

BRANDI LIBERTY

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www.luakgroup.com 

Professional Bio



Brandi Liberty

Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska/United Houma Nation

Brandi Liberty, enrolled member of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska and descendant of the United Houma Nation, is the owner and CEO of The Luak Group and provides tribal consulting services for Tribes and Tribal entities. With over 16 years of experience, she is one of the top five grant writers in Indian Country and has over \$135 million in federal and state level grant awards for projects and program serving Indian Country. Her specialties include Business Development, Indian Housing / NAHASDA, Grant Writing, Grants Management, Tribal Housing Human Resources, Technical Assistance/Training, Economic Development, Policy Development, Compliance, and Strategic Planning.

Ms. Liberty is the co-author of “*Womanhood: Identity to Intimacy and Everything in Between*”, published in 2023 through She Rises Studios and is currently writing her second book. She was the keynote speaker for the Healing the Circle in Our Tribal Communities Symposium hosted by the Seminole Tribe of Florida in 2019 and the Families Are Sacred Summit hosted by the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma in 2023. She has been interviewed by High Country News about harassment in the BIA and by the Associated Press on the confirmation of Deb Haaland to the Department of Interior. Currently, Ms. Liberty is a monthly columnist for Verite News in New Orleans, LA, addressing indigenous culture, issues, and events for the Tribes located in the state.

She is an Enterprising Woman of Color, a program under the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) that focuses on providing women of color opportunities to expand their businesses. She has sat on multiple boards across Indian Country, including the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska Election Board and the IPAI Community Loan Fund Board for the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians. She currently sits on the Treasurer of the Board of Directors for the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center and Vice President of Research Wild. Additionally, Ms. Liberty actively supports Indigenous representation in fashion, sponsoring and modeling in events like the RES Fashion Show (2023, 2024) for Choke Cherry Creek and the Women's Foundation of the South Crescendeaux Fashion Show, featuring designs by Brocade and Korto Momolu.

Ms. Liberty graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BA in History. She holds a master’s degree from the Center of Indigenous Nations Studies at the University of Kansas, where her focus was Tribal Human Resources, an Executive Leadership Certificate from Harvard Business School’s Leading People and Investing to Build Sustainable Communities Program through Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA), and a Executive Leadership Certificate from the Indigenous Leadership Academy from the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

Experience and Qualifications

The Luak Group **Chief Executive Officer/Owner**

Established 2023

The Luak Group is the parent organization of Heroda Bikaxe Consulting LLC, Morning Star Consultants LLC, and Ugisa Tribal Consultants LLC. For over 16 years, the Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Brandi Liberty, has worked with hundreds of Tribes to strategically plan for the future of their community, tribal organizations, projects, and or programs. Today, those services are diversifying under The Luak Group to bring Indian Country expanded organizations and services, bringing solutions to your tribal community.

The Luak Group has over two decades of combined professional management experience in Indian Country and is dedicated to ensuring leadership growth and protecting tribal sovereignty through all our services and businesses. Our teams of subject matter experts will ensure your mission and vision is incorporated into your goals and objectives at every level of the services we provide. The Luak Group has one vision in mind...Bringing Solutions to Indian Country

- Responsible for the overall success and growth of the organization, overseeing the day-to-day operations and make strategic decisions to ensure the organization is meeting its goals and objectives.
- Develops and implements the organization's overall strategy and vision.
- Leads and manages the executive team and ensure smooth operation of the organization.
- Builds and maintains relationships with stakeholders, including customers, investors, and employees.
- Ensures the organization's financial performance is meeting or exceeding targets.
- Sets and monitors performance metrics and goals for the organization.
- Ensures compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Serves as the public face of the organization and represents it to the media, government, and other external parties.

Morning Star Consultants LLC **Chief Executive Officer/Principal Grant Writer**

December 2008 – Present

› **Grant Research/Grant Writing/Grant Management**

With over \$135 million in grant awards Morning Star Consultants LLC will provide customized professional technical writing services to assist throughout the pre-award phase of the grant lifecycle. We will conduct grant writing, training, and coaching on grant requirements, peer review, and custom research for projects. Morning Star Consultants will work with funders to identify and answer questions and bridge information gaps that often come up in the research process. Each grant researched will include a professional summary and a standardized set of support information so clients can quickly determine if a funding opportunity is a good fit for a particular project.

