



Biography | Tuleah Palmer



Tuleah Palmer will become president and CEO of Blandin Foundation in Grand Rapids, Minn., in July 2020. In this role, she will oversee the foundation's grantmaking, community leadership training and public policy initiatives, as well as stewardship of foundation resources.

A lifelong resident of rural Minnesota, Tuleah serves as executive director of Northwest Indian Community Development Center (formerly NWIOIC), which works to identify, coordinate and deliver resources that promote wellness and equity for American Indian families in northwest and north-central Minnesota. The Center is a Native nonprofit serving Red Lake Nation, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, White Earth Band of Ojibwe and Urban American Indian Community of Bemidji, Minn.

With Tuleah at the helm, the Northwest Indian Community Development Center's work has been informed by Anishinaabe world view and trauma-informed care and systems change. Initiatives of the Center are: Traditional & Western Educational Pathways, Workforce Development & Training, Economic Security & Financial Access, Family Wellness & Behavioral Health, and Safety & Basic Needs.

As executive director, Tuleah has established and maintains inter-governmental relationships between municipal, county, tribal nation, state, nonprofits and Minnesota State systems. She serves in a variety of advisory roles, including the Governor's Workforce Development Council and co-chair of its Racial Equity Committee, Minnesota Department of Human Services American Indian Workforce Development Committee and Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Policy's Future Services Institute.

For her work in racial equity and Native community development, Tuleah was recognized in 2019 by St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation as its Facing Race Statewide Award honoree. She and the Northwest Indian Community Development Center also received the Bush Prize in recognition of proven community impact, with a \$500,000 award used to address homelessness in Bemidji, including developing housing for women returning from incarceration.

Tuleah was born in Deer River, Minn., and has worked in and lived across Northern Minnesota. She holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in Applied Psychology from Bemidji State University. She has served as tribal planner and community development grant writer for Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, as an independent nonprofit management consultant, and executive director of the Boys and Girls Club of Leech Lake Area.

As a teenager, Tuleah became an advocate for children and women experiencing domestic abuse. She has been a trainer in the effects of child-witnessing family violence, a victim services coordinator for Beltrami County Attorney's Office, and a provider of direct services and advocacy for those victimized by domestic violence as part of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth.

Tuleah is the parent of school-aged children and has lived in Cass Lake, Minn., for 15 years.