



Aaron A. Payment
EdD, EdS, MEd, MPA...GED

Tribal Chairperson,
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Dr. Payment is Tribal Chairperson for his tribe the largest east of the Mississippi. First elected in 2004, he served a four-year term, and was returned to office in 2012 and 2016. Prior to serving as Chair, he served as Tribal Vice Chair for two terms while serving in the Tribal Legislature for eight years. Payment has served his people and other tribes through the following leadership roles:

- **1st Vice President, National Congress of American Indians**
- **Co-Chair, Mid-West Regional Tribal Interior Budget Committee**
- **Vice President, Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes**
- **President, United Tribes of Michigan**
- **Vice-Chair, Bay Mills Community College**
- **HHS Secretary Tribal Advisory Council**
- **Chair, NIH Tribal Consultation Advisory Council**
- **Co-Chair, National Advisory Council on Indian Education (Presidential appointment)**
- **Member and Past Chair, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority**
- **Chair, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan**
- **Michigan Political Leadership Program, Advisory Board and Presenter**
- **Past President of the Chippewa Luce Mackinac Community Action Board**

A high school dropout at 15, Payment earned a GED and the following college degrees:

- **Doctorate in Educational Leadership**
- **Educational Specialist Master's Degree**
- **Master's in Education Administration**
- **Master's in Public Administration**
- **Bachelor's degree in Sociology**

Payment's employment history includes teaching university level public policy, policy analysis, research and statistics (developed the course), and U.S. American Indian policy. He has served in a number of administrative support service capacities to retain ethnic minority students at Northern Michigan University, Lake Superior State University and Michigan State University. He also previously served as Federal State Policy Administrator, Deputy Executive Director and Judicial Branch Division Director for this Tribe. Over the years, Chairperson Payment has served as a volunteer and paid consultant on tribal issues.

Payment's honors include:

- 2015 National TRiO Achiever
- 2013 Sergeant Shriver Achievement in Service Award
- 1999 Distinguished young Native American Alumni, Northern Michigan University
- 1994 Mid-West TRiO Achiever
- 1986 & 1987 ~ 2 year varsity cross country letter winner & 1987 Academic All American