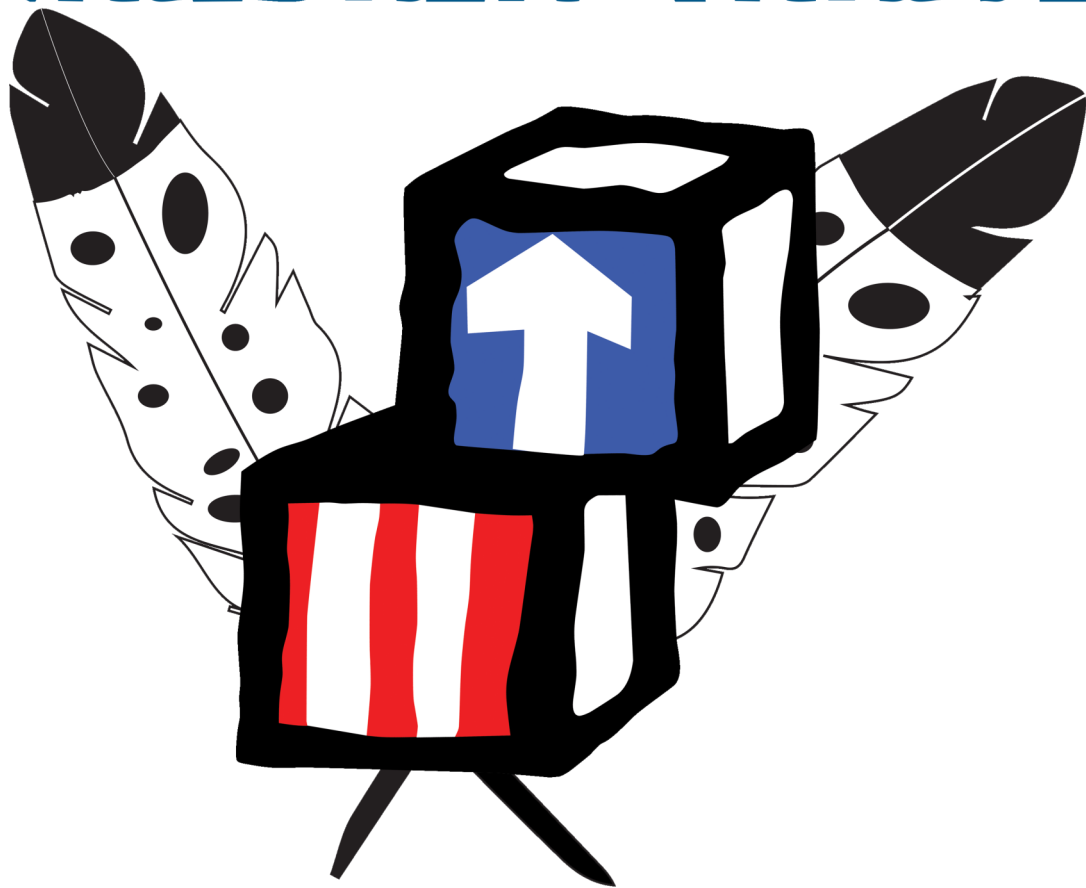


# **TRIBES LEAD CHILDREN THRIVE**



# **AIAN HEAD START**



**35th National Indian Head Start Directors Association  
Management Training Conference  
June 15-18, 2026      Costa Mesa, CA**

# Early Childhood Education



**BAY MILLS**  
Community College

- ▶ **BACHELOR & ASSOCIATE DEGREES**
- ▶ **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**

Earn your degree and elevate your career potential.

This program is ideal for anyone passionate about early learning, child development, and community service. Whether starting with a certificate or pursuing a full degree, graduates gain valuable skills to shape young minds and manage effective early education programs with a multi-cultural edge.



- ▶ **100% Online**

Earn your degree or certificate from wherever you are.

- ▶ **Flexible Credential Options**

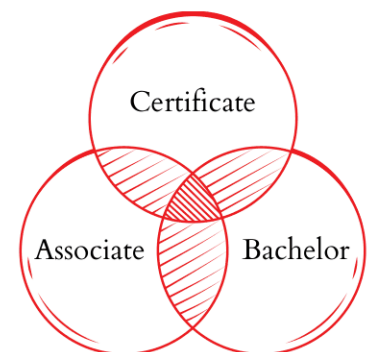
Multiple levels of study catered to various career goals.

- ▶ **Cultural Insight**

Culturally relevant education for Native American communities.

- ▶ **Career Preparation**

Specialize in a growing field of early education professionals.



These programs overlap!  
Many completed courses in one program count as progress for another.

make your **WAVE** and apply today

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**TUITION WAIVED** for U.S. TRIBAL MEMBERS  
and first-generation descendants

National Indian Head Start Directors Association  
35th Management Training Conference

**TRIBES LEAD, CHILDREN THRIVE**

NIHSDA Board of Directors..... 4

Welcome from the President..... 5

**Monday, June 15th**

    Opening Session..... 6

    Raffle and Silent Auction..... 7

    Session Descriptions..... 8

**Tuesday, June 16th**

    Session Descriptions..... 10

    Round Table Discussions..... 11

**Wednesday, June 17th**

    Session Descriptions..... 12

**Thursday, June 18th**

    Session Descriptions..... 14

    Closing Lunch..... 15

Presenters..... 16

Conference Vendors & Exhibitors..... 18

Region XI OHS, T/TA, and Collaboration Center..... 19

AIAN Funded Programs by NIHSDA Zones..... 20

Conference Schedule At-A-Glance..... 21

Sessions At-A-Glance..... 22



*We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mavany Verdugo, former NIHSDA President and member of the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, for her generous donation of Elderberry Blossom Tea and Tobacco & Sage pouches as welcome gifts for this year's conference participants. Mavany's continued support, leadership, and commitment to uplifting Native communities and traditions are deeply appreciated. These thoughtful gifts reflect the spirit of wellness, connection, and cultural care that are at the heart of our gathering.*



# National Indian Head Start Directors Association - Board of Directors 2026

## Officers

**President — Andrea Pesina**, Pueblo of Isleta, NM (NHTA Rep)  
505-869-9797 andrea.pesina@isletapueblo.com

**President Elect — Jayme Trevino**, Kickapoo, OK (NHTA Rep)  
405-964-3676 jayme.trevino@ktoheadstart.com

**Secretary — Ann Cameron**, ITC Michigan, MI  
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**Treasurer — Kristin Ramstad**, Chugachmiut, AK  
907-334-0148 kristinr@chugachmiut.org

## Zone Representatives and Alternates

### Zone 1: Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina

**Representative: Tina Routh**, MS Band of Choctaw, MS  
601-650-1722 tina.routh@choctaw.org  
**Alternate: Vacant**

### Zone 6: Arizona, Navajo

**Representative: Tabatha Novotny**, Cocopah, AZ  
928-627-2811 novotnyt@cocopah.gov  
**Alternate: Vacant**

### Zone 2: Minnesota, Wisconsin

**Representative: Nancy Saboo**, Mille Lacs Band, MN  
320-532-7590 nancy.saboo@millelacsband.com  
**Alternate: Vacant**

### Zone 7: California, Nevada

**Representative: Rhonda Laughlin**, Reno Sparks, NV  
775-789-5615 rrlaughlin@rsic.org  
**Alternate: Verlet Montano**, Mountain Empire USD, CA  
619-473-9022 verlet.montano@meusd.org

### Zone 3: Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota

**Representative: Vonda Pourier**, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, SD  
605-747-2391 Vonda.pourier@rst-nsn.gov  
**Alternate: Anne Reddy**, Rural America Initiatives, SD  
605-341-3339 areddyhsdirector@gmail.com

### Zone 8: Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming

**Representative: Hilary Gourneau**, Fort Peck, MT  
406-768-5164 hgourneau@fortpecktribes.net  
**Alternate: DeAnn Brown**, Siletz, OR  
541-444-2532 deannb@ctsi.nsn.us

### Zone 4: Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas

**Representative: Monica Fisher**, Delaware EHS, OK  
918-440-0698 mfisher@delawaretribe.org  
**Alternate: Vacant**

### Zone 9: Washington

**Representative: Sheryl Fryberg**, Tulalip, WA  
360-716-4250 sfryberg@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov  
**Alternate: Mary DuPuis**, Chehalis, WA  
360-273-5514 mdupuis@chehalis-nsn.gov

### Zone 5: Colorado, New Mexico

**Representative: Vacant**  
**Alternate: Vacant**

### Zone 10: Alaska

**Representative: Jennifer Russell**, Tanana Chiefs Conf., AK  
907-452-8251 x3187 jennifer.russell@tananachiefs.org  
**Alternate: Anne Shade**, Bristol Bay Native Association, AK  
907-842-4059 ashade@bbna.com

## Interested in Serving as a NIHSDA Representative?

### Do you want to:

- Be involved in policy making and shaping the future of Head Start and Early Head Start?
- Build your leadership capacity while networking with other stakeholders in the early childhood community?
- Stay informed on critical issues and provide guidance on member services like the annual conference?

