

15th Annual Native American Human Resources Conference

January 20th - 21st

2025

JW Marriott Anaheim Resort

Anaheim, CA

CONFERENCE PROVIDER

HRCI 2025 HRCI.ORG

Monday, January 20

Link to All Presentations

All presentations for the conference have been downloaded into a Google Drive folder, and is accessible through the below link. If you have trouble accessing a presentation, please contact us at sales@nativenationevents.org

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JEz2QTeNmZaDn_1acbaOQQsNS8yMeMor?usp=drive_link

8:00 - 9:00 AM
Event Hub

Registration and Networking Breakfast

9:00 - 9:15 AM
Orchard Ballroom

Welcoming Remarks



Justin O'Connor
President
Native Nation Events



Jaylon Jackson
Head of Client Success
Corporate Traditions



Doug Benson
Vice President of Sales
BeneCard PBF

Monday, January 20

9:15 - 10:45 AM
Orchard Ballroom

General Session

Training the Trainer

Even managers need training. Join our leadership session to discover what new practices you can implement to ensure your staff is prepared for anything. What are the most effective leadership styles? How do you manage a diverse group of employees? Leading can be challenging, but these experts will detail how to do it effectively.

MODERATOR:



Joe Tate
Director of HR Consulting
GBS Benefits

SPEAKERS:



Dale Patricia Merrill
Senior Vice President of Human Resources and Administration
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation & Foxwoods Resort Casino



Trevor Mullins
Director of Operational Training
Choctaw Casino Resort Durant



Heather Kitcheyan
Human Resources Manager
White Mountain Apache Housing Authority



Bryan Harris
Tribal Partnerships Manager
Paradigm Shift

10:45 - 11:15 AM
Arbor EFG

Morning Networking Break

Monday, January 20

11:15 AM–12:00 PM
Track A
Orchard Ballroom

Breakout Sessions

Employment and Tribal Law Updates

Lawyers and subject matter experts will dive into what you need to go regarding changes to laws and policies going into 2025. What changes to laws will affect your workplace? What might be on the horizon to be aware of? Listen in as the panel details exactly what you should know in regards to law updates.

MODERATOR:



Sandra McCandless
Partner
Dentons

SPEAKERS:



Brenda George
Tribal Attorney
Suquamish Indian Tribe



Scott Wilson
Attorney
Law Offices of Scott A. Wilson



Tonya Fletcher
Assistant Director of Human Resouces
Cache Creek Casino Resort

Monday, January 20

11:15 AM–12:00 PM
Track B
Arbor Ballroom

Breakout Sessions

Optimizing Pharmacy Services for Your Benefit Plan: Leveraging In-House or Partner Pharmacies for Better Outcomes

This session is designed to guide Tribal Nations, whether they operate their own pharmacy or not, on how to enhance pharmacy services within their benefit plans. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the cost-saving benefits, streamlined processes, and personalized care that in-house pharmacies can offer. For those Tribal Nations that do not operate a pharmacy, we will discuss working with a "partner" pharmacy to accomplish a similar outcome and empowering your plan to deliver more efficient and effective pharmacy solutions. Don't miss the opportunity to discover strategies that can optimize pharmacy services and improve the overall health of your Tribal members.

MODERATOR:



Kyle Johnson
Vice President of Sales
ClearScript

SPEAKERS:



Duane Winship
Senior Director of Total Rewards
Choctaw Nation

12:00 – 1:00 PM
Arbor EFG

Networking Lunch

Monday, January 20

Breakout Sessions

1:00 - 2:00 PM
TRACK A
Orchard Ballroom

Recruiting New Talent: How to Find the Best Candidates

In various areas, tribes and tribally-owned properties have expressed difficulty in recruiting new individuals. From the desire for more remote work, to being in a geographically-challenging area, recruitment can be difficult for a variety of reasons. Listen to these HR executives and industry experts explain what strategies have worked for them to recruit new talent, and how you may be able to implement it at your own organization.

MODERATOR:



Alicia Finley
Human Resources Service Director
Blue Stone Strategy Partners

SPEAKERS:



Jasmine Takeshita
Director of Talent Acquisition
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians



Melisa Woolery
Director of Talent Acquisition
Four Winds Casinos

Monday, January 20

1:00 - 2:00 PM
TRACK B
Arbor Ballroom

Company Culture: What's Right For You?

