

# TESIA MARIE ZIENTEK

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**EDUCATION** **Stanford University Graduate School of Education, Stanford, CA, June 2013**  
Master of Arts: Policy, Organization, and Leadership Studies

**University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, May 2009**  
Bachelor of Arts: English  
Minor: Anthropology  
Overall GPA: 3.9, Magna Cum Laude

**University of Notre Dame London Program, London, England, Fall 2007**  
Study Abroad Program

**EXPERIENCE** *Senior Director of Programs, AISES*  
Remote Office: Oklahoma City, OK, **April 2023 – Present**

- Responsible for the overall personnel performance and program outcomes.
- Ensure the creation of departmental plans, establishing goals and benchmarks for performance, and aligning departmental goals with AISES' strategic plan and priorities.
- Lead implementation of program development initiatives and evaluation of program performance.
- Provide thought leadership and strategy development in program development and evaluation efforts.
- Maintain a team culture centering Indigenous values and an environment where all staff feel valued and supported to successfully achieve their projects' goals.

*Education Director, Citizen Potawatomi Nation*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **October 2015 – Present**

- Proposed, developed, and implemented the first Department of Education for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.
- Manage the affairs of the Department of Education, including four employees and a multi-million-dollar budget.
- Provide an accessible entry point for college-bound Citizen Potawatomi Nation students in search of individualized college advice, scholarship help, or internship information.
- Partner with local schools to support college access and completion.
- Construct curriculum and culturally relevant programming for partnerships with local universities.
- Develop helpful resources to prepare Citizen Potawatomi Nation students for success in college.
- Track and analyze data to show student success and return on student investment.
- Wrote, designed, and implemented grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Department of Justice, Administration for Native Americans, and Indian Health Service.

*Program Advisor, Potawatomi Leadership Program*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **June 2012 – Present**

- Proposed and implemented new curriculum for the Harvard Honoring Nations Award-winning program, which hosts tribal interns aged 18-20 on-site to be immersed in the Citizen Potawatomi Nation for six weeks.
- Lead weekly discussion groups to consider issues of cultural identity, traditional knowledge, and future tribal involvement and leadership.
- Create and grade reflection assignments.
- Design, advise, and monitor capstone group projects.

*Adjunct Professor, St. Gregory's University*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **June 2016 – December 2017**

- Proposed and created courses for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Core, a series of courses required for Potawatomi scholarship students at St. Gregory's University to promote connection and engagement with their tribal community.
- Developed curriculum for two courses with Citizen Potawatomi culturally relevant curricula: Introduction to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation I and Introduction to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation II

*Curriculum Development Specialist, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Mentorship Program*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **October 2013 – February 2016**

- Collaborated with staff to construct culturally relevant and site-appropriate curriculum.
- Developed the Adult Mentor and Peer Mentor training curricula, which include manuals, slide presentations, and lesson activities.
- Developed the Cultural Activities Curriculum materials to guide the mentors in teaching traditional Native American knowledge to youth in order to promote healthy and positive decision-making.

*Grants and Contracts Coordinator, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Office of Self-Governance*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **May 2013 – October 2015**

- Led grant proposal development teams to complete funding applications.
- Wrote, reviewed, edited, and submitted grant proposals in accordance with funding announcement guidelines.
- Developed project budgets.
- Provided tribal-wide technical assistance and training to grant project directors.
- Acted as a liaison between funding agencies and grant programs.
- Assisted with self-governance management and advocacy.
- Guided strategic planning efforts to ensure that all funding pursuits interact to best benefit Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal members and other community members in our service area.

*Powwow Systems Manager, Stanford University Native American Cultural Center (NACC)*  
Stanford, California, **September 2012 – June 2013**

- Collected best practices from the 42-year history of the Stanford Powwow, the largest student-run powwow in the nation, to capture institutional memory of the event.
- Led the NACC's transition to the online platform OrgSync.
- Synthesized experience into a scalable model of the powwow for use in other Native American communities
- Served as liaison between students and NACC faculty to facilitate a smooth transition to OrgSync.