### NIHSDA Zone Representative's responsibilities include:

- Help guide, direct, and advocate for NIHSDA's mission.
- Attend and be prepared for all Board of Directors and committee meetings, functions and events. The board conducts monthly teleconference meetings as well as three face-to-face meetings.
- Serve on committees.
- Regularly contact programs in your zone and share updates on any activities and issues.
- Manage NIHSDA's resources and determine its programs and services

Representative positions are for 2 years beginning in September of every other year. To be nominated you must be a paid NIHSDA member and submit your name and a letter from your supervisor supporting your decision to place your name into the running for a NIHSDA Zone Representative or Alternate position. When the Board of Directors elects a Zone representative as an officer, the alternate automatically fills the position of the representative.

**Contact Teri Stringer (teri@threefeathersassoc.com) for more information.**



**NATIONAL INDIAN HEAD START DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. BOX 6058 • NORMAN, OK 73070**  
**www.nihsda.org**

June 15, 2026

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the National Indian Head Start Directors Association (NIHSDA), I extend a warm welcome to each of you attending the 35th NIHSDA Management Training Conference. It is an honor to gather with you in Costa Mesa, California, for a week dedicated to strengthening Tribal early childhood programs, leadership, and communities.

Our 2026 conference theme, “*Tribes Lead, Children Thrive*,” reflects the strength of Tribal nations in shaping high-quality, culturally grounded early childhood education rooted in sovereignty, language, culture, and community values. Tribal Head Start programs continue to demonstrate that when Tribes lead, children, families, and communities thrive.

This year’s conference was designed with your feedback in mind. We maintained the immersive, in-depth learning opportunities participants valued while restructuring the agenda into one-day sessions that allow attendees to participate in multiple training tracks throughout the week. Our goal is to provide practical strategies, meaningful dialogue, and opportunities for collaboration that you can bring back to your programs and communities.

The 2026 conference features a wide range of training opportunities focused on leadership, education, family engagement, fiscal management, workforce development, disabilities and mental health, facilities, governance, federal policy, and culturally grounded teaching practices. Throughout the week, we will also offer sessions designed to help Tribal leaders, directors, and representatives prepare for meaningful participation in the Office of Head Start Tribal Consultation, which will take place on the final day of the conference. These sessions are intended to support participants in understanding current federal issues, identifying key concerns affecting Tribal programs, and strengthening Tribal voices as we collectively advocate for our children, families, and communities.

As we come together, we also recognize the significant challenges facing Head Start programs across the country, including flat funding despite rising inflation and operating costs, federal staffing reductions causing delays in grant processing, waiver requests, funding awards, and technical assistance, proposed changes to Head Start Performance Standards and evolving federal expectations, and ongoing workforce shortages, difficulties recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and under-enrollment challenges impacting program stability.

Now more than ever, NIHSDA remains steadfast in our mission. For more than four decades, NIHSDA has served as the voice of American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs—advocating for resources, supporting culturally appropriate solutions, and promoting the leadership, resilience, and excellence that define our programs and communities.

Thank you for being here, for your continued dedication to our children and families, and for the important work you do every day. I look forward to a week of learning, inspiration, and unity as we continue moving forward together to strengthen Tribal early childhood education for future generations.

Warm regards,

Andrea Pesina  
President  
National Indian Head Start Directors Association

**OFFICERS**

*President*

**Andrea Pesina**  
505-869-9796

*President Elect*

**Jayne Trevino**  
406-964-3676

*Secretary*

**Ann Cameron**  
906-632-6896

*Treasurer*

**Kristin Ramstad**  
907-334-0148

**ZONE REPRESENTATIVES**

Zone 1: ME, MI,  
MS, NY, NC, SC

**Tina Routh**  
601-650-1722

Zone 2: MN, WI

**Nancy Saboo**  
320-532-7590

Zone 3: NE, ND, SD

**Vonda Pourier**  
605-747-2391

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918-440-0698

Zone 5: CO, NM

**Vacant**

Zone 6: AZ, Navajo

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928-627-2811

Zone 7: CA, NV

**Rhonda Laughlin**  
775-789-5615

Zone 8: ID, MT, OR,  
UT, WY

**Hilary Gourneau**  
406-768-5164

Zone 9: WA

**Sheryl Fryberg**  
360-716-4250

Zone 10: AK

**Jennifer Russell**  
907-452-8251

**Posting of the Colors**

**Invocation and Welcome**

Shannon Wingfield  
Tribal Secretary, Juaneño Band of Mission  
Indians Acjachemen Nation

**Land Acknowledgement**

**Zone Recognition**

**Kim Kovol**

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Tribal Affairs | Principal Deputy  
Director, Administration for Native Americans

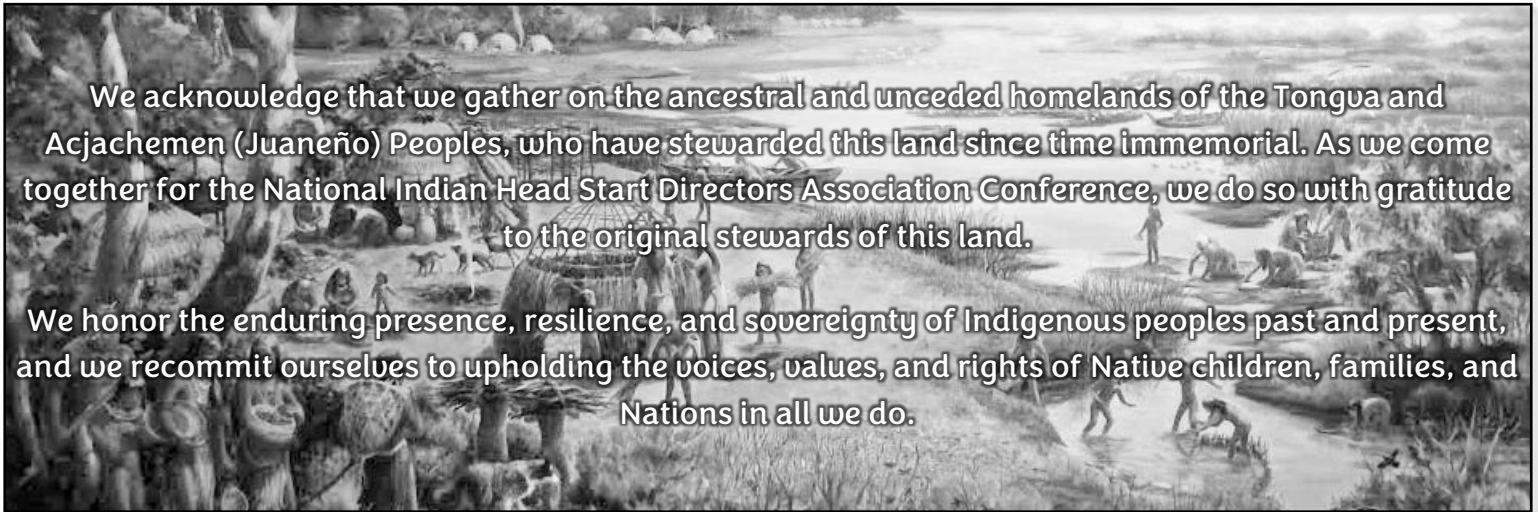
**Announcements**



Kim Kovol serves as Principal Deputy Director for the Administration for Native Americans within the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She brings more than 25 years of leadership experience across public service and the private sector, most recently serving as Commissioner of the

Alaska Department of Family and Community Services, where she led efforts in child welfare, behavioral health, juvenile justice, elder care, and community-based services.

