I am running for Chairman of the Cowlitz Tribe and I would be humbled and honored to have your support.

Most of you remember my father, John Barnett, who served as your Chairman for 26 years and dedicated his life’s efforts to successfully obtaining our tribe’s federal recognition. I am running to carry his legacy forward and know he is smiling on my decision as he watches from above.

Like my father, I have dedicated my life to improving the Cowlitz Tribe and have learned from his tenacity and commitment. At his direction, I risked everything I had to purchase the land where our reservation now stands. As the founder of the Cowlitz Reservation and ilani Casino and Resort, this 19-year undertaking was the most difficult challenge of my life -- even when I brought in the Mohegan Tribe. Had we not succeeded; I would have lost everything. It was your support that kept me going.

Other recent success I have led on behalf of all Cowlitz people include:

- **Vote-by-Mail**: I fought for three years to secure your right to vote-by-mail, despite supporters of my opponent fighting me every step of the way. This effort made it easier for you to participate in the tribe and have your voice heard.

- **Enrollment**: I brought forward an amendment that you will vote on this June that will allow children to enroll in the tribe until the age of 19 (currently children can only enroll up to one year old). I also fully support a hardship enrollment policy that corrects the historic wrongs for those who have been left behind.

- **COVID Assistance**: I will stand strong to ensure that equal distribution of all COVID relief money goes directly to tribal members and will push for an emergency tribal member assistance fund for those facing extreme hardship.

- **Saving Our Language**: I brought in The Language Conservancy to preserve and grow our tribal language. Now, tribal members can easily download the Cowlitz Salish Vocab Builder application on their smartphones to learn our native tongue.

- **Never Taking a Salary**: I will donate my salary to tribal members in need.

- **Personal**:
  - **B.A. in Communications from the University of Washington and 4-year varsity letterman and team captain in track and field, where I broke 4 minutes in the mile.**
  - **I Founded No Cowlitz Left Behind** to ensure equal rights and benefits for every tribal member, no matter where you live or your current situation.
  - **Giving back**: To honor my father, I have given back over $700,000 to Cowlitz members in need, including the disabled. Nothing has been more rewarding.

I believe the most important objective of any tribal chairman is to provide maximum benefit to all tribal members. If you believed in and supported my father, please support me. I will always put tribal members first.

I’d love to hear from you, so please contact me at:

(206) 707 – 5765 or ilanifounder@gmail.com.
Philip Harju

Inspired by the wishes of my mother, I became active with our tribe in 2002. She felt that we must care for all Cowlitz People especially our elders and children. For six years I volunteered my time to our Tribe. In 2004, I was elected to the tribal council and in 2008 I left my full-time job to become the Cowlitz Tribal Attorney and was elected as Vice Chairman. I resigned as the tribal attorney in August 2020 when I stepped into the role of Chairman. It continues to be an honor to represent the Cowlitz People.

As chairman, I began with an assessment of our Tribal Housing to ensure that we are serving our elders in the best way possible. Other priorities include better healthcare benefits and improving communication to tribal members. With the federal government, we are in the process of adding an additional 48 acres to our reservation. As chairman, I strongly support preserving our cultural and natural resources including regaining our hunting and fishing rights, bringing our language back to our people, and preserving our cultural traditions and protecting the environment for future generations.

During my years of service, I have worked to build positive relationships with other tribes, governments, organizations, and the community at large. I have served on the Cultural Resources Board, Planning Committee, Audit Committee, Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Authority (CTGA), and Executive and Personnel Committees for the tribe. In representing the tribe, I have been active with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the Washington Indian Gaming Association (WIGA), and our gaming partners the Mohegan Tribe. I have testified before congress on the federal regulations of taking land into trust (establishing tribal reservations) and testified before the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and state agencies. I have represented the tribe in the community for over 19 years.

In running for Chairman, it is important to have experience, training, and knowledge. This includes participation in cultural and traditional events and listening to tribal members and the advice of elders. A leader needs to be respectful of our tribe. Leaders don’t tear people down but build our people up. No one person is responsible for getting us where we are today. It has taken a team effort.

