

**SPOKANE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION  
SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL INDIAN LAW CONFERENCE**

Venue: Gonzaga University Cataldo Hall Globe Room  
*Friday, March 6, 2026*

- 8:30 am *Opening Prayer & Welcome*  
Tim McLaughlin (Navajo Nation), Chairperson, Indian Law Section
- 8:45 – 9:45 am **Legislative, Executive, and Litigation Updates**
- **Brian Gunn** (Colville), Principal, Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville, PC
  - **Rick Eichstaedt**, Partner, Rey-Bear McLaughlin, LLP
  - **Jordan Thompson** (CSKT), Acting Executive Officer, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of Flathead Reservation
- 9:45 – 10:00 am Break
- 10:00 – 11:30 am **Columbia River Update**
- Upper Columbia – **Anna Brady**, Associate, Ziontz Chestnut
  - Lower Columbia – **Jaime A. Pinkham** (Nez Perce), Senior Advisor to the Executive Director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
  - Columbia River Treaty – **William Barquin** (Eastern Shoshone & Oglala Lakota), Attorney General, Kootenai Tribe
- 11:30 am – 1:00 pm Lunch – Globe Room
- 12:00 – 12:30 pm **Keynote Address:** Michelle Ressa, Spokane County Superior Court Commissioner
- 1:00 – 2:30 pm **638 Issues, Contract Support Costs, and 105(I) Leases**
- **Nickolaus Lewis** (Lummi Tribe), Contractor, Confederated Colville Tribes
  - **Becca Patterson**, Partner, Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Miller & Monkman, LLP
  - **Geoffrey Strommer**, Partner, Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker
- 2:30 – 2:45 pm Break
- 2:45 – 3:45 pm **General Welfare Exclusion Act Regulations**
- **Robert R. Yoder**, Partner, Yoder & Langford, PC
- 3:45 – 4:45 pm **Native American Voting Rights**
- **Allison Neswood** (Navajo Nation), Sr. Staff Attorney, Native Am. Rights Fund
- 4:45 pm *Closing Remarks and Adjourn*; SCBA ILS Annual Meeting

**Washington State Bar Association 6.5 CLE general credits approval pending**

To register, please visit <https://www.spokanebar.org/events-calendar/>.

Registration fees: \$200 in-person and \$300 remote attendance, with a \$50 discount for either for non-CLE tribal leaders or staff; students free.

Also, donations may be made to the SCBA ILS bar scholarship.

## **SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

**WILLIAM BARQUIN** is Eastern Shoshone and Oglala Lakota and was raised on his father's ranch on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming.

Mr. Barquin is the current Attorney General of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. His duties in this role is to provide legal advice on a number of issues affecting the Kootenai Tribe government and enterprises. His duties include the areas of promotion of self-determination, economic development, natural resource and environmental protection and cultural and archaeological resource protection.

Mr. Barquin's legal career has concentrated on negotiated problem solving on behalf of tribal governments and enterprises in a variety of contexts. That work has included representation of a tribal fish and wildlife department regarding the interrelationships of the Northwest Power Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act and other legal authorities in the protection of tribal natural resource utilization, protection of Treaty-reserved rights, and promotion and implementation of tribal self-governance..

### **ANNA E. BRADY**

#### **Bar Admissions:**

State of Washington • State of Montana • U.S. Supreme Court • U.S. Court of Appeals: Ninth Circuit • U.S. Court of Appeals: Eighth Circuit • U.S. District Court: Western District of Washington, Eastern District of Washington, District of Oregon, District of Montana

#### **Education:**

Undergraduate: Bachelor of Arts, English and Environmental Studies, University of Montana, 2008  
Graduate: Master of Science, Environmental Humanities, University of Utah, 2015 • Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of Writing & Rhetoric Studies • Excellence in Writing Award for Teaching

#### **Legal:**

J.D., University of Oregon, 2018 • Order of the Coif • Native Environmental Sovereignty Project Fellow, Environmental & Natural Resources Law Center • Wayne Morse Law Fellow, Wayne Morse Center • Co-Director, Native American Law Student Association