Whether the grant award is a state, federal, or a foundation grant, Morning Star Consultants will assist the Finance department to ensure the proper management of each grant award. Morning Star Consultants will assist in fulfilling the requirements of the grantor, comply with regulations, provide financial processing support, prepare periodic performance and financial reports, and search for ways to expand existing projects and department services.

- Researches and identifies potential funding sources that align with the organization's mission and project goals.
- Writes and develops grant proposals that effectively communicate the organization's objectives and demonstrate the need for funding.
- Collaborates with program staff, finance, and other stakeholders to gather information necessary to develop grant proposals.
- Manages the grant application process, including preparing and submitting grant applications and tracking application status.

- Ensures that grant applications comply with funding source requirements, including formatting, content, and submission deadlines.
- Follows up with funding sources and maintains accurate records of grant applications, funding received, and reporting requirements.
- Stays up to date on funding trends, best practices, and regulations related to grant writing.

Heroda Bikax[^]e Consulting, LLC
CEO/Tribal Housing Consultant

February 2016 – Present

➤ **Housing Consulting**

Heroda Bikax[^]e Consulting has been a leader in Indian Housing, ensuring Tribes and TDHE's have established internal controls that meet NAHASDA regulations, while ensuring that their housing needs are prioritized. Our housing services include development of internal policies and procedures, program/project planning/design, strategic IHP planning, grant writing, grant management, IHBG, ICDBG, and IHBG Competitive expertise, self-monitoring, financial management and 2 CFR 200, Admissions & Occupancy, Procurement, and training and technical assistance for Board, Executive Directors, staff, Tribes, tenants, and the community.

➤ **Housing Development**

Heroda Bikax[^]e Consulting will work with the housing department/authority, developers, housing participants, General Contractors, and Architect and Engineers to provide housing development consulting services on residential and community facility development projects that include rental and homeownership development, ensuring compliance with NAHASDA regulations, OMB Super Circular, and overall housing development for affordable housing needs.

➤ **Capacity Building/Needs Assessment**

Heroda Bikax[^]e Consulting will develop a housing needs assessment on the areas determined by the Tribe to ensure an accurate approach to capacity building and strategically planning. We can develop an assessment on comprehensive community needs related to tribal housing. From there our team can create a customized workplan for the Tribe and its housing department to streamline steps to build its capacity.

➤ **Strategic Planning**

Heroda Bikax[^]e Consulting will conduct a housing strategic planning process that will include a comprehensive set of Goals, Objectives, and Critical Tasks related to the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Tribe and its entities, projects, and programs. The typical strategic planning process will take place over three phases, Discovery, Documentation, and Implementation, ensuring that we deliver plans and resources that offers up strategies and tools for implementation.

- Provides expert advice and guidance to tribes and TDHE's on issues related to housing and community development.
- Assesses the housing needs of the community they are serving, including identifying the current housing situation and identifying areas for improvement.
- Develops community housing plans, which may include strategies for new construction, rehabilitation of existing housing, and developing sustainable housing programs.
- Provides technical assistance to the community, including guidance on funding sources, federal and state regulations, compliance, and other relevant policies and procedures.
- Facilitates partnerships with other organizations and government agencies to secure funding and resources to support housing initiatives.
- Manages grants and other funding sources to ensure compliance with regulations and to maximize the impact of housing programs.
- Conducts outreach to the community to raise awareness of available housing resources and promote community participation in housing initiatives.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of housing programs and make recommendations for improvements based on data analysis and community feedback.
- Stays up to date on housing trends, best practices, and regulations related to housing and community development.

› **Tribal Governance Consulting**

Ugisa Tribal Consultants provides Tribal Council a foundation towards governance planning and prioritization that aligns with the mission and vision of the Tribe. Our subject matter experts can provide strategic planning, implementation, and monitoring of the legislative functions and oversight of the Tribe's administrative programs, departments, agencies, and divisions.

