

Chairman Austin Lowes Bio

Chairman Austin Lowes is in his first term as Chairman of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He was first elected to the Sault Tribe Board of Directors in 2020. In 2022, he was elected by the Sault Tribe membership to complete the previous Chairman's vacated term.

Chairman Lowes received a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Lake Superior State University, along with a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from Michigan State University. As a graduate student, he was awarded a graduate health fellowship from the National Congress of American Indians. Chairman Lowes began his career as a social worker. He has worked on the Sault Tribe, the Bay Mills Indian Community and the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana. This experience provided valuable insight into the needs of Indigenous communities. During his time in Montana, he received the Governor's Award of Excellence in Performance.

Chairman Lowes is passionate about increasing the Sault Tribe's land base, meeting the Sault Tribe's housing needs, emergency and transitional housing services, substance abuse services, and an equitable distribution of resources for members living outside the Sault Tribe's service area. Chairman Lowes was instrumental in establishing the first tribal homeless shelter in Michigan. This shelter, known as the Lodge of Hope, opened in 2023 and has provided a safe space for tribal families to get back on their feet with dignity. Additionally, he spearheaded the creation of the Sault Tribe's first Medication Assistance Treatment Program (MAT Clinic) The Healing Place, which provides services to individuals diagnosed with opioid and alcohol use disorders. Chairman Lowes also has been appointed by Governor Whitmer to serve on the Michigan Community Service Commission to represent Native American Tribes for the term February 27, 2025 thru October 1, 2026.

Chairman Lowes resides in Sault Ste. Marie with his wife Tara, and his two daughters, Emilia and Eden.