Our goal is to responsibly and sustainably grow resources for tribal members. These include expanding healthcare benefits, educational benefits, and payments to tribal members through our General Welfare Benefit Program. As our economic benefits increase, payments will increase. Also, our enrollment requirements need to be updated so that all eligible Cowlitz can be enrolled. This process takes time because it requires amendments to our constitution.

We want to honor our ancestors by empowering our people to be able to live healthy and happy lives by continuing our traditional and cultural ways. With your support, I envision a future where we can work together, relying on the strengths of our tribal members, to continue to grow and thrive.
Kindly honor me with a vote to serve as your next General Council Secretary. It will be my privilege to continue serving on Tribal Council. Together, we can lead our tribe to health, prosperity, and peace.

**Cultural Heritage**

Proud descendant of the Boscillet Shaldow family line who was given and kept our Lower Cowlitz Language from going extinct. It was my ancestors George Katel’s granddaughters Emma and Lucy Katel that were recorded and gave us the Lower Cowlitz Language.

As a child, I remember harvesting huckleberries with my brothers for our dear Grandmother to process. My first drum was made by hand and gifted to my mother, Sheril Dea. As a girl, I learned to bead pieces by hand and weave with cedar.

**Cowlitz Tribe Volunteering**

- Tribal Council Secretary
- Pow Wow Committee
- Election Committee
- Economic Development Committee
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Statewide Foundation Fund
- Culture Committee
- Communications

**Other Volunteering**

- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Community Advisory Group for I-5 Bridge
- Indian Policy Early Learning
- Court Appointed Special Advocate

**Education**

- Bachelor's degree of Criminal Justice and Political Science and from Washington State University.
- Tribal Gaming and Hospitality Management from the Foster School of Business, University of Washington.

**Professional Experience**

My career with the Cowlitz Tribe began in 2010 in our Health and Human Services Department. Shortly after, I was promoted in Administration to serve as the Executive Assistant/Child Care and Development Program Administrator/Planning Program Supervisor/Communication Team Lead.

Gaming Compact was signed by Governor Inslee and our reservation land was taken into trust by the Bureau of Indian Affairs during my employment for Chairman Iyall. At the Chairman’s request, I performed extensive research on the detriment posed on our Tribe as a result of no reservation. My research was compiled into a legal document and provided to the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Kevin Washburn. Shortly after a meeting with him, our land was taken into trust on March 9th 2015. It is a true honor to have assisted in these efforts and to have witnessed both historical documents signed.

In 2016, ilani General Manager and President, Kara Fox LaRose recruited me to work in the executive office, where we successfully opened our casino in April 2017.

**I support:**

- Health services more equally distributed among members.
- Profits distributed equitably to help all members prosper.
- Peaceful and orderly business conducted.

Let it be known, I will continue to firmly act in the welfare for all Cowlitz Tribal Members. And ensure our membership is offered access to Tribal Council meeting minutes and communicate effectively and efficiently about tribal meetings. It will be a privilege to publish notices of Tribal meetings. I look forward to championing issues for the betterment of the Cowlitz Membership.

**Council Secretarial Experience**

- General Council Secretary minutes
- Prepare tribal council packets
- Meeting invites
- Phone polls
- Resolutions

VOTE Whitney Mosback for General Council Secretary, whitneycowlitz@gmail.com or (360) 213-9848
My name is Steve Barnett, and I would like your vote for the Cowlitz Tribal Council. My goal in running is to help ensure the tribe is managed for the benefit of all members. I previously served on the Tribal Council for the better part of two terms during the 1990s, including being elected Tribal Council Secretary. I was on council during the last days of the recognition struggle. Watching the sacrifices made by our people before and during that time made me greatly appreciate our connection to the past and our shared hope for the future. I had the opportunity to serve with both my father Werner Barnett and my uncle John Barnett. I stepped away from the Tribal Council to focus on raising my young children. Those children are now grown, giving me the opportunity to serve again.

