

Bill Harris

Chief of the Catawba Nation

Bill Harris was elected as Chief of the Catawba Indian Nation in Rock Hill, SC on July 23, 2011. Bill has been involved in tribal politics for many years. In 1997 he began fighting for the rights of the Catawba people in tribal government and for the enforcement of the Catawba Constitution. In 2009 he became the Chairperson of the Election Committee and in 2010 he became the Chairperson of the Economic Development Board.

Bill's Catawba roots are deep and he is proud of his heritage. His father is Floyd William Harris. His grandfather, Douglas Harris, was a Chief of the Catawba Nation and his grandmother, Georgia, was a talented Catawba potter who was instrumental in preserving the Catawba people's four thousand year-old art form. She passed her love for the artform to Bill by teaching him how to work with clay and create Catawba pottery.



Bill was born and raised near the Catawba reservation in upstate South Carolina. He worked as a self-employed craftsman for most of his adult life. During his time as Chief, Bill has made it his number one priority to serve the Catawba people to the best of his ability. He has represented the tribe in many capacities including the USET Board of Directors, South Carolina Native American Advisory Committee, and RFATS Policy Committee. He serves on the Direct Service Tribe's Advisory Committee for Indian Health Services, and he has testified on behalf of the tribe at meetings of Congress. These organizations represent federal, state, and local levels of government. All of this while still being accessible to the Catawba people and leading decisions at the tribal level.

Bill has very little spare time, but when he has the opportunity he likes to practice the craft of making his Nation's pottery. In doing so, he feels bound to his ancestors, and he becomes another link in the chain that connects the Catawba Nation's past to its future.