*Administrative Assistant, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Environmental Department*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **June 2011 – August 2012**

- Maintained records for ten government grants.
- Tracked payment process of each purchase made with grant funds per line-item budget.
- Acted as primary liaison between department and vendors or contractors.
- Reduced waste and streamlined process by restructuring filing procedure from a paper to an online system.

*English as a Second Language Teacher, Colegio Maria Auxiliadora*  
Santurce, Puerto Rico, **October 2010 – August 2011**

- Made and executed daily lesson plans for six classes of 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> graders.
- Created original worksheets, reviews, and tests to assess and monitor the students' progress.
- Designed creative projects to make classroom material interesting and relevant to all 184 students.

*Teacher and Tutor, Puerto Rico Center for Social Concerns (PRCSC)*  
Orocovis, Puerto Rico, **August 2009 – July 2010**

- Made and executed daily lesson plans for K-3 English and science classes.
- Planned and organized an afterschool program serving approximately thirty K-7<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Coordinated the daily tutoring efforts for seven 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Prepared and taught a daily English reinforcement class for approximately fifteen students.

*External Affairs Intern, Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)*  
Arlington, Virginia, **June 2008 – August 2008**

- Wrote and edited articles for *Fish and Wildlife News*.
- Covered wildlife-related hearings for the branch of Congressional and Legislative Affairs.
- Researched and helped construct a FWS strategy for minority employment outreach.

*Human Resources Intern, Citizen Potawatomi Nation Human Resources*  
Shawnee, Oklahoma, **Summer, Fall, and Spring Breaks, May 2005-August 2007**

- Restructured personnel filing system for over 2,000 Citizen Potawatomi Nation employees.
- Assisted in the transition from paper employment applications to online employment applications.

## ACTIVITIES

- *President, National Indian Education Association (NIEA)* October 2022 – Present
- Protect the organization's mission to promote Indigenous educational sovereignty
- Preside at all meetings of Board of Directors and general membership
- *President, Oklahoma Council for Indian Education (OCIE)*, December 2020 – Present
- Support statewide Indian education advocacy; plan and implement several Indian education activities
- Chair the Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society committee to honor over 1,000 Native students annually
- *Co-Chair, National Congress of American Indians Human Resources Committee*, October 2022-October 2024
- Facilitate development of resolutions related to health, education, child and family welfare, disabilities, and elders
- *Chair, National Congress of American Indians Education Subcommittee*, October 2022-October 2024
- Facilitate development of policy position resolutions relations to Native American education issues
- *Vice President, Tribal Education Departments National Assembly*, October 2017 – April 2023
- Guide the national organization, which strives to represent tribal education department interests
- *Treasurer, National Indian Education Association*, October 2020 – October 2022
- Make organizational and fiscal decisions to promote Indigenous educational sovereignty
- Chair the fiscal committee to ensure prudent spending of the nationally recognized nonprofit
- *Member At-Large, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Oklahoma*, October 2020 – Present
- Support the defense and promotion of individual rights secured by the U.S. and Oklahoma constitutions
- *Board, The Kwek Society*, June 2020 – Present
- Support the eradication of period poverty by providing period supplies to Indigenous students nationwide
- *Board, Community Renewal of Pottawatomie County*, March 2019 – September 2023
- Guide the local organization, which helps neighbors restore community through intentional relationships
- Chaired the fundraising committee from 2021-2022 and raised over \$50,000 in event revenue
- *Board, Pioneer Library System (PLS) Foundation*, August 2020 – May 2023
- Guide the organization's efforts to support literacy and a love of learning throughout PLS communities
- Chair the Governance committee to safeguard the Foundation's compliance with the law and internal policies
- *Reviewer, Cobell Scholarship*, 2021-2022
- Review and score dozens of high-achieving Indigenous scholarship applications based on a rubric
- *Member, Matriarch Aubrey Dameron MMIW Scholarship Committee*, August 2019 – August 2021
- Develop application, award, and review process for scholarship honoring an Indigenous student

