

NAYA 101

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“NAYA Family Center Strives to enhance the diverse strengths of our youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education”

Our Mission: Throughout our 34 year history our mission has changed many times via a variety of processes and community engagement practices. In 2001 the mission was revisited by a group of 150 community members, youth, elders, staff members and volunteers. It was condensed to be one concise, memorable sentence that embodies the positive elements of what we want the community to achieve for itself. We ask that all staff and board members know the mission, and strive to live the mission by their actions and behaviors each and every day. The NAYA Family Center strives “to enhance the diverse strengths of our youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education.”

Our Values: In 2003 at a staff retreat held at Silver Falls Oregon, the NAYA staff worked very hard to identify 10 core values that related to our mission- and wrote out behaviors and expectations that demonstrated what we believe and how we want to conduct ourselves both as a community and also as individuals. In 2006, the NAYA Early College Academy and our Portland elders began a two year process to build on this work by creating ten core values with clear definitions that all elders, board, executive leadership, staff, community, youth, and parents would adhere to when in the building and in the larger NAYA community. A consensus building process ensued to name the top ten values, define the values, and share them with the larger community. This is a journey that we have only begun, but will never end considering that we are an ever changing dynamic community. Elders and youth worked together to determine the words, fifty youth worked to define all ten words, and a team of parents, youth, and elders worked to consolidate the definitions. The final editing and took place at a NAYA staff retreat. This two year process resulted in NAYA’s core values which include respect, balance, pride, giving, community, tradition, kindness, accountability, diversity and leadership. We hope to continue to promote these values with each other, our students and the larger community.

***Respect
Balance
Pride
Giving
Community
Tradition
Kindness
Accountability
Diversity
Leadership***

Federal Policies Effecting Native Populations

Federal Termination Act of 1954: This act terminated a total of 114 tribes nationally, including six tribes in the state of Oregon. This act eliminated tribal status and, in effect, legally removed the title of "Indian" from its members. Former members of these Tribes were legally mandated to give up the status of being Indian and were not eligible for any Tribal rights, or allowed to identify as Indian people. In Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz became the first Oregon tribe to be restored in 1977. The Cow Creek Band in 1982, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in 1983, Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw tribes in 1984, the Klamath Tribes in 1986, and the Coquille Indian Tribe in 1989 followed them. The Federal Termination Act, which lasted into the late 1980's, barred Native people from identifying themselves. Native Americans born from 1954 on have lived the majority of their lives legally unable to claim their identity. This has resulted in an environment where Native Americans and their children have been taught to reject their ethnic identity, especially in regards to federal and institutional identification.

Indian Child Welfare Act (1978): Native American children were systematically removed from their families and placed in foster families and boarding schools in an effort by the federal government to assimilate them into mainstream society up until the early 1980's. The federal government passed the Indian Child Welfare Act in 1978 in an effort to protect the rights of Native American families, although enforcement issues surrounding this law continue today. Prior to the Indian Child Welfare Act being passed, Native American children were 50-60 times more likely to be placed out of their home than other children.¹ This practice effectively led to an environment in which admitting Native American ancestry would lead to a child's removal. As a result, many Native people have been forcefully taught to misidentify themselves as a protective measure.

The U.S. Relocation Act: In the lower 48 states, there are currently 565 federally recognized tribes and in Alaska there are 231 federally recognized tribes. In 1953, there was the federally organized migration of thousands of Native Americans to urban areas of the United States and today 63% of American Indians living in the U.S. live in metropolitan areas of the country.² Portland was one federal relocation site. What this has meant for Portland is that over 300 federally recognized tribes are represented in the Multnomah County Native American population. As expected, this has led to a massive amount of tribal inter-marriage amongst the Native American population in Multnomah County. The barrier this represents in regards to the undercount of Native Americans in Multnomah County is addressed in the preceding section. Another way in which the Relocation Act has led to the undercount of Native Americans living in Multnomah County is that their remains an allegiance to tribal community reservations for Native Americans no matter where their current address is -- for traditional, symbolic, and enrollment qualification reasons. This results in many Multnomah County Native American residents listing their address as being on their tribal reservation.

Other important Acts and Federal Legislation and issues to understand:

- Native American Freedom of Religion Act
- Native American Citizenship
- Native American Voting Rights
- Federal Boarding School Policies- past and present

¹ Health Needs of American Indian and Alaska Natives, Michelle Christensen, Ph.D. & Candace Fleming, Ph.D., University of Colorado, Health Sciences Center, 2002

² Urban American Indians: Myth, Stereotype and Reality, W. Keith Overstreet, 1999

Understanding the history of tribal enrollment

By Nora Livesay

It's difficult to talk about tribal enrollment without talking about Indian identity. The two issues have become snarled in the twentieth century as the United States government has inserted itself more and more into the internal affairs of Indian nations.

Ask who is Indian, and you will get divergent responses depending on who's answering. The U.S. Census Bureau, state governments, various federal government programs and agencies, and tribal governments all have different definitions. The criteria vary from a specific amount of blood quantum and descendency to residency and self-identification.

