

Sara-Jane Smallwood

Sara-Jane Smallwood is the Director of Public Policy and Promise Zone Coordinator for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Her Choctaw heritage and passion for public policy are intertwined. She comes from a long line of farmers and ranchers who make their living from the land, and she grew up near Sardis Lake and the Choctaw Capitol in Tvshka Homma. These experiences taught her the importance of the Choctaw Nation's culture, natural resources, and leadership. Sara-Jane is currently a student at Oklahoma State University pursuing a PhD in Environmental Policy. She received her Master of Public Affairs with emphasis in local governance from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs in 2012. She received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Communications and American Indian Studies at Oklahoma State University in 2008, and was named an Outstanding Senior as one of the university's top graduates. In 2007, she was chosen as a Scholar by the Morris K. Udall and the Stewart L. Udall Foundation and as a Fellow by the Public Policy and International Affairs Program, where she was part of the Princeton University summer fellowship. Sara-Jane was previously employed by the U.S. Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Division. Sara-Jane serves as an Oklahoma Champion for Early Opportunities with the Potts Family Foundation, board member of the Oklahoma Academy for State Goals, and serves on the Board of Trustees for the Eastern Oklahoma State College Foundation. In her free time, SJ can be spotted cruising southeastern Oklahoma in her cobalt blue Mini Cooper.