## HONORS

- **Native American 40 Under 40**, Selected in 2020
- Recognized for outstanding leadership, initiative, dedication, and significant community contributions
- **Shawnee Forward 15**, Selected in 2020
- Selected to celebrate achievement and excellence in career
- **ionOklahoma Magazine NextGen Under 30**, Selected in 2016
- Selected from a pool of 700 nominations overall as part of the effort to recognize and encourage the next generation of innovative, creative, and inspiring individuals who push the boundaries of endeavor
- **Leadership Shawnee**, Accepted in 2015
- Local leadership program committed to educating a diverse group of businesspeople about the economy, resources, and challenges facing the greater Shawnee area
- **Citizen Potawatomi Nation Noek Nmeshosek**, Accepted in 2014
- Tribal employee program that fosters leadership skills and teaches tribal history and modern governance
- **Howard Yackus Memorial Scholarship Award**, Selected in 2013
- Nominated as an outstanding participant of the CPN Workforce and Social Services department
- **Gates Millennium Scholar**, Received in 2005 - 2013
- Scholarship awarded for academic achievement and leadership to support undergraduate and graduate studies
- **Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society**, Inducted in 2009
- A nationally renowned honors society pledged to the ideals of liberal learning and moral integrity
- **Sigma Tau Delta**, Inducted in 2009

- International English honor society
- **Presidential Scholar**, Awarded in 2005
- One of 20 students chosen out of a class of 2000 based on academic and extracurricular performance
- **Citizen Potawatomi Nation Family Reunion Festival Head Dancer**, 2016 - Present
- Nominated by tribal leadership to represent the Citizen Potawatomi Nation at the annual event

## PRESENTATIONS

- *We Are the First Scientists*, April 11, 2024, YOU Belong in STEM Convening, White House
- *Ensuring Resilient Tribal Communities by Building Up the Next Generation of STEM Talent*, March 13, 2024, Reservation Economic Summit
- *Member Education Sessions: Next Gen Now Panel*, January 25, 2024, Native Americans in Philanthropy
- *Inclusivity in STEM Panel*, August 6, 2023, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
- *Community Conversation on Current Topics in Indigenous and Native Education*, May 13, 2022, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- *The History of Indian Education and Its Impact on Youth Development*, May 13, 2022, Tribal Youth Resource Center
- *Achieving Oklahoma's Postsecondary Attainment Goal, Oklahoma Legislators Retreat*, January 21, 2022, The Hunt Institute
- *Indigenizing Education: Local to National Panel*, November 30, 2021, Oklahoma City Metropolitan Library System
- *A Public Talk Celebrating Indigenous People Heritage Month*, November 12, 2021, Texas Tech University Honors College
- *Native American History Month Kick-Off Keynote*, November 3, 2021, University of Central Oklahoma Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- *Surveying TEDs Nationwide: Developing a 2021 TEDNA Report*, October 16, 2021, National Indian Education Association Annual Convention
- *Preparing for the Next Seven Generations: Indigenous Student Academic Success Strategies*, August 12, 2020, Northern Oklahoma College NASNTI Program
- *Native Mascots and How They Affect Native Identity*, November 19, 2019, University of Central Oklahoma Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- *Native Identity Panel*, November 13, 2019, Texas Tech University Student Intersectional Leadership Council and Raiderland Native American Student Association
- *Funding Opportunities for Native Students, Native American Attainment Convening*, February 27, 2019, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
- *Native Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Nation Building*, January 16, 2019, Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- *Developing Future Leaders*, December 4, 2018, Oklahoma Council for Indian Education Annual Conference
- *Citizen Indigenous Panel Discussion*, March 19, 2018, Harvard University Native American Program and the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development's Honoring Nations Program

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- High level of proficiency in Spanish, both verbal and written
- Superior verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent ability to problem-solve, make independent decisions, and recommend solutions
- Ability to manage unpredictable and voluminous workloads, demonstrating a high degree of flexibility
- Strong attention to detail
- Unwavering commitment to Indigenous perspectives and cultural growth