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ATNI-EDC

www.atniedc.com



Remembering Rexford "Scott" Clements

Scott Clements, Chair of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Financial Services Loan Committee passed away on March 24, 2025.

Scott was our long-time chair. He was a key figure in the development of ATNI Financial Services & served on the board of the ATNI-Economic Development Corporation at its inception. Scott was an asset to our tribes & tribal citizens. His expertise and heart of service will be missed.

His memory will live on in the many hearts of those lucky enough to have worked with him. On behalf of ATNI-EDC, we send our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones.

Details can be found on the Gardner Funeral home (White Salmon) website obituaries. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to either The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Trout Lake Buddhist Abbey, or the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian", all organizations that Scott felt strongly about.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Sending greetings to all as we arrive at the mid-point of the year. This point in the calendar also marks my one year anniversary of stepping into the director position and the full shift into spring. This is a time of growth, a time of change, and a time of action.

ATNI-EDC has garnered attention nationally due to our unique approach to inter-Tribal economic development and native small business financing. Our work with the Tribal State Small Business Credit Initiative continues to drive our growth and increase our presence in the international discourse about Tribal access to economic development tools. While I have been spending time talking about our continued success deploying Tribal SSBCI across the consortium of 36 Tribes, I have invested a lot of time listening as the environment shifts and the stakes grow high.

My father is a musician. He plays piano professionally and has often talked about how music is like the art of keeping time. We talk about the mathematics of dividing time and punctuating time to evoke feeling. Decorating time with beats, chords, progressions. Sometimes with dissonance, clashes, tension. Sometimes the impact is in the notes that don't get played. These things come to mind as I listen across the nation to folks coming together to figure out what's next in this time of discord.

While it's tempting to key in on the silence, the voices of our counterparts across the various institutions gone quiet, I try to focus on the voices of those pushing forward despite it all. The voices of the leaders that got us here like our dearly missed Scott Clements, and the many amazing people who have invested so much of themselves into this work. These voices still run strong within the mission and vision of this organization, a testimony to their foresight and wisdom.

While it's clear much is changing in the ecosystem of economic development, my team remains steadfast in our commitment to the mission. The moment requires adaptability and I am grateful to see that modeled in here at ATNI-EDC and throughout Indian Country.

I am thankful for the trust and partnerships made through the Northwest Native Lending Network at a time when the Native finance industry is experiencing so much uncertainty and increasing threats to the foundations of our work. The network is moving forward and engaging in a strategic planning process in the spirit of collaboration, a key to tenacity in these uncertain times. I'm thankful for the funders of our work and the people that build the flow of capital into our communities.

Most of all I am thankful for the resilience of Native entrepreneurs. The small businesses are doubtlessly the most marginalized among us and they are relentless in the pursuit of a better life for themselves and their families. It's my honor to support their growth.

Casey Pearlman
Executive Director

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

It's been nearly seven years since I joined the board of ATNI-EDC. I still remember my first ATNI convention, where I came not as a participant but as a learner. I was curious, listening closely, not quite sure where the experience would take me. And I remember how nervous I was when I sent a letter of consideration to Amber, asking to become a board member.

Since then, it has been my privilege to support Casey, and Amber before her, as well as the brilliant and dedicated staff. Even more so, it has been an honor to learn and lead alongside fellow board members who bring deep knowledge, tradition, community insight, and lived experience to every conversation.

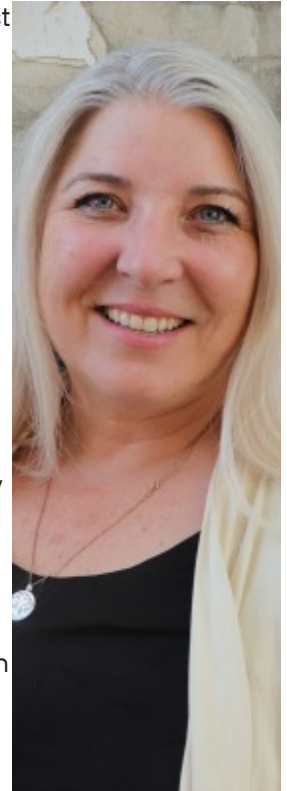
I grew up in a small town in Southern Oregon, on Takelma lands, raised by a family who earned their livings with their bodies and gave to their community with their hearts. I carry the roots of that place and those people with me in everything I do—in my work, my relationships, and in the ATNI-EDC boardroom.

