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Team Member Biographies

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Penobscot Nation Language Committee

1. James Francis is Director of the Department of Cultural and Historic Preservation and is responsible for the management of all departmental projects, tribal and grant funds. He has managed three ANA grants for sustaining the Penobscot Language and has successfully completed two for the development of curriculum materials on Penobscot tribal history and culture for public school teachers.

2. Carol Dana is the Master Language instructor. She has been studying and learning the Penobscot language for over forty years and was one of the key research assistants on the original Penobscot Dictionary project directed by Dr. Frank T. Siebert in the 1980s. She has been teaching the language in the public school and community for many years.

3. Gabe Paul is a language instructor who served as a language apprentice and has been teaching since 2003. He has taught and led conversations in Penobscot in language immersion camps, developed and pioneered teaching Penobscot at the Boys and Girls Club and Teen Center in the community.

4. Roger Paul teaches Wabanaki language classes at the University of Maine in Orono in the Native Studies program. He is a native speaker of Maliseet, a closely related language to Penobscot.

5. Edwina Mitchell is a native speaker of Maliseet.

6. Bill Thompson is tribal chief and also a language learner with a strong interest in language sustainability.

7. Mark Chavaree is a Penobscot attorney and legal advisor to the project.

8. Chris Sockalexis is the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer.

9. Darren Ranco is a Penobscot tribal member, a Professor of anthropology and also director of Native Programs at the University of Maine.

The University Team

1. Co-PI Conor Quinn holds a PhD in linguistics from Harvard University. His dissertation, “Referential-Access Dependency in Penobscot” presents an analysis of pronominal features based on their morphosyntactic properties in Penobscot and other Algonquian verbal systems that eliminates the need for the traditionally stipulative system of pronominal feature hierarchies; these effects instead being accounted for by assuming an internal syntax to pronominal features themselves.
Quinn worked with Siebert in the mid-1990s and has also worked extensively with the closely related Passamaquoddy-Maliseet language.


3. Dr. Timothy Powell serves as the liaison to the project for the American Philosophical Society which holds the Siebert papers as well as much other material in Penobscot. He is director of Native American Projects at the APS and also is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania and a consulting scholar for the University of Pennsylvania Museum.