



# Seattle Clear Sky Newsletter

Thriving Through Education. Culture and Tradition



## A WEEK OF MEMORIAL AND DISCOVERY

By Cat Tetrick

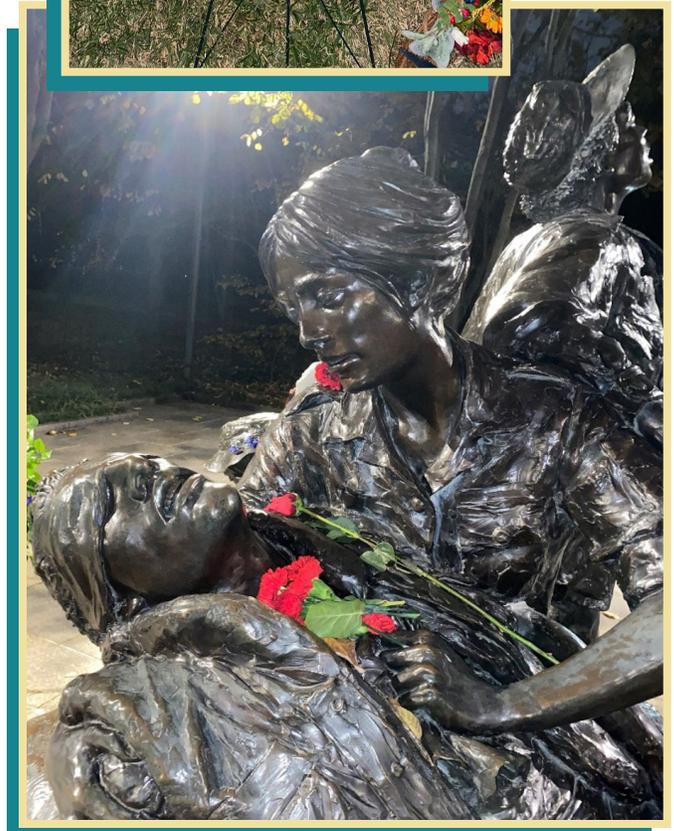
### DECEMBER 2021 ISSUE

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This was my first time ever visiting Washington D.C. and I am incredibly grateful for the experiences it brought me, and mostly the ability to see the Vietnam memorial wall, which was incredibly moving and sentimental to me. My grandfather served in the Vietnam War as an airborne medic, and his sergeant's name is on the Vietnam memorial wall. It was special to be able to see it because I know how important he was to my grandfather. When experiencing the Vietnam memorial wall in person I learned that it is made to show your reflection in the stone so people visiting their loved ones can feel connected with them. The Vietnam woman's memorial was another site that was incredibly moving to me. The depiction of three woman, faith, charity, and hope protecting and caring for a fallen soldier is vivid and detailed. It made me feel very sad and have much respect for the woman who served and nursed our veterans during the war.

I was surprised to learn about how many women and indigenous people served during the Vietnam War, and was even more surprised that it has been acknowledged in monuments and memorials because there is often a lack of acknowledgment in history towards women and people of color. The most important cultural learning experience for me was holding a ceremony on Veterans Day at the Native American Vietnam memorial. Which is designed for ceremonies to be held. It was a very calm and powerful place. The energy felt peaceful and understanding. We spread tobacco on the earth surrounding the memorial, and we wore ribbon skirts that originally, I was not very fond of, but after the experience, I noticed feelings of connection and respect and I am very happy that I was able to appreciate and be a part of the cultural experience.

It was very interesting to see at the United States air Force memorial that one of the statues was a military woman. It makes me happy to see that women have been recognized for their sacrifices in line of duty during the war. I also had great appreciation for the National Museum of African American history and culture. Which had a large section dedicated to Barack Obama and how his presidency changed history. However, I was oddly unimpressed by the White House. Personally, it felt very sad and empty. I was expecting to see a lot of flowers and lights but instead it was a very simple house with an empty green lawn. The city does not have the best energy surrounding it, a lot of history, but with that a lot of loss and mourning. As well as, everyone seems to be very political which may be nice for others but personally, it was uncomfortable for me. Overall, it was a great experience and I learned a lot about American history. I also learned that I can travel, be away from family, be social and invested in learning opportunities when I stay committed to something. Which is important to me.





