

My name is Vanessa Welch, I am Mohave and the daughter of Paula Welch, granddaughter of the late Eunice Welch, and great-granddaughter of the late Annette Harper Welch and the late Oscar Welch. Raised here on our CRIT Reservation as the eldest of eight siblings, I attended our local schools and actively participated in sports during my formative years.

After graduating high school, I pursued higher education at Haskell Indian Nations University, where I was a student-athlete playing volleyball. In 2015, I earned my Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts and returned to Arizona the following year. I continued my education at Arizona State University, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Education (Educational Studies) in 2018 and a Master of Arts in Indigenous Education in 2020.

My lifelong goal has been to gain knowledge and skills that I could bring back to benefit our Tribe. My deep love for our Reservation and the CRIT community has always driven me. Every step of my educational journey was motivated by my desire to return home and serve our people, contributing to the future of our Tribe.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed my return, but in late 2021, I reestablished myself within the community. I began volunteering and later joined the Tribe as a Grants Writer in 2022, a role in which I contributed to several significant grants such as a \$177,000 Solar Planning grant, the 25-million-dollar Broadband USDA Reconnect Program grant, and the CRIT Head Start 13.8-million-dollar Federal grant that supported our Tribe's growth and sustainability. In 2024, I successfully ran for the special Tribal Council election and have since served as a proud Tribal Council Member. Additionally, I serve on the Royalty Board of Directors for our CRIT Queens.

I am now seeking re-election to the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes. It has been an honor to serve as your Tribal Council Member, and I am deeply grateful for the trust you have placed in me. During my 11-month tenure, I have worked diligently to make a positive impact on our membership and foster a sense of hope and progress within our community.

As we navigate this pivotal time in CRIT's history, I am committed to providing leadership for a new era and a new generation of CRIT members. My approach is rooted in transparency, accountability, and collaboration. I have maintained a consistent daily presence in the office, sought guidance from other Tribes, and prioritized initiatives that directly benefit our membership. Notable accomplishments include supporting the development of an Ethics Code, advocating for the rights and well-being of our directors and employees, and holding non-Tribal directors accountable for practices that exploit our Tribe.

As a council member, I have prioritized health, wellness, and education to strengthen our community, while also focusing on securing a solid financial future for CRIT. I am dedicated to protecting our water and land, recognizing that these resources are not only vital to our survival but also integral to our cultural identity and economic stability.

It would be an honor and privilege to serve another four years as your Tribal Council Member. Together, we can continue to build a stronger and brighter future for our Tribe, ensuring leadership that reflects the values and aspirations of a new generation of CRIT members. Looking ahead, I recognize the pressing challenges we face, including housing, healthcare, broadband access, law enforcement, and the joint venture sewage system. I am committed to addressing these issues while ensuring our Tribe's financial strength and growth.