Previously, Kovol served as Special Assistant to Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy, overseeing initiatives related to homelessness, domestic violence, substance use, suicide prevention, and missing and murdered Indigenous persons. She holds degrees from San Diego State University and University of Alaska Anchorage and is currently pursuing a doctorate in executive leadership in mental health and human services at Houston Christian University. A longtime Alaskan and mother of four, she remains active in community service focused on children, hunger relief, and homelessness.



We acknowledge that we gather on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the Tongva and Acjachemen (Juaneño) Peoples, who have stewarded this land since time immemorial. As we come together for the National Indian Head Start Directors Association Conference, we do so with gratitude to the original stewards of this land.

We honor the enduring presence, resilience, and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples past and present, and we recommit ourselves to upholding the voices, values, and rights of Native children, families, and Nations in all we do.



**50/50 RAFFLE FUNDRAISER**

*All proceeds support NIHSDA Advocacy Efforts*

**\$1/Ticket**

*Drawing will be held at the Closing Lunch*

*Raffle tickets may be purchased throughout the conference, and one winning ticket will be drawn at the closing lunch. The winner receives 50% of the total amount collected from ticket sales, and the remaining 50% supports NIHSDA advocacy efforts. You must be present to win.*

# RAFFLE

## Pendleton Luggage Set

### CARICO LAKE 20" SOFTSIDE SPINNER LUGGAGE



Enjoy style for miles with this softside suitcase constructed from sturdy polyester with quiet, easy-glide spinner wheels. Features faux leather trim, antiqued brass hardware and an adjustable, push-button locking handle. Roomy, lined interior has tie-down straps and multiple zippered pockets, including one compression pocket.

14"W x 23"H (including wheels) x 7"-10"D

### CARICO LAKE TRAVEL TOTE



A lightweight tote perfectly sized for daily excursions and short getaways. Constructed from durable polyester with antiqued brass hardware, adjustable shoulder strap plus faux leather handles and trim. Lined interior has multiple pockets. Back trolley strap.

12½"H x 5¾"D x 14½"W at bottom, 19"W at top

### CARICO LAKE DELUXE TOILETRY BAG



This perfect deluxe toiletry kit opens up to a bright printed interior with a classic Pendleton pattern and vegan leather trim. In addition to the side zippered compartments, there are multiple interior zippered pockets to keep all your necessities separate. A sturdy hook allows you to hang your kit from anywhere for a convenient caddy. An additional hidden interior slip pocket in the back allows for easy access and staying organized.

6"W x 4"H x 10¾"D

# SILENT AUCTION

## Silent Auction

*Located in the Emerald Bay 1*

NIHSDA is pleased to present an

array of silent auction items donated by NIHSDA members, vendors and participants that you are invited to bid on. The auction showcases many wonderful items representing



Indian Country across the nation. Browse each item, and don't limit your bidding to just one! With each winning bid you will take home a unique prize and know that your gift supports the NIHSDA Advocacy Agenda.

**The silent auction opens in Emerald Bay 1 on Monday afternoon and final bids must be received by Wednesday at 4:15 p.m. Be sure to stop by and place a bid!**

### **How to Bid at the Silent Auction**

1. View the auction items and take note of the items that interest you. A bid sheet is provided for each item with a notation of its starting bid and bid increment of either \$1 or \$5, respectively.
2. Bid on an item by writing the amount you would like to bid and signing your name on the bid sheet.
3. Check the items periodically to see whether you have been outbid. As the auction period continues throughout the Conference more people sign bid sheets, and the prices increase.
4. Write a new amount if you are willing to increase the bid, and sign your name on the bid sheet again.
5. Be at the closing of the auction to challenge other bidders during the final minutes. Once the auction closes the winner may retrieve and pay for their item(s).
6. All items must be claimed and purchased by 10:30 am Thursday.

**Raffle tickets are \$2.00 per ticket or  
3 tickets for \$5.00.**

**The winning ticket will be drawn during the  
closing session on Thursday.**

**Monday, June 15, 2026**

**10:00 am—12:00 pm | 1:30 pm—4:00 pm**

**Understanding the PFCE Framework and HSPPS in Action**

*Rosa Vasquez, Jaime James, AnnMarie Alvarado Pacific I*  
Strong family engagement begins with a clear understanding of the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework and the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). This interactive session will take participants back to the foundational “why” behind family engagement work in Head Start programs. Through real-world scenarios, group discussion, and guided reflection, participants will explore how the PFCE Framework and HSPPS shape everyday practices in ERSEA, relationship-building, and family partnership processes. Staff will examine how these processes translate into meaningful interactions with families and how their role supports family well-being and child outcomes.

**Recognizing and Sustaining Leadership**

*Laura Waukechon Factor, Gayle Perryman Pacific II*  
During this session, participants will identify and develop leadership and succession planning to ensure continuous high-quality services to support child development, family services, and compliance with Head Start Performance Standards. Learn how to build targeted systems for succession plans, including identifying future leaders, knowledge transfer, and risk management during transitions of staff.

**Supporting Children’s Mental Health, Special Needs, and Classroom Management Through Relational and Trauma Responsive Practices**

*Jessica Barnes-Najor, Marie Tabanera Herrick, Deana Around Him Pacific III*  
This workshop integrates relational approaches to mental health, strength based classroom management, and workforce development data on staff well being. Co-facilitators and participants will explore how to support children with special needs and mental health challenges through co regulation, culturally grounded, and trauma responsive strategies aligned with Tribal early childhood values. We will draw on classroom management expertise from Tribal Head Start program staff and researchers from the Tribal Early Childhood Education Research Center.

Participants will deepen their understanding of how children’s mental health, trauma, and special needs influence day to day classroom dynamics, while exploring relational and culturally grounded strategies for co regulation and responsive caregiving. They will examine workforce data that highlights the importance of staff well being in shaping classroom climate and child outcomes. Through applied practice, participants will develop strategies that support both children’s emotional regulation and educator wellness. Participants will be provided with a toolkit that includes resources on classroom practice, relational and trauma-responsive approaches, Conscious Discipline, staff well-being and workforce development, and classroom observation data.

**Inclusion that Works: Leadership Strategies for Supporting Children with Diverse Needs in Early Childhood**

*Kassy Lopez Pacific IV*  
Inclusion does not succeed because of individual educators working harder—it succeeds when leadership creates systems that support it. Tribal Head Start and Early Head Start leaders are tasked with ensuring all children, including those with diverse developmental, behavioral, and sensory needs, are meaningfully included in early learning environments. This session is designed specifically for leaders and management teams and focuses on what it takes to move from intention to implementation. Participants will explore how to build program-wide systems, staff capacity, and supportive environments that make inclusion sustainable—not overwhelming.

Grounded in strengths-based and culturally responsive practices, this session honors the values of Tribal communities and emphasizes collective care, relational leadership, and shared responsibility. Participants will leave with clear, actionable strategies to support their staff, strengthen classroom practices, and lead inclusive programs with confidence.

**Understanding Autism: Strategies to Improve Participation and Engagement**

*Rebecca Freedman, Michael Royal Emerald II*  
This workshop gives educators practical strategies to improve safety and participation for autistic children, leading to improved outcomes for the entire program. Participants will learn all-day supports that reduce escalation, including regulation tools, predictable routines, and consistent adult responses. Educators will build routine-specific plans for three of the most commonly challenging parts of the day: arrival, meals, and whole group. Participants will practice minimizing unnecessary demands, simplifying adult language, and using clear if/then team agreements so responses stay consistent. Participants will leave with a plan to help their center better engage children that are diagnosed or in the process of being evaluated for Autism.