## INDIGENOUS IN D.C

By Kayla Harstad

During my Washington D.C trip I had an overall wonderful experience. I was blessed and happy to have the opportunity to travel over 2,000 miles to the Nation's capital. It was a huge learning opportunity for me, and it gave me the ability to grow in my leadership and independent skills. Not many students get to do this, and I was thankful I got the opportunity to be a part of it with my internship and learn with other Indigenous youth. UNEA has a great group of youth leaders and I noticed



how we all learned from one another. We asked each other questions, generated new ideas, and made personal connections to everything we did. I believe this trip was a bonding experience and made me feel closer with more interns and chaperones. It makes me excited for our future work we will all do together because of how strong our relationships became on this trip.

What was most impactful was the National Museum of American Indian. I loved seeing all of the beautiful artwork on the walls and I enjoyed searching for the artwork of Tina Norman's father, Darell Norman. When I first walked through each section of the museum, I noticed how each piece provided viewpoints from both perspectives, the Native Americans and the Europeans. I thought that was extremely beneficial because I was able to understand the history from both perspectives of the situation and not just through the western perspective that I learned about in school. It showed the cause and effect from moments in history and I think that is what schools and communities need to do when learning about Native American history. I loved being surrounded by Indigenous art and reading about Indigenous heroes and Heroines in our community.

One of my favorite tourist places was at the end of our trip, the National Archives. This was a museum filled with tons of historical

pieces that I learned about in school during history class. I saw the first constitution, written documents about the women's rights movement, and immigration files. When I was walking around the museum getting ready to leave I read this quote written on the wall from Chief Joseph: "The earth is the mother to all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it," written in 1879. I thought this quote was very impactful because everything that he said was true. We all deserve equal rights no matter who we are or where we live. The earth was given to us to survive upon and it's unfair how we live in a world where everyone isn't granted the same equal opportunities as one another.

Outside of all the learning we did, we were also able to enjoy ourselves with some nice food. One of my goals on the trip was to be able to go to Georgetown cupcakes, which was a cupcake shop that also had their own t.v. show. I was bugging everyone about going here the entire trip. After waiting in line for about 45 minutes I secured 2 cupcakes, one was salted caramel and the other was double chocolate mocha. I am a huge fan of all the frosting. However we weren't able to eat it until after dinner, which took place at Mei Wang chinese restaurant. We ate at this restaurant family style, serving several dishes where we were all able to get a little bit of everything. The cool thing about this restaurant was how the owner serves food to the president. His daughter was also an intern for former president Obama. I thought it was super interesting how when we first started eating, we learned about his story of coming to America.

He said he came from nothing, but now he runs a successful business with himself and his family, and that is truly what makes him happy. I loved how the entire time through our trip we were able to make friends. I won't forget our tour guide, Jennifer, our security guard Terry, and friends we met at the mall dressed in red, white, and blue. I will never forget this trip because of everyone who made it possible and I won't forget about all of the fun memories and friends I was able to meet along the way. In the future, I might work towards working in being a politician.

I think being around an environment where it felt very respected and also being around successful professional people has inspired me to be one myself. I see myself working towards making BIPOC communities more equitable for children and young adults, and somehow incorporating working directly with women would be a huge goal of mine. This trip has impacted me in pursuing a higher education one where I am able to make an impact on other people for the better.



## PLANTING THE SEED OF KNOWLEDGE AND COMMUNITY

By Gia Tran

For five days, Clear Sky Interns along with chaperones Sarah Sense-Wilson, Mark Peltier, and Lenelle Jenkins went to Washington D.C for an immersed educational experience. This was a big leadership opportunity for us interns, as well as Clear Sky youth Jah'leen Armes and Chayton Remle. During this trip we were led by tour guide, Jennifer Oh, who took us around the monuments and told us information we may have not known from just strolling around the sites. Having personally gone to D.C before in 2019, it made a difference in having a tour guide who knew the stories behind certain places and buildings. I learned a lot of fun and historical things involving famous connections to local areas. It felt nice to see and experience places in which those in high politics have been, and meet people also working with those in office.

The environment really impacted me. The cleanliness of the streets and nice monuments inspired me to one day be in a place where I'm making change and living somewhere with that strong sense of official status. It was nice to meet the people we did along our trip such as a few individuals who work with Deb Halaand, Terry, a security guard working at the Library of Congress, and a parachute veteran at Arlington Cemetery. As well as the man who sang traditional songs at the Native Veterans Memorial. Their energy carries on with me to hold myself high and to have a career making change for policy in the lens of equity for all.

