



## Y U R O K   T R I B E

190 Klamath Boulevard • Post Office Box 1027 • Klamath, CA 95548

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**  
**Matt Mais**  
**(707) 954-0976**  
[mmais@yuroktribe.nsn.us](mailto:mmais@yuroktribe.nsn.us)

## **Talented Tribal citizen returns home to run new construction firms**

*Yurok member Pamela Ames's impressive career path comes full circle*

After she delivered the valedictorian speech at her Hoopa Valley High School graduation, Yurok citizen Pamela Ames left home with a plan to pursue an educational and professional path that she knew would lead her back to Yurok Country.

During the past decade, the Gates Millennium scholar completed a Bachelor's of Science in Construction Engineering Management degree at Sacramento State University and acquired a position with a prominent corporate construction firm in the Bay Area, where she was immersed in every aspect of commercial building. Following a fast ascent up the corporate ladder, Ames was promoted to senior management after working through the ranks on major projects, including the construction of a Kaiser hospital and multiple high-rise buildings. In January of this year, when the Yurok Tribal Council offered her a position overseeing Per-Geesh and Prey-go-neesh, the Tribe's new construction firm and its subsidiary, she eagerly accepted the offer.

"My goal after high school was to further my education and gain the professional experience that would help me become an asset to my Tribe," Ames said. "From afar, I have followed the Tribe's success in infrastructure development and river restoration and I am excited to be a part of that growth. I am grateful to be home and working for my people."

The Tribe has been developing Per-Geesh and Prey-go-neesh since May of 2019. In the next few months, Per-Geesh will be registered with the US Small Business Administration's Tribal 8(a) Business Development Program, which will make it eligible to receive federal contracts for the types of largescale projects that fall precisely within Ames' area of expertise.

"Pam has the ideal skillset to lead our new construction companies. She is literally the perfect person for this position," said Yurok Vice Chairman Frankie Myers, who has been cultivating this initiative on behalf of the Tribal Council for the last year and a half. "The construction firms will create many new opportunities for our members in the near future and for many decades to come."

Prior to accepting her dream job with the Tribe, Ames was a Senior Project Manager for the corporate construction firm Marelich Mechanical. At Marelich Mechanical, she managed numerous

high-profile projects, including the construction of 434,000 square-foot hospital, Ghirardelli San Francisco Brewing Co and several 40-story luxury condominiums buildings.

“I am confident that my experience will enable me to successfully develop these construction corporations for the Yurok Tribe,” Ames said.

The federal government’s Small Business Administration’s Tribal 8(a) Program was established to aggressively address poverty on reservations through economic development. To accomplish this objective, the program helps tribes launch new revenue-generating enterprises in construction and several other exciting industries. The entities enrolled in the 8(a) program, such as Per-Geesh, are then given preference in the federal procurement process. For example, tribal 8(a) businesses are eligible to receive sole-source federal contracts with no upper dollar limit.

“These new corporations represent an unprecedented platform to create good-paying jobs and subcontracting opportunities for our people and tribal-citizen business owners,” said Joseph L. James, the Chairman of the Yurok Tribe. “The Yurok-owned contracting firms will complement our existing businesses and they will greatly enhance our economy for the foreseeable future.”

Once Per-Geesh becomes a registered 8(a) contracting firm, the Business Development Program will work with the Tribe on forming additional contracting corporations in the desired professional sectors. In addition to construction, the Tribe is interested in developing 8(a) companies in the following fields: manufacturing, information services, technology, transportation, infrastructure, energy and special trades. The program will also provide technical assistance and training opportunities for the tribal workforce.

While the Yurok Tribe will be one of only a few tribes in California to take advantage of the 8(a) Business Development Program, other tribal organizations outside the state have used the program to put their people to work performing meaningful, well-paying work.

**For additional information, please visit:**

[https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ogc\\_and\\_bd/resources/11498](https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ogc_and_bd/resources/11498)