If elected to the council I would bring twenty-five years of local and state government experience with me. This includes nearly twenty years of management experience. The ability to do this began with the help of the Cowlitz tribe who, despite having very little money at the time, were forward thinking enough to provide college scholarships to members. I am happy to see that this practice continues and has been expanded to include vocational training. I used the five hundred dollars provided by the tribe to help buy textbooks while I worked on a bachelor’s degree. I went on and got a master’s degree in science (geography). I work in an IT field called GIS (maps tied to databases). In my role as a GIS manager, I work across the spectrum of Government. This understanding of how departments as diverse as natural resources, law enforcement, health, and IT work will help me know what questions to ask to make sure tribal members are being served in the best way possible. I have participated in seventeen budget cycles and know what it takes and how much it costs to run a government efficiently. If elected to the council, I will do my best to make sure all Cowlitz Tribal members get the services and benefits they deserve. I thank you for taking the time to read this and again ask for your vote.
I would like to be considered for a position on the Tribal Council this coming June. I come from the Wannassay family. My father is Jacque (Jack) Cassity. My grandmother was Jaqueline Wannassay Hill and my great-grandmother was Maude Wannassay. My second great-grandfather was Frank Wannassay 3rd great grandparent Jack and Sally Queen (Patch Eye) Wannassay which every Wannassay comes from.

I am a mother of two, grandmother of three, and recently gained three more grandchildren when my daughter married March 6. My family and my heritage mean everything to me. Some of my hobbies are beading, weaving, quilting and attempting to learn our native language.

I grew up in Cowlitz county have 29 years of Management. Recently changed job to work part time now that my kids are grown I feel that I can devote more time and energy to the tribe. I have been on the Pow Wow committee since 2017. In the last two years I’ve served as Chairwoman on the Pow Wow committee and served on the Culture board as the Pow Wow representative.

If given the opportunity to serve on the Tribal Council, I would listen to our members and work towards the betterment of the tribe as a whole. I believe in accountability and transparency is only how we grow is with complete trust. I would like to see our tribe grow with more jobs for tribal members. If tribal members are not qualified for jobs, we can empower them with on the job training, and building their skills. It is my desire to lookout for our Elders and make sure they are taken care of and listen to in the most respectful and healthy way. We need programs to change to help everyone not just low income, this was a tough year for every income bracket.

If you have any questions for me you can email them to me krisdil43@gmail.com

Sincerely, Kris Dillehay
Suzanne Donaldson
(Ike Kinswa Family)

Independent Thinker, Integrity, Traditional Cultural Values,

After over 23 years of serving our tribe in a variety of roles, I am running for General Council because I believe my 19 years of business experience will bring exceptional value to the council and our Tribe in an official capacity. As CEO of Donaldson Consulting, LLC, a national consulting firm, I have consulted on public and private development projects worth over several hundred billion dollars. Much of my work involves managing budgets, adhering to regulations, and ensuring my clients comply with rules and polices, all important traits for our tribe. I advise my clients on managing their projects efficiently; implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion; providing business coaching for underutilized firms; and ensuring agency contracting compliance in addition to community engagement and project management.

In addition to my business experience, I bring outstanding communication and leadership experience, bolstered by my commitment to valuing our elders and respecting others’ opinions. I listen with an open mind while providing a devil’s advocate perspective. My clients and colleagues value my ability to bring disparate personalities and perspectives together to work toward the common good. In 2018, my business received the Minority Business of the Year Award from the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs.

I have been praised for my collaborative style and drive for constant improvement. As one of my clients said, “Suzanne speaks with candor, holds people accountable, and follows through with her commitments.”

If elected to Tribal Council, I vow to conduct myself as I do in my business, with the highest level of integrity and honesty. I believe that we should be working together towards to improve the lives of all tribal members and I pledge to listen to tribal members with an open mind and to work towards supporting all tribal members in a fair and equitable manner.

I believe in open communication on Tribal matters, and I vow to support our tribe through sound fiscal policies, wise investments, and sound capital development.

Cowlitz Tribe volunteering:
- Cowlitz Tribal Foundation Statewide Fund
- Cowlitz Art & Culture Facilitator, April 2020-present (connecting Tribal members via zoom)
- Revenue Review Committee member, 2016-present
- Education Committee member, 2009-present
- Ethics Committee member, 2020-present
- Drum Group member, 1998-present
- Pathways to Healing volunteer, 2009-present
- Elders Program volunteer, 2009-2017
- PowWow Committee member, 2004-2016 (9 years as chair)
- Tribal Council member, one term

Other past and present volunteering:
- Oregon Native American Chamber of Commerce (2013-present)
- Portland Indian Leaders Roundtable (2018-present)
- The Old Church Concert Hall Board Member
- Port of Portland Mentor Protégé Program (mentor)
- SafeBuild Alliance – member and past mentor
- Cancer Society
- Providence Festival of Trees
- Clark County Santa’s Posse

I am a resident of Clark County, Washington with an A.A. degree and additional courses at WSU, PSU, and WGU.

