



Seattle Clear Sky

Newsletter

Thriving Through Education. Culture and Tradition

WELCOMING UTOPIA

By Junior Victor

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On March 24, 2022, Mane T.Tuia'ana and Herbert joined Clear Sky to talk about UTOPIA youth program and how they create a safe & sacred healing spaces for all 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and their allies. UTOPIA youth program focuses on reclaiming Indigenous Queer identities and cultural practices to help empower students on their personal journey to celebrate who they are in their fullness. Mane and Herbert shared about their struggles with being 2SLGBTQIA+ and how their identity is different from everybody.

Our Urban Native Education Alliance (UNEA) student leaders and community asked questions about UTOPIA program and questions about their personal stories. As a transpacific islander I asked a lot of questions, and the question I asked their advice on how I can get over the difficulties as a trans person myself. Their response was that it takes time, and it's your life, not theirs, and it's your choice when it's time. Their advise was a big relief

and made me less worried about what life was about to come. The other things that they said that were important to me were these new terminology and cultural significance of roles and place 2SLGBTQIA+ have in traditional Indigenous societies and what it means to people who are native, Pacific islander, and people of color: A new word was 2 spirits. The definition is Two-Spirit is a modern, pan-Indian, umbrella term used by some indigenous North Americans to describe Native people in their communities who fulfill a traditional third-gender ceremonial and social role in their cultures. Everything they talked about is so relatable to me and probably to others.

Overall, I really liked how they were showing who they were and what they represented for their community and would really like them over at Clear Sky for some healing and learning. The energy they gave was amazing.



UTOPIA youth program focuses on reclaiming Indigenous Queer identities and cultural practices to help empower students on their personal journey to celebrate who they are in their fullness.



REVELATIONS AND REVOLUTIONS

By Kayla Harstad



Clear Sky tutoring is offered every Thursday from 6-8 pm at NSCC. I never had the chance to start attending until this recently because of my participation in after-school extracurricular activities. My decision to start Clear Sky tutoring was based on the endorsement made by interns who spoke very highly of it. My fellow interns shared about their personal academic improvements and overall positive change in their school and work ethics, so I thought I should give it a try. I knew I needed to start prioritizing my academics after I decided to place myself in IB and Running Start classes because I wanted to challenge myself and grow as a student.

One of the classes I chose to take was IB Biology. I have never been good at science, and I started to notice myself struggling the more time that would pass by. My struggle was directly related to my overall disinterest in the class. Biology class and instruction were without cultural relevancy and I experienced feeling genuinely uncomfortable and out of place. These classes are not designed for BIPOC students. I have come to realize Ingraham and IB Biology courses lack support, lack inclusivity, and segregate students based on performances yet offered no assistance for those of us struggling. I am more than capable of learning the material but I was denied alternative methods of instruction or from a perspective that made sense to me. It was not until I started attending Clear Sky tutoring that I began to grasp Biology material. My tutor Robert

Hall (Tlingit) tutor offered me an Indigenous-based approach and taught me about science from an Indigenous perspective. I learned how our ancestors were unable to break down certain molecules and enzymes because of the traditional foods we were gifted to eat and I gained valuable knowledge about why this is important. I went from knowing nothing about IB Biology, uncertain if I would pass the class, or not, to now amazingly receiving an A on my chapter tests. I now feel empowered, confident, and excited while most importantly connected to the topic. I now fully realize how important it is to have Indigenous educators, tutors, mentors, and staff.

We need to see ourselves in the classroom of every subject and every classroom to fully realize our Ingraham claim to inclusivity. We need more tutoring and academic resources available for our academic relevance and responsiveness. When learning is culturally relevant, responsive and methods for instructing are respectful of our unique learning we can relate the material to our lived worldviews. We cannot separate our identity, worldview, and learning, which is a significant value difference between White pedagogy and tribal pedagogy. Tribal pedagogy is learning who we are as individuals and growing as People. I believe my newfound understanding is far more important and satisfying than making an 'A' in a White supremacy ruled class.

