

PWNA LEADERSHIP

An experienced, dedicated Board of Directors sets PWNA's strategic direction and governs our administration and finances. Their backgrounds span diverse industries, including business and financial management, strategic planning, law, education, health care, economic development, programming, grants, humanitarian services, and multicultural diversity. PWNA's Board of Directors is passionate about improving the quality of life for Native Americans, and the members volunteer their time and expertise to help PWNA achieve its mission and vision with efficiency and integrity.

2024 Board of Directors



Corey Mzhickteno, Chairperson

Corey joined the PWNA Board in 2019, served as Treasurer for several years, and recently renewed his commitment to PWNA to serve as Board Chairperson. An enrolled citizen of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation in Kansas, Corey has served 10 years as a Board Member for the tribe's business enterprises, assisted with long-term strategic planning for business development, completed two major expansion projects, assisted with new business startups, and advanced long-term goals and acquisitions for other enterprises that impact tribal programs and well-being on Tribal lands in Kansas. He also worked for (then) Harrah's Entertainment (now Caesars), holding front-line, supervisory, and management roles. In his early career, Corey was commissioned as an Officer in the U.S. Air Force where he attended flight school and then amassed 18 years of military aviation experience. Corey also worked in the civil aviation sector for about 2 years. Today, Corey provides flight expertise, consulting services, flight tests, aircraft delivery, and flight/simulator training in multiple aircraft to domestic and international customers while also juggling part-time service in the U.S. Air Force Reserves at Randolph AFB, Texas. Corey holds a bachelor's in business administration from the Washburn University School of Business in Topeka, Kansas, and a master's from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. Passionate about making a continuing impact on Tribal nations, he brings to PWNA skills in business operations, tribal government programs, strategic planning, finance and economic development, organizational restructuring, and international business.



MaKenley Barton, Vice Chairperson

A former AIEF scholarship recipient, MaKenley is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation tribe. She earned her bachelor's in healthcare administration from Northeastern State University and her master's from Oklahoma State University. MaKenley has been working in tribal health care since college, completing job shadows and internships at W.W. Hastings Hospital – the Cherokee-operated hospital. She started her career with Cherokee Nation Health Services as an Administrative Officer for a value-based care program the tribe participates in and then was promoted to Director of Patient Access Management to direct the scheduling and registration departments for the hospital and new outpatient health center. Since 2019, MaKenley has been serving as the Deputy Hospital Administrator for W.W. Hastings Hospital. She always wanted to work in healthcare but, more specifically, the health care system of her own tribe. MaKenley brings her knowledge of healthcare (rural and tribal), finance, operations, and strategic planning to PWNA.



Matt Horinek, Treasurer

A leading business development expert with extensive knowledge of institutional wealth for corporations and nonprofits alike, he is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Matt currently works with the Bank of Texas as Vice President and Senior Business Development Officer in their corporate division, and earlier with their institutional wealth team. His focus is building teams around middle-market business leaders and helping them meet their business' operational needs through his bank or partner network. Prior to the Bank of Texas, Matt worked with BOK Financial for eight years, focusing on retirement planning, investments, and institutional wealth. He holds a bachelor's in business administration with a major in financial management from Oklahoma State University, Spears School of Business. Besides his passion for connecting people for mutually beneficial relationships, Matt brings to PWNA skills in business development and financial management.



Emily McDonald, Secretary

Services Currently a senior director of Learning and Workforce Development with Disability:IN, Emily accelerates early career talent for professionals with disabilities, oversees the development of educational content for disability inclusion, and consults with Disability:IN partner companies through the Inclusion Works program. Formerly a senior leader of Walmart's Culture, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (CDEI) team, Emily focused on enterprise strategy, brand identity, external relations, digital engagement, and benchmarking surveys for the Disability Equality Index and Global Disability Equality Index. Earlier with Walmart, Emily managed corporate strategy and stakeholder outreach for Native Americans and People with Disabilities. During her 12 years at Walmart, she also held roles in corporate communications, associate engagement, data insights and measurement, public relations, philanthropic program management, and the Tribal Voices: Indigenous Associate Resource Group. Prior to Walmart, Emily served as Executive Director of the Heritage Youth Development Center at the YMCA. In further support of Native youth, Emily serves as co-chair of the American Indian College Fund's Next Generation Advisory Council to help increase the number of Native students who hold college degrees. She holds a bachelor's from Missouri Southern State University and her DEI perspective is informed by her experience as a Native Hawaiian - Pacific Islander woman with non-apparent disabilities. Emily brings to PWNA expertise in diversity and inclusion, strategic planning and communications, effectiveness benchmarking, and empowerment of women and youth.



