



FEBRUARY 2024 ISSUE

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CELEBRATING NATIONAL RIBBON SKIRT DAY

BY: AMELIA ANDRESS (SENECA HAUNDENOSAUNEE)

In December 2020, a 10-year-old Indigenous student by the name of Isabella Kulak from Cote First Nation in Saskatchewan, Canada, decided to wear a traditional ribbon skirt to her school's formal event. The ribbon skirt is a significant piece of clothing in Indigenous culture, with each color representing a special meaning or person to the wearer. It is a garment worn with pride and holds deep cultural significance.

However, Isabella's Kulak decision to wear the ribbon skirt was met with disapproval from a teacher, who deemed it inappropriate and encouraged her to change. This incident highlights the lack of understanding and appreciation for Indigenous traditions and cultural practices.

I became aware of the significance of ribbon skirts when I joined UNEA at the June 2023 graduation ceremony. I noticed that many people were proudly wearing ribbon skirts.

After being with UNEA over the summer and fall, I decided to teach myself how to make a ribbon skirt and embarked on a journey of sewing. Despite the initial challenges and frustrations, I persevered and successfully sewed my first ribbon skirt just hours before the Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at Daybreak Star. Standing in a line with other women, all of us adorned in ribbon wear, I felt a sense of pride and unity as we sang the women warrior song.

Since then, I have made two more ribbon skirts and continue to work on honing my sewing skills. Being able to partake in and learn new traditions every month with UNEA fills me with immense pride. It is a reminder of the importance of preserving and appreciating diverse cultural practices.

Isabella's Kulaks experience serves as a reminder that cultural appreciation and understanding should be encouraged and celebrated. The ribbon skirt is not just a piece of clothing; it represents the resilience, strength, and identity of Indigenous communities. By embracing and respecting traditions like the ribbon skirt, we can foster a more inclusive and diverse society.



UNEA STUDENT INTERN OF THE MONTH

BY: AMELIA ANDRESS

Nya:wëh sgë:nö', I am Amelia Andress, a Seneca Haudenosaunee Indigenous birth keeper. I completed my postpartum training at the Center for Indigenous Midwifery and postpartum healing lodge. Currently, I am taking classes with the Center for Indigenous Midwifery to become a childbirth educator. In the future, I aspire to undergo indigenous-centered lactation training and birth Doula training. Additionally, I am a first-year intern with UNEA. I take pride in my work as an Indigenous birth keeper and with UNEA, anticipating the promising future ahead. Having worked at a preschool for nearly three years, I've gained valuable experience in interacting with children and youth. During my free time, I relish being in nature—whether swimming, paddleboarding, hiking, or camping. I also have a deep passion for photography, reading, and writing.



My connection with UNEA began just two weeks before my high school graduation. Karen Elliott, the Indian education coordinator at Edmonds School District, shared a flier with me about an essay contest hosted by UNEA. The essay theme was “standing in your power,” and I decided to enter. Upon writing and submitting the essay, I was invited to the graduation ceremony, where I was pleasantly surprised to be honored as a graduate. Stepping into the grove for the ceremony, I immediately felt embraced by a community, despite not knowing anyone there. The announcement of the essay contest winner brought me immense joy, even though they were unfamiliar with my identity. They listened to my story, a deeply emotional one for me to write and share with strangers. I am profoundly thankful for UNEA, the community it provides, and the meaningful relationships I've cultivated through this association.

One of the most special things about UNEA is the sense of community and family bonds it Foster's, I feel so honored that I get to stand with, learn with, and just be with a community that I feel welcomed in. I wish that I had found this program so much sooner, but I know that I found them at the time that I was supposed to find them. nya:wëh aè

COMMUNITY CENTER PLANNING

BY: SOPHIA DAVID

Hello, my name is Sophia David, and I'm from the Sault Ste. Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians from the Great Lakes area, and I am a first year intern at the Urban Native Education Alliance.

On January 9th, 2024, Headwater People welcomed UNEA at the Grove at North Seattle College for a brainstorming and informative session for a Native Community Center near the Seattle area. Colleen Echohawk, a member of the Pawnee Nation, led the discussion and first shared very welcoming words to the community that gathered at the Grove. Before we began our discussion of the design of the community center, Colleen spoke and asked if a UNEA Intern would like to do the blessing. Somehow, I was chosen from the table, and gave the best blessing I could in front of everyone at the workshop. After doing so, I felt much more relaxed, and I enjoyed the company of the people I was sharing the space with so much more. The food was provided by Jason Vickers, a local native chef who made sure that the meal was prepared according to practice.

