



**POUHANA
O NĀ
WĀHINE**
Pillars of Women

Parallel Event – NGO CSW Forum
UN Commission on the Status of Women 68th Session

Accelerating Empowerment of Indigenous Women and Girls in the Americas

March 12, 2024, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. (Eastern)

PROGRAM

Technical Introduction

Tatiana Galdamez, Program and Administrative Assistant, Indian Law Resource Center

Welcome

Christopher T. Foley (Cherokee Nation), Senior Attorney, Indian Law Resource Center

PANEL

BRAZIL

Coordination of the Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB)

Marciely Tupari (Tupari), Secretary Coordinator

GUATEMALA

International Mayan League

Juanita Cabrera Lopez (Maya Mam), Executive Director

Abigail Monroy Xuya (Maya Kaqchikel), Ancestral Authorities of Rtun Tinamit of Chwatutuy

PERU

Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDSEP)

Teresita Antazú López (Yanesha), Member of the National Board of Directors, Responsible for the Indigenous Women's Program

Regional Organization of the Indigenous Peoples of the East (ORPIO)

Zaira Lizeth Rodríguez López (Yagua), Responsible for the Indigenous Women's Program

Regional Coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples of San Lorenzo (CORPI-SL)

Elaine Shajian Shawit (Awajún), President

UNITED STATES

Alaska Native Women's Resource Center

Tami Truett Jerue (Anvik Tribe), Executive Director

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center

Paula Julian (Filipina), Senior Policy Specialist

Native Women's Society of the Great Plains

Carmen O'Leary (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe), Director

Pouhana O Nā Wāhine

Nicole Cristobal (Indigenous Hawaiian), Representative of Pouhana 'O Nā Wāhine

Recommendations and Final Considerations

Christopher T. Foley (Cherokee Nation), Senior Attorney, Indian Law Resource Center

Biographies



Nikki Cristobal, Ph.D. was born and raised on the island of Kauaʻi. Nikki is the Policy and Research Specialist for Pouhana O Nā Wāhine (Pillars of Women), the first federally funded Native Hawaiian domestic violence resource center. She has a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy and serves as the Principal Investigator for the Missing & Murdered Native Hawaiian Women, Girls, Māhū Report- a ka pae ʻāina wide report mandated by the Hawaiʻi legislature and part of the MMIW2S international movement. Nikki is also the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the grassroots community education and culture nonprofit, Kamāwaelualani.



Christopher T. Foley, an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation, is a senior attorney with the Indian Law Resource Center in its Helena, Montana office. Founded in 1978, the Center is a nonprofit organization established and directed by American Indians that is dedicated to protecting the rights of Indian and Alaska Native nations and other indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. Chris works on the Center's international projects to build and strengthen human rights standards relating to indigenous peoples within the United Nations and the Organization of American States, and on the Center's domestic law reform efforts. He focuses much of his time on the Center's Safe Women, Strong Nations project which works to end violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. Chris received his B.A. from Swarthmore College, his J.D. from Temple University, and he is admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania.



Tatiana Galdamez (she/her/ella) is the Administrative and Program Assistant for the Indian Law Resource Center's Washington, D.C. Office where she works on projects related to indigenous rights including accountability for multilateral development banks and land titling. Tatiana graduated with a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Delaware (UD), with a focus on nonprofit management. During her time at UD, she was particularly interested in diversity, equity, and inclusion; immigration reform and refugee crises; and sociolinguistics. She previously received her bachelor's degree from Florida Gulf Coast University, where she majored in community health with a minor in theater. She is fluent in English and Spanish.



Marciely Tupari is a young indigenous woman who currently serves as the Secretary Coordinator of the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB). She has previous experience as the Fiscal Councilor of the Association of Indigenous Warriors of Rondônia (AGIR); the Vice-coordinator of the Indigenous Youth Movement of Rondônia; the coordinator of the Women's Department of the Wãypa Indigenous Association of the Rio Branco and REBIO Guaporé Indigenous Land; Counselor of the Union of Indigenous Women of the Brazilian Amazon (UMIAB); and seed woman of ANMIGA.



Tamra (Tami) Truett Jerue is an enrolled citizen of the Anvik Tribe and currently resides in Fairbanks, having just moved there from Anvik, Alaska, a small Athabascan community on the Yukon River. She is the mother to four children and the grandmother of five grandchildren. She is the Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center. Ms. Jerue has worked in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault for the last 40 years in various capacities. Her education includes a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Community Psychology and Secondary Education. She has been involved with many non-profit boards over the years and has worked most of her professional life in rural Alaska in fields such as therapy, sexual assault counseling, teaching, Tribal administration, ICWA social work and trainer. Her many experiences and that of her family and friends with domestic violence and sexual assault have kept Ms. Jerue passionate in helping facilitate change at a community level, within systems and families to help survivors live a violence free life.



