



U.S. Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Office of Trust Services

Honoring our Trust Services Veterans



The U.S. celebrates Veteran's Day and the service members who have courageously served and continue to serve in our Armed Forces. Given that American Indians serve in the United States 'Armed forces at five times the national average, a higher per capita ratio than any other ethno-demographic in the United States, those who continue their service with the BIA are, rightfully, doubly honored. My ask of all of you is that if you know or work with any veterans, please take the time to thank them for their continued service and the leadership they share throughout the year. I am deeply grateful for the leadership they model and the expertise they share. Their input makes BIA and Indian Country a stronger, more economically viable place for us and the American Indians and Alaskan Natives we serve.

Darryl LaCounte

Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Honoring our Trust Services Veterans

**Edwin ALONZO**

Forestry Technician
Boise, Idaho

Eric Michael GONZALEZ

Cartographic Technician
Sacramento, California

Michelle Lynn MORRISON

Fiduciary Trust Officer
Lakewood, Colorado

Robert C. ANDERSON

Supervisory Physical Scientist
Lakewood, Colorado

John HOLDER

Audiovisual Production Specialist
Boise, Idaho

Steven Donald MESA

Program Analyst
Lakewood, Colorado

Darin BEGAY

Inventory Management Specialist
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Daniel James KAIM

Supervisory Petroleum Engineer
Lakewood, Colorado

Ira NEW BREAST

Water/Land Resources Officer
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Travis BLACKETTER

Program Analyst
Lakewood, Colorado

Steven D. LARRABEE

Fire Management Specialist
Boise, Idaho

Delores A. REAVES

Supervisory Budget Analyst
Boise, Idaho

Albert (Dale) BOND

Realty Officer
Lakewood, Colorado

Bradford LECOMPTE

Supervisory Equipment Specialist
Eagle Butte, South Dakota

Owen RICHARDSON

Asst. Ntl. Fire Cache Manager
Billings, Montana

Michelle CRUZ-SALEM

Contract Specialist
Boise, Idaho

Kyle Albert LEVIN

Mechanical Engineer
Lakewood, Colorado

Samuel K. SCRANTON

Forester
Boise, Idaho

Anthony Charles DAVIS

Electronics Technician
Boise, Idaho

Olivia LUCERO-NELSON

Administrative Assistant
Dulce, New Mexico

Christopher T. TALBOT

Cartographic Technician
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Darla EVANKOVICH

Realty Specialist
Billings, Montana

Paul Michael MAHON

Cartographic Technician
Dulce, New Mexico

Robert T. WEBER

NIOGEMS Trainer (Contractor)
Lakewood, Colorado

Information for employee bios provided on a strictly voluntary basis.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

November 10, 2022

Greetings all,

This year's Native American Heritage Month's theme at Interior is 'Revitalizing Indigenous Connections.' It invites the entire Interior family to reflect on its existing nation-to-nation relationships and how those must be continually honored, maintained, and renewed. Unlike our sister bureaus and offices within the Department, BIA employees know what it is to live and work on a reservation, rancheria, pueblo or Indian community, and it is that knowledge that drives why we strive daily to make a meaningful difference for the communities we serve. I am deeply proud of the work we do to serve Indian Country despite the challenges we face.

Tomorrow, the U.S. will celebrate Veteran's Day and the service members who have courageously served and continue to serve in our Armed Forces. Given that American Indians serve in the United States' Armed forces at five times the national average, a higher per capita ratio than any other ethno-demographic in the United States, those who continue their service with the BIA are, rightfully, doubly honored.

My ask of all of you is that if you know or work with any veterans, please take the time to thank them for their continued service and the leadership they share throughout the year. I am deeply grateful for the leadership they model and the expertise they share. Their input makes BIA and Indian Country a stronger, more economically viable place for us and the American Indians and Alaskan Natives we serve.

Happy Veteran's Day and Native American Heritage Month!

Darryl LaCounte

Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Darin Begay, Staff Sergeant (E-5)

United States Air Force veteran

BIA Position: Inventory Management Specialist with Program Management & Coordination, Albuquerque, New Mexico



Photos: Darin Begay in military collage and standing with 505 Thunder basketball team he coaches, 505 Thunder logo

Darin Begay has been working with the Office of Trust Services for two years. He is an Inventory Management Specialist, with Program Management and Coordination. He is a member of the Navajo Tribe.

