



**NCAI Digital Divide Task Force
Second Tribal Leaders Summit
Tuesday, May 15
Speaker Biographies**

Irene Flannery

Irene Flannery is Vice President of USAC's High Cost and Low Income Division. In this capacity, she is responsible for the day to day management of the various components of the high cost and low income support mechanisms.

Ms. Flannery came to USAC from the Federal Communications Commission, where she worked on universal service issues for four of her five years at the Commission. Most recently, Ms. Flannery served as Chief of the Common Carrier Bureau's Accounting Policy Division (APD). In that role, she supervised all aspects of universal service, including the high cost, schools and libraries, rural health care, and low income support mechanisms. Ms. Flannery also served as Assistant Division Chief of APD, federal staff chair for the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, and team leader on schools and libraries issues. As a staff attorney in APD, Ms. Flannery was co-author of the schools and libraries sections of the original Universal Service Order and the Federal-State Joint Board's First Recommended Decision.

Ms. Flannery is a graduate of the Georgetown University Law Center, where she served as Senior Articles Editor for the American Criminal Law Review. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Flannery was an elementary school teacher in Montgomery County, Maryland. She holds a Master's degree in early childhood education from the University of Virginia and a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and economics from Duke University.

Robin N. Fohrenkam

Robin Fohrenkam is a member of the Akimel O'odham tribe from the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona. He is the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors for Gila River Telecommunications, Inc. (G.R.T.I.) and also works as a Systems Design Analyst for his tribe's M.I.S. department.

Robin has strongly promoted self-sufficiency within his community with support from tribal and federal programs.

One of the initiatives that Robin has been involved in is promoting better telephone service for his community and other Indian Reservations. He was very pleased when the F.C.C. announced the ENHANCED Lifeline program and hopes the F.C.C. will continue to support this telephone assistance for Indian Reservations.

Robin is a Northern Traditional Dancer and a member of the Red Hide Men's Society and is a committee member of the Russell Moore music fest in Gila River. He has two sons, two daughters and one grandson.

Robin sends a message to all Indian Nations to utilize the Enhanced Lifeline Assistance program and extends a welcome to all NCAI participants to contact G.R.T.I. for more information.

Earl C. Evans

Earl Evans is an enrolled citizen of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe of North Carolina. He is a 1997 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke with a BA in American Indian Studies, and a Founding Father of Phi Sigma Nu, the world's first Native American Fraternity. He has served two terms on the Board of Commissioners for the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, and currently serves on the Haliwa-Saponi Board of Education for the Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School.

Mr. Evans has previously been employed as a Site Manager with the NC Indian Housing Authority in which he managed 30 rental and 44 mutual help homeownership units that service the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe. After resigning this position, Mr. Evans accepted the position of "Tribal Planner" with the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe.

In his 1 year 5 month tenure as a tribal planner, Mr. Evans assisted with negotiating a \$1,000,000 housing loan set-aside for recognized Tribes in North Carolina through USDA, obtained over \$2,000,000 in new grants funding for tribal government programs and tribal school system, and managed the tribe's overall planning efforts.

On April 18, 2000, Mr. Evans was sworn in as a Tribal Development Specialist with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Native American Programs in Washington, DC (HUD/ONAP) with the Native eDGE initiative. While with eDGE, Mr. Evans has assisted the eDGE team with responding to over 350 economic development project inquiries; developing a comprehensive program plan; and coordinating ONAP's Tribal Neighborhood Network initiative, generating collective government and private sector partnerships of over \$400,000 for funding and operations of the first four demonstration sites.

Brian King

Brian S. King is currently a Research Associate at the Harvard University Native American Program. His research and professional interest examines how new information and communication technologies (ICT) are being adopted by developing nations. He was awarded a Harvard–Motorola Research Fellowship to examine and document how ICTs are best supporting distance learning, professional and economic development within culturally specific communities. He has worked with Native American, First Nation and African communities to better understand how technology is supporting and meeting the specific cultural, economic, social and educational needs of indigenous, rural communities. Brian’s current project – based research is examining technology implementation and adoption processes in a First Nation Community School in Canada to document best practices that contribute to successful technology use and ownership in American Indian communities.

Martina A. Hone

Martina (Tina) Hone is PowerUP's Vice President of Public Policy. In this capacity, she works at the federal, state and local level to develop government support for the PowerUP program and its mission to help young people succeed in the Digital Age.

