



Seattle Clear Sky Newsletter

Thriving Through Education. Culture and Tradition

DECEMBER 2022 ISSUE

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WALKING THROUGH LIFE AS AN AMERICAN INDIAN BY LANDON BREWER

This month I have really put more thinking into what it means to walk through life as an American Indian. Living in Seattle we have exposure to all different ethnic and religious backgrounds so one doesn't feel like one or the other really stands out because everyone is different from each other, but not all areas of the country are like ours.

This month we took a trip to Washington, D.C. one of the first things I noticed is that there is really 2 main populations in D.C. (black and white people). There happened to be a lot of Indians there at the time because they were there for the same ceremonies and events that we were there for, but for the most part there isn't usually many Indians roaming around the east coast, especially dc.

For many of the people we had interacted with in dc it was on one of the first time they were really exposed to many Indians, so it got me paying more attention to their demeanor around us compared to others. I noticed that many people would stare us down when we would be wearing our traditional clothing, almost as if they had just spotted aliens. Part of me wondered if when they saw us in our ribbon shirts and skirts if they thought we were of some religious cult or something.

On the way back I had been stopped by security for having my Iniskim (medicine bag) around my neck he patted me down and asked me if I had anything around my neck so I pulled out my Iniskim and he told me he needed to look through it, so he opened it up, pointed a flashlight in it and started looking through.

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Some of my medicine I knew probably wasn't legal to fly with and on top of that it was also stressed out because it felt so violating to me. I knew he could see something I shouldn't be flying with and he paused and stared at it for a couple of seconds, and then he asked "is this religious or sum" and I said "yes". "alright you're good", said the security guard, so much stress was relieved at that moment. That situation had me thinking about how I got lucky and if that guy was a racist I could have been in a really bad situation, but the odd thing is I've gone on planes with my iniskim many times before and no one said anything or cared, I think it was the medicine that has saved me from that situation before.

Often when I go to small white towns I get weird looks and people will act somewhat odd around me, But this is a completely different type of response than being an Indian gets in Washington D.C. It's more like a stare of hatred, especially in towns near reservations. Its not uncommon in reservation border towns for natives to get denied service for being native, being treated as a lower class citizen, or even being a victim of a hate crime.

These are just some examples of how outsiders may act around us. I encourage all my fellow natives that may be reading this to try and pay more attention to the way others treat us, compared to non-native individuals around us. It is important that everything we do in the outside world reflects native people as a whole, so we always need to be the best versions of ourselves and represent our amazing culture.



NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN, ALASKAN NATIVE VETERAN DEDICATION & MEMORIAL CEREMONY BY JAZELL J. (UNANGAN)

Native Americans serve in the United States Armed Forces at five times the national average. Regardless of the years of oppression and ongoing racism is done in the hands of the United States and the colonized society the settlers forced upon Native people, many Natives served for the U.S.A. and all its citizens. It's important to honor those who have put their life on the line for a country that continues to mistreat them. This is because the Natives who've served have moved through all the circumstances and with all their mental and physical strength fought for you and me.

Every year on November 11th is a special day to give thanks to our veterans. A nationally celebrated holiday, Veterans Day.

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This year on veterans' day, I had the honor to be able to be in Washington D.C. at the National Native American Dedication with Urban Native Education Alliance for their second educational trip for Clear Sky Academy and Leadership council. Although this year was the first group to join as an audience to watch the parade of veterans followed by the official dedication. Watching each tribal group of veterans come together to be celebrated and applauded for their absolute leadership and resilience built through culture, spirituality shared values, and a strong sense of identity, accountability, and responsibility.

More than 1,500 Native veterans representing nearly 125 tribes gather around the National Museum of American Indians, where the National Native American Veterans Memorial is located right across from. Many of the well-decorated war veterans used canes or walkers while some rode in wheelchairs; many wore veteran baseball caps and large varsity jackets that detailed their respective military branches. Others wore their traditional Indigenous regalia, and some were in full military dress as they carried flags of the United States, their military branch, and tribal affiliations and marched in cadence. Although for the majority of the time of the dedication it was rainy it cleared just in time for the lighting of the Veterans' memorial for those who've passed or were killed in battle.

