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VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

See www.nicwa.org/conference for more information.

**MONDAY**
**APRIL 12, 2021**
- 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. — Opening General Session
- 10:30 a.m. - Noon — Workshops A
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. — Workshops B
- 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. — Membership Meeting

**TUESDAY**
**APRIL 13, 2021**
- 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. — General Session
- 10:30 a.m. - Noon — Workshops C
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. — Workshops D
- 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. — General Session

**WEDNESDAY**
**APRIL 14, 2021**
- 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. — Workshops E
- 10:30 a.m. - Noon — Workshops F
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. — Closing General Session

All times are listed in Pacific Time.
Dear NICWA Members and Conference Attendees,

On behalf of the National Indian Child Welfare Association Board of Directors, I am pleased to welcome you to the virtual 39th Annual Protecting Our Children Conference. I hope you enjoy your time with us.

Though this has been a long and difficult year for our communities, I am grateful that we are able to gather together virtually. Our 2021 theme for the Protecting Our Children Conference is “Connectedness, Resilience, and Persistence,” values that are more important than ever. Through the workshops, plenary sessions, and opportunities for connection during the virtual conference, I hope that you are able to spend time considering the ways in which our families, communities, and culture have prepared us to adapt and innovate to meet the needs of the Native children, families, and communities we serve.

I wish to thank the many people who have worked hard to make this year’s virtual conference a success: our presenters, sponsors, attendees, volunteers, board members, and staff. Your efforts on behalf of Native children and families, especially during challenging times such as these, are important acts of service for our people. Together we are improving practice and service delivery in Indian Country, and together we are strengthening the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children, families, and communities.

As always, I am honored to serve this organization, and you, as NICWA’s board president. I sincerely hope you find our time gathered together virtually valuable, enjoyable, and beneficial to the vital work that you do, and that you leave the conference inspired to carry our work forward in service of connectedness, resilience, and persistence.

Thank you,

Gil Vigil (Tesuque Pueblo)
President, Board of Directors
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Dear NICWA Members, Sponsors, Donors, and Friends,

Cama'i. On behalf of our board of directors, board of trustees, staff, partners, and the families we serve, welcome to the 39th Annual Protecting Our Children National American Indian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. For 39 years, we have met in April, Child Abuse Prevention Month, to gather together and share our collective wisdom about how to draw on our cultural traditions and teachings to strengthen American Indian/Alaska Native families and children. This year’s theme, “Connectedness, Resilience, and Persistence,” is a reflection of our lived experience during the pandemic over the last year.

The birthright of worldviews and values encoded in our languages and ways of life instructs us in our connectedness, how to adapt when our environment and context changes, and how to collectively get through situations together and move forward. In the last year, in the face of multiple and layered health, economic, and social crises, we, as Indigenous peoples and communities, have stayed connected, been resilient, and persisted. With hope, and prepared by the ones who came before us, we act to bring ourselves, our communities, and our world back into balance. We don’t know when that will be, nor how rough the road will be as we pass through difficult times, but we do know that we will be stronger together, whether in person or virtually.

This conference gives us the opportunity to gather together and step back from our day-to-day work to focus on Native children, families, and communities and learn from one another. In plenary sessions and in workshops, we’ll have the opportunity to hear about diverse models and practices across Indian Country that are serving children and their families well.

In a virtual format, we’ll be joined by many more people than are ordinarily able to travel to our physical location to attend our conference. While I’ll miss being together in person, it is a gift to be able to welcome so many more people to our conference to share in this experience. I’m so grateful to the many presenters who have agreed to join us online to share their work with all of us.

I look forward to seeing you online and engaging with you in all of the amazing ways we can connect while being apart. Please chat with us in the conference platform, and use our conference app to connect to presenters and participants. I hope the content we provide and the spirit of support in being together will inspire and sustain you for the work you do all year long.

Finally, I have the distinct honor of acknowledging our host sponsors. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation Statewide Fund for making the work we do at our annual conference possible. We heartily thank representatives from Seminole Tribe of Florida and Cowlitz Tribal Foundation Statewide Fund, along with our many other sponsors, for their unwavering support of our mission: strengthening the well-being of Alaska Native and American Indian children and families.

