

**SPOKANE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION  
SIXTEENTH ANNUAL INDIAN LAW  
CONFERENCE**

Co-Host: Gonzaga University School of  
Law Venue: Gonzaga University Hemmingson  
Center Ballroom

*Friday, March 7, 2025*

Welcome	Margo Hill (Spokane Tribe), Chairperson, Indian Law Section
8:30 am	<i>Opening Prayer &amp; Welcome Song</i>
8:45 - 9:45 am	<b>Reflections on the Centenniary of the National Congress of Indians in Spokane</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fawn Sharp</b> (Quinault Indian Nation), former President, NCAI</li><li>• <b>Mel Tonasket</b> (Colville Tribes), former President, NCAI</li></ul>
9:45 - 10:00 am	Break
10:00 – 11:30 pm	<b>Eastern Washington Tribal Forestry Trust Management Litigation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ethan Jones</b>, former Lead Attorney, Yakama Nation Office of Legal Counsel</li><li>• <b>Brian Chestnut</b>, Partner, Ziontz Chestnut</li></ul>
11:30 – 1:00 pm	Lunch – Hemmingson Center Ballroom
	<b>Keynote Address: Mel Tonasket</b> (Colville Tribes), former President, NCAI
1:00 – 2:30 pm	<b>Tribal Co-Stewardship of Federal Land</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Wizipan Little Elk Garriott</b> (Rosebud Sioux Tribe), former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, U.S. Dep’t of the Interior</li><li>• <b>Jordan Thompson</b> (CSKT), Attorney, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Flathead Reservation</li></ul>
2:30 - 2:45 pm	Break
2:45 – 3:45 pm	<b>Ethics in Federal Declinations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Vanessa Waldref</b>, former U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Washington</li><li>• <b>Bree Black Horse</b> (Seminole Nation of Oklahoma), Assistant U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Washington</li></ul>
3:45 – 4:45 pm	<b>Equity and Inclusion in Indian Law</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Margo Hill</b> (Spokane Tribe), Interim Director, American Indian Studies &amp; Associate Professor, Eastern Washington University</li><li>• <b>Juliana Repp</b> (Nez Perce), Executive Director, Sage Indigenous Law Center</li></ul>
4:45 pm	<i>Closing Remarks and Adjourn; SCBA ILS Annual Meeting</i>

**Washington State Bar Ass’n 7.0 CLE credits approval pending,  
including 1.0 Ethics credit and 1.0 Equity and Inclusion credit**

## **SPEAKER BIOS**

**BREE BLACK HORSE** serves as the first Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Assistant United States Attorney for the Northwest Region of the United States. She is based out of the United States Attorney's Yakima Branch Office in the Eastern District of Washington.

Before joining the U.S. Justice Department, Bree worked in the Native American Affairs practice group at the law firm of Kilpatrick Townsend advising Tribal governments and enterprises on all aspects of federal, state, and tribal law, including tribal sovereignty, economic development, treaty rights, and complex Indian country litigation.

She also served as the Program Director for the 2023 LSAC Pre-Law Undergraduate Scholars Program, and was recently named the Director of Seattle University's HUB Law School at Heritage University in Toppenish, Washington.

Bree previously served as a law clerk to Chief U.S. District Court Judge Brian M. Morris in the District of Montana, and as a legal aid attorney and public defender for the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

Bree is a 2013 graduate of Seattle University Law School, where she was the Douglas R. Nash Native American Scholar, Co-Founder and Editor-In-Chief of the American Indian Law Journal, and President of the Native American Law Student Association. Bree is a Co-Founder of the Women of Color Legal Education Fund. Bree also serves on the Northwest Harvest Board of Directors, and as Secretary of the Eastern District of Washington Federal Bar Association.

Seattle University School of Law named Bree the Woman of the Year for 2024. The Puget Sound Business Journal recognized Bree as one of its 40 Under 40 in 2024, and as the "Next Gen in Law" in 2023. Kilpatrick Townsend awarded Bree the Pro Bono Associate of the Year in 2022. Washington Women Lawyers recognized her as Chapter Member of the Year in 2022. Bree is a 2019 recipient of the Public Service and Leadership Award from the Washington State Bar Association Young Lawyers Committee. The National Center for American Indian Economic Development recognized Bree with its "40 Under 40" Award in 2016. The *Yakima Herald* featured Bree as one of its "39 Under 39" in 2022.