After everyone had finished eating, Colleen passed out large pieces of poster paper to each table, along with markers to describe and illustrate what our ideal native community space would look like. We were encouraged to dream big, and be demanding of what resources we want and need for our community. My group wrote down things like athletic facilities, healthcare and rehabilitation access, daycare and art workshops. After everyone had finished filling up their posters with ideas and sketches, we went from table to table and shared everything from our posters. This sharing made me feel very hopeful for our community. That someday we will have a large space, with the resources and funds for every need in our community. That youth younger than me will have the benefits of this center being there for them to utilize. I felt very honored and thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of this workshop, and to be a part of the future community center coming together.

FIRST MONTH AS A NEW INTERN

BY: NICK ESPAÑA

January is my first month as a new intern with UNEA and so far, it has really been good. At first, I was nervous about being a new intern because I would be the new person there. That was a little nervous for me, and I have never done an internship before or had a job, so it was something new, but also exciting for me, and kind of out of my comfort zone. That added to the nervousness that I was feeling about starting but once I was there seeing how nice and welcoming everyone there is, it started to ease my anxiety and I started to get more relaxed and comfortable. Since I've been doing the internship I have been trying to learn the songs that we do, and it's been a little bit of a challenge for me because I've never drummed before and singing the songs out loud was kind of scary for me at first but now it's still kind of scary but I'm getting more use to it, it still is a little embarrassing when my voice cracks but other than that I'm really enjoying drumming and singing.



CLEAR SKY ACADEMY

BY: AIDEN GALINDO (APACHE)

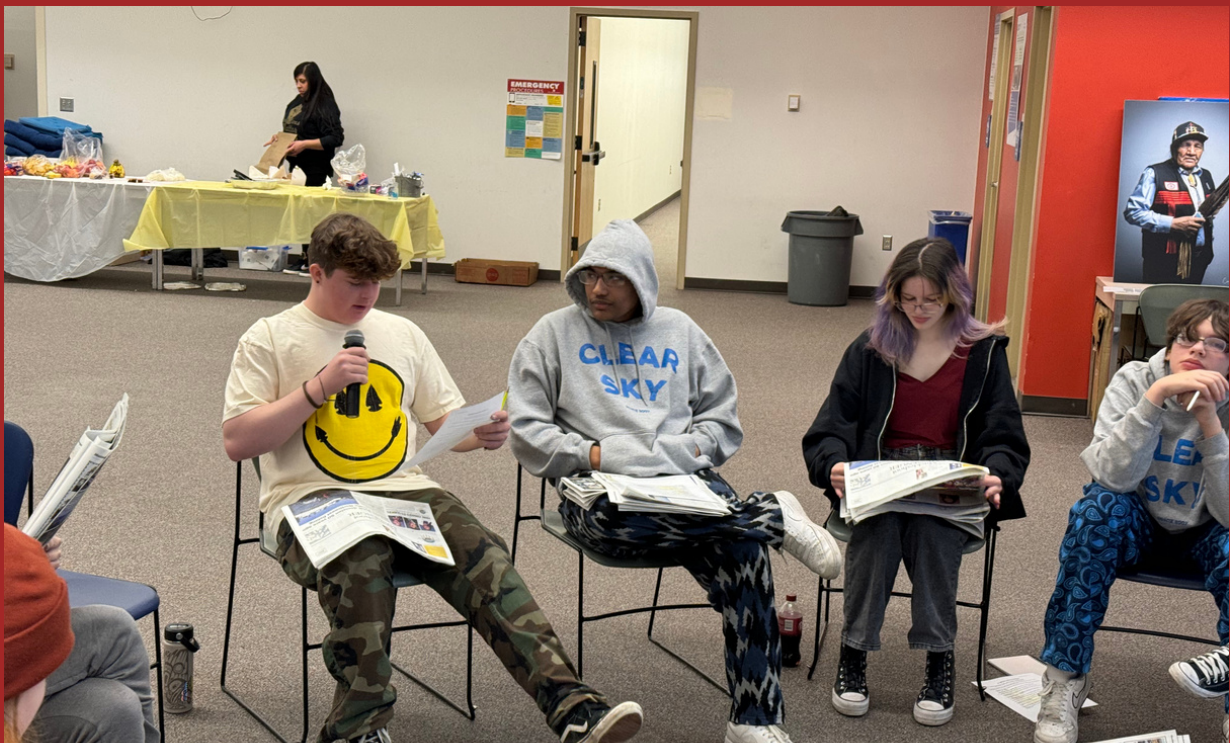
This year, Clear Sky/Yellow Wood Academy is starting up their first semester of indigenous journalism!