QPR SUICIDE PREVENTION

By Jah'Lene

On February 3rd, 2022 Clear Sky hosted a QPR Suicide Prevention training led by Sarah Sense-Wilson (Oglala, Lakota). QPR is a suicide prevention training. I learned how to recognize suicidal thoughts in others, how to ask them if they need help and to be there every step of the way. This QPR training emphasized on taking suicidal thoughts and ideation seriously and how to approach it. Another important factor in identifying suicidal ideation is that suicidal people may not have extremely blatant or straight forward signs. Some examples I've seen in people who are suicidal or struggling with mental health include; wanting to be alone, talking bad about oneself, not eating, and mood swings. Upon completion of QPR Training I received an official QPR Certificate. I plan to use what I learned to work with people who are experiencing suicidal thoughts and to support in getting professional help.





Volunteer of the Month

Myleaka Webster

Myleaka Webster, I am 29yrs old, born and raised in Seattle, WA. Myleaka is a mom to two wonderful girls. Myleaka is Hidatsa from the Three Affiliated Tribes in North Dakota. Myleaka enjoys fancy dancing, singing, basketball, swimming, reading, walking our dog and cat, and giving back to the community as much as I can. Myleaka is a co-founder of Clear Sky and a graduate of Indian Heritage Middle College. We chose Myleaka as UNEA Volunteer of the month for her support towards rebuilding NWA basketball program. You might see Myleaka on the court coaching, signing people in, or giving basketball ball handling trick moves on the sidelines. We appreciate her enthusiasm, leadership and positive attitude she brings with her every practice and event. Wopila Myleaka!



UNEA UPDATES AND NEWS

By Sarah Sense-Wilson (Oglala)



UNEA has been working diligently to onboard, review and tend to professional development as a concerted effort to raise the level of expertise and efficiency of our working board. Our multifaceted daily operating, developing, organizing and community building is 24/7, our legal and financial responsibilities requires us to maintain our non-profit status and manage multiple grants simultaneously. These duties are taken with great care, while balancing mentorship and programs with direct services to our youth and community. We remain a grassroots, volunteer based organization dedicated to uplifting the voices, visibility and academic success of our youth. Our small but mighty board membership is committed to service and we see this commitment within the context of multilayer systems of racism, oppression and discrimination. Despite the many obstacles, delays, and various barriers we have continued to flourish as a non-profit Native led organization. This past month UNEA has focused our work on providing youth with opportunities for engaging in ceremonies, drumming/singing, and cultural learning. While these cultural and traditional practices are not 'academic' oriented they are identity strengthening, peer to peer bonding, and spiritual connections. We are very appreciative of Elder Whaakadup Monger (Tulalip) for sharing his knowledge, talents and gifts with our urban Indian youth. I can see the difference in our youth as they all begin to walk and talk with confidence, integrity and pride. We know the past couple years has required us all to draw on one another for various forms of support and we will continue to find ways to lift up our youth, families and community.