But, the answers don't really tell you who is Indian. They tell you who can receive health care from the Indian Health Service (IHS), who can get eagle parts from the National Eagle Repository, who qualifies for educational assistance or who can vote in tribal elections. These artificial definitions don't come close to describing how it feels to sit with one's own people sharing a joke or a ceremony. They don't describe the cultural and historical bonds that guide one's life. Identity reaches into the intangible parts of ourselves. The rest are definitions with an agenda.

The agenda behind tribal enrollment is a sordid one, but one that continues. Indians are still defined as a "problem" for American progress, and manipulating tribal enrollment particularly through blood quantum is how federal and state governments have dealt with the issue.

As historian Patricia Nelson Limerick summarized in *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, "Set the blood quantum at one-quarter, hold to it as a rigid definition of Indians, let intermarriage proceed as it had for centuries, and eventually Indians will be defined out of existence. When that happens, the federal government will be freed of its persistent 'Indian problem.'" This was particularly evident in federal relocation programs that encouraged Indians to leave their reservations and resettle in large metropolitan areas beginning in the 1950s through the 1980s.

While many non-Indians are searching for spiritual validation, the real fight over who is Indian is centered on assets; spiritual and cultural assets, land assets and financial resources, which the federal government is obligated to provide based on treaties and subsequent federal trust responsibility.

In exchange for more than 95 percent of the land in what is now called the United States, the U.S. Government signed international treaties that promised goods and services to different Indian tribes. Commonly, these included education, health care, food and annuity payments. Nearly all the goods and services were promised to continue in perpetuity.

Unbeknownst to Indian leaders, the U.S. Government did not have serious intentions to abide by those treaties. But because it was a relatively new nation without much

international clout, the U.S. couldn't abrogate its treaties with Indian nations without jeopardizing those with its European cousins. Instead the U.S. Government embarked on various plans to get rid of the Indians and thereby get rid of its treaty obligations. One method that the government began using in the 1800s and continues to use is federal involvement in tribal enrollment.

Determination of one's own citizenry is a universal principle of sovereignty. Every nation possesses the right to determine its members regardless of how powerful it is or how rich it is. The United States opted to unilaterally preempt the rights of many Indian nations to engage in this fundamental and internal decision-making process.

Federal officials began deciding on a person-by-person basis who qualified as a member of the tribe and therefore, qualified for treaty benefits. Eventually the federal government settled on the idea of blood quantum, similar to what was used to determine which African Americans could be enslaved.

In 1887, under the General Allotment Act (also known as the Dawes Act), Congress adopted the blood quantum standard of one-half or more Indian blood. This meant that if an Indian could document that he (women were excluded) was one-half or more Indian blood, then he could receive 160 acres of tribal land. All other Indians were excluded regardless of their standing within the tribe. After all the "blooded" Indians were parceled out land, the rest of tribal lands were declared "surplus" and opened up for non-Indian settlement.

Limiting the allotted land to 160 acres per qualified person ensured that there weren't enough Indians meeting the genetic requirements to retain the original land base of the tribe; land that was rightfully theirs by aboriginal occupancy and recognized as such by treaties with the U.S. Government. In this way, the aggregate Indian land base was "legally" reduced from 138 million acres to 48 million acres in less than 50 years. (John Collier, Memorandum, Hearings on H.R. 7902 Before the House Committee on Indian Affairs, (73rd Cong., 2d Sess.), U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, D.C., 1934, pp. 16-18).

From then on, the federal government began imposing various blood quantum eligibility requirements on Indians for commodity rations, education, annuity payments and health services.

"By the 1920s, it was also becoming increasingly apparent that much of the agriculturally worthless terrain left to Indians after allotment lay astride rich deposits of natural resources such as coal, copper, oil, and natural gas; later in the century it was revealed that some 60 percent of all "domestic" uranium reserves also lay beneath reservation lands. It was therefore becoming imperative, from the viewpoint of federal and corporate economic planners, to gain unhindered access to these assets. Given that it would have been just as problematic to simply seize the resources as it would have been to abrogate the treaties, another expedient was required. This assumed the form of legislation unilaterally extending the responsibilities of citizenship (though not all the rights; Indians are still regulated by about 5,000 more laws than other citizens) over all American Indians within the United States." (M. Annette Jaimes 1992, p. 127).

U.S. citizenship was conferred in 1924, whether it was wanted or not. The resulting dual citizenship of Indians served to confuse the issue and allowed government and corporate representatives to negotiate with individual U.S. citizens and prevail with arguments about the "greater good," thereby bypassing Indian governments.

In 1934, the federal government interposed itself one step deeper into internal tribal affairs with the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) also known as the Howard-Wheeler Act. The ultimate goal of the IRA was to dissolve native nations and absorb Indians into the dominant culture. A committee selected by the secretary of the interior had determined that Indians comprised an unbearable financial burden for the federal government and advocated their dissolution by humane means.

