

PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE'S 9TH ANNUAL ICWA CONFERENCE AGENDA

Keeping Families Together: The Heart of ICWA

October 14-16 | Casino Del Sol

PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE

ARIZONA

Day One: Wednesday, October 14

Registration: 7:30am – 12:00pm

8:30am-9:25am	**Complimentary Breakfast**
9:25am-9:30am	**Opening Prayer**
9:30am-10:00am	**Color Guard & Opening Remarks**
10:00am - 11:00am	**ICWA Law Update** ICWA Caselaw Update: An overview of litigation involving the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) over the past year. **Autumn Shone,** *Attorney at Law, Rothstein Law* **DesiRae Deschine,** *Senior Counsel, Zwillinger Wulkan*
11:00am-12:00pm	**Protecting Future Keepers: ICWA Advocacy and Implementation** Consistent implementation of the letter and spirit of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) continues to be a challenge in many states. Findings from a recent qualitative study in Montana showed that a lack of resources, lack of knowledge on ICWA, racism, judicial leadership and state/Tribal relationships are key factors influencing implementation. This workshop will present findings from this recent study as part of a larger discussion on recommendations for advocacy to promote ICWA compliance. With ongoing threats attempting to diminish the spirit and letter of the law, this workshop seeks to offer suggestions, grounded in findings from our state, on specific mechanisms Tribes and individual Tribal advocates can employ to hold states accountable to ICWA compliance. The workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to engage in an exercise around advocacy efforts they might undertake to promote compliance at the state level as well as provide tools Tribal advocates might consider for practice in state courts. **Kristina Lucero,** *Director, American Indian Governance and Policy Institute* **Ashley Trautman** *Associate Professor, Chair, University of Montana School of Social Work*
12:00pm-1:00pm	**Complimentary Lunch**

Agenda continued on next page

Day One: Wednesday, October 14 *(continued)*

Breakout Session(s)	
1:00pm -2:00pm	**Session A** **Drug Endangered Children: Often the Forgotten Ones** This session will help participants understand who drug endangered children are, along with the risks and long-term impacts associated with parental and caregiver substance misuse and drug activity. Trainers will share the importance of and opportunities for early identification and intervention and the need for multidisciplinary collaborative efforts to identify and help these children. Trainers will provide examples that all disciplines can relate to and activities to assist in applying this challenging topic. Trainers will help attendees identify the opportunities to change the trajectories of the lives of drug endangered children and break multigenerational cycles. **Carrie Jensen**, Director of Operations, National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children **James Henning** Retired (Certified DEC instructor) **Session B** **Ethics in ICWA (CLE)** Gain insights into the ethical considerations and responsibilities involved in ICWA practice. **OJ Flores,** Attorney General, Pascua Yaqui Tribe **Domingo DeGrazia.** *ICWA Supervising Attorney, Pascua Yaqui Tribe*
2:00pm -3:00pm	**Session A:** **Fort Belknap Indian Community: Soaring Eagle Program** Fort Belknap Tiwahe/Soaring Eagle Juvenile Justice formally the Recidivism Reduction Initiative. Fort Belknap has created a culturally infused alternative sentencing for youth offenders to reduce the rate of recidivism, which was implemented into the juvenile system through holistic and culture of the Aaniiih and Nakoda Traditions. **Joan Johnson, Councilwoman**, *Fort Belknap Indian Community Council* **Charity Boushie**, *Soaring Eagle Case Manager, Fort Belknap Indian Community Council*