**BRIAN CHESTNUT** is a partner at Ziontz Chestnut, a Seattle-based law firm that almost exclusively represents Tribes and related entities. Brian has worked on many diverse Tribal issues including breach of trust litigation. Beginning in 2000, he has served as plaintiff's attorney in federal court cases in which Tribes claimed breach of trust for mismanagement of trust funds, oil and gas, timber, dams, roads, sand and gravel, and other land-based claims. He is currently counsel for the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in the United States Court of Federal Claims in a breach of trust lawsuit for mismanagement of timber and related resources, and counsel for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in United States District Court in a breach of trust lawsuit for failure to provide proper and sufficient law enforcement services.

**WIZIPAN (Wee-Zee-Pan) LITTLE ELK GARRIOTT (He/Him)** is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota. Since 2021, he has served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior. In this role, he served as the first assistant and principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, in the development and interpretation of policies affecting Indian Affairs bureaus, offices, and programs. Prior to his appointment in the U.S. Department of the Interior, Mr. Garriott served as chief executive officer from 2012 to 2021 of the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation, an ecosystem of Tribal organizations serving the Rosebud Indian Reservation. In this capacity, Mr.

Garriott led and started businesses and community-based programs, including a Native language immersion school and 1,500-head buffalo herd.

Mr. Garriott was born and raised on the Rosebud Indian Reservation where he attended St. Francis Indian School, a Bureau of Indian Affairs (now Bureau of Indian Education) facility. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies from Yale University. Mr. Garriott received his Juris Doctor degree in 2008 from the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College.

**MARGO HILL-FERGUSON, JD, MURP**, is a Spokane Tribal member and grew up on the Spokane Indian reservation. Dr. Hill served as the Spokane Tribal Attorney for over a decade and as a Coeur d'Alene Tribal Court Judge. Ms. Hill earned her Juris Doctorate from Gonzaga School of Law and her Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Eastern Washington University. Her bachelor's degree is in Political Science from University of Washington. Margo Hill is professor of Urban Planning at Eastern Washington University where she teaches Urban Planning classes and American Indian Law. Hill is Director of American Indian Studies. Margo Hill was awarded the Trustees' Medal which is the university's highest form of recognition for faculty achievement. This year She was selected as a Spokesman Review "Woman of the Year."

Hill is known for her Community Engagement, Environmental, and Murdered, Missing Indigenous Women Advocacy, and educating the community on tribal history, Federal Indian Law and Tribal Sovereignty.

**ETHAN JONES** is Of Counsel for Galanda Broadman, which is an indigenous rights law firm based out of Seattle, WA. Ethan works out of their Yakima Office, where his practice focuses on litigation and civil legal representation of Tribal Governments and their economic enterprises. Before joining Galanda Broadman, E than served as Lead Attorney for the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, where he worked for 12 years. While serving as Lead Attorney, E than was the Yakama Nation's Counsel of Record in two ongoing breach of trust lawsuits pending before the United States Court of Federal Claims.

