



## Tribe names Barker to general manager position, ready to face challenges ahead

Kurtis Barker, a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, has been named the new general manager of the Siletz Tribe. His first day will be Feb. 1.

Barker will lead a workforce of approximately 200 located at offices in Siletz, Eugene, Salem and Portland. He has worked for the Tribe for nearly 16 years, most recently as director of the 477 Self-Sufficiency Program for 10 of those years. In this position, he led a team of 13 staff who assist Tribal members in meeting their basic needs and preparing them to (re)enter the workforce. Barker also administered the Home Visiting and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

“I am humbled by the opportunity to serve the Siletz Tribe and our membership in this new capacity. We have many challenges facing the Tribe, including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, recovery efforts provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and staffing shortages, to name a few. I am familiar with Tribal government operations and I will work at the direction of Tribal Council to

establish, promote and achieve our goals and objectives,” Barker said. “We have a talented team that is dedicated to serving the membership and I look forward to leading them in this position. To gain a better understanding of the Tribal membership’s needs, I plan to participate in community meetings scheduled for late January through March and encourage everyone to join as well.”

Barker holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration with a concentration in leadership, organization and management from Eastern Oregon University. Barker was a co-founder of the Siletz Change Team, which seeks to create a more welcoming environment for two-spirit and LGBTQIA employees. The Change Team also advocates for policies, procedures and services to be more inclusive and address the needs of LGBTQIA Tribal members. These efforts led to the development and approval of the Siletz Tribal Marriage and Dissolution ordinances.

Barker has been appointed by Gov. Kate Brown to serve two consecutive



Photo by Andy Taylor

Kurtis Barker

terms on the Oregon Employment Department Advisory Council and has served on its Modernization Board for a number of years. He has advocated for workforce development and self-sufficiency programs at the state and national levels. As

the 477-SSP director, he has developed working relationships with various state and federal agencies. Barker has also served on the Siletz Tribal Election Board for many years.

“I have dedicated my adult career to serving the Tribe and our community. I was raised in Siletz, attended Siletz School and currently live in Siletz Tribal housing. For all of us, the pandemic has limited our ability to enjoy many of our favorite activities, and for me that includes traveling and spending time with family and friends. I look forward to the day we can once again enjoy and experience our cultural events like pow-wow, Run to the Rogue and Restoration Celebrations,” said Barker. “At 37, I may be younger than many within our leadership team, but I am motivated to lead and modernize our approach to serving the entire membership. I will spend my first few days acquainting myself in the position, but I am eager to engage with Tribal Council, our team, Tribal members and the local communities.”

**Is it a cold, allergies, the flu or COVID? See a list of the different – but sometimes similar – symptoms for each one on page 11.**

### New Comfort Station opens

Photos by Andy Taylor

The Tribe held an open house at the new Comfort Station in Siletz on Dec. 30, 2021, located at the corner of Gaither Street and Logsden Road. The showers are now open by scheduled appointment (see details on page 6). Community Health Director Ruby Moon (right) and Joella Strong, PRC technician II, review the set up of a washing machine. Washers and dryers will be ready soon. Please call 541-444-8348 for more information.