As Executive Director of Rural Development Initiatives, I spend most of my time thinking about what it takes to build strong local economies and a larger regional economy that reinvests in the people and the lands that fuel it. The barriers to achieving that lofty vision can feel insurmountable at times, especially when working in places that are both underserved and underresourced. It can seem like for every step forward, we take one back—or that there's always another layer of the problem to uncover.

But every time I slip into that kind of thinking, a local leader, a community project, or a talented organizational partner reminds me that there are thousands of points of inspiration, hope, and progress in this work. Across these states, I see people building businesses and enterprises that reflect who they are. I see young leaders stepping into their passions and purpose. I see funding strategies that may finally be starting to bend our way. I see communities revitalizing.

These people and efforts remind me how much of a small town the Northwest really is, how tenacious our communities can be, and how vital the connections between us are. At every level of the system and across hundreds of communities, those connections are what make it possible to move closer to what our board often refers to as economic parity.

Serving on this board has sharpened my understanding of what economic development can and should look like. It has pushed me to unlearn, to broaden my priorities, and to recognize how much more powerful our collective work becomes when Native priorities are centered and Native leadership is guiding. ATNI-EDC does that and gives that. I'm proud to be a small part of it, and I look forward to continuing this journey with and for all of you, for as long as it takes.



Heidi Kothar

Board Member



FEATURED BUSINESS OWNER: JESSE HOLDEN, DUNGENESS SILVER

Jesse Holden, a member of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (JST), is a husband and father that is instilling and strengthening his Tribe's cultural rights and heritage to his children. As part of that cultural legacy, he wants to make sure his children have opportunities to earn a living in a way that supports the heritage that his father and grandfather passed down to him.

Jesse is owner of Dungeness Silver, a locally owned business that operates fishing, diving, and aquaculture harvesting on the Olympic Peninsula and Salish Seas. Jesse grew up fishing and harvesting with his father, uncle and grandfather. As a young man, he went into the construction trade working for others, but three years ago was drawn back to his roots and started his own business.

Through his grandfather and father, he simultaneously ventured into raising oyster seed into marketable oysters and buying a fishing boat to fish and dive for the various edible species available year-round. The purchase of this vessel allowed for a more diverse catch giving Jesse confidence to grow with the knowledge that the survival of his business and product supply are not overly dependent upon one species.

With product diversity in mind, in the Fall of 2024 he bought his third boat, a 34 foot aluminum vessel that previously served as part of the Bristol Bay fleet. This boat is Jesse's workhorse allowing him to fish for crab, shrimp, Chum salmon as well as dive for cucumbers and red urchins. He was able to finance this boat purchase with financing through Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Capital (JST Capital), a Native Community Development Financial Institution (NCDFI) that provides consumer loans to tribal members, and microenterprise financing to eligible borrowers on the North Olympic Peninsula.

JST Capital (www.jamestowncapital.org) is a small but growing NCDFI. In the case of Dungeness Silver the loan amount was larger than JST Capital's lending limit, so they reached out to Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians - Financial Services (www.atniedc.com) to share the financing and participate in the deal. Together the two organizations were able to meet Jesse's boat purchase needs.

Johanna Bartee, Executive Director of JST Capital noted that providing capital to individuals supports the development of a robust private sector by promoting economic self-sufficiency. Financing these individuals and enterprises creates positive changes by providing the capital support required for real and sustainable job creation. It sparks the development of small businesses and the private sector.

