



### **Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive**

Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin was sworn into office in July 2012. As Chief Executive, Benjamin leads the Band's executive branch that implements Band laws and administers programs and services. Most recently, Benjamin was interim director of the Pine Grove Leadership Academy, a Minnesota public charter school located in District III of the Mille Lacs Reservation.

Ms. Benjamin was initially elected Chief Executive in 2000 and was re-elected in 2004, 2008 and 2012. She previously served the Mille Lacs Band as Commissioner of Administration (*the Band's highest appointed position*) from 1989-1997, and Chief of Staff to the late Chairman Art Gahbow. She has also been Senior Vice President of Administration and Finance at Grand Casino Hinckley, and has served the American Indian community through numerous boards and organizations at the local, state and national levels.

Ms. Benjamin is a founder and current Treasurer of Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations ("*WEWIN*"), a mentoring and support organization for Native women in leadership roles in business, government and our communities. She currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Tribal Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT), and Chair of the MCT Housing Subcommittee.

Benjamin has also been the Minneapolis Region representative to the Tribal Task Force on BIA (*Bureau of Indian Affairs*) Trust Management Reform, Secretary of the National Indian Gaming Association and Treasurer of the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association. In addition, she was appointed by Minnesota Governor Arne Carlson to serve on the Roundtable for Sustainable Development.

Ms. Benjamin is a life-long resident of Minnesota.