

Tribe hires, promotes employees in recent months

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

Several recent new hires and promotions have occurred at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

Linda Hanna has been named controller for the Tribe. She formerly held the position of assistant controller and has worked for the Tribe since July 2008.

"Working directly with the finance officer, the controller is the direct manager of the Tribe's accounting and financial functions," said Hanna.

For goals, Hanna added, she'd like to bring the preparation of financial statements in house, provide timely and accurate information reporting, and upgrade accounting systems and processes.

Tribal member Brent Merrill returns to Tribal employment as Tribal Council executive coordinator.

Formerly, Merrill was a public relations consultant, counting the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and various sporting organizations among his clients. He also worked on independent films and was vice president of the Native American Journalists Association. He also worked for the Tribe as editor of the Tribal newspaper, *Smoke Signals*.

With nine Tribal Council members as bosses,



Linda Hanna



Brent Merrill

Merrill said he also sees Tribal Elders and members as his bosses. "Access to the Tribal Council can come through this office," he said, "and I'll do whatever I can to get their issues in front of Tribal Council."

For Tribal Council, Merrill sets the agenda and pulls together background information on issues that come before the Council.

Tribal member Perri McDaniel has been named economic development analyst, working in the office of Economic Development Director Titu Asghar.

McDaniel was most recently coordinator of the Eugene satellite office.

"Under the direction and guidance of the Economic Development director, my job is to research and analyze potential investments that will help the Tribe add value and diversify our economic base," said McDaniel.

Her goals are "to work closely with the Economic Development director in further establishing the Tribe's Economic Development Department and building a focused and cohesive team," for a department aiming "to maintain traditional values while we grow and develop a self-sufficient and sustainable Tribal economy."

Jesse White has been named Project Engineer manager. He was previously a project engineer for Reece & Associates Inc., an Albany-based civil engineering and land use planning firm that has done many projects for the Tribe. Most recently through Reece & Associates, White was design engineer for the Grand Ronde Road widening project.

In his new position, White is working on the Youth Education addition and various other construction and capital improvement projects.

As he sees the job, White said, he will be "making sure construction projects run smoothly and get finished under budget and on schedule."

Tribal member Luke Soderberg has been named the Tribe's new Forest Patrol officer, succeeding Jake McKnight. The position works within the Natural Resources Department.

Soderberg previously worked for the Tribe as an armed security professional with ProStar and Advanced Security Inc.

Describing his job as "keeping our forest safe,"

Soderberg also said, "I hope to accomplish a number of things. There are 16 square miles of land on the reservation, and that's just up in the hills. I want to preserve our land and make it safer for Tribal members to go up there and hunt, fish and camp during the appropriate times. I eventually want to become another (Tribal police) officer through the (state police training) academy, so I can serve in the forest better."

During the fire season, Soderberg said, he will "double on the fire crew for the initial attack."

"I love it," he said about his first weeks on the job. "I love all the people over here. They've given me a pretty warm reception." ■



Jesse White



Luke Soderberg

Elder Christmas Party

Friday, Dec. 16

Starting at 3 p.m. With snacks
Dinner at 4 p.m.

In lieu of gift exchange, accepting
blankets or lap blankets for needy
Elders or toys, hats, or mittens

Unwrapped

Willamina Tree of Giving

Tribal Elders 55 and over please.

For more info contact: Linda, 971-267-0918