

PATRICIA WHITEFOOT
President-Elect, Board of Directors
National Indian Education Association

BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in the original homelands of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Patricia Whitefoot lives in White Swan, WA where she was raised by her maternal grandparents. She continues to live in the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains range where early lessons were grounded in the natural environment. Family travels along the Columbia River, bordering Oregon and Washington, to fish and gather the traditional foods fostered a deep relationship with extended family and the diverse landscapes.

At the urging of her grandmother, Patsy obtained a B.A. with a Teaching Certificate in Education from Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA and a M.A. from Ft. Wright College in Spokane, WA. For 40 years, she has managed Indian Education and community mobilization programs from preschool to higher education at the tribal, state and national level. Currently, she is the director of the “*Palatisha Miyanashma*” Indian Education Program and Yakama Reservation Wellness Coalition. Patsy serves as the Education Chair of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (62 Tribes) which she has facilitated for almost 20 years.

She has three children who all graduated from White Swan High School on the Yakama Reservation and ten grandchildren. In rearing her children and supporting extended family, she is impressed in the Native children’s natural gift for learning. In her role as an educator, she advocates her ancestors’ vision of holistic health, environmental and spiritual well-being with origins steeped in the diverse Native languages, values, cultures and histories of the Americas.