› **Human Resources & Talent Acquisition Consulting**

Provides advice, counseling, and coaching management and supervisory personnel in all areas of tribal Human Resources management and the application of any codes or policies applicable to the tribal organizational needs. Our human resources services include:

- Development of tribal organizational policies and procedures
- Identifies, evaluates, and resolves Human Resource, and work performance problems within the organization to facilitate communication, improve employee relation skills, and work performance.
- Assist with the development and coordination of recruitment and retention strategies.
- Conduct an audit of HR activities to ensure compliance and efficiency.

› **Workforce Development**

Workforce Development is important to cultivating strong tribal professionals and leaders in this ever-changing world. We provide a range of courses and certifications to ensure students and professionals will acquire the necessary skills they need to expand their expertise in the workforce.

› **Training/Technical Assistance**

Ugisa Tribal Consultants can provide training and technical assistance on a variety of housing topics as it relates to the Tribe's organizational objectives and professional development needs. Topics include, but aren't limited to: NAHASDA, Federal Contracting and Compacting under Public-Law 93-638, Trends in Tribal Enrollment, Indirect Cost Negotiations, Federal Indian Law, ICWA, Code Development, Tribal Court Systems, Detecting Theft and Fraud in Indian Country, Communication Skills, Customer Service, Drug Free Workplace, Tribal Council, Executive Director and Board of Directors Training, Grant Writing/Grant Management, Outreach in Native Communities, Human Resources topics, and more.

Enterprise Community Partners

August 2022 – December 2024

www.enterprisecommunitypartners.org

Technical Assistance Consultant

- Provided direct technical assistance to Tribes/TDHE's under HUD's **Community Compass Technical Assistance Program**.
 - HUD's Community Compass initiative funds technical assistance (TA) and capacity building activities for HUD's customers, including grantees, public housing authorities, and tribes. Community Compass helps HUD's customers navigate complex housing and community development challenges by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, tools, capacity, and systems to implement HUD programs and policies successfully. The goal of Community Compass is to empower communities so that successful program implementation is sustained over the long term. Activities performed under Community Compass include:
 - Needs assessments.
 - Direct Technical Assistance and Capacity Building engagements.
 - Development of products and tools.
 - Self-directed and group learning.
- Provided direct technical assistance to Tribes/TDHE's under HUD's **Distressed Cities and Persistent Poverty Technical Assistance Program**.
 - The Distressed Cities and Persistent Poverty Technical Assistance (DCTA) program is designed to build capacity of local governments experiencing economic distress and assist local governments and their

nonprofit partners in alleviating persistent poverty in specific areas (census tracts). Through DCTA, HUD provides technical assistance (TA) directly to entities serving smaller communities with populations under 50,000.

The Project Team (subsidiary of Ho-Chunk Capital)

April 2022 – December 2023

<https://hochunkcapital.com/theprojectteam.html>

Project Manager Consultant

- Provided full-service project management and technical assistance during all phases of a project's life cycle.
- Pre-development & Planning
- Market & Feasibility Studies
- Economic Development Analysis and Consulting
- Financial Modeling and Projections
- Tax Credit and Grant Sourcing

Native Learning Center (Seminole Tribe of Florida)

March 2017 – February 2023

<http://nativelearningcenter.com>

Subject-Matter Expert ~ Training/Technical Assistance Contractor

- Provided onsite and webinar-based training and technical assistance as a NAHASDA subject-matter expert through the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Native Learning Center.
- Assisted and promoted affordable housing activities, ensuring safe and healthy environments, planned for, and integrated infrastructure resources for Tribes and TDHE's, and promoted the development of private capital markets in Indian Country.
- Keynote speaker for the *Healing the Circle in Our Tribal Communities Symposium* hosted by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Native Learning Center.
- Planned, coordinated, and presented over 70 webinars, onsite conferences, onsite training/technical assistance, and podcasts for over 2700 Indian Country participants.

