

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## YAN member admitted into tribal law program at University of Wisconsin

BY DON DECKER,  
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Desiree Huey was admitted into the National Tribal Trial College of University of Wisconsin Law School which will confirm a Certification in Tribal Court Advocacy for Desiree.

This program is funded by the Southwest Center for Law and Policy based in Tucson under a grant from by the Office on Violence Against Women and the U.S. Department of Justice.



Desiree Huey of Yavapai-Apache Nation has been accepted into a court advocacy certificate training program at University of Wisconsin.

Desiree said she grew up on the Yavapai-Apache Nation except for a brief stay on the Hopi Reservation where her mother still lives.

She graduated from Mingus Union High School and attended Yavapai College at the Clarkdale campus where she received state certification as a peace officer in 2006. Desiree served in that capacity for 8.5 years for the Yavapai-Apache Nation Police Department.

Presently, she is employed as a Victim Advocate within the Domestic Violence Program for the Nation.

Desiree thanks Catherine Kelley, assistant prosecutor at Yavapai-Apache Nation, who steered Desiree toward pursuing her certification. "She encouraged me to apply, to submit an application to that program," said Desiree.



Law student graduates from Wisconsin in the year's past.

YAN News photo.

"The certification program is offered to all Natives who work with victims of domestic violence and sexual assaults- anytime that there is a victim".

The Southwest Center for Law and Policy, which sponsors this program, state that over 100 students have earned their certification in the Tribal Court Legal /Advocacy Program. This 6-month program involves 20 weeks of on-line study,

coursework and one week of residency at the University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison.

The one week stay in June upon completion of the on-line course involves an intensive 40-hour week of skills building sessions with professors and legal specialists in the area of victim advocacy.

Once Desiree is certified from the program she will begin her new role as a legal advocate for victims of domes-

tic violence. "Upon my application for the program, I had to get a letter from the Chief Judge of Yavapai-Apache Nation Todd Matha that would allow me to practice in our tribal court once I receive my certificate," added Desiree.

Desiree is married to Jon Huey, Chairman of the Yavapai-Apache Nation and they share 5 children.

Desiree's parents are David Trujillo of Middle Verde and

Ruthena Lomayaktewa of Hopiland.

Siblings include sister Davalene Flowers who resides in North Carolina with her family and a brother, Norberto Trujillo.

Desiree's certification began February 10 and will terminate in June of 2020.

Desiree said she plans to continue on with a career in law after the advocacy program.

## YAN welcomes Opal Boyer as the new WIOA program manager

BY DON DECKER,  
YAN News

Ms. Boyer has taken over the management of the Nation's key employment readiness program. Known as the WIOA or Work Innovation Opportunities Act, requires expertise and extensive knowledge to assist the Nation's members in seeking employment training and career orientation and preparation.

It will take someone like Opal Boyer to provide the professional direction for this program.

Ms. Boyer is a graduate of Camp Verde High School (Class of 2004) and attended Yavapai College and received an Associates of Arts Degree in General Studies. She then enrolled at Arizona State University where she finally received her Bachelor's of Science Degree in Economics.

With these educational degrees, Ms. Boyer moved to Washington, D.C. where she began her career as a contract data analyst for the Department of Energy. Within 2 years, she was promoted to the manager's position working with the data analysts team in the department.

Always looking for a challenge, Ms. Boyer found her perfect place transferring to another federal department in Washington, D.C. This time, working for the ANA program (Administration for Native Americans) as a contract Program Specialist focusing on administration of grants for Indian tribes.

The ANA department provides discretionary grant funding, capacity building, gathering and shar-



Opal Boyer

ing data and advocating for improved services to Native American communities across the country.

Ms. Boyer spent the

past 2 years working in the ANA program prior to returning home in Middle Verde. "The last 2 years I've been traveling to Indian reservations visiting communities to help them advocate for grants," she said.

These travels took her on a giant circle starting in Phoenix and then on to San Carlos Apache, White Mountain Apache and the Navajo Nation.

It has been a long journey to Washington, D. C. 2,500 miles away and living in Alexandria, Virginia where she had an apartment overlooking the Potomac River.

Now, back in Yavapai-

Apache Nation, she and her family members find plenty of time to go hiking in the nearby hills and canyon near Beaver Creek north of Camp Verde. "It was nice. I just do a lot of hiking and fishing. It's been good to do all of that. I lived in the city and didn't have a car," she said about her newfound freedom.

Ms. Boyer's mother is Veronica Boyer and her father is James Boyer of Camp Verde.

Ms. Boyer's grandfather was elder Victor Smith of Middle Verde and her aunts are Vivian Smith Stevens, Vonda Smith, Delphina Smith-Montoya and the late Christine Celaya.

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pose to teach about culture when they (the school staff) don't hold to those culture values," she asks.

Ms. Jackson is very adamant about the uniqueness of the Yavapai-Apache people. "What made us indigenous? It was because we were resilient and when the government moved us, we came back. We

didn't chose to lay down as a tribe and give up," she adds. "Being indigenous is a mind set—a heart space".

When Ms. Jackson was selected on the night of the pageant she appeared surprised. "I was shocked, honestly. I think, for me, I've always loved our community, our youth," she says. Ms. Jackson is just glad that her new role will bring a new perspective to the mean-

ing of inclusiveness. "For some, it's a different thing to grasp," she adds. "I just went there (the pageant) to do my best".

For her talent portion, Ms. Jackson sang the national anthem in Apache and performed a traditional Yavapai Bird Dance. For her modern talent, she sang Ariana Grande song "Almost is never enough", a bluesy slow song that has 33 million views on youtube.com.

Ms. Jackson gives most of the credit to her family for her success.

"My family supported me- encouraged me. There was a couple of times before the pageant when I was nervous and I wanted to give up but I just pushed and I'm glad that I did," she added. "I'm just happy. I'm an emotional person- I cry especially when I'm passionate about something and our community is something I'm passion-

ate about and so it's an opportunity to represent them. I don't take that lightly".

One of the ways of her helping is being a good role model as a peer counselor and a tutor in the public schools. When the students at the school found out Ms. Jackson's new role as Miss Yavapai-Apache Nation, the mood seem to change for the students.

"I talk to them all the time and tell them they

can do whatever they put their mind to. If I tell them (students) these things, I need to believe that in myself. It's easy to see the potential in other people but sometimes it's hard to see the potential in yourself."

Ms. Jackson has plans to return to the University of Arizona and complete her last few semester hours to receive her college degree sometime in the near future.