**First things First – Implementing Health and Safety Practices**

*Echo Keough, Jessica Felix, Chris Bolinger Emerald III*  
From fire and tornado drills to universal precautions, from staff background checks to health and safety checklists, and from planning for classroom coverage to daily health checks – Head Start programs put first things first. Join this session to explore strategies that provide the foundation for safe and secure learning environments.

**From Vision to Dollars: Understanding the Head Start Planning Cycle and Budget Phases**

*Racquel Martinez, Lamont Yazzie Laguna Beach I & II*  
Your budget tells a story—make sure it aligns with your program’s vision. This session provides a focused and practical exploration of

**Monday, June 15, 2026**

**10:00 am—12:00 pm | 1:30 pm—4:00 pm**

the Head Start budget development process, grounded within the broader Head Start planning cycle. Participants will gain clarity on how fiscal planning integrates with program goals to produce compliant, fundable, and strategically aligned budgets. While the session briefly introduces the planning cycle to establish context, the primary emphasis is placed on understanding the phases of budget development that support strong financial stewardship in Head Start programs. By the end of this session, participants will be able to: Describe each step of the Head Start planning cycle and how it supports continuous improvement; Describe the connection between the program planning cycle and fiscal planning; Identify and apply each of the five phases of the budget development process; Strengthen the alignment between program goals, fiscal strategy, and federal budget categories; Improve internal fiscal systems to support compliance and transparency.

**AI Isn't as Scary as You Think, Practical and Ethical Uses of Artificial Intelligence for Head Start Programs**

*Frances Moore, Valerie Taylor* *Laguna Beach III*

Artificial Intelligence is quickly becoming part of everyday work, yet many Head Start leaders are unsure how it can be used safely and responsibly. This interactive workshop introduces practical ways AI can support common program tasks such as planning, reporting, communication, and data organization. Participants will see real-world examples aligned with Head Start Program Performance Standards and learn how AI can help reduce administrative workload while supporting stronger leadership and program operations.

Designed for Directors and Managers, this session provides a practical and approachable introduction to using AI thoughtfully, ethically, and responsibly in Head Start programs—no technical background required.

**Navigating 2 CFR 200: Procurement, Budgeting, and Compliance Essentials for Federal Programs**

*Sarah Henke* *Newport Beach*

This interactive workshop provides a practical overview of 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance) and its impact on federally funded programs. Participants will gain a clear understanding of the purpose and structure of Uniform Guidance, key compliance requirements for recipients and subrecipients, and the distinct roles of program, finance, and procurement staff in maintaining compliance.

The session will focus on procurement standards and thresholds, including procurement methods under 2 CFR 200, current federal procurement thresholds, and common risk areas frequently identified in audits and monitoring reviews. Participants will also explore budget application requirements, allowability of costs, and the utilization of new or expanded budget categories.

Designed for program directors, fiscal staff, grant managers, and procurement personnel, this workshop emphasizes practical application, internal controls, and strategies to strengthen compliance while effectively managing federal funds.

**Tips for a Successful Conference**

Wear your name badge

Silence your cell phone

Focus your attention on the speaker

Don't monopolize the speaker's time

Plan your time

Show up on time

Collect all of your belongings

**Don't forget to scan your badge at each session you attend, (Morning and Afternoon), to receive Professional Development hours!**

**Introducing the Family Services Essentials Training Suite for Strengthening Family Engagement**

*Alexis Tarbin, Juan Rodriguez, Jr. Pacific I*

Family services professionals play a central role in strengthening parent, family, and community engagement in Head Start programs. This six-hour session brings together all four modules of the Family Services Essentials Training Suite to support AIAN programs in building strong, relationship-based practices that promote family well-being and positive outcomes for children.

Participants will explore strengths-based attitudes, relationship-based practices, and the essential role of family services staff in building partnerships with families. This session also creates space to reflect on how family engagement is shaped by culture, tradition, and community connection. Participants will consider how to apply the modules in ways that honor the strengths, identities, and life ways of native families and communities.

Through guided reflection, small group discussion, and hands-on practice, participants will gain practical strategies and tools to support family engagement efforts in their programs. Join the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement to experience increased confidence in using the Family Services Essentials Training Suite to strengthen family engagement practices that reflect the strengths, cultures, and connections in their communities.

**Creating a Culture Safety through Professional Development and Coaching**

*Stephanie Turpin, Samantha Crist Pacific II*

Creating safe learning environments is a critical responsibility in early childhood programs. This session explores how to develop a coaching approach to foster a culture of safety and support active supervision in daily classroom routines.

Participants will learn how coaching strategies - such as observation, reflective conversations, and collaborative goal setting – can help staff consistently implement safety procedures and actively supervise children. Join us to explore how intentional professional development planning and coaching can cultivate a strong culture of safety, enhance active supervision, support staff development, and promote safer, more responsive environments for children and families.

**Bi Baandikendegejik (Looking for Knowledge): A STEM Adventure Connecting Culture!**

*Heather Stelzer, Kelly Mitchell Pacific III*

This practical, hands-on session supports Early Head Start and Head Start teachers in naturally integrating STEM into everyday routines and experiences—without overcomplicating the process. Participants will recognize and build on teachable moments, using children’s curiosity, Native culture, and environments as the foundation for meaningful learning. Educators will also deepen their understanding of OHS Learning Standards, ensuring that all experiences are engaging, inclusive, and aligned with children’s developmental stages. Participants will leave with make it and take it items.

**Developing a Sustainable Language Revitalization Program**

*Mike Richardson Pacific IV*

Developing language within our Head Start programs is key to saving our languages and having speakers for the future. We will look at developing programs from a few words spoken to full immersion. What is needed and how can we improve on what we have. The staffing shortage has had huge impacts on moving forward with our language revitalization plans. With so many new staff and fewer resources, many are asking how do I even get started. This presentation will be on how do I plan for and put together a sustainable language program from development to implementation. We will look at sustainable pathways that will not only look at how we survey current language practices to support language in our classroom and community, but also how to develop a sustainable language plan inclusive of culture. Sustaining our tribal languages is a lifetime commitment. It will take time, a lot of effort, frustration, but the future language legacy for our young children and communities is priceless!!! Let’s always strive to make language FUN!!!

**Thriving Together: Leadership Strategies to Support Educator Wellness and Resilience**

*Lillian Hubler Tobin Emerald II*

This full-day management training equips Head Start and early childhood leaders with practical strategies to strengthen educator wellness, reduce burnout, and build more resilient program cultures. Participants will explore tools that support staff well-being, emotional balance, reflective practice, and workplace connection while creating healthier, more sustainable learning environments for both adults and children.

**Facilities First: From Foundations to Stewardship in Head Start Facilities**

*Arnold Ramirez, Cristian Quinones, John Mathews Emerald III*

This comprehensive session series provides a full-spectrum look at Head Start facilities, beginning with foundational definitions, governance roles, and regulatory frameworks that guide decision-making. Participants will explore current and emerging resources, including new tools and guidance available through PMFO and HeadStart.gov, while gaining insight into effective leadership and accountability through the LEADS framework. The session walks through the full facilities life cycle and the 1303 pre- and post-approval process, including application requirements, planning, procurement, and ongoing responsibilities. Emphasis is placed on a FAIR (Financial, Accountability, Integrity, and Responsibility) approach to support sound decision-making. Participants will also examine best practices in facility maintenance and repair, including conducting facility condition assessments, ensuring safety and compliance (including lead testing), and implementing strategies that protect investments and support high-quality learning environments over time.

# Tuesday, June 16, 2026

8:30 am—11:30 am | 1:00 pm—4:00 pm

## School Readiness Simplified: Goals, Data, and Strategies that Work

*Mala Sablok, Carol Bellamy*

*Laguna Beach I & II*

The Head Start approach to School Readiness (SR) means that children are ready for school, families are prepared to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready to welcome and support children. Join us to learn about the four steps to School Readiness and the core strategies that promote successful outcomes for children and families. During this session, we will review the development of SR goals and implementation plans, including strategies for aggregating and analyzing SR data and using the results to strengthen continuous program improvement.