**RICK EICHSTAEDT** advises Tribal governments and Tribal organizations on a variety of matters, including environmental and natural resource matters, energy development, land use, economic development, gaming, sovereign immunity, and litigation. In addition to his practice with Rey-Bear McLaughlin, Rick serves on the Washington State Growth Management Hearing Board. He previously served as Director of Gonzaga University's environmental law clinic, representing organizations and individuals on a variety of environmental and land-use matters in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Rick also previously served as the executive director of the Center for Justice, a Spokane-based public interest law firm. Rick started his legal career as a staff attorney for the Nez Perce Tribe in north-central Idaho. During his seven years with the Tribe, he worked on a wide variety of water right, environmental, natural resource, cultural resource, and treaty rights protection cases.

**BRIAN GUNN** - A member of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Brian works on a wide variety of issues for tribal clients in the U.S. Congress and federal agencies.

Brian specializes in matters related to the federal budget and appropriations, natural resources, federal lands and federal land transfers, taxation, energy development, and Indian health. Brian was the lead lobbyist for the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (Pub. L. 114-178), which President Barack Obama signed into law on June 22, 2016, and other tribal standalone bills and tribal provisions included in larger bills that have been enacted since.

In addition to his government relations capabilities, he has served as lead counsel in several tribal trust mismanagement lawsuits in the federal courts, including Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation v. Salazar (D.D.C. 2005), which resulted in a \$193 million settlement in the Tribe's favor. Brian is currently serving as of counsel in Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation v. United States (No. 21-6144, May 30, 2024), a tribal timber and wildfire breach of trust case currently pending in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

Brian was named to the National Law Journal's "Minority 40 Under 40" in 2011 and the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development's "Native American 40 Under 40" in 2012. He is also recognized in Chambers USA for Native American Law-Nationwide. Brian was formerly a partner at Drinker Biddle & Reath, LLP. He received his law degree from the University of Washington and a BA from Washington State University

Practice Areas:

Indian Tribal Governments

Tribal Policy and Advocacy

Education

J.D., University of Washington, 1999

B.A., Washington State University, 1995

Bar Memberships

District of Columbia

U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia

U.S. Court of Federal Claims

Honors & Awards

The Best Lawyers in America®, Native American Law, 2015-2024

**NICKOLAUS D. LEWIS** (Lummi) is a member of the Lummi Nation Tribe of Washington State and served as a Councilmember of the Lummi Nation for nine years and currently works for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

In addition to serving three terms on his tribal council, Mr. Lewis has held leadership roles such as Chairperson of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, Vice Chairperson of the National Indian Health Board, and Secretary of the National Congress of American Indians. He has also served as Vice Chairperson of the Self-Governance Communication & Education Tribal Consortium (SGCETC) and participated in several federal advisory committees and boards, including the SAMHSA Tribal Technical Advisory Committee, CMS Tribal Technical Advisory Group, VA Tribal Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs, and various committees with

the Indian Health Service.

Mr. Lewis is a proud veteran who served eight honorable years in the U.S. Navy from 2000 to 2008. He is also a father of three, one of whom currently serves in the U.S. Navy.

As the grandson of the late Chief Sa-hum-kun (Donald Lewis) of the Lummi Nation, Mr. Lewis believes that true leadership means serving the people with humility. This principle guides all his work and, regardless of the context, he feels it should also be applied to everyday life. Throughout his career, Mr. Lewis has demonstrated this commitment by prioritizing collaborative decision-making and advocating for the well-being of his community. Whether leading on the tribal council or representing Native interests on national boards, he consistently strives to uphold the values of humility and service passed down by his grandfather.

**ALLISON NESWOOD** is an experienced advocate for social justice and equitable policy. At NARF, Allison is a member of the voting rights practice group, which engages in nationwide litigation, advocates for Native American voting rights legislation, supports civic engagement, and assists tribes in advocating for greater voter access for their communities. In her role, Allison was the lead attorney in successful federal litigation challenging an Arizona state law that would have disproportionately denied Native Americans the right to vote. She also focuses on the enforcement of Native voters' language access under section 203 of the Voting Rights Act.

