



**Raymond J. Welch**  
**Tribal Chairman**  
**Barona Band of Mission Indians**

A third generation Barona leader, Raymond J. Welch, is currently serving his second term as the Chairman of the Barona Tribal Council. Prior to being elected Chairman, Chairman Welch served as Vice-Chairman for six years. He has called the Barona Indian Reservation home his entire life.

Chairman Welch is continuing his family's long legacy of Tribal leadership that includes his paternal grandmother Catherine Banegas Welch (Chairwoman 1948-1969) – the longest serving Tribal Chairperson for the Barona Band, mother Carmen "Daisy" Welch, who was a Viejas Tribal member and served as Chairwoman of her people for ten years; his father Robert "Robbie" Welch, a Barona Tribal member who served 12 years on the Barona Tribal Council, eight of those as Vice-Chairman; his sister Rhonda Welch-Scalco (Chairwoman 2005-2008); and his brother Robert "Cita" Welch, former Chairman of the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians (2015-2018). This leadership legacy is unparalleled in San Diego County.

Taking a cue from his upbringing and predecessors, Chairman Welch encompasses the same ethic and moral responsibility to lead and stand by his Tribe. He lives by the quote – "do the right thing, because it is the right thing to do." – Marcus Aurelius. That belief is extended to the many Tribes that are still struggling for basic needs. He believes that with success comes the responsibility to speak up for and help his brothers and sisters that are less fortunate in their business endeavors.

Actively looking ahead, Welch has aligned a set of congruent goals to ensure the prosperity and longevity of the Tribe. Economic diversification became top of mind as COVID-19 emphasized the need to seek other forms of income beyond gaming. Connecting generations, actively engaging with Barona youth, and ensuring the Tribe's elders continue to inspire the future generations to come is essential for a flourishing future. On the development front, he has prioritized infrastructure enhancements on the reservation including large-scale improvement projects and securing sustainable water resources.

Welch has been happily married to Sandy Welch for 37 years. They have three kids and two granddaughters. When asked what the word family means to him, he responded: Everything – which is no surprise since he says he is happiest when spending time with his family.

Prior to serving on the Barona Tribal Council, Chairman Welch worked for the Barona Gaming Commission in the Surveillance Department for 14 years, 12 of those years as Director, overseeing department operations in an effort to protect the integrity of gaming at the Barona Resort and Casino.