Agenda continued on next page

Day One: Wednesday, October 14 *(continued)*

	Breakout Session(s)
2:00pm -3:00pm	**Session B:** **From Investigation to Permanency: The Ultimate ICWA Playbook (CLE)** Please join the Arizona ICWA Court Judges for an overview of ICWA best practices for every professional through a judicial lens from the 50-yard line. We will discuss investigations, hearings, report writing, active efforts, tribal inclusion, ICWA placements, permanency, CASA/FCRB roles, and data. For the benefit of Native families and children, let's work together from the ultimate ICWA play book to bring our hearings across the goal line. **Judge Janet Bostwick,** *Pima County ICWA Court* **Judge Angela Kircher,** *Coconino ICWA Court* **Judge Chuck Whitehead,** *Maricopa County ICWA Court* **Judge Kathleen Quigley,** *Pima County ICWA Court*
3:00pm -3:15pm	**Break**
3:15pm -4:15pm	**Uniform Law Commission Draft ICWA Law** In July 2026 the Uniform Law Commission approved the Uniform State Indian Child Welfare Act, a comprehensive statutory framework that was developed with the essential participation of tribal leaders. In this session, Professor Atwood, a member of the State ICWA Drafting Committee, will discuss the need for such an act and will explain the ways in which the new Act clarifies and strengthens the fundamental guarantees of the federal ICWA. **Barbara Atwood,** *Mary Anne Richey Professor of Law Emerita & Co-Director, Family and Juvenile Law Certificate Program*
4:15pm -5:00pm	**Grief & Loss in Indian Country** As tribal child welfare professionals, we experience and see grief and loss that most other professionals never see in their lifetime. The work we do is both meaningful and hard. Even "positive" outcomes, often still hold complicated feelings. During Grief & Loss in Tribal Child Welfare Systems, we will learn about the intersection of "ambiguous grief" and intergenerational trauma and where it may show up in the lives and responses of our selves, our children, parents, foster parents, kinship support, and our communities. Tribal communities have always had ways and traditions that have kept us tethered to this earth through unimaginable hardship, attempted genocide, an attack on our very way of life. Through it all, we are still here. Join us for an engagement filled session of identifying and exploring a healing way forward. **Courtney Bolt,** *Faculty, University of Oklahoma*
EVENING NETWORKING SESSION	

Day Two: Thursday, October 15

Registration: 7:30am – 12:00pm

8:30am-9:00am	**Complimentary Breakfast**
9:00am-9:05am	**Opening Prayer**
9:05am - 10:00am	**National Tiwahe Tribal Leadership: An Update on Tiwahe (Authorization Act)** The opportunity now is to move Tiwahe from simply being a program model to becoming a Tribal operating framework—one that helps Tribes coordinate programs, share information, measure outcomes, and ultimately provide families with a more seamless system of support. For us, that means continuing to build the infrastructure necessary to make whole-family, coordinated service delivery possible. We'll provide an update on how we're progressing. **Crystal Keung,** *Principal, Whānau Tahi USA*
10:00am-11:00am	**Building Systems that Keep Families Together: Strengthening Tribal Child Welfare Through Culture and Family-Based Policy.** Tribal child welfare programs are central to ensuring that Native children remain connected to their families, culture, and communities. Building systems which truly support "keeping families together" requires more than services – it requires policies, practices, and infrastructure grounded in tribal values, kinship systems, and cultural responsibility. This session focuses on how Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes can strengthen their child welfare systems through the development of cultural- and family-based policies which guide decision-making, service delivery, and program design. Participants will explore how clearly defined policies rooted in culture and family preservation can build program capacity, create consistency in practice, and support better outcomes for children and families. In addition, the session will introduce practical tools for program assessment, case practice review, and community engagement to help Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes strengthen and sustain their systems. Emphasis will be placed on aligning systems with tribal sovereignty, supporting extended family networks, and ensuring policies and practices reflect the values of keeping families together. **Donalyn Lorenzo,** *Founder, Indigenous Family Solutions*
11:00am-11:15am	**Break**

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Day Two: Thursday, October 15 *(continued)*