Take time today to recognize, pray, and honor those close to your heart that have served.

INTRODUCING NEW UNEA BOARD OF DIRECTOR LENELLE MILLER-JENKINS (UNANGAX)

Please join me in welcoming Lenelle Miller-Jenkins (Unangax) to our dedicated, volunteer, hard working team. We are honored she has chosen UNEA to commit her time and expertise as we continue to grow and expand our organization.

In her own word, "I am drawn to UNEA because of the Native community engagement and how it brings Native urban youth together, who would otherwise be disconnected from the community. I see the importance of connection that it brings to the Native youth. I feel that it is very important for our Native youth to grow up with the feeling of belonging, have a sense of who they are, where they come from. It is important to have this pillar growing up. I know this because I have a daughter who has been part of UNEA Internship & Clear Sky Academy from 2020 till now. Along with her, we as a family have learned and built connections with Native youth and elders in this urban community. I feel it helps families thrive by getting reconnected with their culture, food, music, arts and community who would otherwise be disconnected and colonized. Our daughter has thrived since joining UNEA/Clear Sky with her academics, her confidence, her self-worth and self-identity. I believe she would not be where she is today if it weren't for her involvement with UNEA."



OUR DC TRIP

BY JAY S.

On our trip to DC I learned and saw some interesting things. We went to the National Museum of the American Indian. We got to see the opening celebration of the Native American Veterans Memorial. We got to speak to people about native issues. All of this contributed to a great learning experience that I brought back home with me.

When I went to the National Museum of the American Indian, I saw the history and tragedies of some tribes, albeit the museum primarily focused on tribes located in the United States, with a small tribute to Quechua/South American tribes, and no acknowledgement of Inuit tribes. While I saw the flaws in the museum's representation, I also saw that it was hugely improved from previous years, acknowledging crimes the United States committed against tribes, and that tribes are still affected.

The opening parade for the Native American Veterans Memorial showed us that there was still a large and thriving community of Natives. For the majority of our time in DC, we saw people demonstrating and taking pride in their culture and heritage. We saw that there was a large presence of Native people still, but that wasn't well represented in the people we spoke to. When we spoke to Pramilla Jayapal's and Patty Murray's offices, we noticed that there was a lack in knowledge surrounding Native issues, specifically MMIW and cohesive Native Education Support.

Our trip to DC taught us many things about how the United States views and treats Native Americans in modern day society in contrast to the actuality of Native American people's lives. Without UNEA, we wouldn't have been able to learn these important things or see such monumental and historical places.



WASHINGTON DC ADVENTURE

BY LANE R. (DAKOTA/LAKOTA)

This month the UNEA interns were lucky enough to travel to Washington D.C for Veterans Day! The first day we woke up early and headed over to the National Museum of the American Indian, here we explored the multi-level museum and saw some really interesting pieces. My favorites at the museum were the area where they hung all the tribal flags, I remember Landon and I searching for ours. We then ate lunch which consisted of Indian Tacos and then we quickly changed into our ribbon skirts/shirts to watch the memorial ceremony. This event was so cool, it started with all the nations veterans walking around the block of the museum with their tribal flags and families. Then everyone sat down while tribal leaders spoke and the artist himself who designed the Veterans memorial spoke- Harvey Pratt (Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma).

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The next day we went to Arlington Cemetery with our fabulous tour guide Jennifer, she showed us around and we visited Ira Hayes grave where we spent some time and gave tobacco. We also saw RBG's grave, John F Kennedy's, Thurgood Marshall's and many more. Then, Savannah, Landon, Izzy and I participated in a laying of the wreath ceremony for the tomb of the unknown soldier which was so cool to be a part of.