Paula Julian serves as a Senior Policy Specialist with the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC). She works with a team of staff and partners to develop and maintain NIWRC's policy agenda to support governmental, nonprofit, and community responses to violence against women, including researching and drafting policy priorities, policy analysis, advocacy and monitoring, providing technical assistance and training and developing partnerships to strengthen laws, policies, and responses addressing violence against Native women. Paula assisted Alaska Native advocates to establish the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center and Native Hawaiian advocates who formed the Pouhana O Nā Wāhine (Pillars of Women), dedicated to establishing a Native Hawaiian Resource Center on Domestic Violence. Formerly, she also worked with the La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians to develop the Tribe's response to violence against women; organizations aimed at addressing violence against Native women including Sacred Circle and the White Buffalo Calf Woman Society; and the Office of Violence Against Women at the U.S. Dept. of Justice.



Juanita Cabrera Lopez is Maya Mam from the Western Highlands of Guatemala. She is a survivor of the internal armed conflict in Guatemala and a former political refugee. She has both personal and professional work experience in the defense of indigenous peoples' human rights. Her focus has been to use international law and organizations and traditional knowledge for the development of an indigenous human rights response in the areas of immigration, land rights, and environmental protection. She works with Maya leaders and elders in Guatemala and the United States through their traditional institutions. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and its full and effective use and implementation is a key pillar to her work. She holds a Master of International Public Policy from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.



Abigail Monroy Xuya is a Maya Kaqchikel Authority with the National Council of Ancestral Authorities. She is a legal representative of the Maya Kaqchikel community and an Indigenous mayor.



Teresita Antazú López is a member of the Yanesha indigenous peoples from the Central Pasco region of the Peruvian Amazon. Currently, she is a member of AIDSESEP's National Board of Directors and is responsible for AIDSESEP's Indigenous Women Program. Teresita has always believed in defending the rights of indigenous women and indigenous lands and territories. She has been involved in the fight for indigenous rights since a young age, participating in indigenous organizations at the local, regional, and national level.



Carmen O'Leary is Director of Native Women's Society of the Great Plains. She is a citizen and a resident of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe where she has gathered her experience and expertise to develop programs that serve Native women experiencing violence. Carmen is a trainer on advocacy around sexual assault and domestic violence and is certified with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for Law Enforcement on Domestic Violence. Carmen has worked at providing insight on Tribal Codes in relation to sexual assault, domestic violence and the issuance of protection orders. In 2000, she worked as a consultant for the State Court Association in providing training on full faith and credit to Judges and courts on the VAWA provision. She has worked as a social services aide in a hospital setting, as a child protection worker, and as the coordinator for the Women's Shelter for seventeen years. Carmen is a Tribal Legal Lay advocate for the Cheyenne River Tribal court and

has served as a part time magistrate for Tribal court. She has facilitated reeducation classes for domestic violence offenders and also for women's support groups and adults molested as children. Currently, Carmen is the regional representative for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center where she is the Vice Chair, and is on the Sacred Heart Center board, a local program that governs a women's shelter and an adolescent program.



Elaine Shajian Shawit is an indigenous leader of the Awajún people and President of the Regional Coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples of San Lorenzo (CORPI-SL).



Zaira Lizeth Rodriguez Lopez was born in the Native Community of Nuevo Jesus de Praga in the Department of Loreto. She is a member of the Yagua indigenous peoples and is currently responsible for ORPIO's Indigenous Women's Program. She led the development of the diagnosis of participation of indigenous women in decision-making and violence against indigenous women. Our vision as a program is to promote cultural identity by generating spaces for the exchange of cultural, social, and political practices for women.

Co-sponsoring Organizations

The ***Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDSESP)*** is the leading indigenous organization for the peoples of the Peruvian Amazon. Since its founding in May 1980, it has worked tirelessly to defend the fundamental rights of the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon. AIDSESP aims to defend and advance indigenous peoples' collective rights by working to call attention to their needs, promote their alternative development proposals that reflect their worldview and culture, strengthen their self-government, and reclaim the territorial integrity of indigenous lands. AIDSESP is comprised of 9 decentralized organizations located in the northern, central, and southern regions of the Peruvian Amazon, representing 109 local federations within 2,439 communities where more than 650,000 indigenous men, women, and youth live. AIDSESP is represented internationally as a member of COICA. (<https://aidesep.org.pe/>)

Organized in 2015, the ***Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC)*** is a tribal nonprofit organization dedicated to ending violence against women with Alaska's 229 tribes and allied organizations. AKNWRC board members are Alaska Native women raised in Alaska Native Villages and have 141 years of combined experience in tribal governments, nonprofit management, domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy (both individual crisis and systems and grassroots social change advocacy at the local, statewide, regional, national and international levels), and other social service experience. AKNWRC's philosophy is that violence against women is rooted in the colonization of indigenous nations. (www.aknwrc.org)