## The Director’s Journey

*Chris Bolinger, Manisha Tare, Ronda Ritchie, Patricia Banks, Laura Factor Waukechon, Lamont Yazzie*

*Laguna Beach III*

Have you been in the Director role for less than three years? Are you an Assistant Director who would like to understand more about the expectations for running a Head Start program? Have you been a director for longer and just feel like you never got all the information you need? If so, this is for you! In this session we will be kicking off a professional development series where AIAN Head Start Directors will get the opportunity to take a deep dive into the roles and responsibilities of this key position. Participants will be given the opportunity to assess their own strengths, make connections with other Directors will, be oriented to key elements of AIAN Head Start, and will walk away with a plan to continue their development with the support of TTA. Follow-up webinars will be offered by TTA to assist participants with continuing their professional development in this area.

## Orientation to Federal Policy & Budget Process: Understanding the Landscape That Shapes Head Start (AM Session)

*Claire Newfeld*

*Newport Beach*

This foundational workshop is designed to help participants build a clear, practical understanding of how AIAN Head Start programs are authorized, funded, and regulated within the federal system. Participants will explore the structure of Head Start in law and policy, beginning with the Head Start Act, the statutory framework that defines program purpose, eligibility, and the AIAN set-aside. The session will highlight how various federal actions impact AIAN Head Start programs and how Tribes can influence federal actions to support Native early childhood development.

## Tribal Resilience Through Federal Policy Transitions (PM Session)

*Claire Newfeld*

*Newport Beach*

Explore the real-world impacts of federal administrative changes on Tribal communities, with a focus on the Trump Administration. This workshop will review policy updates affecting Tribal programs, identify challenges encountered at the local level, and discuss how Tribal leaders and organizations can respond. Emphasis will be placed on resilience, adaptability, and strengthening Tribal systems amid evolving federal priorities.

## Round Table Discussions

4:30 - 5:30 PM

- Education & Early Child Development .....Pacific I**  
*Carol Bellamy*
- Program Management .....Pacific II**  
*Lamont Yazzie*
- Health, Mental Health, & Nutrition .....Pacific III**  
*Manisha Tare, Betsy McDougall*
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance ..... Pacific IV**  
*Laura Waukechon Factor*
- Human Resources..... Emerald II**  
*Ronda Ritchie, Echo Keough*
- Fiscal..... Emerald III**  
*Racquel Martinez*
- Disabilities ..... Laguna Beach I & II**  
*Ashlee Johnson, Jaime James*
- Facilities, Transportation, & Safety ..... Laguna Beach III**  
*Ron Ransom*
- Family & Community Engagement..... Newport Beach**  
*Rosa Vasquez*

## **Leadership in action: Sharing Tribal Head Start Leadership Experiences with a Focus on Best Practice**

*Betsy McDougall, Ron Ransom Pacific I*

This interactive leadership session supports American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Directors, managers, and leadership teams in using a culturally grounded leadership framework based on the Medicine Wheel. Participants will examine how leadership systems support workforce stability, staff engagement, and collaborative practice across Head Start programs. Participants will engage in a leadership-focused Talking Circle discussion that highlights real-world experiences shared by a panel of AIAN Head Start Directors who have prepared for and participated in federal monitoring reviews. Through these discussions, participants will examine how programs have strengthened internal monitoring systems, governance oversight, documentation practices, and staff preparation as part of ongoing program improvement. systems while supporting staff well-being, professional development. This session includes interactive leadership discussions, peer learning, and scenario-based exercises designed to support directors in strengthening recruitment systems, improving staff retention, and creating collaborative leadership environments.

## **Celebrating Our Teaching Strengths: CLASS® Pre-K Through an Indigenous Lens**

*Renetta Goeson, Melisa Jaén Pacific II*

Are you wondering how to center culture, language, and lifeways as the heart of everyday teacher-child interactions? Do you want to learn more about strengthening teacher-child interactions as measured by the CLASS® Pre-K tool? Join our session to explore the CLASS® Pre-K tool and discuss the connection to cultural practices and honoring how we support children's learning and development. During our time together, you will have opportunities to engage, interact, and discuss strategies you can apply to classrooms immediately.

## **Disability/Mental Health Joint Presentation with special presenters Special Olympics and Sesame Street**

*Mike Richardson, Ashlee Johnson, Manisha Tare, Jennifer Hansen, Ryland Towne, Antonio Freitas Pacific III*

Join us for a dynamic, full-day learning experience focused on strengthening supports for children with disabilities and mental health needs through inclusive practices, family engagement, and community collaboration. This unique joint session brings together the National AIAN Head Start Collaboration Office, Special Olympics Young Athletes, and Sesame Street to provide engaging, culturally responsive strategies for AIAN communities.

Participants will explore the importance of early identification and services, including screenings, IEPs, 504 plans, LEA partnerships, and MOUs, while learning strategies for building coordinated systems of support for children, families, and staff. Through hands-on activities and real-world application, attendees will experience inclusive play and movement, explore adaptable activities that strengthen family and community connections, and learn practical approaches for

supporting children's emotional well-being, resilience, and healthy relationships. The session will also highlight self-care strategies for early childhood staff.

By the end of the day, participants will leave with practical tools and strategies to create inclusive, supportive environments that promote healthy development, emotional well-being, and belonging for every child and family.

## **Learning Through Lifeways**

*Laine Rinehart, Mala Sablok, Christa Avila Pacific IV*

One of the positive attributes of AIAN programs is their ability to gain strength through their culture and lifeways. Learning Through Lifeways focuses on making culture and language the heart of Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Together we will develop and share strategies to intentionally connect your traditional values, beliefs, skills, culture, and lifeways with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Participants will explore ways to create a warm, culturally based, meaningful, and responsive learning environment for all children and families.

Audience: Program staff from all roles are welcome to participate.

## **Reimagining Workforce Systems: Talent Acquisition, Engagement, and Retention in Action**

*Jacquie Davis, Ametta Reaves, Camille Stanford Emerald II*

This dynamic session series explores how intentional disruption, employee engagement, and strategic leadership can transform workforce systems in early care and education. Participants will examine how to challenge traditional talent acquisition approaches and build innovative strategies that strengthen recruitment and long-term impact. The sessions highlight how engagement drives retention, emphasizing proactive leadership practices that foster purpose, recognition, and growth. Using tools such as the Employee Retention Strategy Guide and Employee Experience Journey Tool, participants will map the 12 elements of engagement across the full employee experience—from recruitment through retention. Grounded in current workforce realities, this series also explores sustainable, high-impact retention strategies that help programs not only keep great staff, but reignite their commitment and connection to the mission. Attendees will leave with practical tools, fresh perspectives, and actionable approaches to build resilient, engaged, and mission-driven teams.

## **Financial Essentials for Head Start**

*Racquel Martinez, Lamont Yazzie Emerald III*

Financial Essentials for Head Start is designed to strengthen participants' understanding of the fiscal foundations required to operate a high-quality Head Start program. This session provides a clear overview of key financial concepts, responsibilities, and compliance requirements that support strong program management and accountability. Participants will explore the core components of Head Start fiscal operations, including budget development, cost allocation, internal controls, allowable costs, and monitoring expectations. At the end of the session, participants will be

**Wednesday, June 17, 2026**

**8:30 am—11:30 am | 1:00 pm—4:00 pm**

able to: Understand essential federal requirements outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards and Uniform Guidance; Recognize the fiscal responsibilities of governing bodies, Policy Council, and management staff. Identify the elements of a compliant budget and cost allocation plan; Apply basic internal control practices to promote accountability and reduce fiscal risk; Strengthen collaboration between program and fiscal teams to support data-informed decision-making. This session is ideal for new and experienced staff, governing or tribal leadership, and anyone seeking greater confidence in the financial stewardship of Head Start funds.

**Partnering with Families: Supporting the Journey from Prenatal Services to Kindergarten**

*Rosa Vasquez, AnnMarie Alvarado Laguna Beach I & II*

Join us for an in depth look at how Head Start guides a family on their journey – from recruiting an expectant parent, through transitions into the program’s prenatal services, continuing through the birth of the newborn, and into the child’s enrollment in Early Head Start and transition to Head Start, as we prepare children to be successful and school-ready. Through interactive scenarios, discussion, and reflection, participants will explore how programs support families during pregnancy, strengthen relationships through home visiting, and partner with parents as their child grows—supporting transitions from home into Head Start/Early Head Start and later from Head Start into kindergarten. Participants will also hear directly from Parent and Family Voices as they share their journey partnering with Head Start for their child’s success.

