

Tara Parrish

Bay Mills Indian Community - Treasurer



My name is Tara Parrish, and I am running for Treasurer. Many of you know my family — I am the daughter of Lynda and Jason Pesola, and the granddaughter of Bob and Irma Parrish. I have started a family with my partner, Dennis, and have a wonderful four-year-old daughter.

I grew up on Lakeshore Drive's "Farms" side, and I've lived here my entire life. I graduated from Brimley High School in 2002. I attended Lake Superior State University, earning an Associate of Arts, a Bachelor of Science in History, and a Bachelor of Science in Sociology. I also completed the MPA program at Central Michigan University, earning a Master of Public Administration with a focus on Nonprofit Management, with plans to continue developing myself to benefit our community by pursuing a Ph.D.

I worked at Bay Mills Resort and Casino for nearly 18 years in Food and Beverage at Sacy's Restaurant and the Horizons Conference Center before transitioning to the Marketing Department and Player Development. In 2019, I was elected as an Appellate Judge for a six-year term and joined the Healing to Wellness Court. In 2020, I became the Tribal Grants Coordinator, helping secure funding for key projects like the Boys and Girls Club, elder homes, and studies on broadband, tourism, and business diversification.

Currently, I am the Tribal Grants Administrator, overseeing diverse projects, including several worth millions. This role has strengthened my skills in collaboration, compliance, and project management. I work closely with federal, state, and foundation agencies to ensure successful grant implementation and compliance. My experience with grant objectives has enabled me to manage complex, high-stakes initiatives effectively.

Over the years, I have developed valuable skills. I learned that service is about people—listening patiently, handling concerns calmly, and finding common ground across different backgrounds. Those years taught me to stay open-minded and communicate clearly and respectfully, even when under pressure. The most important lesson was learning to listen and understand people's issues truly.

By running for Treasurer, I aim to continue my public service journey, inspired by my grandmother, who worked in grants and served on the 1971–1973 Executive Council. She taught me the importance of community, passion, listening, caring, and making a difference. I am committed to honoring this legacy and positively impacting our community.

--Miigwetch