

## **Bio for Lyndon Alec**

### **Alabama-Coushatta Tribe**



Lyndon Alec is a member of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe, has been performing the Indian Hoop Dance for 41 years and has traveled throughout the United States performing in places such as Iowa, Illinois, Washington, D.C. and at the Madison Square Garden in New York. He has also served as Head Man Dancer at various pow wows and has performed at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

In September, 1986, Lyndon had the opportunity to travel with the Alabama-Coushatta tribal dancers to South Australia and participated at the Royal Adelaide Show. In July, 1994 he traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia to perform at the Opening Ceremonies for the Goodwill Games.

Also, in March, 1995, he had the privilege to travel to Nice, France to perform at their annual French Carnival and Parade and in June, 1996, performed in Seoul, Korea.

Lyndon also performed at the Jazz Festival in New Orleans, LA. in 2006, which is one of the largest events in the United States. In 2008, he traveled to Wasilla, Alaska, hometown of Sarah Palin, where he performed at the school where her children were attending.

Lyndon is retired now and enjoys traveling and meeting people. He is currently serving on his third term as a school board member in Livingston, TX where he graduated.

## **Bio for Sheldon Spotted Elk**

### **Director of Indian Child Welfare Programs**

### **Casey Family Programs**



Sheldon Spotted Elk (Northern Cheyenne) currently works for Casey Family Programs, Director in the Indian Child Welfare Unit based out of Denver Colorado. At Casey Family Programs he works collaboratively with tribes to improve capacity in child welfare systems, he regularly trains on the ICWA for state judges and attorneys and before Casey, he worked as the Guardian ad Litem for the Ute Indian Tribal Court (Utah). He also served as the Chief of Staff to the Ute Indian Tribe and worked for Utah Legal Services, Inc. He holds a Juris Doctorate from University of New Mexico School of Law, where he served as an Editor of the Tribal Law Journal and was awarded the CALI Excellence for the Future

Award. He has authored an article on Tribal constitutional reform.

**Bio for Angel Smith**  
**Supreme Court Justice for Pawnee Nation**  
**Appellate Justice for other Tribes**



As a young child, Angel Smith spent approximately ten years as in the center of two ICWA cases. Angel was the child at the heart of a five year legal case regarding application of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act. Her case went on writ to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma (unpublished opinion). As a teen-ager, she was in a ICWA kinship foster care placement with her grandparents. As an adult, she dedicates her professional and personal work to advocacy on behalf of Indian children. She is happily married with children. Angel is a sixth generation registered tribal citizen of the Cherokee Nation, with direct line to the historic removal of her family from Georgia to Delaware and Tahlequah Districts. Her family links remain in Delaware, Saline and Tahlequah Districts with ties to Dog Town, Kenwood, Pryor Creek and Tahlequah communities. She currently is a private attorney focusing on ICWA, serves as a Supreme Court Justice for Pawnee Nation and an Appellate Justice for other tribes, and works across the country advocating the rights

of Indian children. Recently, Angel starting working as an assistant attorney general for a tribe in Oklahoma, and well as continuing ICWA efforts.

**Bio for Rose-Margaret Orrantia**  
**Tribal Elder**  
**Tribal STAR (Successful Transitions for Adult Readiness)**



Rose-Margaret Orrantia (Yaqui), Tribal STAR Elder, completed her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees at San Diego State University. She worked at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M. for 18 years. Returning to San Diego, she served as the Executive Director of Indian Child and Family Services (ICFS), a State Licensed Foster Family and Adoption Agency serving the American Indian population in San Diego and Riverside Counties. After leaving ICFS she served as a consultant and grant writer to Indian Tribes and non-profit agencies for eight years. She also served as the Director of Foster Family and Adoption Agencies in the non-Indian world.

She recently retired from the Academy for Professional Excellence, a program of the SDSU School of Social Work, and continues to serve as a member of the Tribal STAR team which is housed at the Academy. She is also a member of the Capacity Building Center for Tribes National Advisory Council and serves on the Expert Panel for the National Indian Justice Center.

**Bio for Tom Lidot**  
**Program Manager**  
**Tribal STAR (Successful Transitions for Adult Readiness)**



Tom Lidot, (Chilkat Tlingit), is the Program Manager for Tribal STAR (Successful Transitions for Adult Readiness), a program of the Academy for Professional Excellence San Diego State University School of Social Work, and is actively involved with local, regional, and national tribal issues related to health, child welfare, and self-determination.. He also leads Pacific Mountain Philanthropy, a team of experienced executives with a track record of improving outcomes for American Indians/Alaska Native communities.

Tribal STAR's ICWA curriculum *Working with Native American Children and Families* is required training for all new hire social workers in California. Recent efforts include the American Indian

Enhancement Toolkit to Reduce Disproportionality of Native American children in Child Welfare for California (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/implementation-toolkit-american-indian-enhancement-project/implementation-toolkit-american-indian-enhancement-project>). Some of his recent publications include: *Continuum of Readiness for Collaboration, ICWA Compliance, and Reducing Disproportionality* (2012) in Child Welfare Special Issue: Services for Native Children and Families in North America; and *American Indian/Alaska Native Children and Families* (2015) in Addressing Racial Disproportionality and Disparities in Human Services: Multi-systemic Approaches.