I respectfully ask for your vote for Tribal Council.

All my relations,

Suzanne Donaldson

www.donaldsonconsultingllc.com
Robert Erickson

I am excited and honored to be a nominee for the Cowlitz Tribal Council. My father is William Erickson and my grandmother is Bonnie Erickson. Working for you, would be an awesome opportunity to use my education and experience to help strengthen the Cowlitz Tribe.

I am reliable, responsible, and resourceful Cowlitz Member. Who has over 6 years of property management experience, a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration and Property Management, who previously served 5 years active duty in the United States Marine Corps.

I enjoy working in teams to achieve stunning results on a budget and by the established deadlines. So far this year, I had the pleasure of leading my team to numerous milestone achievements. One achievement was that our property was awarded the ORA Power Ranking Elite 1% Award for being in the top 1% out of 1,303 other properties for reputation and customer service. These milestone achievements were accomplished through teamwork, attention to detail, clear workflow, and careful audits of our business processes and their results.

I like to empower and support people. I think trust and initiative mixed with accountability and support, leads to increased productivity and a healthier environment. These ideals have helped me to develop and implement numerous policies and procedures that increased operational efficiency and resident satisfaction, while decreasing expenses. My year-to-date expense savings for 2021 is 9% or $33,178

In conclusion, I want to thank you for taking the time to read this and I look forward to what we may accomplish together.

Respectfully,
Robert Erickson
William (Bill) Erickson

I am running for the Cowlitz Tribal Council

My Roots:
Bonnie Erickson/Sidney Earl/Lucille LeGarde/Sophie Weiser/Lucy Skloutwout

Vision

I want to see the Cowlitz Tribe being a force for good, a leader in the State and Nation, resilient people who honor their Culture, Language, and History, while building sustainable future.

My Focus

* Enrollment - there is still work to be done. Too many eligible Cowlitz are not enrolled. I will work to correct this.
* Promoting economic growth and searching for new sources of sustainable revenue.
* Responsible Money Management that eliminates wasted spending and saves funds to give back to our fellow Cowlitz. Let there be no poor among us.
* Encouraging use of advanced technologies in everything we do - this is our link to effectiveness and efficiency.
* Universal health and dental care for all our members.
* Preserving our Culture and Language - these are the ties that bind us together as a family.
* Prohibit Conflict of Interest in all Tribal operations.

My Life’s Dream

My story matters, it is the story of our Cowlitz People, how against all odds we are still here. We are strong and resilient. I have come from a dusty road on East M street, Tacoma, WA. Years later I built a successful medical practice in Anchorage, Alaska and operated it for 20 years. I come from humble beginnings and understand the value of a dollar. I will treat Cowlitz funds with wise management. I respectfully ask for your vote. I will not let you down. I will always remember that I am Cowlitz and I am working for you.

Life Experience

I have the honor of working in our Cowlitz Tribal Clinic, in Longview as a Medical Provider. Like all of us, I am not alone. I stand on the shoulders of my great beloved ancestors. I honor my Grandmother’s memory and her determination to always be true to her Cowlitz roots. As a young boy, I remember her telling me, “Billy always remember that you are Cowlitz”. I really did not know how her admonition would affect me. As time went by, and I pursued my profession, her words would come back to me, “Always remember you are Cowlitz”. She would be proud of my decision to run for Tribal Council.

Our family lived a humble life, but we were taught to stand up straight and be honest, look a person in the eye when you talk to them, and respect your Elders. I promise, this is the attitude that I will bring to The Tribal Council. I will fight for our Cowlitz family, never fight within our Cowlitz family... You will only get respect from me.