He earned the rank of E-5 in the United States Air Force and while serving from 1987-1991. While in the military his primary duties as a Tactical Aircraft Maintenance Specialist, tasked with taking care of the F-16 tactical aircraft systems, when the pilots aren't flying them, ensuring they are repaired and maintained to be ready at any time.

Aircraft maintenance specialists perform end of runway, post-flight and preflight, thru-flight and phase inspections. Perform integrated combat turns and hot pit refuels, advise on maintaining, servicing, and inspecting aircraft and related aerospace equipment, and troubleshoot and maintain aircraft structures, systems, components, and related equipment. These airmen remove and install aircraft components, conduct functional tests of repaired components and systems, and adjust, align, and rig aircraft systems. Inspections include structures, systems, components, and related systems and interprets inspection finding to determine what corrective actions might need to be taken.

For fun and in his free time he enjoys playing video games with his boys and serving as head coach for all Native American Youth Girls' basketball team, 505 Thunder, at local and out of state basketball tournaments. Volunteers time on basketball tournament committee for Native American boys and girls. Striking Eagle Native American Invitational (SENAI) is held annually at the University of New Mexico Johnson gym on the main campus.

Travis Blacketter, Corporal (E-4) United States Marines veteran

BIA Position: Program Analyst, Division of Land Titles and Records, Lakewood, Colorado



Photos: Travis Blacketter delivering ordinance to an expeditionary airfield, screen shot of GIS parcel creation process, and Travis atop 14,000-foot peak in Colorado

Travis Blacketter has been working with the Office of Trust Services, Division of Land Titles and Records as a Program Analyst working on Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) in Lakewood, Colorado for ten years. He is a member of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe. Travis was tasked with creating a new GIS Branch under OTS called Branch of Geodata Examination and Validation for the purpose of supporting OTS GIS needs and support for the BIA Regions. He is currently the acting Branch Chief for this new GIS modernization effort.

He earned the rank of Corporal in the United States Marines and served for 4.5 years in Iraq, Kuwait, Japan, Thailand, and Gaum. He built, delivered, and deployed air launched rockets, missiles, and bombs, in support of ground forces during active combat missions.

He describes one of his most memorable experiences working with the BIA to be working with multiple BIA Regions to support the parcel creation process. For fun and in his free time he enjoys climbing 14,000 feet plus peaks in the lower 48 states.

Kyle A. Levin, Senior Airman (E-4/HM1)

United States Air Force veteran

BIA Position: Audiovisual Production Specialist, Division of Wildland Fire Management, National Interagency Fire Center, Boise, Idaho



Photos: Kyle Levin exiting a plane, Airmen posing for photo in front of plane

Kyle A. Levin has been working with the Office of Trust Services, Division of Energy and Minerals Development (DEMD) as a mechanical engineer focused on renewable energy in Lakewood, Colorado for 6.5 years.

He earned the rank of Senior Airman in the United States Airforce where he served for 6 years. As a Senior airman he was responsible for Airborne Cryptologic Language Analysis. He preplanned and organized airborne operations and was responsible for translating foreign intelligence communications and locating ground threats. He also provided airborne oversight for U.S. troops and allies during combat, personnel recovery, and special operations missions. He flew aboard RC-135 and MC-12 aircraft for a total of more than 1,000 combat flight hours overseas. Kyle was deployed five times to Qatar (Al Udeid Air Base and Afghanistan Bagram Air Base).

He describes one of his most memorable experiences working with the BIA as follows. "One of my best memories at DEMD was watching one of my first projects evolve from a feasibility study grant application to completion and implementation (1.2 MW Solar PV Array at Picris Pueblo). It really showed me that what we do here at DEMD really does make a difference".

For fun and in his free time he enjoys hiking, camping, boating, fishing, guitar, and karaoke.

Paul Mahon, Captain **United States Air Force veteran**

BIA Position: Cartographic Technician with the Land Titles and Records Office (LTRO) in Bloomington, Minnesota



Photos: 1) My son Andrew "best wingman I ever had." He'd grow up to earn a master's degree in Aerospace Engineering, studying with NASA Goddard, Edwards AFB Flight Test Center, and the Naval Postgraduate School, 2) Members of the 12th Tactical Fighter Squadron "Dirty Dozen" Kadena Air Base, Japan 1990, and 3) Pilot training graduation, T-38 airplane.

