



MUWEKMA OHLONE INDIAN TRIBE

OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA REGION

'Innu Huššištak Makiš Mak-Muwekma *"The Road To The Future For Our People"*



CHARLENE C. NIJMEH
Chairwoman
Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe

"There is no greater honor than being chosen to serve and I hope to honor my ancestors and tribal family by being worthy to lead my people into spiritual alignment with our ancestral lands in order to reclaim our sovereign rights of self-determination."

Charlene C. Nijmeh is the **Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe**. She is from the Marine-Sanchez lineage that descends from the first peoples of the San Francisco Bay Area. Her ancestors are direct descendants of those peoples brought into the mission system at Santa Clara, Mission San Jose, and Mission Dolores in San Francisco.

Charlene began her engagement in Tribal affairs at an early age of 8 when she was **exposed to her Tribe's efforts to repatriate ancestral remains during the early 80's**. The previous Chairwoman (Charlene's mother) made sure to involve Charlene and other Tribal children and stress the importance of being responsible for our ancestral remains and ancestral lands.

As she became a young adult she **worked as a Native American Monitor and Field Crew for the Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Cultural Resources Management firm** providing Tribal consultation to commercial developers and construction companies, municipalities, county, state, and federal agencies on ancestral Muwekma Ohlone heritage village and cemetery sites that included monitoring, mitigation, excavation, removal and relocation of ancestral remains.

In 2018, Charlene was elected as Tribal Chairwoman to help lead her people after the retirement of Rosemary Cambra (the previous chair). As Chair of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, she represents over 600 tribal members who comprise the Ten lineages of the **previously recognized, never terminated Verona Band of Alameda County**. Her mother Rosemary Cambra has been an active and persistent advocate of indigenous rights in the San Francisco Bay area for 40 years and Charlene has worked to carry this legacy and improve the lives of tribal members. She is also the **President of Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Inc.**, the Tribe's Cultural Resources Management firm. A corporation devoted towards preserving the material and cultural heritage of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe.