



LORA ANN CHAISSON BIOGRAPHY



Lora Ann Chaisson proudly serves as the Principal Chief of the United Houma Nation (UHN), the largest Indigenous tribe in Louisiana. Chief Chaisson has dedicated 42 years to advocating for her community, both locally and nationally. She resides in Pointe aux Chenes, Louisiana, and is the daughter of Theo Chaisson and the late Betty Chaisson.

Chief Chaisson's commitment to her people began early. Her first speaking engagement on behalf of her people was when she was 15, at an all-girls school in New Orleans. She also worked with the youth down in Grand Caillou/Dulac through volleyball and teen girl programs, and by sharing cultural traditions, including tribal dancing, basket weaving, beadwork, and storytelling. This has been her life, always with her people.

As a prominent leader in Native American advocacy, Chief Chaisson represents the UHN on a national level as a delegate to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest and largest political organization for Native Americans in the United States. She was recently elected unanimously as the Area Vice President of the Southeast Regional Caucus. In this role, she actively contributes to national policy discussions affecting Native communities and advocates on the Hill to advance improvements for Indian Country.

Chief Chaisson also serves on the First Peoples Fund Board. Rooted in the traditional values of generosity, wisdom, respect, integrity, strength, fortitude, and humility, First Peoples Fund sustains culture and cultivates entrepreneurial initiatives and community development programs for and alongside Native artists.

Her commitment to community welfare extends to her role on the StrongHearts Board of Directors, which operates a 24-hour hotline for domestic violence and sexual assault in Native communities.



She is also a board member of the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana and the Institute for Indian Development. This organization offers comprehensive employment and training programs designed to enhance workforce competitiveness while honoring the cultural values of member tribes, and she worked for 25 years there.

Chief Chaisson serves on the Advisory Committee for the Workforce Grantmaking in Native Nations & Communities, where she supports, advocates for, and assists policymakers through a holistic, culturally informed approach.

She served for 15 years on the American Indigenous Alaskan Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) board. She served as Treasurer and Vice President of the Board, and while she was there, she worked on the Native Act and was very proud to see this passed into law to promote cultural tourism nationwide.

Chief Chaisson served two terms on the United States Department of Labor's Native American Employment and Training Council, appointed by the Secretary of Labor, where she helped shape policies affecting employment and training for Native Americans.

An alumna of the Americans for Indian Opportunity Ambassador Program, Chief Chaisson, is 1 of 302 in the World to be part of such an esteemed organization that advances, from an Indigenous worldview, the cultural, political, and economic rights of Indigenous peoples in the United States and around the world.

Professionally, she works with the Tribal Solutions Group, providing tailored services in education, call centers, medical supplies, and communication solutions for tribal nations. She has devoted her career to leadership development and capacity-building within Native communities.

In June 2024, Chief Chaisson was recognized as a Top Female Achiever by New Orleans Magazine, the city's premier lifestyle magazine, for her accomplishments.

Beyond her professional achievements, Chief Chaisson enjoys sharing her cultural heritage by teaching traditional Houma Indian basket weaving, jewelry-making, and cooking. However, the most important thing in her life is her family. She is who she is today because of her upbringing and her strong commitment to her family. Besides her Creator, her father is her World!