The culture of your workplace can determine both your recruitment and retention rates. But how do you establish the company culture you want? And how do you ensure that HR is able to perform its duties without fear of retaliation? Listen in as HR Executives from both tribes and casinos talk about the differences in workplace culture, and creating the best environment for your employees.

MODERATOR:



Andrada Paraschiv
Vice President of Hospitality
Beekeeper

SPEAKERS:



Robert Silverang
Vice President of Human Resources
Fantasy Springs Resort and Casino &
Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians



Gary Burrus
Executive Officer of Human Resources
Choctaw Nation



Shannon Porter
Director of Talent
Grand Casino Mille Lacs

Monday, January 20

2:00 - 2:45 PM
TRACK A
Orchard Ballroom

HR's Role In Managing A Crisis

From cyber security attacks to natural disasters, your organization is not immune from a potential crisis. Listen to experts detail what your role should be during these events. What procedures can you put in place, and how do you ensure that your employees are prepared? How do you convince leadership that you need a seat at the table? Answer these questions and more on crisis management.

MODERATOR:



Amelia Wilcox
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Nivati

SPEAKERS:



Tania Tafoya
Training and Employee Relations Manager
Cache Creek Casino Resort



Robert Silverang
Vice President of Human Resources
Fantasy Springs Resort and Casino &
Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians

Monday, January 20

2:00 - 2:45 PM
TRACK B
Arbor Ballroom

Employee Gifting: A Strategic Approach to Engagement and Retention

HR executives will discuss how employee gifting has progressed from a simple act of appreciation to a strategic tool for boosting morale, engagement, and retention. In a competitive landscape, organizations are increasingly using gifting as a key component of their recognition culture.

MODERATOR:



Jaylon Jackson
Head of Client Success
Corporate Traditions

SPEAKERS:



Raymond Corn
Team Member Relations Manager
Potawatomi Casino Hotel



Charles Walters
Chief Human Resources Officer
Isleta Resort & Casino

2:45 - 3:15 PM
Arbor EFG

Afternoon Networking Break

Monday, January 20

General Session

3:15 - 4:30 PM
Orchard Ballroom

HR Executives Roundtable: Creating Positive Employee Relations

The human resources department is meant to help employees, but how do you foster a culture of trust? From asking important medical coverage questions to being honest about their mental health, employees should feel comfortable coming to HR for a variety of reasons. Getting to the human level of HR and effectively communicating with employees can make a big difference for company culture. Listen to these HR executives elaborate on the importance of good communication in your organization.

MODERATOR:



Alicia Finley
Human Resources Service Director
Blue Stone Strategy Partners

SPEAKERS:



Raquel Aviles
Executive Director of Human Resources
Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona



Klo Abeita
Human Resources Director
Pueblo of Zuni



Denise Abrahamson
Director of Human Resources
Spokane Tribal Enterprises



Alanna Sherman
Director of Human Resources
Fortune Bay Resort Casino

4:30 PM

Day One Concludes

Tuesday, January 21

8:30 - 9:30 AM
Arbor EFG

Registration and Networking Breakfast

9:30 - 10:30 AM
Orchard Ballroom

General Session

Addressing the Different Benefits Needs In Your Organization

Benefits and compensation play a big role in attracting qualified employees, yet the workforce of today has very different ideas of what good benefits are. How do you balance the desires of each generation and what benefits they are looking for? How do you create one benefits plan for both enrolled tribal employees and non-enrolled employees? What are some non-traditional benefits your workplace could implement to attract new employees? This panel of experts will dive deeper into the realm of benefits, and help you determine what is best for your workplace.