Allison believes that we as a nation have made policy choices that continue to negatively impact the health and well-being of Native communities for generations. Her work is dedicated to changing that reality.

Prior to joining the NARF team, Allison established herself as an expert in the field of health policy and healthcare justice. She led the passage of several pieces of legislation to improve equity in health care and was recognized with the Health Equity Advocate of the Year Award (Colorado Cross Disability Center), the Consumer Champion Award (Colorado Consumer Health Initiative), and Consumer Health Advocate Award (FamiliesUSA).

Past media appearances include Stairway to ATJ podcast. Episode 2: Diversity and Justice (Colorado Bar Association).

### **Tribal Affiliation**

Navajo

### **Education**

Yale University, B.A. Political Science

Columbia Law School, J.D.

Outstanding Contribution to Social Justice Award for a service learning trip she led to the Navajo Nation.

### **Admissions to Practice**

Colorado Bar

---

**REBECCA A. PATTERSON** first joined Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Miller & Monkman, LLP in 2013 and became a partner in 2017. Before joining the firm, Ms. Patterson clerked for Chief Justice Walter L. Carpeneti (Ret.) of the Alaska Supreme Court and Judge Sharon L. Gleason of the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska. She works in all phases of the Firm's general counsel practice and specializes in Alaska Native law, litigation, and self-determination/self-governance issues. She is the current President of the Alaska Bar Association.

### **Practice areas**

Administrative Law  
Alaska Native Law  
Child Welfare  
Employment Law  
General Counsel  
Health Law  
Jurisdiction and Tribal Sovereignty  
Litigation: Trial, Appellate and Supreme Court  
Self-Determination and Self-Governance  
Tribal Codes

### **Judicial Clerkships**

Chief Justice Walter L. Carpeneti (Ret.) - Alaska Supreme Court  
Judge Sharon L. Gleason - U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska

### **Education**

Harvard Law School, J.D., 2011  
Washington University in St. Louis, B.A., summa cum laude, 2007

### **Bar & Court Admissions**

Illinois, 2011  
Alaska, 2013  
Federal Court for the District of Alaska  
9th Circuit Court of Appeals  
10th Circuit Court of Appeals  
U.S. Supreme Court  
Appeared pro hac vice in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeal and federal district courts in Arizona, the District of Columbia, New Mexico, and Oklahoma

**JAIME A. PINKHAM** (Nez Perce) is the Senior Advisor to the Executive Director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, which provides science and policy support to four treaty tribes in the Columbia Basin: Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Nez Perce. In 2021, he joined the Biden Administration to serve as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) providing guidance and oversight to the Army Corps of Engineers in their mission areas including navigation, flood and storm risk management and response, ecosystem restoration, and regulatory affairs. He was CRITFC's Executive Director from 2017–2021 and from 2009-2017 was Vice President of the Bush Foundation in St. Paul, MN leading their efforts in MN, ND and SD to partner with tribes as they redesigned their governing institutions. At the Foundation he led the creation of the Native Governance Center, an independent, tribally led non-profit and was a loaned executive in 2016 assisting the Center's launch. He worked for the Nez Perce Tribe from 1990-2002, where he was elected twice to the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee retaining the position of Treasurer as the Tribe was expanding gaming operations. When he was not on NPTEC he oversaw Tribal fisheries, forestry, wildlife, cultural resources and agriculture and was

involved with salmon restoration, land acquisition, water rights negotiations and wolf reintroduction.

Current Boards:

- Defenders of Wildlife
- The Nature Conservancy Washington State Trustees Board

Previous Boards:

- The Wilderness Society
- American Rivers
- Native Arts and Culture Foundation
- Northland College
- Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy at UA Udall Center for Public Policy
- Bonneville Environmental Foundation

Education:

Oregon State University (Forestry)

Peninsula College (Forestry)

Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation's Leadership Program

Awards:

US Army Distinguished Public Service Medal

US Army Corps of Engineers Bronze de Fleury Medal

The Wilderness Society

OSU Alumni Fellow

College of Forestry Outstanding Alumnus

Washington Ag-Forestry Stu Bledsoe Leadership Award

Intertribal Timber Council

Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

**COMMISSIONER MICHELLE RESSA** Commissioner Ressa was born and raised in Spokane and graduated from the University of Washington in 1992 with a degree in Political Science. She graduated, cum laude, in 1996 from Gonzaga University School of Law. Commissioner Ressa has spent her entire legal career working in the field of child welfare, or as she describes, in public health.

