



# Seattle Clear Sky

## Newsletter

Thriving Through Education. Culture and Tradition



### SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING & UNEA LEADERSHIP DINNER

By Jazell J.

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they practiced their 1-2 punch. Kali offered advise and instruction needed to improve our punches, positioning, and movement. This helped me because, my body was moving awkwardly at first with no bent knees and too dramatic of a movement while throwing my punch. Now I feel confident that I'll be able to swing an effective punch to properly protect myself and get out of a bad situation, if the time ever comes, because you never know. Especially being a young Native girl that takes public transportation to get around the city, this eases some of my worries, as I have another way to defend myself other than the pepper spray key chain that's always at the bottom of my bag along with my emergency alarm.

We finished our training off with a dinner and custom cake with Kali as the UNEA interns asked her questions. Some things I learned about her is that she is a Virgo, the thing she fears the most is not doing all the things that she could've done that the creator had planned out for her life, that every punch is prayer for her as well as her medicine that makes her a better person, and that she always has the mindset that she is ready to die when she's in the ring to box in her match, which is one of the things that sets her apart from the other boxers. I hope we'll be able to meet again, I'm so thankful that I got to met her at least once and experience how truly extraordinary of a human she is. Thank you, K.O. Kali Reis, can't wait to see what you do next.

UNEA was blessed with the presences of the honorable and inspiring soul of Kali Reis at Clear Sky's Self Defense Training and Leadership Dinner hosted by UNEA this past June 18th. K.O. Kali Reis, a beautiful Indigenous Seaconke Wamanoag & Cape Verdean Two-spirit relative, that you should meet. Meeting and conversating with her was an experience like no other. Kali is down to earth, abundantly energetic, charismatic, and genuine attitude compels you, you become star struck but she makes you feel seen and understand, eye to eye. A raw and authentic individual that is caring towards our Indigenous community, and we are incredibly grateful to have had her join us. During our Self Defense Training she gifted us with her life story of why and how she became the World Champion Boxer with many other titles and talents including: motorcycle technician, a counselor, a MMIW advocate, an actor, and a vital community leader. Her story shocked me in all the right ways, it made me motivated and inspired to start boxing right then and there but also made me want to zone out and think about life for a while. Luckily, we then started our Self-Defense Training teachings by Reis that consisted of multiple punching method techniques that she demonstrated while we shadowed and practiced with repetition.

We learned the 1-2 punches, easy and simple enough for all the NWA and Clear Sky youth to grasp while learning a way to defend oneself. Kali was hands on in offering critiques and uplifting encouragement to each individual youth one on one as





## INCLUSION ADVOCACY EVENT

By Joseph Aleck

On June 7th UNEA hosted 'Inclusion and Advocacy' event with panelists; Mane Tuianna, Itai Jeffries and Raven Two Feathers. Each panelist spoke about being inclusive within spaces where you may have the opportunity to be a strong voice. I co-facilitated with Junior Victor and it felt really empowering to hear the relationship everyone had with their culture. Like Mane with the term FA'AFINE which means "In a manner of a woman." I thought when Mane's advice to "Stay in organizations that center your voice and not steal it" was an important point in taking care of yourself. If groups or organizations or Institutions don't listen to you that shows they may just want you for an image of inclusivity, but without the work that comes with listening to the people that may need a voice.

The panelists shared about the importance of finding people who will take care of you when experiencing burnout, because the work in dismantling homophobia and racism is taxing. Especially when sharing about identity within spaces where we experience negative or hostile exclusionary treatment.

An important message Itai brought up alongside Mane and Raven was "find your voice with what you want done and you have community with you." For example, Itai learned of a 13-year-old trans youth targeted at his school, so they went to the school principal, school district and superintendent and successfully shut it down the school. The student was able to mobilize people together for a town hall and made positive change across the country. With that being said, Itai pointed out "You stand on the shoulders of the ones who may not be walking around anymore, the ones that pray for you from before and now." This inspired me and has provided me with a tremendous amount of courage and inner strength to feel empowered to be a change maker in my community. I appreciate the time devoted by Itai, Raven and Mane to share their wisdom, experiences and insights. We take pride in opening up this space for LGBTQ2S+ people and recognize the importance of valuing each and every member of our community.



