

My father was a former tribal council member, and I've always been really proud of his service to the Cherokee people. My father was a tribal councilor of two chiefs, chief Ross Swimmer and Chief Wilma Mankiller, and he served at a time when we didn't have the funding that is available. When he served there was no compensation, it was just pure service and love for our people, and that was instilled in me at a very early age, to always want to give back. I decided, perhaps I should think about helping my people—I'm more than half Cherokee, and I thought it's time for me to do something for them. I actually attended council meetings before I actually decided to run, to sit through them and see what I thought, what I was getting into. And I thought, I'd love to help my people. That's what got me involved.