Education, Training, Service

Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington/Master of Science in Nursing, 2001
Westminster College of Salt Lake City/ Bachelor of Science in Nursing, 1997
Desert Storm Veteran, 1991
United States Army Reserve, 1990
United States Marine Corps Reserve, 1982
Our Cowlitz Honor Song calls our People home; do you hear the Ancestors?

My name is Teri Graves, daughter of Joyce Schumaker; daughter of Marie Woracek; daughter of Alfred Marion Smith; son of Peter Smith; son of Elizabeth Smith; daughter of Iuse Musch Skaowit; daughter of Chief Scanewa.

“Horse People riding, this River so Free, the Land of the Cowlitz, is calling to me.”

My thirst to know my People started when my Great Grandfather passed when I was 11 years old, and knowledge died with him. This Journey to come home to our People started over 30 years ago.

During that time, I have been the first Vice-Chair of Health Board, volunteered on Cultural Committee when it first started, volunteered on Powwow Committee as Vendor Coordinator, and volunteered on the “Tech Team.” I volunteered to work with the Youth long before I had my own children and long before we had an official Youth Committee and Youth Department. I love to instill the Pride of being Cowlitz in our Youth and.

I was bitten by the Tribal Canoe Journey bug when I traveled to Hoh River to see it in 2002. Four years later, Cowlitz Families came together and put a canoe on the water. In 2008, John Barnett bought us our canoe, “Sahu hi tithla,” One Who Gives All.” I had the blessing to sit at the feet and learn and listen to the stories of Elders and Chiefs, and with that, a responsibility to Honor those teachers by teaching it forward.

In my Teachings, we are only as strong as our weakest. I use this Teaching to lift up and love our People; to listen to their words and hear their Hearts. I humbly ask for your vote for Tribal Council. All my life has been in the work of Service, and I will continue to work in a position of Service for our People.

“The Spirits they Whisper, ‘My Child never roam, come back to the Cowlitz, the Cowlitz is Home.’”

You may have heard my voice at General Council, speaking for those unable to speak—our Military & Veterans, our Children, our bedridden, housebound Elders, our People with past mistakes (like Substance Use, felonies) and for our “Lost Birds” crying to come home to be with us. It is important to have various experiences and knowledge to bring to the table and have those hard discussions. I am ready to do that work, because in the end this is most important: I have heard these words and know them to be true “Cowlitz Are Stronger Together.”

“My Brothers and Sisters, Stand Now with me, We are United, A Nation that’s Free.”

It would an Honored if you elect me to serve you on Tribal Council. I am also pursuing my MPA in Tribal Governance at The Evergreen State College. I can be reached at terigraves@comcast.net or my cell 253.290.8057. My resume’ for more on my abilities: https://my.indeed.com/p/terig-6u3nm98

Náxʷqʷul’as (Thank you)
Hi, my name is Dustin. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my wife and children. I am an avid hunter and love being outdoors. I am a small business owner that specializes in Home Repair and Remodel. I am currently the Chairman of the Housing Board. If elected for Council, I would like to advance housing assistance to all of our members in further counties and states. I would also like to see tribal hunting and fishing be recognized for the Cowlitz Tribe. As a supporter of No Cowlitz Left Behind, I feel that every member counts, as well as every vote should be counted. Please consider me as your next Cowlitz Tribal Council Member.

Sincerely,
Dustin
I am from the Ike-Kinswa family,
Taidnapaum, Upper Cowlitz

- I supported the mail in voting amendment.
- I support a change in leadership
- I support the membership attending tribal council meetings, either in person or virtual. We work for you!
- I support tribal members joining committees and boards regardless of their residency.

My path in the Cowlitz Tribe began as a child when my mother and father took me to the general council meetings in the old Cowlitz Prairie Grange. My job was to serve the Elders. I have been serving the Cowlitz people all my life, as a volunteer then as the Elders Program Manager. I retired from employment in 2015, but continue to be active in the tribe.

I currently serve as the Tribal Council Chair, on the health board, vice-chair of the Cultural Resources Board, and as a mentor and cultural educator to the HHS programs, substance use disorder, mental health, Positive Indian Parenting and the Medical Assisted Treatment Program.

Indian Child Welfare has been a big part of my life as well, serving on the newly formed Indian child Welfare Committee, LICWAC (Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee). Currently serve as a QEW (Qualified Expert Witness) for Cowlitz children in the court system.