At NICWA we look forward to a brighter time, and until then and always, we will remain connected, resilient, and persistent. Quyanaa for participating in the NICWA annual conference!

Sincerely,

Sarah L. Kastelic (Alutiiq), PhD, MSW
Executive Director
WELCOME FROM HOST SPONSOR:

Seminole Tribe of Florida

Seminole Tribe of Florida is proud to sponsor the virtual 39th Annual Protecting Our Children Conference

Family and Child Advocates works with NICWA and other partners for better outcomes for Seminole families. Native American families require a Native American perspective and understanding.

Welcome attendees and thank you for the work that you do on behalf of Native children and their families.
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Monday, April 12, 2021 | 3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Pacific Time

The Annual NICWA Membership Meeting is a place of connection, celebration, and recognition. NICWA is a membership-based organization, so we look to you, our members, for guidance, and we are grateful for your direction and support. The 39th Annual Protecting Our Children Conference is in its second year being virtual. You are invited to join us for the Annual Membership Meeting, which will feature the following:

• Updates on the new slate of board members
• Recognition of NICWA’s Member of the Year
• Program previews
• Networking opportunities
• Cultural performances
• Raffles!

As is tradition, we will be raffling off a couple of amazing items. We will also be raffling off a Pendleton blanket for members who complete this survey [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BP9TD2D](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BP9TD2D)

Thank you for supporting NICWA with your membership! Please join us on Monday, April 12, 2021, from 3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Pacific Time for the membership meeting; we hope to see you there.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR NATIVE CHILDREN

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.–8:15 a.m. Pacific Time

As advocates for Native children gather for NICWA’s 39th Annual Conference, we invite Native communities and our partners nationwide to join together in a National Day of Prayer for Native Children. Please join us online for this respectful gathering, or host a safe, socially distanced event in your community to demonstrate support for all Native children. Find more information at [www.nicwa.org/conference](http://www.nicwa.org/conference).
Grand Prize Sweepstakes

Our sweepstakes raises mission-critical funds to support our work. Thank you to our Four Directions Sponsors for making this Grand Prize Sweepstakes possible: Choctaw Nation, Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, Eaglesun Systems Products, Inc., and RiteTrack.

Grand Prize: Hawaiian Vacation

Due to popular demand, our 2021 grand prize is once again a trip for two to Hawaii! Enjoy a room at Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa during your five-day, four-night stay. Two round-trip tickets from Alaska Airlines will get you there to enjoy everything Hawaii has to offer, plus a $100 gift card courtesy of Convenient Cards to make your visit more enjoyable. Purchase tickets and learn more about this fantastic trip in either our conference app or online at https://nicwa.tapkat.org/winhawaiitripfor2.

Anyone can enter!

With a virtual event, anyone can enter so please share the link with your friends and family. We have also extended the length of time before the drawing. You can enter the sweepstakes anytime between now and June 1, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Runner Up Prize: Microsoft Surface Pro

Our second prize is a Microsoft Surface Pro 6 with keyboard donated by Eaglesun Systems Products. This tablet is incredibly powerful and the best laptop replacement by far, making it a great piece of tech to take with you wherever you go. This tablet features a beautiful 12.3-inch touch screen and 13.5 hours of video-playback battery life.
Enter to Win the Grand Prize Sweepstakes Online

To enter the sweepstakes and view the full rules, visit: [https://nicwa.tapkat.org/whawaiitripfor2](https://nicwa.tapkat.org/whawaiitripfor2)

Entries start at $5 and the drawing will take place on June 1, 2021.

A special thank you to our Grand Prize Sweepstakes donors: Alaska Airlines, Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, and Convenient Cards.

WANT TO HELP NICWA CONTINUE TO BE RELENTLESS ADVOCATES FOR NATIVE CHILDREN?

Donate at [www.nicwa.org/donate](http://www.nicwa.org/donate) or [www.facebook.com/NativeChildren/](http://www.facebook.com/NativeChildren/) to help us provide critical training and resources that helps people just like you—those on the frontlines of Indian child welfare.