This course will be instructed by Dr. Jeffery Hamley, him and his four decades of teaching experience will aim to enhance our knowledge about our past and present indigenous ways. I personally have two semesters of experience when it comes to Clear Sky/Yellow Wood Academy. I remember last year we all went on all sorts of field trips, including a walk to Robert Eagle Staff Middle School and learning about the paintings by Native artist Andrew Morisson and their individual meanings. We also got to see a wide variety of plants over at the UW Botanical Gardens. I honestly hope that this year's field trips compare to last year because I would love to experience more awesome activities like the ones previously.

This year, Clear Sky Academy will be bringing in multiple guest speakers, they will be educating us about different categories of indigenous journalism. I remember last year coincidentally, Jeffery's twin sister Jerrilyn Hamley came in and taught my peers and I all about indigenous plants, and we even took the time to make some tea with the plants she brought in. I am looking forward to more interactive activities like that.

Oh, not to forget that our dear friend Tess Gamez is going to introduce us to her diverse collection of traditional medicine tea blends that we will all enjoy together as a community, along with cocoa that will be used to make a hot cocoa bar which is something I am extremely excited about.

Clear Sky/Yellow Wood Academy has a lot to offer, and I am thankful to be able to take advantage of this learning space provided to me.



UNEA INSPIRES NATIVE SUCCESS

BY: SAJALI K. (MUCKLESHOOT)

I am Sajali Keeline from the Muckleshoot tribes as well as an intern for UNEA. This month was an amazing month with great experiences as well as change. We went to the Shoreline board meeting on Dec 19th to do a Proclamation for the acknowledgment of native students and Missing Murdered Indigenous People's Day. The motive for this was...recognition, to prove that native youth are resilient and deserve to be heard, acknowledged and their ongoing repeated history to be taught truthfully. This was very sentimental to me because it is blatant proof that we are capable of change. After our resolution the interns went out to eat, and we met a group of the kindest elderly women, they offered us Christmas carols and gave us ornaments. It was a great way to end our night! Just 2 days before we went to the Shoreline school board we had a Winter Holiday Gift making event, lots of people showed up. This day had a lot of love because understanding how time/money consuming the holiday's are, the kids were able to be fulfilled with gifts, food and good energy and love. I love what UNEA does for the community, specifically youth! Personally I don't know where I would be if it weren't for the support of the Interns and UNEA itself.

Quote- How far would you be in life if you knew you couldn't fail?



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JANUARY ARTICLE 2024

BY: KAYLA HARSTAD (TURTLE MOUNTAIN CHIPPEWA)

On Monday, January 15th, UNEA attended an MLK rally and march at Garfield High School. The rally consisted of speakers and performances, ranging from young elementary school students sharing spoken word to the divine nine showing up, and contemporary dances that we all got to witness.

The previous weekend on January 11th, we also participated in a march in support of Palestine and the ongoing genocide in Gaza. As Indigenous youth, it is crucial for us to actively support other communities and people of color. There are historical and cultural ties for us, as American Indians, to stand in solidarity with Palestinians.

Being in Seattle, our voice and presence carry a meaningful impact. UNEA attending these marches goes beyond just our participation, it is an actual effort to utilize our voices and the platform we have as an organization. As American Indians, showing up is a powerful way to contribute to the collective fight for social justice. These marches were not mandatory for us youth, yet it was inspiring to witness all the interns choose to show up and actively engage in the struggle for justice. Our commitment demonstrates the importance of using our collective influence to advocate for positive change and amplify the voices of those who need it most. I believe we need to attend more of these marches in making sure we are constantly showing our solidarity and support.

