms. Eisenberg is knowledgeable regarding the research design, implementation, and evaluation of health messages targeting special populations. She has conducted many literature reviews, developed survey instruments, entered and evaluated the resultant data, and contributed to journal articles and reports on health communication topics.

Ms. Eisenberg earned B.A. degrees in communication studies and psychology from the College of New Jersey and earned her M.A. in communication from Ohio State University.

**Marilyn Doyle** is Tlingit/Nisgaa, a member of the Eagle/Wolf clan of the Yanyeydi people, also known as the Taku River Tlingit from Southeast Alaska. Ms. Doyle is the Preserving Native Families Coordinator of the Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribe of Alaska. As the Preserving Native Families Coordinator, Ms. Doyle administers the Preserving Native Families Program, which began operating in 2006 as a Tribal In-Home Prevention Services program serving Tribal members who reside in Juneau, Alaska. She has been employed with Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska/Tribal Family and Youth Services Department for nine and a half years.

Ms. Doyle holds a Bachelor of Arts in Management. She participated in Casey Family Programs/Breakthrough Series on Disproportionality work in Alaska, and was involved in the initial implementation of the Casey Family Programs, Knowing Who You Are trainings in Alaska. Ms. Doyle also assisted in bringing Permanency Roundtables to Alaska this summer. She is a Family Group Decision Making facilitator and has received training in a variety of areas: Case management training; Visitation training; Cultural competency training; Historical trauma; and Adoption work.

Ms. Doyle also serves as the Tribal co-chair on the Western Pacific Implementation Center (WPIC) Tribal In-Home Services Workgroup Project and as a Tribal community member on the City and Borough of Juneau, Social Services Advisory Board.

**Caron Dwyer** is a Program Specialist at the Administration for Children and Families Immediate Office of the Regional Administrator in Region X.

**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). Geene has more than 23 years 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.

**Gwendolyn Gua** has held the position of Social Services Manager for South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency for the past five years. Ms. Gua is an enrolled member of the Colville Confederated Tribes. Ms. Gua retired from State service in 2006 after 26 years with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) where she held a variety of positions such as Social Worker, Social Worker Supervisor, Program



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Manager and Director. Ms. Gua has also worked within the Omak School District as a Secondary Counselor for Indian Students.

Ms. Gua has gathered much experience in implementing and forging government-to-government relationships in Washington State as an employee of DSHS. She also possesses a vast amount of experience with the social service delivery and policy making, especially in areas of related to TANF, Indian child welfare, child support, aging, and juvenile justice.

**Clint 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, Mr. Hackney has earned two Governor Awards in the state of Washington. Mr. 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.

**Tanya Hill** is a Senior Tax Consultant with Internal Revenue Service. She has been in the Stakeholder Partnerships, Education, and Communication (SPEC) division for 11 years, and has worked for Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in various customer service capacities for a total of 28 years. In SPEC, Ms. Hill is responsible for collaborating and supporting external partners to provide free tax preparation services, outreach and education, and financial education to low and moderate individuals throughout the state of Washington. Ms. Hill currently works closely with the Washington State Tribal Nations, Northwest Native Asset Building Coalition, Whatcom County Asset Building Coalition, independent VITA sites, Domestic Violence Community and has worked with the Colleges/Universities and Disabled community. Working with various communities, Ms. Hill's favorite moments are the "Ah ha" moments when the "plan comes together".

**Cynthia Jackson** is the Operations Manager of the Spokane Tribe of Indians. Spokane Tribal TANF is a tribally operated program with sites in Wellpinit and Spokane. The TANF program provides assistance to needy families to become self-sufficient or reduce their dependency on government subsidies. Assistance can come in the form of cash assistance, job preparation, prevention and referrals.