I believe in being available to all tribal members for questions, suggestions, and comfort. Technology has made more connections possible during this covid-19, bringing members from long distances to the meeting as well as cultural days.

Culture is the tribe. Cultural education is essential, now with virtual the language and culture classes being available to all has been a great step for our people.

I am asking for your support and vote so that I can continue to help our tribe grow in a good way. I have been known to speak for our people, to bring your concerns to the front, find resolutions, and not have secrets!

All my relations
Patty cell 360-520-2578
pattygaiser@gmail.com
pkinswa-gaiser@tc.cowlitz.org
Klahowya,

My name is Brad Parker, and I am running for the position of Tribal Council Member. I grew up in the Pacific Northwest and I always felt a deep pull to the woods and waters that I think I can assume we all enjoy. It was not until I found out that I was Native American, that I began to understand where that pull was coming from. By the time you have read this statement I will be 31 years old. I know that many of you will read this and think that someone so young has no place in a community government position. I assure you that I am prepared for this position and I will do everything in my power to serve the people of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

Some policy areas that I will strive to start conversations on include furthering the Cowlitz Tribe's cultural footprint. I currently sit on my employer's diversity council as a council member. What got me interested in diversity council was my own heritage and the feeling that Native American culture seems to be slowly disappearing in the Pacific Northwest. There are a vast number of archaeological sites here that we have barely scratched the surface on. As a people our story deserves to be told. I think that nothing would make our tribe stronger than to be able to see; and touch; and feel; real artifacts from our own ancestors and to be able to show them to the world. Second, as a federally recognized native American tribe in Washington our people deserve to practice one of our most sacred cultural trademarks like we did in the past. Many other tribes in the state enjoy fishing and hunting rights for subsistence and cultural heritage and I believe that we should as well. And lastly, I also believe that our tribal government has struggled in the past with things like credibility, transparency, and good faith actions that are ethical and moral toward all tribal members. It is time to enact change, to decrease the size of our tribal council, and eliminate holding tribal government positions while holding a job within the tribe. I want to make a push for openness and transparency in all the tribe's dealings so that our people are informed and can make educated decisions when voting on policies and positions.

I am completely ready for this position. I am college educated with a degree in Criminal Justice. I currently work in the Aerospace Industry and have worked in this fast-paced environment for many years. I am also an officer in my labor union and so have ample experience in community government. I am asking for your vote for tribal council member so that I may serve the people of this tribe.

Best Regards,
Brad Parker
Justice Wayne Rhodes

Vote for Justice Rhodes (incumbent)

Cousins,

Thank you for your resilience! I’m honored to serve on Tribal Council and continue our foundational work. We are off to a great start this year in making some major changes that will benefit you and continue to build on our future together! I will continue to listen and react to your responses. I will continue to lead with integrity. Your vote for me will continue the legacy and commitment to bringing great opportunities to the Tribe.

Justice Rhodes, Enrollment #1611

Great Grandson to Herman Rhodes (Forks, WA); Grandson to Eugene Rhodes (Drain, OR); Son to Wayne Rhodes (Cottage Grove, OR)

Support:
Chairman John Barnett asked me to go to Law School in 2003, so I moved to Colorado where I continue to live with my wife, Jan, and our two boys, Owen (8) & Oliver (6).

The Barnett Family and No Cowlitz Left Behind supports my lifelong dedication and commitment to serving the Tribe.

Cowlitz Tribal Service:

In the late 90’s I worked hard to get Docket 218 money coordinated for our recognition. I led multiple committees: Finance, Governance, Technology and Housing. I drove from Eugene, Oregon to Longview multiple times each month, for many years.


When St. Mary’s Housing Complex (Cowlitz Mission) was transferred to the Tribe, I helped secure HUD funding and complete the legal work to acquire and formulate the entity.