## SELF DEFENSE LESSONS

By Jah'Lene Armes

On June 18th 2022, Clear Sky and NWA youth had the privilege of hosting a self-defense training with the amazing professional boxer Kali Reis. Kali offered hands on instruction self defense on how to protect ourselves. What I took in from this lesson was learning basics of boxing (1-2 punch and proper stance. We started with warm-ups (push-ups, squats and lunges) followed by clear demonstration on proper boxing stance and how to punch. Kali also taught us how to protect our faces, this taught me to keep focus on my punches, know my surroundings, and watch cautiously who I'm with or nearby. Kali taught us why we needed these lessons, and why we need to learn these skills to defend ourselves as native women.

Over the years as an indigenous youth, I personally have experienced trauma first hand and can see how useful this can be. Ultimately what Kali is giving us is empowerment, she not only taught us physical skills, but she's teaching us to be prepared.

I also learned some interesting facts about Kali she is a professional boxer a world champion, both WBA, WBO and IBO championship belts. Kali is also a critically acclaimed actress in the thriller "Catch the Fair One". Personally, I thought the movie was great, a beautiful storyline on how Kaylee (Kali Reis) is a former boxer and her little sister was missing two years ago and Kaylee hoped she might be alive and in the movie was her passion and goal was to find her little sister. The movie highlighted the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Girls. The movie was both sad, thrilling, and intense because of the journey we all experienced through the eyes of Kaylee. I recommend the movie to everyone and I am happy to have had the opportunity to meet a dynamic, impressive role model to many, Kali Reis is a modern day superhero.



## NWA AND PROFESSIONAL BOXER KALI REIS

This past Saturday NWA youth had the unique experience of meeting with professional boxer Kali Reis (Seaconke Wamponoag tribes). Kali Reis gave a wonderful uplifting message about overcoming adversity and striving for what you have a passion for in life. Kali is a multitalented actress, MMIP Advocate, and successful professional boxer, winning 6 boxing titles including World Champion light weight. Kali shared boxing tips and demonstrated the basics of self-defense while also offering 1:1 instruction for safely protecting and defending yourself when necessary. The lesson was capped off with autographed limited edition posters. And professional photos (Melanie Ponder). The time and care Kali committed to her presentation was underscored by her personal story about her journey through abuse, identity issues, and substance use to finding her gifts through competing on the stage in the arena “fighting for my life”. Kali shared how each fight, even sparing practice carries life and death risk, the risk of permanent injury and loss of livelihood. After the Self-Defense training presentation Kali joined UNEA Leadership students for a special dinner. The dinner was an opportunity for our leadership students to ask personal questions and dive deeper into the life and success of Kali Reis. Kali was receptive and welcoming of all questions and offered thoughtful responses. One highlight of the leadership dinner was the sensitive discussion about Black-Indigenous allyship and the challenges experienced by Kali in being accepted into some indigenous communities. Kali was honest and thoughtful when explaining how she is compassionate and respectful despite experiencing some rejection by Indigenous people. Kali shared about how her Cape Verdian and Indigenous connections are a tremendous strength in her confidence, fight and outlook in life. Please take the time to learn about Kali and her recent film debut “Catch the Fair One” and we wish Kali all the continued success and encouragement to keep living her passion.





## RITE OF PASSAGE WELCOME

By Sarah Sense-Wilson (Oglala)

"Good day relatives, my name is Sarah Sense-Wilson, I am Chair of UNEA and a humble servant to our community. I have the distinct honor of welcoming you all AND to share a few words"

"First, I want to acknowledge our partners and sponsors for this special day. Pilamayeye to North Seattle College; specifically, D'Andre Fisher, and his amazing team of dedicated allies. Thank- you to King County Best Start for Kids, Discuren Foundation and Urban Indian Health Institute."