**Thomas Jensen** is the Director of Asset Development Programs at Community and Shelter Assistance (CASA) Corporation, of Oregon. CASA is a Community Development Corporation and a Community Development Financial Institution and Mr. Jensen is the Program Director of its Family Economic Opportunity Program. In this position, Mr. Jensen oversees savings and credit enhancement programs for low-income families throughout the state of Oregon. Under his leadership, the CASA IDA network, an Assets for Independence (AFI) funded project, has received 10 grants, totaling more than \$5 million. CASA has grown into one of the largest IDA networks in the country with 62 community organizations, housing authorities, high schools, colleges as network partners. There are more than 2,000 participant IDA savers.



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Mr. Jensen offers public, private and nonprofit organizations expertise in strategic planning, program development, fund management and investment, large-scale and multi-site program operations, program cost analysis, collaborative and partnership development, Information Management Systems, high school and college-based IDA programs, microenterprise development programs, tax credit and tax preparation initiatives, microenterprise development programs, credit-builder loans, and research and evaluation.

**Susan Johnson** was appointed by President Obama as Health and Human Services (HHS) Regional Director for Region X in December of 2009. Ms. Johnson serves as Secretary Sebelius' primary representative and liaison to key constituencies in the Region. In this role, Susan provides guidance on and coordination of HHS policies in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Prior to her appointment, Ms. Johnson served as Regional Health Administrator and Director of the King County Health Action Plan (KCHAP) since May of 1997. As Regional Health Administrator, she had the responsibility of communicating with King County and Seattle elected officials regarding H1N1 planning and response. Ms. Johnson was also a member of the Washington State Health Care Policy Board, appointed by Governor Mike Lowry in 1995, and prior to that was the State Governmental Relations Director for the Service Employees' International Union, then, the largest health-care union in the AFL-CIO. Ms. Johnson was also appointed by Governor Lowry to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and by Governor Booth Gardner to the Shoreline Community College Board of Trustees. In past year, she was on the steering committee for the State Public Health Improvement Plan and was a member of the Long-Term Care Advisory Committee in the former Washington Health Services Commission.

Ms. Johnson graduated from Middlebury College, Vermont. When not working on health policy, she skis, plays tennis and golf, fly fishes, writes and does water colors.

**Mary Lorence** has worked in the field of child care for over 20 years. Ms. Lorence recently moved to Washington State after living in Alaska for over 30 years. During her time in Alaska, Ms. Lorence lived in the Village of Hoonah, traveled extensively to other villages in Southeast Alaska, worked for the State of Alaska Division of Public Assistance (TANF agency), and worked as the State of Alaska Child Care Administrator. Ms. Lorence understands the intricacies of coordinating TANF services and funding with CCDF services and funding.

**Nadia Nijim** is a Child Welfare Program Specialist for the Administration for Children and Families in Region X.

**Paulette Running Wolf, PhD** is an enrolled Blackfeet Tribal member and a counseling psychologist. Dr. Running Wolf has over twenty-five years experience in American Indian education/training, program development, research & evaluation and is professionally committed to the improvement of behavioral health services and systems in Indian Country. As a national consultant Dr. Running Wolf has provided community mobilization and planning services in over thirty tribal communities nationally. Until recently, she was the lead developer and project manager for a SAMHSA contract entitled "Native Aspirations Suicide, Violence & Bullying Project" (community mobilization & planning services) in fifteen tribal communities.





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As an educator, Dr. Running Wolf has taught in a variety of settings such as elementary – secondary education, at two tribal colleges and as an Assistant Professor at Washington State University. Dr. Running Wolf has successfully implemented national quantitative and qualitative outcome based evaluations in numerous tribal communities (urban & reservation). Dr. Running Wolf's research interests are directed in exploring tribal values – identifying similarities and determining differences from main stream society and their application in effective behavioral health treatment.

Dr. Running Wolf is currently a board member (and past Executive Director) of the First Nations Behavioral Health Association (FNBHA) and serving as a private consultant to tribal communities across the country, federal (SAMSHA, IHS, BIA), state and other entities such as foundations in the areas of social service training, program evaluation/research and assisting states in planning & implementing culturally competent systems of care.

