



Board Member Spotlight: Kellie Carrillo

Leadership Rooted in Service, Accountability and Community

For Kellie Carrillo, serving on the Tule River Economic Development Corporation Board (TREDC) is another pillar of a career centered on service. Kellie currently serves as Director of Tribal Relations at Fresno State, a position she has held since April 2024. In that role, she works with tribes throughout California to strengthen relationships with the university, align tribal and campus priorities, and help make higher education more relevant and accessible for Tribal students.

Kellie's professional experience, however, extends well beyond higher education. She has held several leadership positions with the Tule River Tribe, including Tribal Administrator and Chief Operating Officer. Earlier in her career, she worked in various positions that gave her extensive experience working with other tribes throughout California.

Kellie also brought her leadership experience into local government. From 2020 to 2024, she served a term on the Porterville City Council, becoming the first Native American to serve on the Council. She also served as Vice Mayor during a portion of her term, which coincided with the relocation and opening of the Tribe's casino in Porterville.

A Commitment to Tule River

Kellie's journey to the TREDC Board stemmed from a desire to ensure that the Tribe's interests and perspectives remain at the center of its economic development efforts. "One of the things that I like to do is serve our community in different capacities," she said.

Kellie first served on the TREDC Board for several years before stepping away. "When I joined the Porterville City Council, I stepped down from the TREDC



Board because there was a concern that serving in both roles could create a conflict or even the perception of one," said Kellie.

The experience in local government introduced Kellie to another side of public service and sharpened her understanding of the distinction between governance and day-to-day operations. "It honestly taught me a lot about a different level of accountability. My role then was governance. It was not day-to-day oversight. It was not operations." In 2024, as her City Council term came to an end, Kellie was encouraged to return to the TREDC Board.

For Kellie, that service is about more than business development. It is also about protecting tribal assets, asking difficult questions when necessary, and helping ensure that tribal members understand what TREDC is doing and why. One of the most important lessons she has taken from her various leadership roles is the value of having good information before making decisions. "As long as we have the information, then we're equipped to make educated and informed decisions."

Creating Long-Term Opportunity

When asked what she believes TREDC's most important role is in supporting the Tule River Tribe, Kellie shared, "Creating

wealth is key to building resources for the Tribe, not just for 2026, but for generations to come. Economic development strengthens our sovereignty, expands our assets, supports long-term sustainability, and creates greater self-reliance by giving us access to resources, whether land, water, or other forms of capital, that benefit our people as a whole."

Rather than placing additional burdens on Tribal government, she sees TREDC as an organization that can develop businesses, acquire assets, strengthen and align internal systems, and create opportunities that can ultimately support the Tribe when needs arise.

Kellie is especially encouraged by the efforts to strengthen TREDC's internal infrastructure and believes successful systems developed within the Corporation may eventually provide valuable models or resources that can benefit the Tribe more broadly. "If we can capture successful examples and bring those back to the Tribe, I would love that."

Kellie also sees significant opportunity ahead through federal contracting, property acquisition and continued business expansion. Her long-term vision includes not only expanding TREDC's portfolio but also developing succession plans, providing continued Board training, and building the organizational capacity necessary to sustain TREDC's success for generations.

Building a Stronger Connection

For those considering Board service, Kellie's advice is to start by learning. Attend events, review available reports, ask questions, and understand both TREDC's work and the commitment expected of a director. "Talk to a Board member to see the magnitude of work that a Board member does, because every Board is different."

Eagle Feather Gets a Fresh New Look



Eagle Feather Trading Post is introducing a fresh new look with an updated brand identity designed to be more vibrant, recognizable and consistent as the business continues to grow.

“As Eagle Feather continues to grow, we want our brand to evolve with it,” said Thomas E. Wilbur, CEO of TREDC.

The refreshed design features a bold EF mark, a streamlined red, black and white color palette, and

cleaner typography, giving the brand a stronger, more contemporary presence.

The updated logo is part of a broader effort to refresh and improve the Eagle Feather experience. Recent improvements have included repainting the exterior of the Porterville location and completing a restroom remodel at the Avenal location. Together, these upgrades reflect TREDC’s continued investment in creating locations that feel clean, current and welcoming to customers.

“This isn’t about changing who Eagle Feather is,” Wilbur added. “It’s about strengthening how we present the brand while continuing to honor the cultural connection that is important to who we are as the Tule River Tribe.”

The new logo, refreshed facilities and other recent improvements are all part of the same effort: building a more consistent, professional and recognizable Eagle Feather brand while continuing to improve the customer experience.

The new Eagle Feather logo is scheduled to begin rolling out in October across signage, marketing materials, social media, and other customer-facing materials.

TREDC Participates in Tribal Housing Summit

Members of TREDC attended the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s National Tribal Housing Summit in the greater Washington, D.C., area, held September 1–3, 2026.

The Summit provided an important opportunity to connect with tribal leaders, housing professionals and HUD representatives from across the country, share ideas, and learn more about programs and resources that support tribal housing and community development.

While in Washington, TREDC representatives also had the

opportunity to meet with Tonya Plummer, Director of HUD’s Office of Loan Guarantee, and discuss issues and opportunities relevant to the Tule River tribal community.

Participation in national events like this is important to TREDC as the Corporation continues to build relationships, expand its knowledge of federal programs and identify potential resources and partnerships that can support future economic development, housing and infrastructure opportunities for the Tule River Tribe.



TREDC CEO Thomas Wilbur meets with Tonya Plummer, Director of HUD’s Office of Loan Guarantee, at the HUD National Tribal Housing Summit in September.