

# QUAPAW NATION SPOTLIGHT: RACHAEL BANDY

**How long have you worked for the Quapaw Nation?**

I have worked for the Quapaw Nation since the beginning of 2019, first as a Clerk at the Quapaw C-Store for one year, and later I transitioned into this position March of 2020.

**What do you like about working for the Quapaw Nation?**

I love working for the Quapaw Nation as they enable me to assist people who truly need and appreciate this assistance. I wear two hats as an employee of the Quapaw Nation. The first is as the Social Services Assistant, working under my wonderful boss, Director Patti Rice. The second is as the Emergency Financial Assistance Committee Clerk, where I help the committee assist people who truly need a hand getting back on their feet or staying on their feet.

**What are your favorite Quapaw Nation events or traditions?**

I love attending sweats put on by our Native American Church whenever possible and our annual Quapaw Powwow! In the past, I enjoyed attending our seasonal overnight Native American Church meetings. However, after a car accident on my way to work on an icy day in January 2024, in which I broke my sternum and my tailbone in two places, I've since been unable to sit comfortably through our meetings. I'm looking forward to surgery in the coming months to remove my tailbone, and I hope to be able to sit with my family at one of our NAC meetings in the near future.

**What are some of your favorite memories with the tribe?**

My favorite memory with the tribe dates back to January 2019, when I moved from Tulsa, OK to Miami, OK, hoping to create a better life for my daughter, Eva, and myself. I felt incredibly blessed that our tribe offered valuable resources such as the Tribal Daycare OLC, the Social Services Program that helped with utilities, the Direct Employment Program for Ottawa County tribal members through Family Services, and the EFA Program. If it had not been for these resources, the transition may have been nearly impossible. Now, I feel fortunate to be in a position where I can help other members, just like I was helped, who needed a hand getting back on their feet through my work with both the EFA and Social Services Department.

**What does it mean to you to be a member of the Quapaw Nation?**

For me, being a member of the Quapaw Nation fills me with a sense of pride, pride for our resilient people. It is a source of personal strength to know we come from the Downstream People.

**Who are some tribal leaders or elders who have inspired you, and why?**





Several people come to mind. First, my native mother Minnie Frances Hawk, who accepted me as one of her own. She has taught me through example how to love and care for our people. Despite her own struggles, she makes the time to make beautiful regalia for her little grandchildren and great grandchildren with love and care, and she included my daughter in this loving gesture. My daughter is Quapaw through me, but is Ponca, Iowa Otoe, and Creek through her father. As her father passed away before my daughter's first birthday, and the paternal family is not involved, I was only able to share her Quapaw heritage with her. Momma Minnie is proudly Ponca and Quapaw, when she saw this and took it upon herself to bless my little girl with her first Ponca dress. I am grateful for her, and I hope to model that same care for my tribal family.

Secondly, my brother, Everett Bandy, is nine years older than me and a vast source of knowledge. He has worked for our Nation for over a decade. Our family had moved away two generations ago and only returned once a year for a few hours during Powwow, which meant we were disconnected from our traditions and language. It was my brother's passion for learning about our tribal history that helped bring our family back to our roots. It was his dedication that led our family back to the tribe. By spending time with the elders, absorbing their wisdom, and sharing it with our father and me—we were able to reclaim our culture and find more family connections. Thanks to his guidance, I am now able to raise my daughter in that same cultural heritage.

**What are you passionate about outside of your job?**

I love spending time with my daughter, watching Gilmore Girls together, or hearing about her day. I am also a Sophomore at NEO A&M College part-time, and I am slowly but surely pursuing my Associates in Psychology. My goal is to further my education at another institution and eventually earn a degree in Forensic Psychology. In my free time, I enjoy watching all things true crime (documentaries, police body cam and interrogation videos, court cams) and playing The Sims. I have had the same amazing dog since I was in ninth grade, he is now 16 years old. He is an Australian Shepherd/Great Pyrenees mix named Auzie (AKA: Auzie the Aussie) and at this point we can't imagine a life without him.