Immediately prior to joining PowerUP, Tina was the Associate Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Department of Commerce, where she was responsible for the oversight and coordination of all external affairs at the Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA). ESA includes the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Among her most important challenges as Associate Under Secretary was overseeing all external outreach for the 2000 Decennial Census, which included congressional relations and intergovernmental relations, community outreach and media relations.

Prior to joining ESA in July of 1998, she was the Chief Minority Counsel on the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims where she worked closely with senior Administration officials, Congressional Democrats and numerous international organizations on a broad range of immigration and international migration policies, including refugee admissions and annual caps on H1-B visas for high tech workers.

Tina began her career in Washington as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Mel Watt of North Carolina and later served as a Special Assistant in the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Before coming to Washington, Tina was a Corp Member in the Teach for America Program - an organization she joined after several years of private legal practice in Chicago.

Tina received her law degree from the University of California, Berkeley and her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Chicago. While in law school, Tina was an Associate Editor of the California Law Review, a recipient of the Graduate Minority Fellowship, an active member of the Black Law Students Association and Chair of the Boalt Hall Women's Association.

She is currently a member of the board of the Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights.

Tina's email address is Tinahone@aol.com.

John R. McCoy
Executive Director, Governmental Affairs
Tulalip Tribes

I was born on the Tulalip Reservation but raised on the West Coast, as my father was a career Navy man. I joined the US Air Force in 1961 after spending a summer fishing for salmon on the Tulalip Reservation. My first four years was as a communications operator in Texas, Turkey, Germany, Washington State and the Philippines. During my Philippine tour I cross trained into Communications Computer Operations and moved on to Illinois and Oklahoma where I cross trained again into Communications Computer programming. I moved on to Texas and Maryland, retired from the US Air Force, and went to work for Sperry Univac in Virginia. Sperry and Burroughs merged and became Unisys and I was with them for 12 years with the last eight in management. Most of the first four years was on contract to the White House.

In February 1994 I returned to the reservation as the business manager and completed a number of projects for the Tribes. In June of 1996, the Tribes realized the need for a Governmental Affairs office to address all the issues that were arising out of the federal and state legislatures. There was another issue of improving the relationship between the local jurisdictions and business community. The Tulalip Tribes Governmental Affairs office is charged with interfacing with other tribes, city, county, state and federal governments, working with the business community and with the print and electronic media.

In April 2001, I was given the additional duty of Acting City Manager for the Quil Ceda Village. The Village was created to form a structure to administer to the infrastructure needs of the Tulalip Business Park. The funding of the Village will come from the collection of taxes generated in the Business Park.

Geoffrey Cravatt Blackwell

Geoffrey C. Blackwell is the Liaison to Tribal Governments for the Federal Communications Commission. He also works as an Attorney Advisor within the Commission's Consumer Information Bureau, Office of the Bureau Chief. In addition to providing information on all aspects of the FCC, the Consumer Information Bureau deals directly with communities that are unserved and underserved with respect to telecommunications services. Over the past few years the FCC has made several efforts aimed at improving telecommunications services in Indian Country.

Mr. Blackwell is an enrolled member of the Muscogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma, a federally recognized tribe. He is of Omaha, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek descent. Mr. Blackwell was born in Fort Defiance, Arizona, and raised in New Mexico and Oklahoma. Mr. Blackwell was graduated with an A.B. in Government from Dartmouth College, and with a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Mr. Blackwell is responsible for various outreach efforts to tribes and for "in-reach" coordination with other FCC Bureaus and Offices on matters before the Commission involving tribes and federal Indian law. Prior to his most recent federal service, Mr. Blackwell worked at Hale and Dorr, LLP, of Boston, Massachusetts, and in private practice working with tribes to develop tribal codes of environmental laws. Mr. Blackwell has worked in the following offices and organizations:

- U.S. Dept. of Justice, Western District of Washington, Seattle, WA
- The Southern Environmental Law Center, Charlottesville, VA
- Monticello, The Home of Thomas Jefferson, Charlottesville, VA
- Office of U.S. Senator David L. Boren, Washington, DC
- Muscogee Creek Nation, Office of Real Land Management, Okmulgee, OK
- U.S. Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, Staff of Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, Washington DC
- Smithsonian Institution, Office of Symposia and Seminars, Washington DC

Mr. Blackwell currently resides in Rockville, Maryland, with his wife Beth.