A warm Welcome to all our graduates, parents, caregivers, family members, volunteers, Elders, and community members. We welcome you to our 15th Annual Rite of Passage Graduation Ceremony today we Celebrate graduates' 'Transformative, Indigenous, Brilliance'.

Congratulations to parents, family members, coaches, mentors, friends, caregivers, educators, counselors, and the community who lifts up our Indigenous youth.

If you are a parent/guardian/caretaker of a graduate please stand, let's take a moment to acknowledge and see you in your joy, pride and fortitude. You all are the collective strength of our community. Wopila to each of you.

Today is Juneteenth, also father's Day, and PRIDE month. We have much to celebrate and commemorate, making today all the more special and memorable.

Juneteenth is a Federal holiday commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. We now see Juneteenth as a widely celebrated day honoring African American/ Black culture, traditions, and history. Happy Juneteenth day everyone.

Let's raise our hands up to all the Father's here today, please stand up if you are a father and/or Father figure. Thank- you for being the protectors, providers, and influencers in our lives. (We have special gifts for each of you).

PRIDE Month is important to our community and we are incredibly grateful to our 2S and LGBTQ+ relatives. You all are valued, and needed to bring and restore balance, health, wellness and wholeness to our community. The rainbow color theme for our event today was chosen to highlight and elevate visibility of PRIDE month and to reflect inclusivity, allyship and unity as fundamental principles we live by daily. This generation of graduates advancing themselves and emerging into adulthood are all fortunate to have navigated covid era with new found strengths, resilience, creativity, intellectual growth, and courage. Courage to pursue academic success, courage to cross the high school threshold, and courage to achieve personal goals. Today you are thriving, you are innovating, you are laughing, crying, growing and finding your purpose. Keep moving forward in prayer, keep moving forward in song, keep moving forward in sweet laughter and joy.

The uniqueness of your high school era is not lost on any of us, your generation got to experience many firsts including; Hit series Rez Dogs, Super Model Quannah Chasinghorse and Ashley Callingbull, Deb Haaland the First United States Secretary of the Interior; Kyrie Irving and Lyndy Waters professional basketball athletes, 2 Native Seattle Mayoral Candidates and OUR keynote Kali Reis the First female Indigenous World Champion Boxer. ...The list goes on and on. All these amazing exceptional talents have a common thread, yes they are indigenous, and most importantly they all have strong ties to their culture, their tribal roots and community.

Pilamayeye to our graduates for giving us reason to gather and share in ceremony today. Our gathering today is not just a special moment in time, today marks a momentous victory in overcoming and disrupting settler colonial expectations, you all are triumphant in accomplishing a milestone of significance in our story. You inspire us, you fill our hearts with pride, you lift our spirits, and most poignantly you gift us HOPE.

A sage elder named Arlene Red Elk explained " All tribal communities share universal elements of ceremony, these 4 elements are; Food, Prayer, Song and Witnesses' Let's all celebrate today in feast, laughter, prayer, song and share in witnessing the blessings and good medicine gifted by all our graduates.





## RITE OF PASSAGE

By Kayla H

"I've been trying to think of words or thoughts to describe my experience being a part of UNEA, however whenever I think of anything, I somehow find myself thinking about all of the times that I've felt loved, joy, and family from my community here at Clear Sky. I joined Clear Sky when I was 8 years old and returned to the program in freshman year of high school."

"I was welcomed back with open arms after being away from Clear sky for a few years. The sense of home was still there, like I picked up from where I left off."

"I started as an intern in 2020, knowing little to nothing of what I was getting myself into, to eventually ending up finding myself and my voice. I went from facilitating online zoom events with few people to taking my presence in front of a whole audience of 2,000 people."