**Making Sense of Your Head Start Systems**

*Amy Corkery Laguna Beach III*

Head Start programs rely on complex systems every day to support children, families and staff. Yet even well-run programs often experience the same challenges. Information lives in multiple places. Processes feel harder than they should. Teams rely on workarounds just to keep things moving. This full-day working session helps participants build a clearer understanding of how their systems are actually functioning. Together, we will step back from day-to-day problem solving and examine how tools, workflows, people and leadership decisions interact to shape how work gets done across a program.

Participants will work with real systems from their own program and develop a shared way to recognize where systems

support the work, where they create friction, how workarounds quietly become part of the process and what signals systems send to staff about what matters. The emphasis is on understanding patterns, not jumping to fixes. Participants will leave with new insight into how to assess their systems, greater clarity about what is driving current challenges and a clearer sense of where change would have the greatest impact.

**Governance and Leadership (AM Session)**

*Chris Bolinger, Gil Gonzales Newport Beach*

Welcome to Head Start! In this session, Head Start directors, managers, and leaders will be familiarized with the underlying tenets of Head Start including Head Start’s core values, the Head Start Act, and an overview of Head Start Governance and Leadership. Receive an introduction to the comprehensive nature of HS services and how the Five-year Grant process, HS Planning Cycle, and Management Systems Wheel all build quality services for tribal children and families. Discuss the role and responsibilities of Governance in Tribal Head Start programs. Learn how HS encourages each tribal community to build their program to reflect community needs and support local language and culture.

**Consultation Preparation (PM Session)**

*Claire Newfeld, Andrea Pesina Newport Beach*

This session prepares Tribal leaders and representatives to engage effectively in the Office of Head Start Tribal Consultation. Participants will receive an overview of the consultation process, current policy and program issues impacting Tribal Head Start, and strategies for developing meaningful comments and recommendations. The session will also provide space for discussion, coordination, and identifying shared priorities to help ensure Tribal voices are heard and reflected in federal decision-making.

**Final Auction Bids are due  
Wednesday by 4:15 p.m.  
in Emerald Bay I!**



### **Bringing Indigenous Resources and Content into your Early Years Program**

*Pam Moore, Dylan Moore*

*Pacific I*

Our workshop will share the many ways we create resources for our highly successful Culture kit program. Participants will be shown how we make the resources, then each will be given over 15 different resources we have made including toys, games, books, learning materials and play-based materials, which can then be used in your classrooms. They will also learn how they can easily make many of the resources and learn simple ways to bring Indigenous content into the environment. We will end the workshop with a short 30-minute make and take where participants will make a set of Indigenous artist designed animals for children to play with in the classroom.

### **Preparing for CLASS Self-Review**

*Jessica Barnes-Najor, Amanda Rinna,*

*Rick Burnett, Beedoskah Stonefish*

*Pacific II*

Join us for a practical, culturally grounded workshop designed to uplift program staff to plan and conduct CLASS self-review with confidence. Drawing on experiences of Tribal Head Start programs with CLASS in research and self-review, this session will cover how to prepare for training and reliability testing, plan observation periods, and organize data collection to build a process rooted in shared ownership and that supports staff confidence. Participants will also learn strategies for developing reliable observers through peer or dual coding and using program video clips. Because effective self-review relies on cultural grounding, trust, and staff comfort, the workshop will highlight approaches that uphold community knowledge and support authentic classroom interactions. We'll discuss how to structure reviewer assignments to reduce bias, pair novice and experienced coders, and create a collaborative, growth-focused review environment in which staff feel seen and supported. By the end, participants will walk away with a clear plan to implement a self-review process that strengthens teaching practice and supports children and families in their cultural and community contexts.

### **Nature as the First Classroom**

*Christa Avila, Echo Keough*

*Pacific III*

Nature is a powerful resource for children's learning and development, full of opportunities to explore, imagine, and grow. It supports children's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development while fostering meaningful connections to the world around them. In this interactive session, participants will experience hands-on strategies for bringing nature into daily routines. Through storytelling, playful activities, and guided discoveries, attendees will see how to weave developmental skills into outdoor and indoor experiences. These approaches help children build curiosity, confidence, and a lasting bond with their environment. Come ready to explore, engage, and leave with practical ideas you can use immediately to enrich children's learning through nature.

### **From Burn Out to Balance- Healing Informed Leadership for Thriving Head Start Teams**

*Manisha Tare, Chris Bolinger*

*Pacific IV*

Early childhood educators face increasing levels of stress and burnout, often without the systemic support needed to thrive. This session explores a trauma informed, relationship based approach

to leadership that centers emotional well-being & psychological safety, while honoring professional boundaries and expectations. Participants will engage in reflective practices and explore practical strategies to strengthen supervision, foster trust, and create healthier, more resilient teams

### **The Choice Between Whisper and Wisdom, Honoring the Power of Our Words in Early Childhood Communities**

*Frances Moore, Valerie Taylor*

*Emerald II*

In close-knit early childhood workplaces, words travel quickly—and their impact can be powerful. This interactive session explores how workplace gossip affects trust, teamwork, and relationships with families and communities. Participants will reflect on why gossip happens, how it spreads, and practical ways to redirect conversations toward respectful, solution-focused communication. Together we'll explore how choosing wisdom over whispers can strengthen workplace culture and protect the circle of care around the children and families we serve. This session is designed for Head Start and Early Head Start staff, supervisors, managers, and leaders.

### **Decoding Fiscal Reports: What Policy and Governing Bodies Need to Know**

*Racquel Martinez, Lamont Yazzie*

*Emerald III*

This interactive session is designed to equip Head Start and Early Head Start program leaders with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively communicate fiscal information to their Governing Body and Policy Council. Participants will explore the regulatory requirements outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), gain practical strategies for presenting financial data clearly and meaningfully, and learn how to foster informed decision-making through transparent fiscal reporting. Key topics include overview of fiscal reporting requirements under the HSPPS, and the Head Start Act, roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body and Policy Council in fiscal oversight, and best practices for presenting budgets, expenditures, and financial updates.

### **Strengthening Literacy through Family Engagement**

*AnnMarie Alvarado, Carol Bellamy*

*Laguna Beach I & II*

Families as Lifelong Educators is one of the outcomes of the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework, highlighting the importance of families as children's first and most important teachers. This interactive session focuses on how programs can empower families to support early language and literacy development in meaningful and culturally responsive ways.

### **Improving Family Engagement: Creating Partnerships that Change Outcomes**

*Rebecca Freedman, Michael Royal*

*Laguna Beach III*

This workshop helps educators strengthen family partnerships by leading with a discussion around your program's benefits and barriers to parent/family engagement. Participants will learn practical strategies to build trust through everyday interactions, responsive follow-up, collaborative planning, and celebratory connection points. Educators will practice and gain skills in handling hard conversations on behavior and development. Participants will leave with a concrete plan for improving relationships with the families they currently serve, including next steps to implement in your program right away.

**Invocation**

**Raffle Drawings**

**Lizbeth Casco White**

Director, Office of Head Start

**Closing Remarks**

**Closing Prayer**

**Lunch Menu**

*Mixed Greens, Market Vegetable, Balsamic Dressing*

*Ripe Beef Steak Tomatoes, Red Onions, Basil. Extra Virgin Olive Oil*

*Roasted Potato Salad, Bacon, Dijon Mustard Mayo, Green Onion*

*Spring Vegetable Bean Soup, Arugula Pesto*

*Natural Roasted Turkey, Provolone, Lettuce, Tomato, Multigrain Bread*

*Grilled Free Range Chicken, Caesar Dressing, Romaine, Herb Wrap*

*Roast Pork, Broccoli Rabe, Provolone, Onion Jam, Ciabatta Bread*

*Classic & Summer Berry Cheesecake*

*Warm Artisan Rolls and Soft Butter*

*Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee, Assorted Hot Tea, and Iced Tea*



Lizbeth Casco White serves as director of the Office of Head Start, which administers Head Start and Early Head Start programs supporting early childhood education, health and family services nationwide.