Karen Radney Buller

Karen Radney Buller, a member of the Comanche Tribe, understands and speaks her language. Buller holds a Bachelors Degree in Education from Tabor College, a Master of Arts in Child/Developmental Psychology and all course work for a PhD in Social Psychology from the University of Nebraska. Buller has taught at the University of Nebraska, the University of North Dakota and Haskell Indian Nations University where she was named Outstanding Faculty Member by the students. Buller served as President of Electronic Pathways, an NSF funded telecommunications organization and has also served as Principle Investigator (PI) on two other NSF grants.

Ms. Buller has worked in New Mexico as an advocate and lobbyist for public school reform and children's issues. She has served on many parent and teacher boards for education reform and is an expert in K-12 school funding in New Mexico.

Ms. Buller is the founder, CEO and President of the National Indian Telecommunications Institute (NITI). NITI is a nationally prominent telecommunications organization, which was initially funded by a NSF grant.

NITIs activities include:

- Dissemination of NITIs culturally relevant curriculum template for use by teachers in building webpages
- Training teachers of Indian students in technology and cultural curriculum
- Advising tribes and other native organizations on telecommunications issues
- Speaking at conferences and other national events about the state of telecommunications in Indian country
- Assisting tribes in culture and language preservation using technology
- Developing content for Native Americans in areas of education, economic development, cultural preservation and sovereignty
- Advising non-native organizations on issues related to Native Americans and technology.

Buller is one of a few Native Americans with education and telecommunications expertise as they relate to Native American communities. Buller has twice testified before the [FCC](#) on the issue of Universal Service. Karen also serves on the Boards of Directors of [Libraries for the Future](#), [Civil Rights Telecommunications Forum](#), [Eisenhower National Clearinghouse](#) and the [Navajo Education Technology Consortium](#).

Buller's professional credentials and experience, national visibility and active involvement in Native American affairs and education enable her to offer invaluable insights about how to best serve Native American communities. Buller has emphasized the importance of cultivating elders and other traditional community leaders toward achieving education reform through technology. Ms. Buller has demonstrated the ability to tie projects and support together under her leadership through projects funded by NSF, the US Department of Education, the Ford Foundation, List Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Open Society and Fund for the Four Directions.

Kade Twist

As a policy associate with the Benton Foundation, Kade Twist is working on the Digital Divide Network project. In addition to focusing on the areas of rural communities and American Indian networking, Kade is a contributor to the developing Policy & Politics section. Kade is from Locust Grove, Oklahoma and Bakersfield, California. He is a poet, novelist and essayist whose writings explore the intersection of technology, spirit, flesh, and Cherokee culture. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma where he received the Sequoyah Fellowship Award for outstanding Native American Scholarship.

Valerie Fast Horse

Valerie's interest in information technology began when she served in the U.S. Army during Desert Storm. She was stationed in Saudi Arabia and was assigned to the Information Management Division, which played a key role in waging the "information war." Her assignment allowed her to experience first-hand the use of technology in dominating the collection, dissemination, and application of information and knowledge, which ultimately led to the defeat of Iraq.

This experience left a lasting impression on her, and after working in several other jobs, inspired her to return to the technical arena. She is currently the Manager of the MIS Department for the Coeur d' Alene Tribe. She has a degree in Computer Information Technology, is a Microsoft Certified Professional, and hopes to one day become a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (that is if Bill Gates would quit moving the target long enough for her to set her sights on it, but that's another story altogether).

As the Manager of MIS, she is primarily responsible for integrating technology to improve both internal and external communications. While she enjoys her role in the development of the tribal network and telecommunications system, she takes special pride in her work on the tribe's official website. She is a Webmaster by hobby, and has used her skills to develop the tribal website in order to establish a worldwide presence for her tribe. The URL is www.cdatribe.com.

In addition to being the Manager of the MIS Department, she is also an elected official serving on the Tribal Council.

Cyber-shaman draws thousands to his Web

AGNES DIGGS

Staff Writer

Victor Rocha feels he has found his place in the world, using his cyber drum to tap out news of the world and his community. It's an occupation and a responsibility he said he feels fortunate to have.

"Fortunate. You'll hear me say that word a lot, because I am," he said.