I was able to learn about the dynamic histories of Native, Black and Asian Americans in the development of the United States. Looking back into history, it is eye-opening to step back and see where society has gone. Much has changed since the Vietnam War, and it is astounding that it happened within my parents' lifetime, and had recovered from that not too long ago. Visiting the many memorials brought out a deep sense of honor and respect. When visiting the memorials there was a lot of emotion at the sites, and you had the feeling that many stories occurred in which the memorials symbolize. Coming from a Vietnamese background, and the war being why my parents fled leading to my birth here in the States, it feels like an origin story, to an extent. It's painful for many as there are so many sides to the history. Traditions and culture have definitely taught me how to memorialize and respect those who have passed, and remembering to honor their spirit.

Being the oldest intern, I held the responsibility of paying close attention to the safety of the group as well as being mindful and helping with the engagement for learning. It was an honor to be able to experience the amazing sights, food, and lessons, with the Clear Sky interns. This trip nourished and planted a seed within that will continue to grow and share this light with the community. The interns amaze me constantly with their leadership and how they represent UNEA. Sometimes this requires speaking on the spot, making the right choices, being there as a friend and peer support. It is a holistic position and I'm very blessed to be a part of it as well as having this space of support for Native youth.



## MISS TEEN USA CANDIDATE

By Lailani Norman BigSpring

*Ok! sinotahpii Nitaniku kistowa Ohtskoieniskimakii  
(Hello friends I am Yellow Buffalo stone women)*

My English name is Lailani Norman BigSpring. I am 17 years old, Blackfeet indigenous, and I am running as Miss Washington Teen to enter Miss Teen USA.

I feel like why I would be good candidate to represent Seattle, Washington at the national competition for Miss Teen USA is because I believe in true resilience, confidence, knowledge, success, and happiness. I feel like these are important attributes that display true beauty from inside and out. I enjoy being an excellent representative for my communities.

I have specifically been focusing on representing strength within my indigenous, First Nations community, alongside helping my surrounding communities. I have assisted with food severity through UNEA's Elders Care Project. I have advocated for missing and murdered indigenous women, youth and mental health, the withstanding environmental issues, and assisted with the revision of ethnic studies focusing on indigenous history and the social justices that need change for all our people today. I enjoy engaging my time with community outreach, listening to their voices and the standing needs and issues. I enjoy assisting them with representation, public speaking, and educating political figures and those around me, offering support to advocate the changes that are needed in their communities. This is to help create change allowing it to be successful and to happen in a positive manner.





## NWA FOCUS

By Cat Tetrick

My name is Gregg Kalina. Thanks to my good friend, Sarah Wilson, I have been involved with NWA for fifteen years. I began coaching basketball in the Seattle parks' department, where I first met Sarah. I worked with 6th-10th graders for ten years, and during that time I was asked to help Roosevelt HS varsity boys, where we won the 1982 state championship, 58-52, over undefeated Mercer Island in a monumental upset. After that, I was hooked, and continued coaching in the Metro League for 32 years. I was Lakeside, Roosevelt, O'Dea and Chief Sealth. I was blessed to be part of seven more state champion games, winning four.

I am happy to share I fell in love with my Native community from day one. I have always felt embraced and appreciated. The children's smiles, work ethic, and positive spirit for the game always buoys me. Thus, I leave the gym feeling uplifted every time. As far as our program, we focus on a variety of drills: dribbling, passing, shooting, one-on-one, and promote conditioning, cardio and mental—always striving to be the best person and teammate possible. In this current climate, having your son or daughter engage in physical exercise is beyond priceless. And we are always looking for additional members.

So, if you have any friends who would like to join us, Thursdays 6pm-7:30pm at North Seattle Community College, we'd love to see new faces! All my best karma to all the wonderful kids and parents,

Coach Gregg



## WELCOME JERRILYN HAMLEY

We are pleased to welcome Jerrilyn Hamley (Turtle Mt. Chippewa) to the Elder's Advisory Council to Urban Native Education Alliance. She is a retired counseling professional, with over twenty years of experience serving Edmonds, Marysville, and Tulalip youth, teaching in Indian education programs, and building relationships with parents and community agencies in educational settings.

Ms. Hamley has also worked for Northwest-Indian news, KUSD Public Radio & Television, KIRO-TV, National Indian Activities Association, and for the Journal on Adult Basic Education.