Jackie Blackbird

Jackie is an enrolled member of the Gros Ventre (Aaniiih) Tribe and a descendant of the Assiniboine (Nakoda) Tribe of Montana's Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Her Aaniiih name is 'Itha Gibi That' (translated to English means 'Walking Woman'). Jackie graduated from the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management with a bachelor's in business. Jackie works as the Indigenous Communities Officer for Newman's Own Foundation. Before her current role, she worked for her community's tribally owned business, Island Mountain Development Group (IMDG), and she spent 18+ years with Nike managing their N7 Fund, building capacity for sport and physical activity, and providing grants to maintain or expand programming in tribal communities. Jackie

enjoys traveling, attending tribal ceremonies, and helping her husband manage their food truck. As part of her give-back to the community, she serves as a Board member for the [Native Wellness Institute](#) and the Aaniiih Nakoda Community Foundation, and she is a trustee of Harlem Public School District. Jackie brings to PWNA her knowledge of tribal communities and experience in partnership building, grants, program management, and strategic planning.



Dr. Nicole Been

Dr. Nicole Been (pron. Bean), a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and member of the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town and the Deer clan, is recognized for her expertise in sports, education, socioeconomic development in Native communities, and DEI. Recently named to the 'Native American 40 Under 40' class by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development, she is a cofounder of the Been Foundation focused on youth with socioeconomic challenges. She also cofounded Duck Street Investments, LLC, holds Graduate Faculty status at Oklahoma State University (OSU), and recently became Associate Athletics Director of DEI at the University of Oklahoma. Previously, Dr. Been helped move Bacone to public tribal college status and implement distance learning, served as Dean of the Division of Indigenous Online Teaching and Learning, and held several other roles at the college. An alumna of OSU, Baylor University, and Bacone where she was on the women's basketball team, Dr. Been has deep experience in the world of sports and education, working with Orlando Magic of the NBA, the Baylor Lady Bears basketball program, OSU Athletics, Big 12 Conference women's basketball tournaments, and Langston University Athletics. A three-time published author, she earned her Ph.D. in health, leisure, and human performance from OSU. Dr. Been brings to PWNA strategies to help close the gap in educational achievement, economic development and financial literacy in rural and tribal communities, and nonprofit leadership.



Joe Claunch

Joe is a citizen of the Puyallup Tribe of Tacoma, Washington, with 20 years' experience in Native American communities as an administrator, teacher, and coach. He recently launched Strength-Based Consulting (SBC), a grant-writing, capacity building, and consulting firm serving Native causes. Prior to SBC, Joe was Executive Director of the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (ZYEP)

for six years, drawing on his experience as a culturally responsive researcher, published writer, and award-winning coach to more than triple the size of their annual revenue, youth served, programs offered, and workforce. Joe believes that when youth sports are done well, they have the power to transform lives and unite communities. As Zuni High School's head football coach, he led the team to three district championships, one district runner-up, and a team grade point average better than 3.0 in just four years. He holds a bachelor's in Indigenous studies from Haskell Indian Nations University, a master's in education from the University of Oregon, and a Ph.D. in sport and exercise psychology from the University of Kansas. Joe brings to PWNA his skills in research and consulting, along with strategies for helping Native people leverage their strengths in pursuit of their goals.



Joshua Arce, PWNA President & CEO (Non-voting member)

Joshua joined PWNA as president & CEO in January 2020, our 30th year of serving Indian country. A citizen of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, he has more than 20 years' experience in education management, social work, and business development. Most recently, he served as Chief Information Officer of Haskell Indian Nations University, advancing their IT infrastructure and services to better meet their mission. Other public sector experience includes tribal law and governance; after-school, youth, foster care, and housing programs for low-income families; and diversity and inclusion. Josh has also volunteered for the Kansas court-based [Citizen Review Board](#) for child welfare and [Lawrence+Memorial Hospital](#) for health equity, diversity, and inclusion. Joshua earned his bachelor's in social work from the University of Kansas and then a J.D. specializing in tribal law, applied Indigenous leadership, federal Indian law, and Indian gaming law. Sincere and forward-looking, Josh actively supports the advancement of Native communities.