Thank you everyone for your donations!
2021 CHAMPION FOR NATIVE CHILDREN

Roxanne Roos Finney, an enrolled member of the Assiniboine Tribe, Ft. Belknap Reservation of Northern Montana and a descendant of the Little Shell Tribe, has over 40 years of social work practice, 38 of those years specific to Indian child welfare. She served as the practice consultant and tribal liaison with the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) for over 15 years. Prior to DCYF, she worked for over 16 years for United Indians of All Tribes as the child welfare director and social services director. In addition, she worked for the Snoqualmie Tribe, the Puyallup Tribe, Seattle Indian Center, and the 13th Regional Corporation (an Alaska Native Corporation). She has served on numerous boards, committees, and workgroups.

Roxanne started her career in the 1970s, when she was one of the first advocates to introduce the idea of Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC) staffings in Washington. Throughout her career, she worked in leadership positions and made an enormous impact on the well-being of Native children and families through work in tribal and state government and American Indian organizations. Roxanne is well respected as an Indian child welfare expert, helped develop the Washington State Indian child welfare policies that exist today, and has been instrumental in Indian child welfare case reviews. She also developed curriculum and delivered ICWA trainings promoting and supporting best practice serving Native children and families.

Testimonials

"Roxanne is respected by both tribal and state staff, and her ICW knowledge and experience have helped strengthen the shared goal of the tribes and state to protect children and honor culture."

Bob Smith, Indian Child Welfare Statewide Program Manager, Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families

"We laid the Indian child welfare groundwork beginning with locating and enrolling our adoptees. By the mid ’70s we had... created a licensed child placing agency. We were inventing as we went."

Ramona Bennett, Puyallup Tribal Elder, Former Tribal Chair

"In addition to working with at-risk parents she developed and established the foster care program with recruiting and maintaining 45 culturally appropriate foster families—an amazing achievement that no one has ever matched."

Lorraine Brave, NICWA Consultant, Founding NICWA Board Member, Former ICW Director at United Indians of all Tribes Foundation

"She taught me and many others the basics of Indian child welfare service delivery, and we were able to develop our skill level and our careers on the foundation she helped to create."

Betsy Tulee, Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families Office of Tribal Relations

"She is well respected in our state as an ICW expert. I am always inspired by her lifetime commitment to uphold ICWA; she is a true Champion for our tribal children."

Teena Ives, Director of Tribal Relations, Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families

"Cheers to one of the best Advocates of ICW known by many. I will always remember the way you worked passionately and tirelessly for many."

Gwendolyn R. Guo, Colville Tribal Elder, Former Director, Office of Indian Policy, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
The Cowlitz Tribal Foundation Statewide Fund is proud to be a longtime supporter of NICWA and a sponsor for the annual 2021 NICWA conference as we see the value in the critical work of the organization,” said Suzanne Donaldson, Cowlitz Tribal Foundation Statewide Fund
SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 3–6, 2022
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

40th Annual Protecting Our Children Conference
For more information visit www.nicwa.org/conference

We hope to see you there in person or virtually!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NICWA TRAINING INSTITUTES

Niagara Falls, New York
September 21–23, 2021

Palm Springs, California
February 8–10, 2022

Orlando, Florida
April 6–8, 2022

Visit www.nicwa.org/training-institutes for more information on in-person and virtual trainings.
ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jessiray Wheeler is a descendant of both the Colville Confederated Tribes and the Hoh Tribe. Due to current blood quantum restrictions, she remains unenrolled. She lives on the Spokane Reservation on land assigned to her family during the allotment era. She has shown her art in the We Are Still Here Art Show (2015 and 2018) and has also shown at the Gathering At the Falls Art Show (2019). She spends her time making art, writing poetry, learning the Spokane language, and teaching her two children about the traditions her community is collectively reclaiming.

About the Artwork

The Huddle is depicting the artist’s own experience as a Native youth in the foster-care system and with family visits. When it was time to leave each other again, her family would huddle in a circle and pray—a new ceremony borne out of need. In this way, they were able to maintain a feeling of connection to each other and to their culture while living in diaspora.

2022 Call for Artists

NICWA is excited to once again provide an opportunity for artists to showcase their talents in support of our 2022 Protecting Our Children Conference. The selected artist will be awarded $1,500 for the use of their work in promotional materials for our 2022 conference. Submissions are due May 3, 2021. Visit https://www.nicwa.org/call-for-artists/ for more information.
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2021 Protecting Our Children Conference

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