Ms. Hamley will bring her expertise in education, counseling, and field experience working with urban intertribal youth. We are excited to have her experienced support and shared dedication to serving our local communities!



## STUDENT OF THE MONTH KAYLA HARSTAD

After UNEA's Gifting Back to Our Elders comedy event on Sunday, Dec 12th, I got a chance to talk to our Student of the Month, Kayla Harstad.

She says this is the first time she's received a UNEA Student of the Month recognition in the newsletter!

We took a step outside of Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center, with a perfect view of Puget Sound just behind us.

Kayla first started attending UNEA events when she was about six or seven years old. Soon, she was participating in NWA's basketball program, which must have served her well, as she's on her high school varsity basketball team! Once she reached her Junior year in high school, Kayla became a youth leadership intern. It will be her second year as an intern in June 2022.

I asked Kayla what experiences does she remember and appreciate most while working as an intern. She recalled her time spent on the Billy Frank Jr. Project, giving testimonies to Seattle Public Schools, and becoming more in touch with her cultural roots through UNEA's programs.

In her own activist work, Kayla, alongside intern Jazell Jenkins, have started an "Urban American Native Club" at Ingraham High School, where they both



attend. Kayla felt the need to further representation of indigenous students and native history at her school. Both Kayla and Jazell are drafting a land acknowledgement for their school. In the past couple weeks, both have given presentations on "the meaning of Thanksgiving" and how the Duwamish tribe has yet to be federally recognized.

By the summer of 2022, Kayla will have graduated high school and plans to attend college. She isn't ready to announce which college she'll attend, but she has several majors in mind: American Indian Studies, Sociology (for counseling), Political Science, and Special Education (for indigenous students). She says people often tell her she could be a politician!

Lastly, I asked Kayla what advice she'd give to an incoming intern. "Use all the resources available to you. Literally," she said. Kayla went on to advise interns build friendships, value your other interns, and work together. And finally, Kayla would like new interns to know, "It's okay to say no."

We appreciate all your work, Kayla! And we look forward to what you'll accomplish in the future!



## A WEALTH OF LEARNING IN DC

By Jazell Jenkins

When arriving to DC, I was astonished by the natural beauty of the outdoor landscapes. I was expecting it to be much more city like, but as we embarked on our first ride to the hotel, we were greeted by a soft orange sunset over bodies of water; with water life and plants of all kinds. Our first stop was to the Fashion Centre at the Pentagon for our first dinner together. There, I thought about my intentions/goals for this educational trip:

(1) to learn about real Native American perspective of our people through art, documents, connections, and stories and how the history of our ancestors shaped our traditional culture values.

(2) to create deeper relationships and connections with all the other youth who came on the trip and to challenge myself to have more small talk with others because I struggle with being extremely introverted.

(3) to experience as many things as possible whether it's trying a new food, seeing a new animal, taking an underground train, or making small talk with a security guard in a museum.

Our tour guide, Jennifer, first brought us to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, where I was surprised to learn about how many Native Americans served in US military. I knew my grandfather (a Native man) served, but I didn't think it would be as popular for other Natives to serve. Which led me to learning about the contributions of Native Americans within the U.S. military that are often overlooked and not recognized.

One of the quotes that I personally found significant was, "Women who stepped up were measured as citizens of the nation, not as women...this was a people's war, and everyone was in it." by Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby. During the time of this war, many women were not treated nor seen equal to men, so to see the representation and voice of a woman who served is important to me and my values as a woman.

On Thursday morning, Veterans Day, everyone joined in on a ceremony to honor Native American Veterans, which include my grandfather, Albert Miller, who served in the Vietnam War. Kayla & Cat's grandfather, also Sarah's family member, was honored, too. Our ceremony took place at the National Native American Veterans Memorial, on the same grounds of the National Museum of the American Indian. During this ceremony, I was able to wear my ribbon skirt I hand sew myself with the help of master seamstresses, Alice and Karen Oligario.

We started our ceremony with a sage cleansing, a Land Acknowledgment given by Kayla, and a blessing. We then all took a moment to bless, acknowledge, and honor family members who served. I gave thanks to my grandpa, acknowledging his unimaginable, extremely traumatizing experience that affects him still to this day, an experience he endured for his country that hasn't served him any good. I honor him today and every day for his willingness put his life on the line. We then sang two songs, taught and given to us by Whakkadup Monger (Tulalip). The first was "Eagle Spirit Calling" song and the second was the "Bear Spirit" song.