His work experience is built on a foundation of long-term relationships within tribal and non-tribal communities, a history of working productively with institutional (government and educational) systems, and a passion for improving community well-being with a focus on keeping Native children connected to their culture and tribal identity. His experience in mediation/alternative dispute resolution serves as the foundation for his approach to cross-cultural training and facilitation. He walks in two worlds: as a tribal member who strives to maintain culture and tradition and as an active advocate for the advancement of science and education.

## **Bio for Phyliss J. Anderson**

### **Tribal Chief**

### **Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**



Phyliss J. Anderson, a native of the Red Water community, serves her people as Tribal Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

Chief Anderson was officially sworn in as the first woman chief in Choctaw history during an inauguration ceremony on October 4, 2011. She is currently serving her second term in office.

Chief Anderson, fluent in the Choctaw language, has more than 30 years of experience with tribal government management. In 2003, she was elected to serve as a tribal council representative for her home community. While seated as a representative she served in the position of Secretary- Treasurer for the Tribe. Over the years she has shown a strong commitment to financial responsibility; operating an accountable and transparent government; and building the quality of life on the reservation.

Chief Anderson has been featured in numerous national publications as a rising leader in the Southeast and in Indian Country. She has been honored and recognized with various awards and accolades including the Mississippi Commission on the Status on Women "Woman of the Year" award in the Political/State and Local Government category, Mississippi Business Journal's Top 50 Leading Business Women, the "Mississippi Trailblazer", "Sam Haskell Spirit of America" and "Inspire" award, The Meridian Star's Citizen of the Year, and honorary membership in Delta Kappa Gamma, education sorority. Chief Anderson also is the recipient of a Presidential Citation from Jackson State University. On December 2, 2011, Chief Anderson also had the distinct honor to introduce U.S. President Barack Obama at the 3rd Annual Tribal Nations Conference in Washington, D.C.

Chief Anderson draws on a wide variety of experience. She is a graduate of East Central Community College in Decatur, Miss. She has served on a number of governing boards and committees for multi-million dollar enterprises including those in the tribal manufacturing, tribal government contracting, and the gaming and hospitality industry.

Chief Anderson currently serves as the Chairman of the Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise board. Her experience also includes board and committee representation for Tribal Tax Commissioner, Choctaw Resort Development Enterprise, Chahta Enterprise, Choctaw Development Enterprise, First American Printing and Direct Mail Enterprise, Choctaw Shopping Center Enterprise, Leake County Development Association, Leake County Foundation, Mississippi United Methodist Conference, United Methodist Church - Choctaw Mission, John Memorial United Methodist Church - Finance Chair, Choctaw Business Loans Review Committee. Tribal Government Services 401k Fiduciary Committee and Tribal Council Committees - Children and Youth, Education, Recreation, Culture, Government Affairs, Lobbying, Public Relations and Politics, and Human Resources. Chief Anderson is married to Ricky Anderson, Sr. and is the mother to three, stepmother to four and grandmother of eleven.

## **Bio for Dr. David A. Chandler Commissioner**



David Chandler was an associate justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court. He won election to the court on November 4, 2008, and began in 2009. He stepped down on December 7, 2015, to become the Commissioner of Mississippi's foster care system under the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services.

Dr. Chandler holds a LL.M. in judicial process from the University of Virginia and a J.D. from the University of Mississippi. He also has doctorate, master and bachelor degrees in education from the University of Mississippi.

The beginning of Dr. Chandler's career was spent in education where he worked in different aspects of the field. He served as a research and curriculum specialist at Mississippi State University where he directed the development of curriculum material for secondary and post-secondary work force training programs. His work was designed to provide a more skilled work force in order to attract business and industry to Mississippi.

After law school, Chandler worked with a private law firm. He also served as a municipal judge in Weir, Mississippi, from 1999 to 2001. In 2000, he was elected to the Mississippi Court of Appeals. He was re-elected in 2006 and served until his election to the Mississippi Supreme Court in 2008. He also serves as an adjunct professor at Mississippi College School of Law.

**Bio for Harold “Doc” Comby**  
**Deputy Director of Internal Operations**  
**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**



Harold "Doc" Comby is a member of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and lives on the reservation near Philadelphia, Mississippi. He has worked 33 years in law Enforcement and currently is the Deputy Director of Internal Operations. Doc has a Degree in Social Work from Jackson State University and was half way through a Masters Degree program when he became an officer in 1982. He is the father of four daughters, two still in college, one in the work force, and one who graduated last year and is seeking employment in the computer field.

Doc Comby's work experience started as a youth counselor with M.B.C.I. in 1979. After that job ended, he was hired as a police officer with Department of the Interior, BIA, and Choctaw Agency in 1982. He was detailed to Coshatta Indian Reservation in Louisiana in 1986 due to a conflict over gaming issues. Doc worked at Sequoyah Indian School in Oklahoma in the fall of 1986 and was rehired by BIA on February 1987, stationed in Nett Lake, Minnesota. While with the Minnesota Agency, he was a member of the special operations group that provided emergency law enforcement functions in Indian Country. Doc returned home in 1991 and has been with Choctaw Police Department in various capacities since.

Doc Comby is a gourd, and a traditional dancer and attends as many ceremonies, powwows, and festivals as he can. His hobbies are Native American themes and he is a novice researcher in Choctaw ceremonies, as well as other cultural segments. Doc advocates utilizing traditions as a healing tool and volunteers for federal and state prison programs.