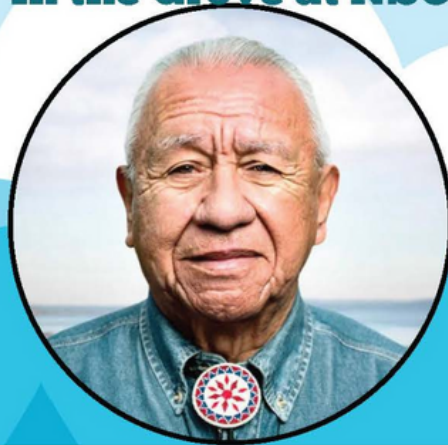


UNEA'S CORNER

Clear Sky/UNEA and North Seattle College EDIC

BILLY FRANK JR. CELEBRATION


March 5th 6-8pm
In the Grove at NSC

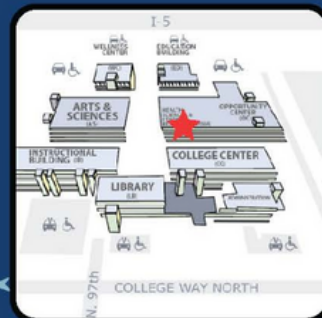


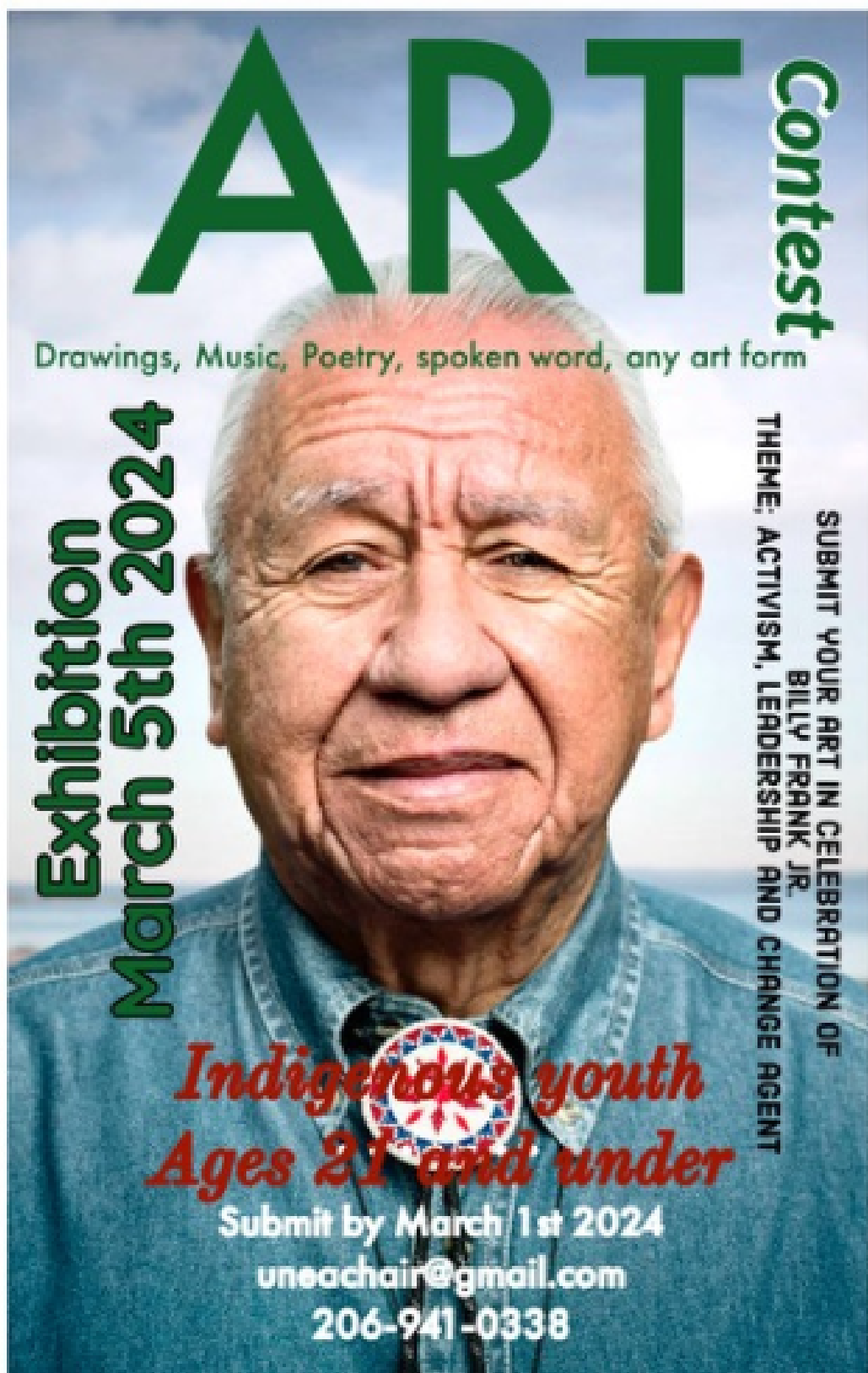
Celebrating Activism, Change
Agents, and Leadership

Join us for an evening of Dinner, Discussion,
and Door Prizes. With special guest panelists:

- Nancy Shippentower (Puyallup)
- Matt Remle (Lakota)
- Chayton Remle (Lakota)

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ART *Contest*

Drawings, Music, Poetry, spoken word, any art form

**Exhibition
March 5th 2024**

**SUBMIT YOUR ART IN CELEBRATION OF
BILLY FRANK JR.
THEME: ACTIVISM, LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE AGENT**

*Indigenous youth
Ages 21 and under*

Submit by March 1st 2024
uneachair@gmail.com
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