This ceremony was special to me in my heart. I hope to continue to be a part of ceremonies like this to offer prayer. It not only brings healing to my grandfather but to me as well. It is a medicine for my spirit and holds great value for me and my mother.



After the ceremony, we were able to experience the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. This was my favorite museum to visit during our trip. Throughout the Museum I was able to have many valuable conversations with my peers and with chaperons. One of the many things I enjoyed were reading about the different viewpoints of Native and European Nations. The most important viewpoints I learned are that all Native Nations were self-governing. This decentralizing non-coercive system gave individuals more independence than the average European enjoyed. When Europeans encountered tribal governments, they became frustrated that no one person could speak for all citizens. Colonial leaders wrote disapprovingly about Indians' lack of subordination.

When then entered an exhibit filled with cards of written experiences of racism Natives experienced. I personally connected to anonymous card that read: "Wait you're Indian? But you didn't look it! I'm sorry should I staple my Navajo Nation ID to my forehead?" I experienced something similar this last summer. A white man went up to me after a public UNEA event, asking if I was Native. When I said yes, he told me, "Oh you don't look Native without your little earrings!" In shock, I didn't respond, although I felt a gut feeling something was just wrong. He continued to ask personal questions about my identity whether my Native blood is from my mom's or dad's side of the family, until another adult interfered addressing what he was doing wasn't ok. There is no look to Native Americans nor any heritage.

On the third and fourth days, we visited the National Museum of African American History & Culture, the National Congress of American Indian office building, and attended a college men's basketball game.

I had such an intense feeling walking through the first part of the underground exhibit at the National Museum of African American. It showed the evil reality of slavery in the United States. The exhibit is a shared story, a shared past, told through the lives of African Americans who helped form the nation. It was a lot to take in, but I'm grateful I had this opportunity to learn about the history not talked about in our classes.

At the NCAI office building, I felt positive energies looking through the Native art. We were each gifted a shirt, a copy of their 75th anniversary book, and a copy of Tribal Nations and the United States. I'm very thankful for all the gifts and warm welcomes.

When at the college men's basketball game, I enjoyed listening to Kayla give her input on how bad the Panther's team was. It was my first time attending a basketball game and it was more entertaining than I thought it would be with the upbeat, hyped crowd and the fast paced game of ball.

In the evening of day five, we went to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. My view on the Vietnam War has changed after learning truths about how deadly and absolutely traumatizing this war really was, seeing the thousands of names engraved into the 300 feet long stone.

The Vietnam War was, mentally and physically, one of the most brutal the United States has ever participated in. Soldiers had to undergo daily miseries and sufferings which wore on them in body



and mind. This was important for me to learn about because I never understood why my grandfather wasn't able to do the everyday things a typical person is able to, nor talk about his past. I do not blame him and pray for his healing.

By the end, I was able to achieve all my goals:

- (1) I learned about woman's rights and equal pay; the long history of enslavement of African Americans and the ongoing oppression they face to this day; Native American racial abuse, societal discrimination, and causes to the generational traumas we still face today; how we still need a lot of change to make our society safer and more equal.
- (2) I built closer friendship and got to know a little more about everyone who joined.
- (3) I reached my goal of living this trip to the fullest. I experience many things for the very first time because of this trip.

I'm thankful I was able to have my mom accompany us. She helped me to stay grounded and give me helpful reminders. My experience in Washington DC was something I will forever cherish.



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH BEN MASAOKA

We are happy to honor Ben Masaoka as our Volunteer of the Month. Ben is a retired teacher who began his role as a volunteer tutor for UNEA during the 2018-19 school year. More recently, some of you may recognize him as the person who sends out our Weekly Reminders.

Ben first heard about UNEA through The Seattle Times. He says he chose to volunteer because he “wanted to be of use for something important.” Ben’s favorite thing about UNEA/CS is that “it is a grassroots organization. For the people, by the people.”

When we asked how UNEA had affected Ben’s life, he simply replied, “In a positive, warm way.” He says he has learned that “there is more depth in the history of this country than is acknowledged by social media and the power that be. UNEA has direct links to that depth.”

Ben’s advice for any new volunteers is to “relax and go with the flow.”

We thank you, Ben, for being a consistent, reliable volunteer who is unfailingly dedicated, humble, understanding and flexible. You are a joy to work with and we hope to benefit from your service for many years to come.

Thank you, Ben!



### 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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