Now with a third boat in his possession, Jesse can utilize all three boats promoting employees as boat captains, allowing these individuals to gain experience and one day be boat and business owners themselves. Jesse stated that he has nine people that rotate as employees throughout the year depending on the fishery at hand.

As mentioned, Dungeness Silver also grows oysters and clams from seed on leased tidelands selling products to local restaurants and grocers. Along with his own leased tidelands, Jesse harvests clams on Jamestown's tidelands.

One product that Jesse is working towards marketing is oysters that are "tumbled". The action of having oysters tumbling around in bags provides a more attractive, stronger shell and a deeper cup for the oyster to grow in. Additionally, the oysters obtain a more consistent and diverse food source allowing them to grow at an increased rate.

Some of Jesse's dreams for his business, Dungeness Silver, include opening a shellfish store on the Olympic Peninsula and building assets to pass down to his family members. JST Capital and ATNI-FS will be there to support Jesse as he turns his dreams into reality.





UPDATE FROM ATNI FINANCIAL SERVICES

In the prior ATNI-EDC newsletter I posed the question: what are the business or industry gaps that Native Small Business Owners (NSBO) could fill in Native communities and on reservation? In this edition, I want to talk about economic leakage.

Economic leakage is a term describing the loss of capital or cash from a community. The capital can escape the economic engine through the import of goods from outside the community, cash going into savings or being applied to taxes. The most prominent cause of economic leakage is buying goods and services from the outside, meaning that the cash to buy these imports leaves the community and does not continue the circulation of that dollar internally. Economic leakage goes hand-in-hand with business gaps within a community, because at some point when consumers want a product or service and can't fulfill that want through an internal source, they will look to fill that need or desire from the outside. Thus the product or service is imported, and the dollars spent on that service or good leave.

BY MARK BOWMAN
FINANCIAL SERVICES
DIRECTOR





An example would be a community that lacks a locally-owned coffee shop and a large chain arrives into the community to provide the service. Or, the community lacks a grocery store and all of the residents have to drive 45 minutes to the nearest town to buy groceries. In both cases, the dollars are not retained by local ownership and either the product is imported or the patrons leave the community to fulfill their needs and wants.

Quantifying leakage is no easy task - it takes time to analyze a community's economic engine. A good place to start is looking for a few signs as one scans the landscape of their community. The signs of leakage include:

- Is the business owned by someone from outside the community?
- Is the business a chain?
- Do people travel outside the community to fill a particular need?
- Are the products you buy in your community grown or made locally or brought in from far away?
- Do the employees of the business commute into the community for work?
- Are the businesses that support another business (landscaping, contractors, accounting, legal, etc.) found in neighboring, larger communities?

As you look across your community and find yourself answering "yes" to one or more of these indicators, it may be time to have a larger community discussion on how to reduce leakage and localize your community.

Mark Bowman

Financial Services Director

AFFILIATED TRIBES OF NORTHWEST INDIANS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

NATIVE BUSINESS FINANCING



ABOUT US

The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Economic Development Corporation provides financial and technical assistance to the 57 ATNI Member Tribes, their Tribal Members and the ATNI-EDC SSBCI Tribal Consortium.

ATNI-EDC is a Community Development Financial Institution that invests in Native small businesses and Tribally-owned enterprises. We make loans that launch startups, support business growth, and build Tribal economic prosperity.



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Get started with a brief inquiry form by scanning the QR code or find it on our website!

OUR SERVICES



Business Financing

ATNI-EDC is here to help your business! We offer business loans from \$10,000 to \$250,000. We can work with borrowers who have imperfect credit or limited collateral. We are committed to working with you so you know your options.



Types of Capital

We can help provide loan capital for startups, business acquisition, working capital, equipment, commercial real estate, tribal project financing and agricultural projects in farming, fishing and timber.



Technical Assistance

We work with technical assistance providers across the region. Need help developing a business plan? Let us know and we will match you with a provider in your area.