Currently Commissioner Ressa is the judicial officer assigned to the Indian Child Welfare Team in Spokane County Juvenile Court. Her dependency caseload consists only of Native American children and their families. Her other dockets include family law motions, civil protection orders, child support modifications, mental health hearings, at-risk-youth, truancy, guardianship and trusts, first-appearance hearings in adult criminal cases, and miscellaneous cases appearing in ex parte court.

Commissioner Ressa is a member and former co-chair of the statewide Superior Court Judges' Association Family and Juvenile Law Committee. She is also a member of an advisory committee for DCYF and several statewide workgroups and committees focused on improving family and juvenile courts.

Commissioner Ressa has conducted numerous hours of training for the courts, the Department, the Attorney General's office and the child welfare community. She teaches Juvenile Law as an adjunct

professor at Gonzaga University School of Law. She has consistently shown her dedication and passion for children and families navigating their way through a complicated, emotional, and financially challenging legal system.

**GEOFF STROMMER** works with tribes on a wide range of issues, primarily self-determination and self-governance. He is dedicated to working with tribal clients to help them develop stable and strong tribal governments that are able to deliver a range of high-quality services to tribal members. Geoff is nationally recognized for his knowledge of and experience working with the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA).

Geoff is a veteran and served an active tour of duty in the United States Marine Corps. He grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, and enjoys traveling the world with his family. He was an avid mountain climber for many years and climbed a number of peaks in the U.S. and abroad.

### **Professional Organizations**

Chairman, Executive Committee, Oregon State Bar Indian Law Section (1999)

The Federal Bar Association

The American Bar Association

Various Positions, Native American Concerns Committee, ABA Section of Civil Rights and Social Justice - Co-Chair, 2023-2024

Trustee, Board of Trustees, National Museum of the American Indian, 2023-2027

### **Education**

Georgetown University Law Center, J.D., 1990

University of California, Berkeley, B.A. (with distinction), 1986

Solano Community College, A.A. (with honors), 1984

### **Bar Admissions**

TRIBAL COURTS

Southern California Intertribal Bar Association

Hopi Tribal Court

Quapaw Tribal Court

FEDERAL COURTS

Supreme Court of the United States

United States District Court – District of Arizona

United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

United States District Court – District of Oregon

United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

United States Court of Federal Claims

United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit

United States District Court – District of Alaska

United States District Court – Western District of Washington

STATE COURTS

State of Arizona Supreme Court

State of Oregon Supreme Court

State of Alaska Supreme Court

State of Washington, Supreme Court

**M. JORDAN THOMPSON** – JORDAN THOMPSON is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (“CSKT”) and lives on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana. He currently serves as CSKT’s Acting Tribal Executive Officer and is also the Tribe’s Deputy Executive Officer, and he was previously a CSKT attorney for 10 years. Additionally, Jordan enjoys teaching Federal Indian Law as an adjunct professor at Gonzaga University’s Law and Business schools. Jordan received his B.A. from the University of Hawai’i at Manoa, his J.D. from the University of Arizona with a certificate in Indigenous Peoples Law & Policy, and an M.B.A. in American Indian Entrepreneurship from Gonzaga University.

**ROBERT R. YODER** is a lawyer representing Indian Tribes throughout the country on taxation, health care and member benefits programs. He is a 1990 graduate from the University of Southern California law school. His practice is devoted entirely to tribal law. He has been active for more than three decades in efforts to secure regulatory guidance and improve consultation between Tribes and various federal agencies, and has litigated a number of cases brought by tribes seeking to improve federal trust, taxation, and health care rights. He currently serves on the Treasury Tribal Advisory Committee General Welfare Exclusion subcommittee and the Parity and Reform subcommittee.