Nakupuna Companies (Honolulu, HI)

October 2021 – March 2022

<https://nakupuna.com>

Senior Consultant

The Senior Consultant supports HUD ONAP in leading a major initiative supporting the implementation, management, and monitoring of the CARES Act of 2020. HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.

- Led deliverable development and delivery independently, or as part of a team, in support of the HUD contract's five task areas (e.g., interviewing clients, leading client teams, creating and delivering presentations, tailoring best practices to HUD context, benchmarking performance, and working with subject experts to develop unique perspectives and insights).
- Assisted ONAP Office of Grants Management (GM) and Grants Evaluation (GE) with the development, review/edit, and finalization of CARES Act policy and funding guidance documents.
- Supported the writing, review, and development of numerous policy and funding documents to align with the ONAP's Program Guidance and Notices.
- Contributed to the original development and progressive elaboration of four comprehensive GM and GE manuals and handbooks.
- Provided input and supported the development of a strategic plan, roadmap, and methodology to test and assess compliance for 15 Tribes and TDHEs CARES Act funding recipients to determine compliance.
- Supported the development of SOP's, checklists, and quality control mechanisms to support PHA's reviews and assessing compliance.
- Conducted numerous remote audio and visual interviews with key stakeholders to carry out assessments.
- Assisted in the development and delivering of a PHA tracking aid that tracks waivers and associated data adopted by PHA's under the CARES Act authority.
- Supported the composition and development of RVI training curriculum and material, technical assistance documentation, troubleshooting responses, and capturing best practices.

- Managed, tracked, and analyzed metrics associated with the roll out of RVI activities.
- Provided recommendations on policy development related to CARES Act expenses.

Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska (White Cloud, KS)

February 2018 – September 2020

<https://iowatribeofkansasandnebraska.com>

Project Manager

The Project Manager for the Comprehensive Tribal Justice Systems Strategic Planning was responsible for facilitating the planning process with the Department of Justice for the 2017 Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation project. Responsibilities included:

- Facilitated the strategic planning process, including forming a strategic team that includes the Tribe's tribal justice system staff.
- Assisted the Department of Justice Technical Assistance Provider with conduction a comprehensive needs assessment of the tribal justice system.
- Identified community strengths and weaknesses through analysis of the comprehensive need's assessment.
- Oversaw the development of strategies to strengthen the tribal justice system and promoted community wellness and safety.
- Assisted the Department of Justice Technical Assistance Provider with completing the final written strategic plan to be submitted to the DOJ.
- Made project management recommendations to the Executive Committee and tribal justice system on grant funded requirements and other identified resources.
- Developed short term and long-range goals and objectives, including project plans and milestones and measures of effectiveness for achieving and accomplishing a successful project.
- Assisted Grant Administrator in preparation of grant narrative and fiscal reporting to the DOJ.
- Provided monthly reports to the Executive Committee on the progress of the project.

Northern Ponca Housing Authority (Omaha, NE)

January 2014 – February 2016

<https://poncahousing.org>

Human Resources and Housing Development Officer

- Organized, managed, coordinated, and directed the operations and functions of employee relations.
- Coordinated and participated as key staff member in employee recruitment process, candidate screening, reference & background checks, including selection (in conjunction with supervising manager), offer and hiring process, preparing position vacancy and activity reports and HR related communications for internal and external distribution.
- Led Northern Ponca Housing Authority managers and supervisors, conducted meetings to provide staff members with clear career goals and criteria for achieving department and organizational goals.
- Monitored job descriptions & salary ranges for industry and market trends. Prepared probation period reviews, annual appraisals, and timelines for completion by respective managers.
- Liaised with Executive Director on schedules and overall employee performance, disciplinary action plans and annual budgeting of salary increases & overtime of the organization.
- Identified, reviewed, and advised on tasks related to recruitment process and employment strategies to meet human resources requirements.
- Planned and implemented a quality assurance system such as monthly and annual client satisfaction reports and liaising with organizational leadership to ensure effectiveness of standards and policies.
- Interpreted, assisted, and advised employees and managers regarding benefit administration, HR procedures and policies within the specified guidelines of the Executive Director.
- Prepared, reviewed, interpreted, analyzed data, information, and reports, and made recommendations based on policy changes and goals of the organization.
- Advised Executive Director, management, and supervisors on human resource issues; investigated human resource related problems and made recommendations to the Executive Director and/or leadership team.
- Led organizational health and safety team, related policies & issues; conducted training, monitored, & provided monthly reporting to Executive Director.
- Supervised Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program and worked directly with the ROSS Service Coordinator in all functions of the ROSS grant development and implementation.

