

19th Annual Southeast Native Studies Conference



THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024

Katie Franklin, is the Hard of Hearing (HOH) Services Coordinator with the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She has worked for the state of NC in different capacities for about 14 years now and has been with this Division for over seven years. She is the SME for all things hearing loss and communication access as it relates to HOH consumers. Katie is an advocate who devotes her time to improving the lives of those with hearing loss. Some accomplishments include starting a hearing loss support group, leading the Hard of Hearing work-group which lead to the development of telehealth resources that are the first of its kind in the country, increasing free hearing screenings throughout the state, presentations to statewide audiences, Signed Governors Proclamations for Hearing Loss Awareness Month annually, provision of a professionally developed resource for Over-the-Counter Hearing aids and much more.

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Sonya Stephenson-Ndiaye, is a member of the Lumbee Tribe in North Carolina, and currently resides in Fayetteville, NC. Sonya is a mother of three young sons and married to an Active-Duty Army husband. She went to Eastern NC School for the Deaf and attended Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va for Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Sonya is currently studying at Grand Canyon University for Masters in Psychology/Forensic Psychology. Sonya is currently a Tribal Counselor for the Turtle Island Hand Talk for Deaf (TIHT) and an Advocate Advisor for the Lumbee Tribe. She believes in human rights and civil rights. Sonya has been an activist and advocate for the Indigenous Deaf Community since 1996. She is working for RHA Health Services as Regional Care and Crisis Intervention Training Coordinator, Deaf interpreter, and motivational speaker. Sonya owns a small business called Amaze Tastes by Sonya.

Email: tnevaeh@gmail.com

Seth Grooms, is an archaeologist who uses methods from archaeology and the earth sciences, and chronological modelling of radiocarbon dates to build high-precision site and regional histories of Native American societies. He interprets this data within a theoretical framework influenced by contemporary American Indian intellectuals (e.g., philosophers, educators, anthropologists, etc.).

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Kevin L. Melvin, is first and foremost husband to LeAnn Strickland Melvin and father to Lorelai Rose (5) and Magnolia Lee (3). He is an enrolled member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. He is the Cultural Historic Preservation Officer for the Lumbee Tribe. He earned his undergraduate degree in American Indian Studies and History from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. And a master's degree in public history from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. He is a founding member of the Lumbee Stickball Association and a member of Phi Sigma Nu Fraternity Inc. His interests are Southeastern American Indian History and Culture, all things outdoors, and classic cars. When he is not working to preserve and promote Lumbee History and Culture, he is working on his family farm in Rowland NC.

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Marie Iys Chambraud, My research focuses on the Eastern Cherokee and Diné Code Talkers of the World Wars, exploring themes of allyship through the recognition of Native agency, cultural preservation, belonging, and Indigenous perspectives on warfare and healing.

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Jacob Bledsoe, is a senior undergraduate student at Berea College doing research into the Berea College Art Collection to ensure compliance with NAGPRA and ethical stewardship of the Native American items in the collection.

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Unmai M. Arokiasamy, a Two-Spirit Lumbee studying American Indian Studies with a minor in Creative Writing at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. After taking a class on Critical Race Theory in their senior year at Appalachian State University, their life took on a new meaning. After graduating from ASU Unmai began to pursue a connection with their relatives, ancestors, and homelands. In 2022, they began their studies at the UNCP and began to immerse themselves in history and culture through university/community engagement. Unmai has been working to understand oral histories of Lumbee elders for almost a year now through the R.E.A.C.H Program and has used this to create collaborative relationships with organizations oriented towards the goals of autonomy and self-determination for the Lumbee people. They also work with their peers, the faculty and the staff to create events/programming on campus to engage people with Native culture.

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Ahelayus Oxouzidis, a Junior at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke studying Psychology, and minoring in both American Indian studies and Business Management. Ahelayus is a member of the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwagu'l, 'Namgis, Lawit'sis, Dzawada'enuxw), Haida, and Tlingit Nations of British Columbia (Canada), and Alaska."

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FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024

Rose Marie Lowry-Townsend, Vice chair and co-curricular designer is Dr. Brenda Dial-Deese, a practitioner with more than 30 years in education that include mental health and school counseling, supervision, tribal and non-tribal consulting, student services, and grant writing. Dr. Tiffany M. Locklear is an action-based administrator, co-curricular designer, an educator, and current university-level professor; teaching includes high-quality mathematics and science developmentally appropriate curriculum theory and practice. Dr. Denise Hunt is a proven leader with state-of-the-art expertise in teaching, mentoring, and instructional coaching alongside a robust understanding for teaching reading.

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Dr. Brenda Dial-Deese, a practitioner with more than 30 years in education that include mental health and school counseling, supervision, tribal and non-tribal consulting, student services, and grant writing.

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Dr. Denise Hunt, is a proven leader with state-of-the-art expertise in teaching, mentoring, and instructional coaching alongside a robust understanding for teaching reading.

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Dr. Tiffany M. Locklear, Lumbee Tribe member and Robeson County resident, serves as an assistant professor in the School of Education. She holds a doctorate with superintendent and administration licensure from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and is an alumna of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, where she earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Elementary Education. With a rich background spanning a decade within the Public Schools of Robeson County as a math educator and administrator, Dr. Locklear transitioned to a faculty role at UNCP teaching, supervising interns, and mentoring teacher candidates. Dr. Locklear's dedication to academic excellence extends beyond the classroom as she chairs the North Carolina State Advisory Council for Indian Education, serves as a Founding Board of Director for Old Main STREAM Academy, and plays a pivotal role as a co-lead for the Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity. Her multifaceted commitment reflects her enduring dedication to education and her community.

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Dr. Alisha Strickland, earned an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership and Administration at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She is a Lecturer in the Department of Inclusive Education at the University of North Carolina Pembroke. Her responsibilities include supervising Elementary Education Student Teachers and facilitating teacher prep courses. Alisha also teaches a Professional Seminar Course for all undergraduate interns in the Birth to Kindergarten, Elementary Education, & Special Education programs.

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Dr. Jamie Litty, has been on the faculty of the Department of Mass Communication at UNCP since 2001, where she has served as the adviser to the student-produced TV newscast Carolina News Today and most recently as the adviser to the Indianhead yearbook.

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Dr. Misti Nicole Harper, graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2017 and is the assistant professor of African American History at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, where she joined the Department in 2021. She previously served as the visiting assistant professor of African American and women's history at Gustavus Adolphus College in Saint Peter, Minnesota. While there, she worked with the Reconciliation Circle led by Cânté Sütá-Francis Bettleyoun (Lakota) that explored the colonizer history of the area and sought to heal fractured relationships between the local Indigenous community and Gustavus Adolphus College. At UNCP, she advises the African American Studies minor and serves a plethora of committees. Harper's forthcoming monograph, *Ladies of Little Rock: Black Femininity and Respectability Politics in the Fight to Desegregate Central High School* (University of Georgia Press, 2024) explores the activism and visibility of middle-class Black women during that 1957 school desegregation effort.

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