White brings more than two decades of experience

in early childhood policy, advocacy and public administration. She previously worked with the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education and most recently served in senior leadership roles in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

White holds a juris doctor from Pepperdine Caruso School of Law and a master of arts in marriage and family counseling from Hope International University.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Our heart-felt thanks go to the following sponsors that have generously supported our 35th Conference*



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**Conference Facilitation** provided by **Three Feathers Associates**

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# AIAN FUNDED PROGRAMS BY NIHSDA ZONES

## **ZONE 1**

*Rep: Tina Routh, MS Band of Choctaw, MS*

*Alt: Vacant*

### **FLORIDA**

Miccosukee Corporation

### **MAINE**

Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians

### **MICHIGAN**

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa- Chippewa Indians - HS/EHS

Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. - HS/EHS

Sault Ste. Marie of Chippewa Indians - HS/EHS

### **MISSISSIPPI**

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians - HS/EHS

### **NEW YORK**

Seneca Nation of Indians

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians – HS/EHS

### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

ISWA (Catawba) – HS/EHS

## **ZONE 2**

*Rep: Nancy Saboo, Mille Lacs, MN*

*Alt: Vacant*

### **MINNESOTA**

Bois Forte Reservation HS/EHS

Fond Du Lac Reservation - HS/EHS

Grand Portage Reservation - HS/EHS

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe - HS/EHS

Lower Sioux Indian - HS/EHS

Mille Lacs Reservation - HS/EHS

Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians

White Earth Reservation - HS/EHS

### **WISCONSIN**

Bad River Reservation - HS/EHS

Ho-Chunk Nation

Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation - HS/EHS

Lac Du Flambeau Reservation - HS/EHS

Menominee Indian Tribe - HS/EHS

Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin - HS/EHS

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa's - HS/EHS

St. Croix Tribe of Wisconsin

Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation

## **ZONE 3**

*Rep: Vonda Pourier, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, SD*

*Alt: Anne Reddy, Rural America Initiatives, SD*

### **NEBRASKA**

Omaha Tribe of Nebraska - HS/EHS

Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska - HS/EHS

### **NORTH DAKOTA**

Cankdeska Cikana Community College - HS/EHS

Standing Rock Sioux Tribe - HS/EHS

Three Affiliated Tribes

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians - HS/EHS

### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Lower Brule Sioux Tribe

Oglala Lakota College - HS/EHS

Rosebud Sioux Tribe HS/EHS

Rural America Initiatives HS/EHS

Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe - HS/EHS

Yankton Sioux

## **ZONE 4**

*Rep: Monica Fisher, Delaware, OK*

*Alt: Vacant*

### **KANSAS**

Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas - HS/EHS

Prairie Band of Potawatomi Indians - HS/EHS

### **OKLAHOMA**

Central Tribes of the Shawnee Area, Inc. - HS/EHS

Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma - HS/EHS

Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma

Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Delaware EHS

Iowa Tribe EHS

Kickapoo Head Start, Inc.

Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma

Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma

Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma

Seminole Nation of Oklahoma - HS/EHS

### **TEXAS**

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas

Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas

## **ZONE 5**

*Rep: Vacant*

*Alt: Vacant*

### **COLORADO**

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe of Indians

### **NEW MEXICO**

Acoma Pueblo

Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc. - HS/EHS

Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council

Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc.

Isleta Pueblo - HS/EHS

Jermez Pueblo

Laguna Pueblo - HS/EHS

Mescalero Apache Tribe

Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan Pueblo)

Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc.

San Felipe Pueblo

Santa Clara Pueblo HS/EHS

Santo Domingo Pueblo - HS/EHS

Taos Pueblo - HS/EHS

Zuni Pueblo

## **ZONE 6**

*Rep: Tabatha Novotny, Cocopah, AZ*

*Alt: Vacant*

### **ARIZONA**

Chemehuevi Indian Tribe

Cocopah Indian Tribe

Colorado River Indian Tribes

Gila River Indian Community - HS/EHS

Havasupai Tribe - HS/EHS

Hopi Indian Tribe

Hualapai Tribe

Navajo Nation - HS/EHS

Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Quechan Tribe

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community - HS/EHS

San Carlos Apache - HS/EHS

Tohono O'Odham Nation

White Mountain Apache Tribe

## **ZONE 7**

*Rep: Rhonda Laughlin, Reno Sparks, NV*

*Alt: Verlet Montano, Mountain Empire USD, CA*

### **CALIFORNIA**

Big Sandy Rancheria - HS/EHS

Bishop Tribe

California Rural Indian Health Board, Inc.

Hoopa Valley Indian Tribe - HS/EHS

Karuk Tribe of California

Mountain Empire USD

Owens Valley Career Development Center EHS

Pinoleville Band of Pomo Indians HS/EHS

Redding Rancheria

Round Valley Indian Tribe

Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Smith River Rancheria) - HS/EHS

Yurok Tribe - HS/EHS

### **NEVADA**

Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

Reno - Sparks Indian Colony

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

## **ZONE 8**

*Rep: Hilary Gourneau, Fort Peck, MT*

*Alt: DeAnn Brown, Confederated Tribe of Siletz, OR*

### **IDAHO**

Coeur D'Alene Tribe of Idaho - HS/EHS

Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho - HS/EHS

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

### **MONTANA**

Blackfeet Tribe - HS/EHS

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes - HS/EHS

Crow Tribe

Fort Belknap Community HS/EHS

Fort Peck Tribe

Northern Cheyenne Tribe

Rocky Boy's Chippewa Cree - HS/EHS

### **OREGON**

Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde - HS/EHS

Confederated Tribes of Siletz

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla

Confed. Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of OR - HS/EHS

Coquille Indian Tribe

### **UTAH**

Ute Indian Tribe

### **WYOMING**

Shoshone & Arapaho Tribes - HS/EHS

## **ZONE 9**

*Rep: Sheryl Fryberg, Tulalip, WA*

*Alt: Mary DuPuis, Chehalis, WA*

### **WASHINGTON**

Chehalis Indian Community - HS/EHS

Colville Confederated Tribes - HS/EHS

Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe - HS/EHS

Lummi Reservation - HS/EHS

Makah Reservation - HS/EHS

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

Nisqually Indian Tribe HS/EHS

Nooksack Indian Tribe

Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe - HS/EHS

Quileute Reservation

Quinalt Indian Nation - HS/EHS

Samish Indian Nation - HS/EHS

Skokomish Indian Tribe

Spokane Tribe of Indians

Squaxin Island Tribe EHS

Suquamish Tribe - HS/EHS

Tulalip EHS

Yakama Indian Nation

## **ZONE 10**

*Rep: Jennifer Russell, Tanana Chiefs Conference, AK*

*Alt: Anne Shade, Bristol Bay Native Association, AK*

### **ALASKA**

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

Association of Village Council Presidents

Athabaskan EHS

Bristol Bay Native Association

Central Council Tlingit-Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska - HS/EHS

Chugachmiut - HS/EHS

Cook Inlet Native - HS/EHS

Cook Inlet Tribal Council EHS

Fairbanks Native Association - HS/EHS

Kawerak, Inc. - HS/EHS

Kenaitze Indian Tribe—HS/EHS

Metlakatla Indian Community HS/EHS

Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. - HS/EHS

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

## **Monday, June 15, 2026 "Native Pride Day"**

*Celebrate your cultural identity by wearing shirts with images or slogans supporting Native communities*

Conference Registration .....	7:00 am - 4:00 pm
Opening Session .....	8:30 am - 9:30 am
Sessions.....	10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Lunch (on your own).....	12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Sessions.....	1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

## **Tuesday, June 16, 2026 "Rock Your Mocs"**

*Wear moccasins or traditional footwear to celebrate unity and tribal individuality*

Sessions.....	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Lunch (on your own).....	11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Sessions.....	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Round Table Discussions .....	4:30 - 5:30 pm

## **Wednesday, June 17, 2026 "Wear Your Art"**

*Show off Native beadwork, turquoise, or handmade items*

Sessions.....	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Lunch (on your own).....	11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Sessions.....	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Silent Auction Closes .....	4:15 pm

## **Thursday, June 18, 2026 "Honoring Our Roots"**

*Represent your tribe with regalia, ribbon skirts/shirts, or other clothing that honors cultural expression*

Sessions.....	8:30 am - 11:00 am
OHS Tribal Consultation.....	8:30 am - 11:00 am
Closing Lunch (provided).....	11:30 am - 12:30 pm

# Every Dollar Counts

## **NIHSDA American Indian Alaska Native Child Advocacy Fund**

The National Indian Head Start Directors Association is an advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start and Early Head Start. The NIHSDA American Indian Alaska Native Child Advocacy Fund supports the advocacy activities of the Association and focuses on improved federal legislation and effective regulations benefiting American Indian and Alaska Native children and their families.