Recent Term (2018 – 2021):

- Forming the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) as a financial/banking institution providing financial services to members.
- Economic Development Authority (formerly the Econ Dev’t Committee) to develop C-Stores/Gas Stations, Port facilities, Housing Developments and big projects creating Cowlitz jobs, careers & fulfilment.
- Strategic Planning Committee

Tribal Relations:
I’ve sweat with the Crow (MT) to help elders get roads across their allotted lands. I’ve worked alongside the Three Affiliated Tribes (ND) to build a Hotel to their casino. I’ve attended private Pueblo (NM) ceremonies and worked with Navajo (AZ) Housing Authority on $400M+ housing funded projects.

For Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) I audited many dozens of Tribal Councils and Housing Authorities.

As a Fiduciary Trust Officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Special Trustee, I worked alongside Yakama (WA), Umatilla (OR), Nez Perce (ID), Colville (WA), Spokane and Coeur d’Alene (ID) tribes, managing on-and-off reservation leases, Individual Indian Money (IIM) Accounts and major Tribal Investments.

Education:
- Univ. of Oregon, Bachelor of Arts (BA), International Business
- Univ. of Denver Law School, Master of Resources Law, (Indian) Land Law
  o Native American Law Student Association
- Univ. of Denver, Master of Global Studies, International & Indian Banking
- Aviation Certs; Real Estate Certs

Outdoor Activities I enjoy:
Bow Hunting; Fly Fishing; Camping; Horseback riding; Farm Work & Smoking Meat

Email: Rhodes.Justice@gmail.com or JRhodes@tc.cowlitz.org

Phone: 303.819.6049

Phone: 303.819.6049
Vanessa Robertson

My name is Vanessa Robertson. I am daughter to Elizabeth Robertson, granddaughter to Leatrice Joann Swanson and descended from Simon Plamondon. I’m 36 years old and I am running for tribal council.

After graduating from Ferndale High, I moved to Longview to pursue degrees in early childhood education. During that time I had the honor to work for our tribe in the elders program with Patty. Patty and Barb taught me many things, how to cook from our culture and for our people.

After college I have worked in early childhood education for the last 18 years, as a lead preschool teacher. Where I have developed the skills of leadership, patience, and understanding. Through experience and classes I have come to know and understand The Washington State WAC and Nyack. I’ve also had much experience with CPS and family health services, that have given me the skills and knowledge to now be a founding member of our Cowlitz ICW committee. Where I now have an amazing opportunity to learn about not only our ICW and how it helps our Cowlitz children and families but ICWA and our rights by law.

I believe, with my skills and knowledge I could be an asset to the tribe, not only with the helping and caring for our tribal children, but also as we move forward with developing an early childhood education program of our own that consists of daycare and preschool. Staying within the guidelines and licensing of Washington state and Early Achievers, and making sure that we stay true to ourselves, our beliefs, and our culture.

I hope to follow in my Great Grandfathers, along with my grandmother’s footsteps of being on Tribal Council. They have both taught me the importance of preserving our culture and family, but they have also taught me that the Tribe comes first. That means to me, what’s best for the tribe, not best for the one. With that in mind, I believe in equal benefits and opportunity for all tribal members, no matter their age or location. I believe in trainings for Cowlitz individuals to fill positions, before hiring non Cowlitz. I believe in full transparency, not only from the Council, but all business dealings we have that would not break confidentiality clauses.

We need to reunite us all as a tribe, bring our last birds home and enroll all our children under the age of 18.

The council was set to represent the members, their wants, needs and do what was best for the tribe as a whole. And seems with every passing year it has gotten further away from that. Last year was a start, but it is time to put a few more new faces on the council that can help return the council to the tribal members and once again represent them. The tribal council needs to re earn the respect and trust of the members, and I hope to be a part of that.

Thank you For your consideration, Vanessa Robertson.
My name is Timi Marie Russin, and I am running for Cowlitz Tribal Council. As a Cowlitz member, I stand proud of everything that our Tribe has accomplished and look forward to our continued growth and success. I am grateful to Mr. John Barrett for his dedication and perseverance that led the Cowlitz Tribe to Federal Recognition. I am thankful for ALL that have served our Tribe and opened countless opportunities. I am honored that Vice President Dave Barnett recognizes my efforts and asked me to run for Tribal Council.

I am asking for your vote of confidence to become one of your next Tribal Council members. I will serve our Tribe with integrity, I will listen objectively, and most importantly, serve with passion and dedication - keeping each of you in mind each step of the way.