Rocha is the webmaster for the Web site of the Pechanga band of Luiseno Indians, Pechanga.net, where visitors can get "Indian gaming news and much more." What began as a news digest to disseminate information to tribes about gambling ballot measures has become a key source for anyone interested in "Native American issues, gaming issues and Indian gaming issues."

Rocha, a registered member of the band, is a cousin of Tribal Chairman Mark Macarro. The site includes a range of choices, including a chat room, guest book, gambling links and an American Indian Web site for children. Internet surfers who select "Victor's Web Links" will find unexpected subjects like vintage guitars, a Bill Gates Web site, "Gilligan's Island's" Dawn Wells' Web site and a One-Stop Government Web site.

E-mail comes in from around the world. Rocha said he recently received a message from India seeking advice.

"They just see Indian and they don't go beyond that," he said. "This guy wrote to me asking for advice because his wife wasn't being obedient and it was embarrassing him in front of his family."

Rocha, 39, was raised in Colton, the second oldest of seven siblings in a blended family. He said his childhood was hard, a typical urban Indian kid growing up without any kind of roots. "I had a dysfunctional family and I did everything I could to stay alive, until I was 30," he said. "I attended public school, but I was fortunate. I was a bookworm, so I got an education in spite of my public school education. My teachers recognized that I had something extra, and encouraged it."

Fresh out of high school, Rocha got a job in a San Bernardino record store where he found mentors who broadened his perspective. He began pursuing a musical career, playing and recording. He moved east in 1987, living his music dream for a time in New Jersey and New York, but he returned to California in 1990. As a cure for his rootless feeling, he began getting in touch with his tribe. His grandmother had moved back to the reservation from the city in the late '80s, he said, and she helped him learn more about his ancestors.

"I didn't feel grounded until the tribe accepted me," he said. As he got more involved with the tribe, he felt more grounded by the love he said they gave him.

"They gave me some roots," he said. " And ever since then, I've felt like I had to give something back, and that's why I have the Web site."

Rocha had learned some computer skills in junior college, he said. He bought his computer three years ago, took it into his loft, sat down and installed it, and he's been there ever since, he said.

"It (the Web site) was created with the best of intentions, to help my tribe," he said. "Then I found out that I can also help other tribes."

The most recent outreach to another tribe came through a convergence of events, beginning with a trip to Washington, D.C., where he watched the presidential inauguration parade with a group which included an aide to Sen. Jay Rockefeller (R-W.Va.) . About a week later, as Rocha was compiling his news digest, he came across an article about a town in West Virginia which is trying to reclaim the remains from 600 American Indian graves. The bodies are stored in plastic bags at Ohio State University, and residents want them returned to sacred tribal ground. Rocha e-mailed the story to his contact in Rockefeller's office, and staff there will be making inquiries into the matter.

"My ability to get things done has to do with my ability to see how things are connected, and how they can be, and how they should be," he said. "That is what I was born to do and I feel that I am helping in the sense of a civil rights worker, moving people forward,"

Rocha is emphatically not a morning person, and a typical day for him starts when he wakes at 10 a.m. He immediately turns on his computer and begins multi-tasking. He loads his Web site, checks his e-mail, culls for relevant news articles, makes phone calls and checks his visitors book, working until 4 p.m. He then might nap until 6, have dinner and maybe a little TV; but by 9 p.m. he's back in the loft where he'll work to compile the news in time for his East Coast readers to get it before going to work.

"I'm riding on top of this big behemoth juggernaut called the Internet," he said. "And I'm hanging on, and I'm having the time of my life."

More important, he said, he now gets paid for doing it. At start-up, he worked without pay. Now he sells some advertising.

"I'm making a living, which is important in this society. You can't just be a gadfly. I pay my taxes just like anybody else."

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Acce Agoyo

Acce Agoyo is a 1995 graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he received degrees in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and Anthropology and Archaeology.

He serves as Chief Executive Officer of Noble Savage Media, an Indian-owned media firm, and as Chief Technology Officer (CTO) of AllNative, a tribal and Indian-owned Internet company. As CTO of AllNative, Agoyo oversees the daily operations of Indianz.Com and makes technical decisions affecting AllNative.Com.

Agoyo's tribal affiliation is San Juan Pueblo. He grew up on his tribe's reservation in northern New Mexico.