- Researched grant programs and plans in coordination with grant teams; wrote funding applications and proposals, in tandem with assigned Grant Project Manager; provided follow-up with the grant/funding agencies to enable future funding, as needed.
- Conducted inter-departmental, inter-tribal and inter-agency meetings to identify and prioritize project needs and opportunities being pursued.
- Maintained awareness of funding opportunities from Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Health Service (IHS), and all other federal, state, local, and private funding organizations.
- Provided timely advice and information on funding opportunities, requirements, and procedures; collaborated in defining and implementing project funding strategies.
- Maintained a relationship with contacts within funding organizations for current and future benefit.
- Provided supportive assistance to Administrative department with goals and objective reviews, budget revisions, evaluations, reporting and grant closeouts.
- Maintained files of submitted proposals, record win/loss record (especially feedback for future adjustments and changes for non-funded grant submittals) and maintained files on necessary documentation for Tribal records.
- Assisted in resolving issues and conflicts with funding agencies, as needed.
- Developed and submitted monthly reports to the Board of Commissioners on progress toward and/or needs to complete tasks and address priorities.

Travois Inc. (Kansas City, MO)

January 2010 – September 2010

<https://travois.com>

Compliance Specialist-Asset Management

- Successfully completed LIHTC training and received certification as a Site Compliance Specialist.
- Reviewed tenant file documentation to determine household qualification for Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) occupancy and performed on-site physical inspections in accordance with UPCS guidelines.
- Developed and maintained standardized review/approval forms for Asset Management department.
- Worked with local PHA departments nationwide to update utility allowances for Asset Management clients.
- Updated rent & income limits within the Tax Credit program for Asset Management clients.
- Updated and maintained manuals for LIHTC Compliance Training.
- Provided clients with weekly status to their projects currently in initial rent-up.
- Prepared and submitted quarterly reports to clients, investors, and local and state governments.

Education

Master of Arts ~ Indigenous Nations Studies with emphasis in Human Resources Diversity Management, University of Kansas, 2008

Bachelor of Arts ~ History with minors in Native American Studies and Ethnic Studies, University of Nebraska, 2004

Executive Leadership Certificate ~ Leading People and Investing to Build Sustainable Communities Program, Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA), Harvard Business School, May 2023

Executive Leadership Certificate - Indigenous Leadership Academy from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University, March 2024

Certificate ~ Spark Developer Academy, Spark CDI, 2020

Certification – LIHTC Site Compliance Specialist, 2010

Professional Affiliations

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Treasurer, Board of Directors –2023-Present

Research Wild, Vice President/Board of Directors –2023-Present

Minority Business Development Agency, Enterprising Women of Color, 2022-Present

American Indian Chamber of Commerce Oklahoma, 2022-Present

California American Indian Chamber of Commerce, 2022-Present

Native American Indian Housing Council, Member, 2017-Present

National Congress of American Indians, Individual Indian Member, 2021-Present
United Native American Housing Association, Associate Member, 2020-Present
Society for Human Resources Management, 2020-Present
Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska Election Board Member, 2015–2019
San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, IPAI Community Loan Fund Board Member, 2017–2019
One Mom’s Battle, Board Member/Chapter Administrator (Indian Country, Louisiana, Nebraska), 2014-2018
National Cervical Cancer Coalition, New Orleans Chapter Administrator, 2017 - 2021

Fashion Experience

2024: Sponsor and Model for the RES Fashion Show, representing Choke Cherry Creek.
2023: Model for the Women's Foundation of the South Crescendeaux Fashion Show, featuring Brocade and Korto Momolu designs.
2023: Sponsor for the RES Fashion Show, sponsoring Choke Cherry Creek.

Indian Preference