With your support we can continue to keep our issues and concerns in front of the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start and the U.S. Congress.

# SESSIONS AT-A-GLANCE

		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY	
		10:00am-4:00pm	8:30am-4:00pm	4:30-5:30pm	8:30am-4:00pm	8:30am-4:00pm	8:30-11:00am	11:30am-12:30pm	
<b>Pacific I</b>		Understanding the PFCE Framework and HSPPS in Action	Introducing the Family Services Essentials Training Suite for Strengthening Family Engagement	Round Table: Education & Early Child Development	Leadership in action: Sharing Tribal Head Start Leadership Experiences with a Focus on Best Practice	Bringing Indigenous Resources and Content into your Early Years Program			
	<b>Pacific II</b>	Recognizing and Sustaining Leadership	Creating a Culture Safety through Professional Development and Coaching	Round Table: Program Management	Celebrating Our Teaching Strengths: CLASS® Pre-K Through an Indigenous Lens	Preparing for CLASS Self-Review			
		Supporting Children's Mental Health, Special Needs, and Classroom Management Through Relational and Trauma Responsive Practices	Bi Baandikendegejik (Looking for Knowledge): A STEM Adventure Connecting Culture!	Round Table: Health, Mental Health, & Nutrition	Disability/Mental Health Joint Presentation with special presenters Sesame Street	Nature as the First Classroom			
		Inclusion that Works: Leadership Strategies for Supporting Children with Diverse Needs in Early Childhood	Developing a Sustainable Language Revitalization Program	Round Table: Eligibility, Recruitment, Enrollment & Attendance	Learning Through Lifeways	From Burn Out to Balance- Healing Informed Leadership for Thriving Head Start Teams			
<b>Pacific IV</b>		Understanding Autism: Strategies to Improve Participation and Engagement	Thriving Together: Leadership Strategies to Support Educator Wellness and Resilience	Round Table: Human Resources	Reimagining Workforce Systems: Talent Acquisition, Engagement, and Retention in Action	The Choice Between Whisper and Wisdom, Honoring the Power of Our Words in Early Childhood Communities			
	<b>Emerald II</b>	First things First – Implementing Health and Safety Practices	Facilities First: From Foundations to Stewardship in Head Start Facilities	Round Table: Fiscal	Financial Essentials for Head Start	Decoding Fiscal Reports: What Policy and Governing Bodies Need to Know			
<b>Emerald III</b>	From Vision to Dollars: Understanding the Head Start Planning Cycle and Budget Phases	The Director's Journey	Round Table: Disabilities	Partnering with Families: Supporting the Journey from Prenatal Services to Kindergarten	Strengthening Literacy through Family Engagement				
<b>Laguna Beach I&amp;II</b>	AI Isn't as Scary as You Think, Practical and Ethical Uses of Artificial Intelligence for Head Start Programs	Orientation to Federal Policy & Budget Process: Understanding the Landscape That Shapes Head Start (AM)	Round Table: Family & Community Engagement	Making Sense of Your Head Start Systems	Improving Family Engagement: Creating Partnerships that Change Outcomes				
<b>Laguna Beach III</b>	Navigating 2 CFR 200: Procurement, Budgeting, and Compliance Essentials for Federal Programs	Federal Policy Transitions (PM)		Governance and Leadership (AM)	OHS Tribal Consultation				
<b>Newport Beach</b>									



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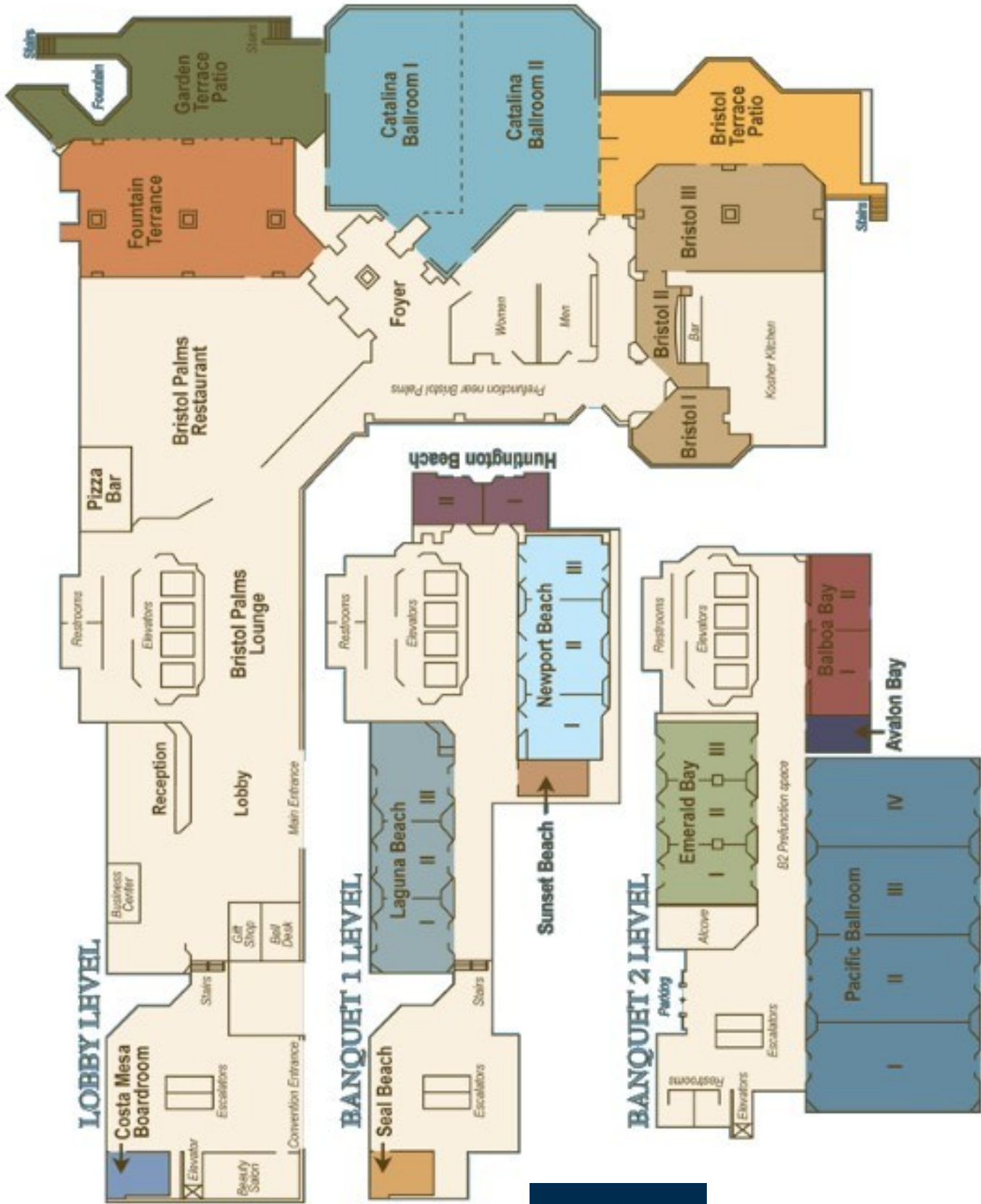
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**Kris Davis**

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