

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

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Vernon Finley, Chairman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, was born and raised on the Flathead Indian Reservation and graduated from Polson High School. He holds degrees from the University of Montana, Oklahoma City University and the University of Georgia, including a doctorate in education from UGA.

He served several years as a Polson school board member and was a finalist for the presidency of Salish Kootenai College in 2009 following the retirement of longtime president Joe McDonald.

Vernon has been an active member of the Kootenai Culture Committee where he has worked on various projects including a curriculum to learn the Kootenai language. Vernon was elected to the Tribal Council and began serving on Council in 2014.

He spends his spare time with his wife and children.