11:15am - 12:00pm	**Elder Connection Report** The Elder Connections Project explores the vital role American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Elders play in strengthening children, families, and communities and preventing involvement in the child welfare system. Drawing on the wisdom and experiences of 60 Elders across multiple Tribal and Native Hawaiian communities, the project highlights the protective power of intergenerational relationships and identifies four key elements supporting healthy indigenous youth: mentorship, cultural practices, education and resources. This discussion will highlight lessons from the project and consider how child welfare systems and communities can more intentionally engage Elders' wisdom, knowledge, and experience to strengthen cultural identity, promote belonging and support children and families before foster care becomes necessary. **Misty Brammer,** *Director, Indian Child and Family Well-Being Programs, Casey Family* **Pandora Lemons,** *Director of Operations, Indian Child and Family Well-Being Programs, Casey Family*
12:00pm -1:00pm	**Complimentary Lunch**
Breakout Session(s)	
1:00pm -2:00pm	**Session A:** **Part 1 - Indigenous Adverse Childhood Experiences: Understanding Trauma and Resiliency** **Dereck Stonefish,** *Training Coordinator, Native Institute* **Session B:** **ICWA Placement Preferences in the Court (CLE)** Take a look into how Arizona's courts view ICWA's placement preferences, including presumptions, policies, burdens of proof, and factors that can and should be considered when determining whether good cause exists to deviate from ICWA's placement preferences. **Dawn Williams, Assistant Attorney General, State of Arizona**

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Day Two: Thursday, October 15 *(continued)*

Breakout Session(s)	
2:00pm - 3:00pm	**Session A:** **Part 2 - Indigenous Adverse Childhood Experiences: Understanding Trauma and Resiliency** **Dereck Stonefish,** *Training Coordinator, Native Institute* **Session B:** **CLE Session** **Valerie Ruiz, JD/JS Attorney,** *Office of the Legal Defender* **Jordan Igo,** *Attorney*
3:00pm - 3:15pm	**Break**
3:15pm - 4:15pm	**ICWA Works!** **Xavier Medina, Sewa U'usim, Pascua Yaqui**
4:15pm-5:00pm	**Olla Curriculum - Designing an ICWA Onboarding** **SALT River and Social Services** Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) developed the Olla Onboarding Curriculum to strengthen how new staff are welcomed, oriented, and prepared to work with children and families in the Community. The curriculum incorporates SRPMIC's cultural values, history, community context, and approaches to family well-being, helping staff understand not only their roles and responsibilities, but also the cultural foundation that should guide their work. The curriculum reflects SRPMIC's broader commitment to building a workforce that is culturally responsive, connected to the Community, and prepared to support children and families in ways that align with Tribal values. The curriculum is now expanding to SRPMIC's Health and Human Services department for ongoing implementation. **Steve Hudson, Social Services Director,** *Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community* **Devanie Hawkins,** *Chair of the Salt River Community Children's Foundation (SRCCF), Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community* **Rachelle Yazzie Quality & Compliance Manager,** *Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community* **William Prichard,** *Child Welfare Trainer, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community* **Kali Scolnick, Founder,** *Kali R. Scolnick and Associates, LLC*
Day Two Concluded	

Day Three: Friday, October 16 (Cultural Day)

Registration: 7:30am – 10:00am

8:30am-9:30am	**Complimentary Breakfast**
9:00am-10:00am	**Flower Making – Pascua Yaqui Tribe** An interactive demonstration we're we'll learn about the Pascua Yaqui tradition of flower making and create our own flower. **Pascua Yaqui Tribe**
10:00am - 10:45am	**Apache Culture Demonstration** Recognized as the "Culture Keepers of Arizona" by the Governor's Office in 2004 and honored with the 2015 Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Award – Native American Business of the Year, we've been the exclusive Native American dance group at Talking Stick Resort in Scottsdale for over a decade. We also work regularly with the Desert Botanical Gardens in Phoenix, Enchantment Resort in Sedona, and Buffalo Thunder Resort in New Mexico. For more than 30 years, we've brought entertainment to national and international corporate events and served as Goodwill Ambassadors with the U.S. State Department and Department of Defense, performing around the world. **Yellow Bird Production**
10:45am-11:30am	**Navajo Cultural Demonstration** A cultural demonstration showcasing the traditional art of hoop dancing, highlighting its history, symbolism, storytelling, and cultural significance. **Michael Goedel**
11:30am - 12:00pm	**Closing Remarks** Closing Prayer *Retrieving the Colors*
12:00pm	**Complimentary Lunch: To Go Brown Bag**
Conference Concluded	

