

Featured TCU Project Directors

Nahrin Aziz-Parsons, Project Director, Northwest Indian College (NWIC)



Nahrin Aziz-Parsons is the lead Early Childhood Education faculty member and Project Director of Early Childhood Education Initiatives at Northwest Indian College (NWIC). She received her undergraduate degree in political science and education at UC Berkeley, and began her teaching career as a Teach For America corps member in New Orleans, Louisiana. After fulfilling her Teach For America commitment, Nahrin relocated to the Pacific Northwest and earned a Master of Education in instructional leadership at the University of Washington, Seattle. During her graduate training, Nahrin also served as an officer for the student organization, Educators for Social Justice, and completed her action research, a longitudinal self-study focused on facilitation and leadership.

After completing her graduate work, Nahrin began teaching at Northwest Indian College, an accredited four-year degree granting institution of higher education and one of 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities. In addition to her faculty position, Nahrin serves as a mentor to Teach For America corps members of color, and as a scholarship reviewer for UC Berkeley's Cal Alumni Association Leadership Award. Her special interests include ending the education debt for students of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Dr. Amy Burland, Project Director, Salish Kootenai College (SKC)



Dr. Amy Burland, Ed.D. is Dean of the Division of Education at Salish Kootenai College (SKC). She earned a Bachelor of Science in elementary education with a minor in child development and family relations from Minnesota State University Moorhead. She holds a Master of Education in education administration from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, and a Doctorate in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in K-8 mathematics instruction from the University of Montana, Missoula. Before stepping up in May 2017 to serve as Dean of the Education Division at SKC, she served as the Elementary and Early Childhood Department Chair for 3 years and has worked as an instructor since 2000.

Since coming to SKC, Amy serves on several committees involving program review and assessment with faculty peers. In addition, she has served on the Institutional Review Board for the past 10 years and continues in this capacity. As the Dean of the SKC Education

She works not only with faculty across the SKC campus but also with faculty throughout Montana who work in Teacher Preparation Programs.

Cheryl Larose, Early Childhood Program Officer, Representing Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC)



Cheryl LaRose received her Master of Education in early childhood education from Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Michigan. As part of her Master project, Cheryl developed and implemented a successful mentor-coach program and presented the benefits and findings at the National Head Start Association (NHSA) Conference in New York. Currently, Cheryl is the Early Childhood Program Officer at the American Indian College Fund. Her experience with the College Fund comes from her position as the Early Childhood Education Department Chairperson at Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC) in Baraga, Michigan and Project Director *For the Wisdom of the Children: Strengthening the Teacher of Color Pipeline*.

As the Education Director at BHK Child Development, Cheryl developed and implemented a comprehensive quality assurance monitoring process for educational programs, including a systematic approach to measuring child and program outcomes and applying outcomes information to program improvement and professional development. In addition, she facilitated the development and implementation of a locally designed infant and toddler curriculum. She has provided leadership in early childhood education by promoting positive relationships with families, staff, and community for the past twenty-eight years.

Sara Montgomery, Project Director, Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College (FDLTCC)



Sara Montgomery, Gwayakogaabawi ikwe, is a Fond du Lac Tribal and community College (FDLTCC) faculty member, Education Coordinator, and Project Director of ECE STEM. As a Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa descendent, an Anishinaabe professional educator, and a change-maker with Indigenous philosophy, Sara finds it a great experience to be part of the stepping stones for the future of Native communities.

Sara received her Bachelor of Arts from The College of St. Scholastica and her Master of Education from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, along with the licensures to teach in a K-12 setting (classroom, bilingual-bicultural, American Indian language and culture, and coaching). Her professional career has extended along the spectrum of education as a teacher in the K-6 classrooms, Principal at Fond du lac Ojibwe Tribal School, and transitioning to the collegiate level as faculty at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College and Winona State University. As a faculty member at FDLTCC, the process of developing the Elementary Education Program and preparing curriculum (embedded with Anishinaabe culture standards) for the Associate of Science degree became a reality, along with igniting the Early

for the seventh generation to carry forward the Anishinaabe fireways within a culturally rich environment in a classroom setting.

Dr. Janine Pease, Project Director, Little Big Horn College (LBHC)



Dr. Janine Pease, D.Ed. is a faculty member in social science and the humanities at Little Big Horn College (LBHC) in Crow Agency, Montana. She is part-time principal of the Chickadee Lodge Apsaalooke Language Immersion School which involves kindergarten and first grade students. Janine coordinates the Crow Summer Institute for Crow language teachers and the Crow Dictionary Project. She holds bachelor's degrees in sociology and anthropology from Central Washington University, and advanced degrees in higher education from Montana State University. From two years of commissioned research on Indigenous language immersion schools and camps, Janine authored a monograph, "Native American Language Immersion: Innovative Education for Families and Children". Dr. Pease is an enrolled Crow tribal member, mother of two, grandmother of seven, and great-grandmother of one, and resides in Hardin, Montana.