MODERATOR:



Kyle Johnson
Vice President of Sales
ClearScript

SPEAKERS:



Marian Hanna
Clinical Account Executive
Benecard PBF



Mary Ellen Anderson
Executive Director of Tribal Business
Luminare Health



Terasita Cowan
Benefits Manager
Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprise

10:30 - 11:00 AM
Arbor EFG

Morning Networking Break

Tuesday, January 21

11:00 AM
- 12:00 PM
Track A
Arbor Ballroom

Breakout Sessions

The Employee Life Cycle: Successfully Onboarding and Offboarding for a Smooth Transition

Every aspect of the employee lifecycle, from onboarding to offboarding, must be have a plan. Ensuring proper procedures are in place to help an employee gracefully enter and exit your organization can create a seamless transition period for both your organization and the candidate. What specific questions should you ask in an exit interview? How can tracking what company property an employee might have save your organization additional costs? What assessment do you put in place to determine if a candidate is eligible for rehiring?

MODERATOR:



Kevin Ragsdale
Director of Strategic Partnerships
Paradigm Shift

SPEAKERS:



Julio Nuñez
Human Resources Director
Osage Nation



Dana Hampel
Vice President of Human Resources
Four Winds Casinos



Ruth Tidmore
Human Resources Director
Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises

Tuesday, January 21

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
TRACK B
Arbor Ballroom

The Future of HR Technology

Explore how technology is revolutionizing HR functions, from recruitment and onboarding to performance management, employee engagement and employee training. Our expert panel will provide insights into the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities in HR technology.

MODERATOR:



Desiree Vincent
Vice President of Product Development
WYSR

SPEAKERS:



Trevor Mullins
Director of Operational Training
Choctaw Casino Resort Durant



Troy Pitney
Agency Partner/Employee Benefits Advisor
The Mahoney Group

12:00 - 1:00 PM
Arbor EFG

Networking Lunch

Tuesday, January 21

1:00 - 2:00
Orchard Ballroom

General Session

Artificial Intelligence: Here To Stay

Artificial Intelligence has only ramped up in the last year, integrating into even more industry sectors than before. Should your HR department be looking to implement artificial intelligence? Have you written procedures and trainings on the proper use of AI programs? How much AI is too much AI? Experts who have started implementing AI into their workforce will explain how you can do so as well, with the correct procedures and safety nets.

MODERATOR:



Andrada Paraschiv
Vice President of Hospitality
Beekeeper

SPEAKERS:



Charles Walters
Chief Human Resources Officer
Isleta Resort & Casino



Ruth Tidmore
Human Resources Director
Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises



Julio Nuñez
Human Resources Director
Osage Nation

Tuesday, January 21

2:00 - 3:00 PM
Orchard Ballroom

General Session

Addressing Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental health is a topic that employees have been more vocal about, but it can be difficult for personnel who are not certified to do so correctly. What steps should you take if an employee comes to you with an issue regarding mental health? How do you help prevent burnout in your workplace? Experts within mental health will detail how you can address mental health issues and retain your employees successfully.

MODERATOR:



Eric Schrumpf
Executive Vice President, Sales, Marketing, and Client Services
Benecard PBF

SPEAKERS:



Amelia Wilcox
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Nivati



Suzanne Casel, RN, CCM, PMH-BC
Director of Behavioral Health & Wellness
Hines & Associates, Inc.



Dale Patricia Merrill
Senior Vice President of Human Resources and Administration
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation & Foxwoods Resort Casino

Tuesday, January 21

3:00 - 4:00 PM
Orchard Ballroom

Hiring the Next Generation: Managing Expectations

As Gen Z becomes more prominent in the workforce, managers are starting to realize the challenges that come with a younger mindset that is “work to live” and not “live to work”. Most importantly, it can be challenging to manage the expectations of the younger generation. How can you change your hiring process to appeal to these new workers? Once they’re in the door, what type of professional development do you implement to level their expectations for career progression? Listen in as HR executives and industry experts give insights on how to hire and retain the newest employees on the job market.

MODERATOR:



Alicia Finley
Human Resources Service Director
Blue Stone Strategy Partners

SPEAKERS:



Elise Campbell
Director of Human Resources
Table Mountain Casino Resort



Lynn Faraca-Bond
Senior Vice President of Human Resources
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians



Sidney Tuttle
Human Resources Director
Santee Sioux Nation

Tuesday, January 21

4:00 - 4:15 PM
Orchard Ballroom

EXHIBIT RAFFLE DRAWING

- **Winners Must Be Present To Win**

4:15 PM

Native American Human Resources Conference Concludes