

Cut the ties you have to failure and shame. Let go the pain you are holding in your mind, your shoulders, your heart, all the way to your feet. Let go the pain of your ancestors to make way for those who are heading in our direction. Ask for forgiveness. Call upon the help of those who love you. These helpers take many forms: animal, element, bird, angel, saint, stone, or ancestor.

— JOY HARJO, CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR HOLY BEINGS: POEMS

Kay Kkendasot Mattena

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As Chief of Staff, Kay Mattena works alongside firm leadership to keep FPLG's priorities moving, connecting people, projects, and follow-through so our team can stay focused on serving nonprofit and social enterprise clients.

Kay comes to FPLG from the nonprofit sector, where she most recently served as a Program Associate with a national Native-led nonprofit, supporting its cultural sovereignty, next-generations, and ally education programs. She has become a leading expert as part of the organizations repatriation training team, helping deliver several compliance-centered trainings on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) for Tribal staff, museum professionals, and agency representatives. She also aided in voluntary returns of Native American Ancestors and belongings in private collections and monitored auctions for illegal trafficking of cultural heritage items. Before that, over the last 7 years she has divided her time across several Indigenous led non-profits and research centers developing curriculum and educational materials on a variety of diverse topics, providing culturally relevant training for volunteers and community members alike, and researching community needs to ensure those needs were met by the organizations.

Kay earned her M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. While there, she designed and taught a first-year course that demonstrated her skills in collaborative community-based teaching methods, she completed a repatriation-focused assessment of museum basketry that



helped connect them back to the Tribes who created them, and she engaged with some of the worlds most renowned Indigenous scholars at the National Science Foundation Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledges and Science. She started her career at Mercyhurst University, spending four years as an archaeological field and lab technician cataloging collections and training incoming students while pursuing her bachelor's degree.

Kay's work has consistently paired detailed planning with care for the people involved. She brings that same combination to For Purpose, where she helps leadership turn priorities into plans the whole team can follow.

Outside the office, Kay serves as the primary researcher for the Potawatomi Nation Tattoo Society working with a community of artists and practitioners to re-awaken traditional Potawatomi body modifications. In addition, she is a fine artist specializing in mixed media artworks that explore identity politics, environmental justice, and Nishnaabe aesthetics.

Kay Kkendasot Mattena is a citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation with matriarchal ancestors among the Odawa and Ojibwe Nations.

EDUCATION

- Master of Arts, Anthropology, University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Bachelor of Arts, Archaeology/Anthropology, Mercyhurst University