**JULIANA REPP**, is a member of the Nez Perce Tribe and an attorney who has practiced law throughout Indian Country for several decades. She is Co-founder and Executive Director for Sage Indigenous Law Center (SILC), a newly formed non-profit law firm located in Spokane, WA. SILC's priorities include advocating for low-income Native Americans in the Spokane area with a focus on representing children in Indian Child Welfare Act cases in Spokane County. She is an administrative law judge for the Suquamish Tribe. Juliana is a member of the Kalispel Tribal Gaming Board, a position she has held for over twenty-four years; she is also a founding member and chair of the Spokane County Bar Association, Indian Law Section, which was formed in 2008. She previously served on the governing council of the Northwest Indian Bar Association; as a trustee for the Washington State Bar, Indian Law Section; and she served two terms as President of the Water Protector Legal Collective (WPLC) Board, an organization formed at Standing Rock, with a mission to support Indigenous-led movements on national and international levels to preserve and protect environment and combat climate change. She has also previously served as a staff attorney for Columbia Legal Services, Special Counsel for the Colville Tribes' Enrollment Department, Interim Chief Judge for the Nez Perce Tribe, and Managing Attorney for the Spokane office of the Unemployment Law Project. In 2017, she received the YWCA Women of Achievement, Carl Maxey Racial and Social Justice Award. Then, in 2020, she received the Spokane Human Rights Champion, Human Rights Leadership Award, from the City of Spokane Human Rights Commission and the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force. On March 23, 2024, she received the Gonzaga Public Interest Law Project (GPILP) Hero Award, an award voted on by Gonzaga Law Students. She is admitted to practice law in Washington State, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington, and numerous tribal courts.

**FAWN SHARP** is a Native American politician, attorney, and policy advocate who served as president of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) from 2019 to 2023. Prior to this position, Sharp served as president of the Quinault Indian Nation, as president of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and as vice president of the National Congress of American Indians.

Sharp has also served in a variety of non-tribal governmental capacities, including as an administrative law judge at the Washington Department of Revenue, a governor of the Washington State Bar Association, and as one of Governor Gary Locke's appointed trustees for Grays Harbor College. Following the Cobell v. Salazar decision, Sharp was appointed by the United States Department of the Interior to serve as chair of the National Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform.

Sharp was born in Aberdeen, Washington. Sharp graduated from Gonzaga University in 1990 at age 19, and is a University of Washington School of Law 1995 alumna. Following law school, Sharp has since received certificates from the University of Oxford and the University of Nevada.

**JORDAN THOMPSON** is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes ("CSKT") and lives on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana. He currently serves as CSKT's Acting Executive Officer, and he was previously a CSKT attorney for 10 years. Jordan received his B.A. from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, his J.D. from the University of Arizona with a certificate in Indigenous Peoples Law & Policy, and an M.B.A. in American Indian Entrepreneurship from Gonzaga University. Jordan has also enjoyed teaching as an adjunct professor at Gonzaga Law School and for Gonzaga's MBA-AIE program.

**MEL TONASKET** has served as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Colville Business Council, the governing body of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation, located in north central Washington state. Mr. Tonasket has served as an elected official for the Colville Tribes at various times since 1970 and has served as the Colville Tribes' Chairman and other leadership positions during his years serving as an elected official. From 1973-1976, Mr. Tonasket served as President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). Mr. Tonasket led the Colville Tribes' fight against termination and as President of NCAI mobilized national support for major tribal legislation, including the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and the Indian Child Welfare Act. He was a member of the American Indian Policy Review Commission for two years and has represented United States tribal governments at the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and at the Inter-American Indigenous Conference in Brazil. Mel Tonasket currently serves as 3rd Vice President of Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.

**VANESSA R. WALDREF** served as the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington from October 2021 through February 2025, after being nominated by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and unanimously confirmed by the Senate. As U.S. Attorney, Vanessa was responsible for overseeing the prosecution of any federal criminal case brought within the 20 counties of Eastern Washington and she prioritized building strong partnerships between federal, state, local, and Tribal law enforcement to make the community safer and stronger. Former U.S. Attorney Waldref opened a branch office in Richland, WA, and successfully advocated for additional resources to serve imminent community needs such as addressing the MMIP crisis, combatting fraud that harms patients and vulnerable populations, and addressing the opioid epidemic.

Vanessa served within the United States Department of Justice since 2013, first as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington and then as a Trial Attorney with the Environment and Natural Resources Division. Vanessa also has taught several courses at Gonzaga University School of Law, receiving numerous accolades for her mentorship of the next generation of lawyers and public servants.

After graduating from Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, WA, Vanessa received her B.A. and J.D. from Georgetown University. Prior to her time at the Department of Justice, Vanessa served in private practice in

Spokane, WA and Washington, DC and served as a law clerk for The Honorable John D. Bates on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.