- I support the efforts of No Cowlitz Left Behind and believe in complete transparency.
- I will promote education to our tribal members and commit to preserving our history.
- I will reach out to our tribal members, help communicate our goals, share our accomplishments, and actively listen to questions and concerns.
- I will serve responsibly and always put the Cowlitz People in mind first and foremost.

In April 2020, I pursued graduate school and graduated in October 2020 with my master's degree in M.S Management and Leadership from Washington Governors University. I am most proud of this accomplishment because I returned to school 25 years after completing my undergraduate degree from Central Washington University in June 1995. Thank you again to the Cowlitz Tribe and the Cowlitz Educational Board for this incredible opportunity.

I am the Secretary for the Cowlitz Tribe Educational Board and feel blessed to be a part of this fantastic team. I am so excited and proud of our tribal members' goals, talents, and academic accomplishments.

The Cowlitz Tribe and our members have worked incredibly hard. Despite barriers, we continue to achieve and pursue opportunities to provide new successes and security for generations to come. Together, I believe we can be more unified. Together, I believe we can take care of one another, honor our ancestors, and provide the very best opportunities for ALL Cowlitz Tribal Members and families.

Thank you for this incredible opportunity and for allowing me to grow and learn more as a Cowlitz Tribal member.

Respectfully,
Timi Marie Russin

I am born and raised in Clark County, WA. My husband and I are raising our two sons in Ridgefield, WA., and I have worked at ilani for two-plus years in the Sales and Marketing Department as the Supervisor for our Shared Services Team.
My name is Michael Simmons, I was nominated with the idea that I would be able to share my perspectives on some issues I feel strongly about, first health insurance, and second is our hunting and fishing rights. In addition to that I have held management positions in the work place where it is very important to be a great listener and team player. I understand that we all have different opinions and views through our life experiences. I am a life long learner in that I may be an "old dog" but I’m willing to learn new tricks. It is with compromise and collaboration that we get things accomplished and grow as people and a tribe.

My specific concerns are health insurance and hunting rights. Contract health is good for members that live in specific counties but it does nothing for spouses if they aren’t tribal members, and nothing for people out of the contract area. I feel we can do better. Hunting and fishing rights are something I want my children and grandchildren and their children to have and not be intimated or bullied by the State of Washington for not having a state license. We did not give up anything by not signing a treaty.

I would appreciate your vote.

Thank you.

Michael M. Simmons
Cowlitz tribal member

As a person running for a general seat on the Tribal Council, I strongly feel our tribal members need a chance for their voices be heard. I support No Cowlitz Left Behind and believe that Tribal Members should have the right to know what is happening within our tribe and be included in our future. We are working hard towards transparency, but we could be doing better.

For someone like myself who lives out of state, I support vote by mail. I feel it is essential to give each member a chance to vote on the important things going on in the tribe no matter where you live.

I support open enrollment for our children. We need to allow kids and youth to apply and become official members of their tribe. They deserve the right to have access to the same benefits as the enrolled members do. This would be one step of progress towards helping our people who fell through the cracks. We are one people, one family, and should support those who got left behind.

I would like to see building or small office be created where tribal members can come, sit and talk with people from tribal council. Where members can voice their concerns or support in ideas, projects, programs, and the future of the tribe.

I am a strong advocate for available and easy access to mental health. This is one topic that has not been discussed very much within our tribe and I would like to work towards making access available. Providing resources to individuals who are struggling with mental health, which would allow them to reach out for help without feeling shame or guilt to get the help they need.

Thank you for your consideration.
My name is Teri Wright and I am running to become a tribal council member. (Disclaimer: That is not my spouse in the picture!)

Our heritage was lost and no native traditions were carried into our family. I have been working for the last 10 years to restore our native culture by volunteering for many Tribal opportunities. I have attended Tribal Council meetings consistently for two years. I have also had many additional learning opportunities and I very much appreciate those who have patiently taught me our native ways. I still have so much to learn.

I have the support of my family in this endeavor, which is paramount to me. I will faithfully attend meetings, be responsive in communication with members, and will always be honest with you. Thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions of me, or wish to speak with me, I can be reached at Teri0414@comcast.net or (360) 259-1745.