

Jen Schlaich is a clinical herbalist, seed saver, small-scale farmer, and grant writer, currently residing in Numu (Paiute) and Newe (Shoshone) Homelands on the Eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California.

Completing her undergraduate degree in environmental science, Jen's studies focused on Biotic Conservation and Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in small-scale community food systems. Following graduation in 2008, she worked nationally and internationally in regenerative agriculture including 2+ years in Senegal, West Africa. Immersed in cultures where local food and traditional medicine are still a part of the daily community fabric, Jen worked alongside farmers and began to deepen her understanding of the importance of access to cultural foods and medicines and passion for working on behalf of Indigenous-led food sovereignty initiatives.

These experiences eventually led her to accept a position with the Bishop Paiute Tribe; as the Food Sovereignty Program Coordinator from 2015-2021 she was hired to begin and then expand a Tribal food sovereignty program including: production garden and farmers market establishment, bio-regional seed saving initiatives, garden-based education, and was responsible for grant writing, reporting, and fundraising to sustain the program. During this time, she both tended relationships with private funders and successfully secured and managed large federal awards including a USDA Farm to School grant in collaboration with the Bishop Indian Head Start and a Tribal Adaptation Planning grant that initiated partnerships with federal agencies with a goal to increase tribal stewardship of traditional foods in ancestral homeland areas. In addition to growing a program, Jen served as a FoodCorps Site Supervisor to provide 150+ students/year with garden-based education, co-established a GreenRx Program in collaboration with Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic to increase access to local foods, and began a Community Supported Agriculture program to provide weekly boxes of garden produce to tribal elders.

While managing the Food Sovereignty Program, Jen continued her studies and in 2020 completed a Master of Science in Clinical Herbal Medicine followed by a 2021 Post-Masters Certificate in Nutrition and Integrative Health. Combining her experience in farming with nutrition and the therapeutic uses of plants, in 2018 she founded a business called Radicle Wellness to partner people and plants and to reconnect individuals to their health and the health of the places that sustain us. Through her business, Jen also works via contracts to uplift community food systems initiatives. In April of 2021, she accepted a part-time contract as the Grant Manager for the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance and is honored to join such an incredible team!