



Welcome to the Full Circle Newsletter

Saying Goodbye to One Colleague, and Welcoming a New One *By Todd Barnell*

When I joined the ITEP team, over twenty years ago now, there were a lot fewer programs and staff than there are now. One of the people already hard at work assisting Tribal Nations and Native Villages was Jen Williams. Over the years she has turned her knowledge and dedication to a multitude of environmental media. She's worked on environmental education, air quality, toxic substances, contaminated lands, solid waste management, and more. She and her family moved to Alaska, where she worked closely with many of Alaskan Native Villages, designing and delivering multiple training courses, as well as assisting her friends and colleagues in many other ways. For several years she also coordinated the excellent work of the National Tribal Toxics Council. And she also ran ITEP's first project developing online training courses – on multiple subjects – so Tribal professionals could hone their skills at their own pace and on their own time. I remember watching her bring a rigorous and innovative mind to those first online courses, and was amazed how she didn't just develop educational curriculum, but also designed projects and activities I would *never* have thought of for those “virtual attendees”...long before the rest of us were imagining such an approach.

As I slowly built ITEP's Waste and Response Program I was thrilled when Jen agreed to join my team. She was there at the start as we tried to figure out what a national Tribal Lands and Environment Forum would be like, and has been involved every step of the way as we made the TLEF what it is today. She convinced me of the need for us to have a broad online library of self-paced courses, educational videos, plain language guidance on navigating multiple difficult subjects -long before the pandemic made us all think about these tools. And to that end, she has created 26 distinct channels of online recordings that have been viewed 11,500 times. Over 1,700 people have (so far) set up accounts to access the many multi-module online courses she designed – and keeps constantly updated with new resources. She helped create the Tribal Lands and Assistance Center, not only creating a huge amount of content for that site, but also patiently educating me on all the technical skills necessary for such a massive undertaking!

On top of all that, for the last few years she's also worked closely with Julie Jurkowski on conducting hands-on training for Tribal staff who want to craft community-specific solid waste codes for their Nations and Villages. And once the pandemic arrived, she helped modify that entire project to a virtual sphere.

It's been a real honor for me to work alongside, and learn from, Jen. But at the end of February she'll be retiring and moving on to some other new (and no doubt amazing) adventures. The whole Waste & Response Team at ITEP (and I'm sure many of you who have worked with her over the years) owe her a lot and wish her the very best!

While it will be hard to say goodbye to Jen, we could not have been more fortunate when it comes to the newest member of our team. A lot of you will recognize the name Amanda Kapp. She's been to many of the TLEF's (as well as all the other ITEP conferences) and is the one responsible for all the amazing highlight videos. She's experienced in creating in-person, virtual, and online trainings, in addition to her recording and video editing skills too. She's been working intensely with Jen, adding to her own toolbox with Jen's skills. On top of those skills, and her innovation and passion, she's also just a joy to work with!

Meet Our Team

Todd Barnell
Program Manager
Todd.Barnell@nau.edu

Julie Jurkowski
Senior Program
Coordinator
Julie.Jurkowski@nau.edu

Jennifer Williams
Senior Program
Coordinator
Jennifer.Williams@nau.edu

Amanda Kapp
Senior Program
Coordinator
Amanda.Kapp@nau.edu

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www7.nau.edu/itep/waste

So, while we do say goodbye to a person who has helped ITEP grow over the last couple of decades we're also thrilled to welcome a new member of the team. Jen, we wish you joy and beauty as you walk new trails. And Amanda, we're thrilled you are a part of our merry band!

Events, Webinars and, Opportunities

We've talked with many of you about how it seems like there are SO MANY different opportunities and events happening right now! It can be a lot to take in, and nearly impossible to take advantage of everything. So here are a few things we want to make sure are on your radar.

Mark your calendars for August 14 – 17, 2023 for the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum! We're working on putting together a hybrid TLEF for you this year again. For those who can attend in-person, we'll be in Syracuse, NY. But if you can't travel, you can also attend virtually. More details will be coming soon.

Electric Vehicles and Environmental Justice is an area that Vickie Flowers (who is a member of the Tribal Waste & Response Steering Committee) is looking into. She is speaking at the National Environmental Justice Conference in March. Vickie wants to hear from her fellow Tribal colleagues. What EJ concerns do you have when it comes to the transition to electric vehicles and Tribal Nations? If you have any thoughts or stories you want to share, send an email to todd.barnell@nau.edu and we'll get them to Vickie.

Food Sovereignty – Healthier Foods, Cultural Practices and Food Security is the topic for the [February 16](#) webinar being done as part of the EPA's Environmental Justice Webinar Series. [Register here.](#)

Tank Talk: SPCC Overview for Tribes is a four-hour in-depth overview of the oil program, regulatory requirements, program implementation (inspections), and federal oil spill reporting requirements. You can register any of these opportunities this year: [March 23](#), 1 pm ET; [August 31](#), 12 pm ET and [September 21](#), 2 pm ET.

The Tribal PFAS Working Group, which is coordinated by the National Tribal Water Council and has members from several other Tribal Partnership Groups (including Page Hingst and Mark Junker from the TWAR SC!) has a new fact sheet you should check out – [PFAS and Your Health: A Resource for Tribal Communities.](#)

Let's Talk About It: New Year's Resolutions for Tribal Waste Management, a webinar by EPA ORCR will be taking place February 21, 2:00-3:00 ET. This webinar will feature the TWAR SC chair, Mark Junker, and the vice-chair, Rebecca Stevens, so you don't want to miss it! [Register here.](#)

April 4 Deadline for EPA's Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant for Tribes. I'm sure many of you have been attending the webinars on this funding opportunity. If not, there are some more in early February - Apply by April 4. EPA announced the availability of \$40 million in grants for recycling infrastructure projects for tribes and intertribal consortia. The [Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling \(SWIFR\) Grant](#) will fund projects that create new capacity for tribes and facilitate greater access to source reduction, recycling, and composting opportunities.

There Are Two EJ Grants for You to Consider. The first is the [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Program \(EJCPS\) Cooperative Agreement Program](#) which provides financial assistance to organizations with current or planned projects addressing local environmental and/or public health issues in their communities. [Click here to apply.](#) The second option is the [Environmental Justice Government-to-Government \(EJG2G\) Program](#) which will support/create model state, tribal, and local government activities that leverage existing resources to develop tools and processes that integrate EJ considerations into state, tribal, and local governments and government programs. [Click here to apply.](#)

Tribal Grid Resilience Grants Webinar: February 2 (9am Alaska, 10am Pacific, 11am Mountain Standard, 12pm Central, 1pm Eastern). ITEP's Tribal Climate Change Program is partnering DOE to share information on a non-competitive Grid Resilience Formula Grant

Program, ahead of the March 31st deadline for Tribes to “reserve” the first 2 years of funding. If this is something your Tribe might be interested in [REGISTER HERE](#). The deadline for these grants is March 31. To find out more [click here](#).

Tribal Clean Transportation is a new program at ITEP. They are holding four listening sessions - February 1, 8, 15, and 22, 12:00 PM PT/3:00 PM ET. They are eager to hear from Tribal leaders, staff, and community members how ITEP can better support Tribes as they justly transition to cleaner electric Tribal fleets to meet the mobility needs of Tribal members. U.S. DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) representatives will also present a brief overview of NREL's technical support for Tribal Clean Transportation. For more information on this new program email andy.bessler@nau.edu and you can click here for the [Zoom meeting link](#) when the meetings begin.