Currently, Dr. Running Wolf is working part-time for Children & Family Futures (technical assistance contractor for the Administration on Children, Youth & Families Children's Bureau) and for the University of Montana Native Child Trauma Center.

**Frank Shields** has been employed by the Federal government for 25 years, and is currently the Regional Program Manager for the TANF Bureau in Region X (Seattle). Mr. Shield graduated from the University of Delaware with a Master's Degree in Urban Affairs and Public Policy. He entered government service in law enforcement with the State of Delaware. Mr. Shields was employed by the state for ten years, achieving the rank of State Child Support Director, when he was recruited by the U.S. Office of Child Support Enforcement as a Loaned Executive to the Philadelphia Family Court.

**Don Shircel** is a Senior Manager and the Director of the Client Development Division of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, an Alaska Regional Native non-profit corporation serving thirty-seven, federally recognized, Athabascan Tribes. During Mr. Shircel's twenty-eight year tenure with the Tanana Chiefs Conference, he has developed and implemented a wide range of tribally administered education, employment and training, and social service programs designed to serve small, remote, and isolated Tribal communities located in Alaska's 235,000-square-mile, Interior region.

Mr. Shircel has served on numerous State and National advisory boards, commissions and work groups, and has been active in both State and national policy discussions involving Alaska Native issues. Mr. Shircel holds a Master of Science degree in Behavior Disabilities from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Holly Snowball** is the Director of the Employment & Training Services Department of the Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC). The mission of the CITC is to work in partnership with the Cook Inlet Tribe to develop opportunities that fulfill each member of the Tribe's endless potential. The CITC believes that when members of the Tribe work together, they can help each other develop their talents and strengths, and become successful and self-sufficient individuals, families, and communities.

**Sandra Starnes** is the Financial Manager for the Children and Family Service Division of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. Ms. Starnes has held this position since 2002.



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Ms. Starnes is both a Certified Governmental Financial Manager and a Certified Public Accountant. Prior to working for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Ms. Starnes worked for public accounting firms and prepared thousands of tax returns during her career of over twenty years.

For the past four years, Ms. Starnes has managed the VITA site for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe and has strived to provide the highest quality of services to the community she serves. Currently, Ms. Starnes is responsible for the recruitment; training and oversight of all volunteers and insures day to day operations of the site run smoothly. Ms. Starnes has received the "Award of Excellence" from the Northwest Native Asset Building Coalition for the 2008 tax season and observed a 20% increase in returns prepared each year.

**Sue Stockman** is a Territory Manager with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in Seattle. As Territory Manager for the Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC) division, Ms. Stockman is responsible for providing oversight for the volunteer free tax preparation program, tax education and outreach efforts, and financial education and asset building programs for the states of Washington and Alaska. Ms. Stockman has worked for the IRS for 28 years, and has held a variety of positions in Field Collection, Equal Employment Opportunity, Bankruptcy and Field Assistance.

**Ilene Stohl** has been active in the movement to end violence against women since 1992. Ms. Stohl holds a Masters in Public health and has worked as an advocate in shelters and community based domestic violence programs across the country. Ms. Stohl currently coordinates the Economic Justice Project and Prevention work at the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Her current work focuses on moving towards preventing violence before it happens and helping systems and institutions improve their responses and strengthen the economic safety net for survivors.

**Rae Belle Whitcomb** is the Director of the Workforce Development Center at the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) in Dillingham, Washington. BBNA is a Tribal Consortium, composed of 31 Tribes and is organized as a non-profit corporation to provide a variety of educational-, social-, economic-related services to the Native people of Bristol Bay region of Alaska. The Workforce Development Center provides quality services to Bristol Bay residents, promoting individual and family self-sufficiency through employment and educational opportunities, which sustains cultural values, and reflects economic trends of the Bristol Bay Region.

**Jennifer Zanella** is a Child Welfare Program Specialist for the Administration for Children and Families in Region X.