"I'm extremely grateful for the progress I've made because now I see myself as a great public speaker. One where I'm able to speak and share experiences without any fear or self-doubt. I'm looking forward to applying the leadership skills that I've been taught confidently in my future and to the best of my abilities with the help of UNEA."

"I made lifelong relationships with my fellow interns, elders and board members here at UNEA. Ones where I'm able to always come back to whenever I can't find myself, or my reason. These friendships last a lifetime."

"I'm thankful for all of the teachings and lessons I've been taught from my elders like John Romero and Sarah Sense-Wilson who have taught me not only to embrace my identity but to also recognize it in the world we live in and to hold my strength. It is through our trauma that we find strength and I have found my strength through battling many obstacles."

"Take advantage of the opportunities this community has to offer and can give you. If you think it's something you can't do, still give it a try because you might surprise yourself. Be blessed that we get the type of opportunities and resources that are given. From tutoring, to Native warrior athletics, job readiness trainings, resume writing, advocacy training, and elders and mentors who come and teach us cultural teachings. Help show the next generations the resilience they have and the triumph they are able to face."

Thank you clear sky and UNEA

## 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.**



## OUR 2SLGBTQIA+ PRIDE PANEL PRESENTATION

By Junior V

On June 9, 2022. Clear Sky had our three special panelist that are apart of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community! For those who don't know what 2SLGBTQIA+ is let me tell you. What is 2SLGBTQIA? Violence towards First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (2SLGBTQIA) people is an ongoing national tragedy. Here is our 3 panelist and who they are!

Itai Jeffries, PhD (they/them/y'all) is a Yesah/Occaneechi Two Spirit educator, qualitative researcher, and equity consultant. They co-manage the Paths (Re)Membered Project at NPAIHB, a 2SLGBTQ+ health equity initiative, and are a firm partner of biwa|Emergent Equity, Inc., a racial equity and organizational development firm based in Chapel Hill, North Carolina."

Mane is the proud child of Fa'amamata Lologo, from the village of Amouli in Tutuila and Iefata Tuia'ana from the village of Atu'u in Tutuila. Mane's blood ties are connected to the Islands of Tutuila, Manu'atele, and Savai'i. Mane was born and raised in the land of the Duwamish and Coast Salish people (Seattle, WA) and is currently residing on the traditional lands of the Puyallup tribe (Federal Way, WA). Mane is an unapologetic Fa'afafine, Trans-Queer Creative and a fierce youth advocate for our Pasifika Communities in King County and Pierce County. She serves as UTOPIA Washington's youth program manager serving all 2SLGBTQIA in South King County. Mane brings with her 10+ years' experience working with our Pasifika Youth including our Queer and trans youth. Mane believes in a holistic approach when it comes to building safe healing spaces for youth, a space that celebrates all identities and walks of life. In her spare time Mane loves painting and teaching Siva Samoa (Samoan traditional dance) to their students of Lanuola Samoan Performing Arts Academy.

Raven Two Feathers (Cherokee, Seneca, Cayuga, Comanche) (he/they) is a Two Spirit, Emmy award winning creator based in Seattle, WA. Originally from New Mexico, they spent their childhood moving and exploring Indigenous cultures across the continent and Pacific. They returned to New Mexico to attend Santa Fe University of Art & Design, graduating magna cum laude with a BFA in Film Production. In 2020 they released a comic, "Qualifications of Being," about their journey of realizing they are trans and Two Spirit. They grow and explore their practice through the people they meet, and the stories that guide them.

It was nice talking to them and having them share the stories on how they faced their biggest problems of being an 2SLGBTQIA+ person. One of my favorite questions they answered was some school's system are not accepting 2SLGBTQIA+ students what should we do about it? I liked how they answered by saying to keep fighting for who you are and find a community or others to help. I liked that question because it relates to my life situation right now and they really helped me paved a path on what a should do as a youth that is struggling with my school.

I just want to thank them for coming and giving us some knowledge to us for those who don't know the struggle as an 2SLGBTQIA+ person. I would love these 3 panelists again at clear sky.



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