On Sunday we visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture. This museum was so cool, it was built so you start two levels below the ground, and you start a couple years before the slave trade, and as history goes on you slowly make your way back to surface level and you end with Obama's presidency and black excellence. There was so much information in this museum it was a lot to comprehend, they had artifacts and deep analysis on every detail regarding African American history and resistance.

We ended Sunday with a Wizards vs Grizzlies game; I had a blast that was the second time I've been to a basketball game. The energy in the stadium felt fun.

On our last day we went to The Capitol, and surrounding buildings and spoke to Patty Murray and Primaya Jayapal representatives on improving urban Native education. The meeting with Primaya Jayapal's representative went well, he answered our questions to a good extent, and we got his card and he said to email him any further notes or questions. When we arrived at the meeting for Patty Murray, we were met with one representative and two interns, one intern just so happened to be in Order of the Arrow boy scouts who engage in cultural appropriation and stereotypes of Native culture. They lacked knowledge on Indian issues and answered most of our questions with, "I'm sorry but I don't know." Which was disappointing.

Going to D.C with the interns was so fun, I got to know everyone better, before going to the trip I thought our group knew each other decently. But, after this trip we are closer on a whole another level. I really liked spending time with everybody each day because our group is just so fun. This trip not only connected me with friends but also inspired me into wanting to go into political science because I want to make a change on a bigger level. I will forever remember the D.C trip.

JAMBOREE AND NATIVE WARRIOR BASKETBALL

BY SARAH SW

NWA will be kicking off the season with an all Native basketball Jamboree for youth ages 4-15 years old. Our Jamboree will feature guest Coaches George Hill (Suquamish) and Dietrich Rios (Ojibwa).

Real Native Fitness is their trade mark business. Real Native Fitness focuses on wellness, health and basketball Training. Jamboree participants will receive personalized training and skill development throughout the day while also gaining court play experience.

We want to combine games with training to make the most of our time with Dietrich and George. The two brothers hail from Seattle/Suquamish communities and they both have a long legacy of basketball success and experience. Coming from a competitive basketball championship family they were raised with basketball being a family value, the Hill family is a dynasty of basketball greatness. Parents Debra Hill and George Sr. are accomplished athletes whom volunteered in their tribal communities as coaches and mentors throughout the years. Both Dietrich and George Jr played collegiate basketball and Dietrich's basketball career led him to professional international basketball.

The two brothers now devote their professional careers to elevating tribal youth to new heights of basketball skills and abilities. Both professional trainers will work with our Seattle area Native youth to offer their expertise in techniques, form, and skills to strengthen each athletes confidence and individual abilities, while elevating visibility of positive role models contributing to the betterment of our urban Indian community.

This is a great opportunity for our youth to see and experience quality coaching from young adult Native athletes. We hope all Seattle area youth join us in this three day event, hosted by Urban Native Education Alliance/NWA at North Seattle College Roy Flores Gymnasium.

Individual youth can register, groups and or teams. \$25.00 per player or \$200.00 per team

Limited edition T-Shirts for all participants and Professional Photos/photo booth

DECEMBER 28/29 & 30TH

Basketball games, training and skill development.

Ages 4-6 and 7-9 b/g December 28th 12-5

Ages 10-12 b/g Thursday 12-5

Ages 13-14 b/g Friday 12-4pm

All youth invited Friday 4-6pm for Additional training

JAMBOREE

COACHES DIETRICH RIOS &
GEORGE HILL



\$200.00 Entry fee per team or \$25.00 per Individual
206-941-0338
markseatt13@aol.com

North Seattle College Wellness center
9600 College Way N. Seattle

UPCOMING EVENT:

February 16th, 2023
UNEA's SWEET 16 Celebration

SAVE THE DATE

**JOIN US IN A SPECIAL CELEBRATION
RECOGNIZING 16 YEARS OF
ORGANIZATION SERVICE TO OUR URBAN INDIAN COMMUNITY.**