Founded on April 19, 1989, the ***Coordination of the Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB)*** is the largest regional indigenous organization in Brazil, seeking to defend the rights of indigenous peoples to their land, environment, health, education, culture, and self-determination. The organization also fights for the protection and recognition of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation. The organization mobilizes roughly 160 distinct peoples, representing 440,000 individuals – nearly 60% of the country's indigenous population – who collectively occupy approximately 110 million hectares of land across all 9 states of the Brazilian Amazon (Amazonas, Tocantins, Amapá, Maranhão, Rondônia, Acre, Pará, Roraima and Mato Grosso). However, these figures do not include indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation. COIAB is a member of the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), one of the largest indigenous organizations in the world and of international representation, and is also a member of the Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB), the largest indigenous organization in Brazil. (www.coiab.org.br)

Regional Coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples of San Lorenzo (CORPI-SL) is one of the regional base organizations of AIDSESP. (<https://aidesep.org.pe/regional/coordinadora-regional-de-los-pueblos-indigenas-de-san-lorenzo/>)

Founded in 1978 by American Indians, the ***Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC)*** is a nonprofit organization that provides legal assistance to indigenous peoples of the Americas to combat racism and oppression, to protect their lands and environment, to protect their cultures, to achieve sustainable economic development and genuine self-government and to realize their other human rights. It's Safe Women, Strong Nation's project works with indigenous women's organizations and Native nations to end violence against indigenous women. ILRC is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. (www.indianlaw.org)

The ***International Mayan League (IML)*** is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote, preserve and transmit the culture, history, and contributions of our ancestors in the defense of Mother Earth. Its work is guided by the vision and practices of the spiritual and traditional leaders, elders and authorities to address the root causes contributing to discrimination, inequality and oppression of the Maya and the destruction of these communities and their environment. IML partners with allies from other indigenous

nations, human rights organizations, academics, scholars, scientists and faith-based communities to stand in solidarity with the struggle of the Mayan peoples. Jointly IML addresses the many critical issues affecting not just the Maya but all of humanity and Mother Earth. (www.mayanleague.org)

The ***Kaqchikel Maya Indigenous Community of Chuarancho*** is an ancestral organization rooted in the culture and identity of the community. Women Ancestral Authorities exercise their authority based on the principles and values of the community. The role of women in the structure of the authorities is to ensure collective and individual rights and gender equality.

The ***Ancestral Authorities of Rtun Tinamit of Chwatutuy*** work to defend their communities, and within their functions they present their community in different public spaces at the national and international level and defend collective rights.

The ***National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC)*** is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure the safety of Native women by protecting and preserving the inherent sovereign authority of American Indian and Alaska Native nations to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault. NIWRC's Board consists of Native women leaders from American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian nations across the United States. NIWRC is a national resource center for Indian nations and Native organizations providing technical assistance, training, policy development, materials, resource information and the development of Native strategies and responses to end the violence. In 2015, NIWRC launched the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Sovereignty Initiative to defend the constitutionality and functionality of all VAWA tribal provisions. (www.niwrc.org)

The ***Native Women's Society of the Great Plains, Reclaiming Our Sacredness (NWSGP)***, is a coalition of domestic violence and/or sexual assault programs committed to the reclamation of the sacred status of women. The Society offers a vision that ends domestic and sexual violence against Native women, in all aspects – a vision of change. The Society works to support and strengthen sisterhood and local advocacy and program development efforts through culturally specific education, technical assistance training and resource implementation. The geographical area that constitutes the service area of the Society includes tribes in southern Minnesota, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. (www.nativewomenssociety.com)

Regional Organization of the Indigenous Peoples of the East (ORPIO) is one of AIDSESP's 9 Federations and represents 23 grassroots base organizations. ORPIO's Women's Program has a vision to promote cultural identity by generating spaces for the exchange of social and political cultural practices for women.

Pouhana 'O Nā Wāhine (Pillars of Women - PONW) is a grassroots organization focused on opening a Native Hawaiian Resource Center on Domestic Violence to reduce disparities faced by Native Hawaiians. These disparities date back to the days of contact with foreigners resulting in the overthrow of our monarch to present day violence and injustice. Our vision is to restore balance of mind, body, and spirit, bringing our people to the state of well-being; and to preserve and promote Hawaiian culture to help families and communities heal from domestic and sexual violence and colonization. Our mission is to advocate for Native Hawaiian families who face challenges related to domestic and gender-based violence by exercising our inherent sovereign rights as Indigenous people of Hawaii to care for and protect our people. Collectively, the individuals of PONW have over 50 years of experience in the advocacy and social service field and are all *Kanaka O'iwi* who have a passion for helping to heal generations past and present to ensure the healthiest future.