

I am writing this letter to inform you of my intention to resign from my position as Tribal Council Vice-Chair, effective January 6, 2020.

I write this letter with mixed emotions but having given this decision careful consideration. At this time in my life, I must focus my energy on the health of my husband and myself, spending the rest of my days on my family and enjoying the consistency of being at home without the hardship of travel. I am passing on the title of “road warrior” to the next generation of Jamestown leaders.

Serving on the Tribal Council since 2002 has been a highlight of my life; I have enjoyed serving my people in this capacity, and I am proud of the wonderful changes we have made to benefit our citizens. True to our cultural values, we have made decisions that will benefit those born seven generations from today. We have encouraged our young people to become educated and self-reliant, and we have taught our citizens how to embrace success without losing their Jamestown identity.

Serving on staff since 1987, as the Tribe’s first Social Services Coordinator, then as Social and Community Services Director, and Tribal Policy Liaison until my retirement in 2014, gave me the opportunity to contribute directly to the wellbeing of our citizens, and to see our programs and services in action on a daily basis.

Serving on the Culture, Elders and Community Network committees over the years allowed me to share and hear ideas from my fellow citizens on topics of importance to them.

Throughout my career with the Tribe, I had the amazing opportunity to be our representative at the local, regional, state and national levels, often forging new ground and creating new partnerships for us, as well as for all of Indian Country.

I have learned much from these experiences and it truly has been a rewarding part of my life.

A good leader needs to know when to speak up, when to listen; to apologize when they are wrong, and to push forward when they are right. I have done this over the years in pushing for the passage of the Washington State Indian Child Welfare Law, Indian Country Estates Recovery policy, mental health, Cradle to Career and many other policies that make me proud.

A good leader knows when to step down, and this may be the hardest leadership step to take. I love what I do and the people I serve. However, for at least a year, I have been pushing past my own endurance. I need to take better care of myself so I can take better care of David. Even though I only have one more year left in my term, I know I need to step down now and am confident that the Council will appoint a well-qualified individual. I am hopeful that a member of our next generation will be seriously considered.

I will truly miss all of you and the work we did together. I thank you all for the time we served together, and I look forward to continuing our good work in my new capacity as a Tribal Elder.

In closing, I hope the next step for Council will be to make a recommendation for a Tribal citizen who is highly qualified and is a true rising star in the Tribe’s next generation of leaders.

I raise my hands to you in honor and gratitude.

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Geraldine “Liz” Mueller, S’Klallam name Ahcultz
Daughter of Charles Fitzgerald Jr. and Mary Ellen Boyd
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