



# AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native  
Tourism Association

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rachel Cromer

[rcromer@aianta.org](mailto:rcromer@aianta.org)

(505)724-3578

## **American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Secures Full Board Leadership at 2016 American Indian Tourism Conference**

*New Representatives from Pacific, Midwest and Eastern Regions Join AIANTA  
Board of Directors*

**Albuquerque, New Mexico (September 21, 2016)** – The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) secured new board leadership at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC) held at the Tulalip Resort Casino in Tulalip, Washington last week.

The AIANTA Board of Directors (AIANTA Board) is composed of two representatives from six designated regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains, Southwest and two At-Large positions to represent all of Indian Country. Each representative is elected by their respective region to serve a three year term and At-Large representatives are elected by the entire AIANTA membership. Each member of the AIANTA Board brings a multitude of varied expertise and resources to the national nonprofit organization.

Patricia Parker, President and CEO of Native American Management Services, Inc. was appointed as AIANTA's newest Eastern Region Representative. Ms. Parker, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has worked with Indian communities and Federal and Tribal governments for more than 35 years. Ms. Parker's work in Indian Country has focused on team facilitation and projects centered on health and economic development issues in tribal communities. Additionally, Ms. Parker uses her background in communication and public relations to provide multi media campaigns for federal government agencies.

Jamie Sijohn, an Account Manager at BHW1 Advertising, was appointed as AIANTA's one of AIANTA's new Pacific Region Representatives. Ms. Sijohn is a member of the Spokane Tribe of Indians and grew up on the Spokane Reservation located approximately 50 miles northwest of Spokane, Washington. Ms. Sijohn has more than 20 years of media experience on a variety of platforms including traditional media, social media and public relations, and she brings that expertise along with strong relationships and partnership building expertise to AIANTA. Currently an Account Manager at BHW1 Advertising, she develops client relationships and programs, with a special emphasis on tribal businesses and economic development projects.

Pohai Ryan, Executive Director of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, was elected as AIANTA's newest Pacific Region Representative. Ms. Ryan brings a variety of experience to AIANTA that has given her a unique lens into Native communities and the visitor industry.



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Previously serving as the Executive Director of the Kailua Chamber of Commerce and the director of the Kailua Information Center, she has gained unique insights into the expectations of the independent traveler, and businesses that support visitors in island communities. Ms. Ryan is known for supporting community and boutique businesses and continues to advocate for support from government and private sector that allow Hawaii to remain and grow as a premier world class destination and first choice for day destination tourism by local residents. Ms. Ryan's goal is to teach visitors "respectful visiting" through future projects and campaigns by NaHHA.

Crystal Holtz, Sales Manager at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Green Bay, was appointed as AIANTA's new Midwest Region Representatives. Responsible for creating and maintaining relationships with associations locally, regionally, nationally as well as internationally, Ms. Holtz has more than 16 years of experience in the marketing field with the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. Ms. Holtz attained her Master of Science degree in Management & Organizational Behavior in 2010.

## **AIANTA Board of Directors:**

### **Alaska Region**

Mario Fulmer, Alaska Native Voices, Huna Totem, Juneau, AK  
Rachel Moreno, Board Vice President, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka, AK

### **Pacific Region**

Jamie Sijohn, BHW1 Advertising, Spokane, WA  
Pohai Ryan, Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, Honolulu, HI

### **Southwest Region**

Sherry L. Rupert, Board President, Nevada Indian Territory, Carson City, NV  
Emerson Vallo, Pueblo of Acoma, Acoma, NM

### **Plains Region**

Jackie Yellowtail, Board Treasurer, Crow Tribal Member, Garryowen, MT  
LaDonna Brave Bull Allard, Standing Rock Sioux, Fort Yates, ND

### **Midwest Region**

Crystal Holtz, Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Green Bay, Green Bay, WI  
Sonja Tanner, Native American Tourism Office of Minnesota,  
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, MN

### **Eastern Region**

Lora Ann Chaisson, Vice-Principal Chief of the United Houma Nation, Houma, LA  
Patricia Parker, Native American Management Services, Inc., Washington, DC

### **At-Large**

James Surveyor, Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites, Tuba City, AZ  
Travis Owens, Cherokee Nation Businesses, Catoosa, OK



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**About AIANTA:**

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of American Indian tribes, tribal tourism, cultural and private sector representatives, representatives from the tourism industry, Federal, State and local governments, colleges and universities, and friends that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of representatives from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.

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