Paul Mahon has been working as a Cartographic Technician in the Midwest Region, Land Titles and Records Office (LTRO) and greatly enjoys assisting the Branch of Geospatial Support (BOGS) and the LTRO in mapping Reservation Trust land. Paul Mahon served as a Pilot, Instructor and War Planner from 1986 – 1997. After graduation from Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base Oklahoma, he completed F-15 training courses at Luke AFB, Arizona. He completed two peacetime tours in the F-15 being assigned to the 12th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Okinawa, Japan, and the 54th Fighter Squadron Elmendorf AFB Alaska. He was also assigned to the 89th Flying Training Squadron and was a member of the European-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training program (ENJJPT) as an instructor Pilot. As a member of the ENJJPT program he trained pilots from Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Norway, and Belgium.

Michelle Morrison, Lieutenant, Direct Commissioned Officer (O-3)
United States Navy veteran

BIA Position: Beneficiary Services Branch Chief and Fiduciary Trust Officer, Indian Energy Service Center, Lakewood, Colorado



Photos: Michelle Morrison at Ronald McDonald House Charities in 2017, talking with visitors at "Stewards of the Sea: Defending Freedom, Protecting the Environment" exhibit during Mount Trashmore's Earth Day celebration, Virginia Beach, VA 2016, and with fellow shipmates at Navy Operational Support Center, Tulsa, OK.

Michelle Morrison has been working with the Office of Trust Services, Indian Energy Service Center for two years. She is a member of the Cherokee Nation. Mrs. Morrison enlisted in 2003 in the Navy Reserve and served as an E-5 Yeoman, 2nd class Petty Officer, (Administrative Assistant). She provided operations, logistics, joint planning, communications, public affairs, and exercise support to joint combatant commands at US Pacific Command and US Southern Command. Selected in 2008 as a direct commissioned officer in Human Resources she provided support to the Navy Personnel Command & Navy Recruiting Command. She was mobilized to the US Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, VA in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. There she worked as the Operational Energy Action Officer in the Fleet Installations, Environmental and Energy Readiness Office on the Great Green Fleet Campaign of 2016. This initiative helped transform the Navy and Marine Corps energy use in accordance with the energy and efficiency goals outlined by the Secretary of the Navy to diversify fuel sources, strengthen operational flexibility and improve combat capability.

She enjoys spending time with family and friends and walking her cattle dogs. She lives on a small farm with cows and horses and tries to lead a healthy lifestyle by staying physically active. She and her oldest granddaughter participate in 5K walk/runs through the year with the Cherokee Nation Wings group. She completed the Route 66 half-marathon, a Tough Mudder and the Native American Pathstar Alcatraz swim.

Robert T. Weber, Air Radar Tech/Gunnery Sergeant (E-7 Retired)

United States Marine Corps veteran

BIA Position: NIOGEMS Trainer, Division of Energy and Mineral Development, Lakewood, Colorado



Photos: Staff Sergeant and Mrs. Weber at the Marine Corps Birthday Ball ~1993. (L-R) Robert's son Stephen, Robert, and Rob Halford, lead singer of Judas Priest 2018

Robert T. Weber has been working with the Office of Trust Services, Division of Energy and Mineral Development as a contractor for over five years. Robert Weber served in the United States Marine Corps from 1982 - 2004. After graduating recruit training in San Diego, California he served as a Dragon Weapons Gunner (0352) in the Marine Reserves in his hometown, Toledo, Ohio. He then transitioned to active duty and reported to Marine Corps Base 29 Palms, California for training as an Air Radar Repairer (5942). Robert then served at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona and Futenma, Okinawa before returning to 29 Palms for training as an Air Radar Technician (5948). Upon graduation, Robert was selected to stay on as an instructor at the Radar Maintenance Training Section. Robert then served as Radar Crew Chief and Radar Shop Chief at Marine Air Control Squadron 23 (MACS-23), Buckley Air Force Base, Aurora, Colorado. Robert then returned to 29 Palms for another tour as an instructor and then returned to MACS-23 where he retired in 2004 as a Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt E-7). Others billets and duties that Robert held are Military Police and Protocol Chief.

Robert enjoys providing NIOGEMS Training at the user's sites because every group is different in how and why they will use NIOGEMS. On a personal note, he enjoys traveling, spending time with his family, watching movies and sports, and listening to heavy metal music set to (11) eleven.