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Autumn Shone,
Attorney at Law,
Rothstein Law



DesiRae Deschine,
Senior Counsel,
Zwillinger Wulkan



Kristina Lucero,
Director,
American Indian Governance and Policy Institute



Ashley Trautman,
Associate Professor, Chair,
University of Montana
School of Social Work



Carrie Jensen
Director of Operations,
National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children



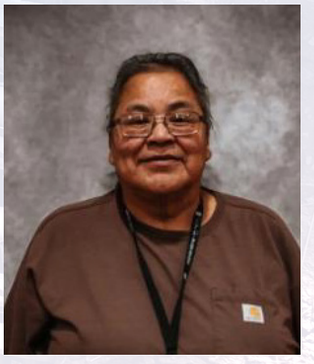
James Jenning
Retired
(Certified DEC Instructor)



OJ Flores
Attorney General,
Pascua Yaqui Tribe



Domingo DeGrazia
ICWA Supervising Attorney,
Pascua Yaqui Tribe



Joan Johnson
Councilwoman,
Fort Belknap Indian Community Council

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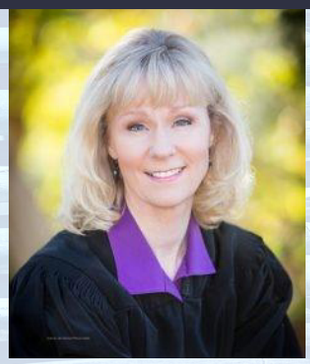
Charity Boushie

Soaring Eagle Case Manager,
Fort Belknap Indian Community Council



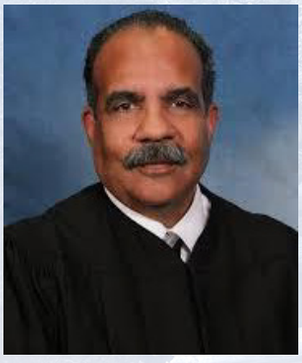
Judge Janet Bostwick

Pima County ICWA Court



Judge Kathleen Quigley

Pima County ICWA Court



Judge Chuck Whitehead

Maricopa County ICWA Court



Judge Angela Kircher

Coconino ICWA Court



Barbara Atwood

Mary Anne Richey
Professor of Law



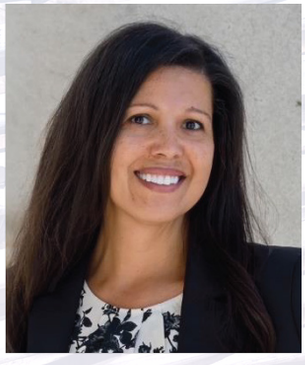
Courtney Bolt

Faculty,
University of Oklahoma



Donalyn Lorenzo

Founder,
Indigenous Family Solutions



Misty Brammer

Director,
Indian Child and Family WellBeing Programs,
Casey Family

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Pandora Lemons
Director of Operations, Indian Child and Family WellBeing Programs, Casey Family



Dawn Williams
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Jordan Igo
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Sewa U'usim, Pascua Yaqui



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Salt River PimaMaricopa
Indian Community



Kali Scolnick
Founder,
Kali R. Scolnick and Associates, LLC



Doreen & Ken Duncan
Yellow Bird Productions



Michael Goedel
Hoop Dancer



Mylo Smith
MC



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RESORT MAP



CASINO DEL SOL
The Sol of Tucson

PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE OF ARIZONA