BILLY FRANK JR. DAY HONOR & CELEBRATION EVENT AT NORTH SEATTLE COLLEGE

By Jazell J

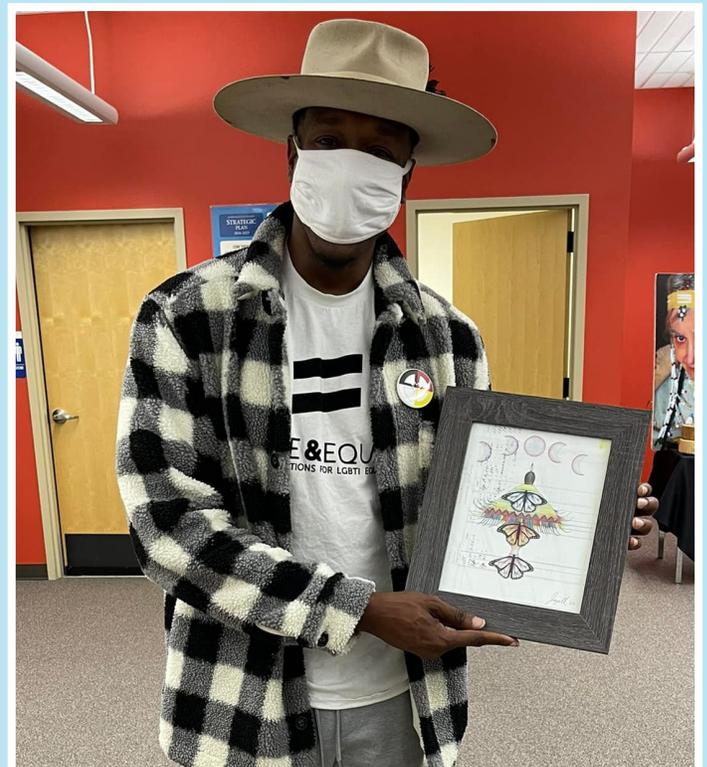
On March 9th we gathered together at North Seattle College to celebrate Costal Salish Hero's birthday Billy Frank Jr (Nisqually). We also celebrated and honored our elders at North Seattle college with a joint effort with Clear Sky interns/staff, community members, volunteers, families, and youth. This special occasion was co-presented by Clear Sky and the Office of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion, but led by Clear Sky youth Interns. The event opened with a prayer song given by Whaakadup and Lisa Monger, as well as 'the Crying song' taught by Whaakadup (a song to grieve and honor those experiencing addiction and alcoholism and to empower them to give them the strength to overcome the struggles). The event at NSC was catered by Daneca Tran with her catering company called Global Chill.

Billy Frank Jr. (Nisqually) was a Nisqually fisherman, a tireless advocate for Indigenous treaty rights and environmental stewardship, born on March 9th, 1931, and sadly passed in 2014. He committed his life to protecting his Nisqually people's traditional way of life and to protecting the endangered salmon whose survival is the focus of tribal life. Arrested over 50 times for standing up, he paved the way for the Boldt decision and led effective fish-ins, which were modeled after sit-ins of the Civil Rights Movement, during the Fish Wars. His works and activism lead to an international ripple effect, impacting not only Indigenous communities but non-natives as well. Billy Frank is a visionary leader, a warrior, peacemaker, and an international symbol of indigenous self-determination. BFJ exemplifies beauty and resilience of Indigenous people. He has forever changed our way of life for the better. We shall continue to honor and celebrate Billy Frank Jr.

Kayla H. (Turtle Mt. Chippewa) and I presented a PowerPoint about the life and legacy of Billy Frank Jr. Billy Frank Jr. showed the bravery and beauty of our people, he represents our Indigenous modern-day Hero and we all need to know his dynamic leadership and activism. Kayla played a large role with presenting to the advisory period on Wednesday March 9th so that all students at Ingraham High School were able to learn about the resilience of Native people through BFJ Day. The highlighting of BFJ was a juxtaposition to students learning only about all the negative and harmful things done to Indigenous people. Currently all most students learn about in today's SPS curriculum is victimization, trauma and defeat of Indigenous people. Next Lalani Norman presented in the honor of woman's history month, highlighting powerful Indigenous woman and their successes, she was well spoken and articulate.

Later Clear Sky interns sang a traditional song taught by Whaakadup 'the Eagle Spirit Calling song'. Gifts were given to all the elders in the room, including two ledgers that I created, my 'spiritual journey' ledger, gifted to D'Andre Fisher (EDI Director) who assisted with making this event happen. My most recent art creation 'Billy Frank Jr.' piece was gifted to my uncle Whaakadup. My gift was to honor him for all the work he has done for our community at UNEA especially for our youth. Together we shared in remembrance

and celebration of Billy Frank Jr. Although we experienced some technical problems, the overall evening of March 9th was special to me and will always be close to my heart. Thank you to all those who helped make it happen.



About Us!
Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council (SCSNYC) provides:

- **Academic Support:**
Instructional tutoring and mentoring.
- **Cultural Learning Activities:**
Song and drum instruction, beading, talking circle, mural painting, storytelling, and art projects.
- **Individual Recognition:** Student of the month, monthly birthdays, and Native graduation acknowledgments.
- **Community Involvement:**
Spirit Walk, social justice rallies, and field trips.
- **Leadership Opportunities:**
Circle discussions, fund-raisers, community organizing, and leadership building projects.
- **Basketball Program.**
- **Student Service Learning.**



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