The IRA used a model for tribal governance based on a corporate structure with a governing council and constitutional bylaws or charters. The Bureau of Indian Affairs developed a boilerplate constitution that was distributed to all the tribes. All constitutional bylaws and all council actions were made subject to the approval of the secretary of the interior. The government model put forth by the BIA ignored traditional and more democratic consensus governing models already in use by tribes.

The act had to be approved by a majority vote of "eligible" tribal members before it could be completely implemented. How the IRA was railroaded through is familiar to many people. Tribes who didn't hold referendums were automatically included. Tribes where most people refused to participate and didn't vote, were included because a non-vote was interpreted by the BIA as a yes vote. There were also cases of more blatant election fraud.

"On the Pine Ridge (Oglala Lakota) Reservation in South Dakota, there weren't enough abstentions to carry the day against those voting against the IRA. It was subsequently discovered that a sufficient number of dead people had cast ballots to provide a pretext for ratification. Even after this was established to have been the case, the ratification was described as 'binding' on the Oglalas." (M. Annette Jaimes, p 117; see also Graham Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism: The Administration of the Indian Reorganization Act, 1934-45*)

With these tactics, the BIA brought nearly every Indian nation under IRA provisions. Provisions for tribal enrollment were part of the boilerplate constitutions forced on tribes. A reading of a number of tribal constitutions today will show that most have not been significantly changed since the 1930s. Enrollment provisions can usually be found under Article II or Article III and most are identical.

Enrollment as laid out under the IRA constitutions, starts with a base roll for defining membership. The base roll is usually a U.S. Census roll, an allotment roll or another BIA-compiled roll, such as the Durant Roll of 1910. Because the U.S. government determined who was included on the rolls, many have argued that the process was biased from the start. Today, the BIA is still responsible for compiling and maintaining rolls. When there is a "federal election" on a reservation to deal with constitutional issues or the election of tribal officials, the BIA runs the elections and uses the rolls to determine who is eligible to vote. (The list of those eligible to vote may or may not be the same list as those enrolled in the tribe.)

From the base rolls, most constitutions include as members anyone who at the time of the adoption of the constitution could prove descendancy from someone on the rolls. After adoption of the constitution, future generations often have to meet a number of criteria usually relating to descendancy from the rolls, their own residency or that of their parents when they were birth, blood quantum or membership of one or both parents. One-fourth degree blood quantum of the particular tribe in question is a nearly universal requirement. Almost all constitutions prevent people from being enrolled in more than one tribe, regardless of their actual blood quantum. These provisions inherently lead to problems of fractional heritage.

The history of tribal enrollment has caused some Indians to refuse participation in the federally sponsored enrollment process. Leonard Peltier expressed a representative sentiment, "This is not our way. We never determined who our people were through numbers and lists. These are rules of our colonizers. I will not comply with them." (quoted by Churchill 1991, p. 12).

But, refusing to participate can also be seen as leaving a void in tribal affairs. Often this void has been filled by people whose interests are not in sync with protecting tribal sovereignty and empowering the Indian community, but rather in enriching themselves.

Many Indians would like to become enrolled with their tribes, but find the process excruciatingly difficult. Often it is difficult to obtain a copy of the tribal constitution and then to find a copy of the base roll. A significant amount of genealogical research is required even before an applicant can meet other criteria.

Although constitutions provide that tribal councils can pass ordinances to govern the enrollment process and establish enrollment committees to review applications, most have not. This leaves potential tribal members without a clear starting point or explicit procedures, and opens the door for real and apparent abuse of the process.

Tribal enrollment raises thorny issues in Indian communities, not the least of which is identity. Should federally imposed blood quantum requirements be thrown out? If they are, how does one ensure that only "real" Indians are enrolled? If they aren't thrown out, how can Indians avoid fulfilling the federal government's original objective of defining themselves out of existence?

What about future generations of Indians? How can tribes ensure that Indian children being adopted outside of the Indian community are not lost? How can tribes address the issues of fractional heritage and the continuing trend toward intermarriage with non-Indians?

Perhaps it is time for Indians to take back the issue of tribal enrollment. As sovereign nations, tribes can and should determine their own citizenry without interference or approval by any federal or state government or agency. Ultimately, tribal enrollment policies will influence the future of tribal governments and the future of Indian nations. At the very least, Indians need to educate themselves about their own constitutions and unique set of circumstances. Becoming informed is the first step toward thoughtful community discussions and avoiding the failures of past policies.

Bow and Arrow Culture Club Agreement

Bow and Arrow Culture Club began in the late 1950's, making it one of the longest-standing grassroots cultural organizations in Portland. NAYA Family Center started in the early 1970's by many of the same parents and community members who were involved in the Bow and Arrow Culture Club. These two organizations have a long history of supporting each other in their important missions to serve the Native American community.

In 1994, Bow and Arrow Culture Club began to advocate with Multnomah County to provide culturally-specific services to the Native American Community; subsequently, several Bow and Arrow parents participated in writing a grant to create direct social services to Native American children in Multnomah County. When the grant was received, there was much dialogue and discussion about the use of the resources; ultimately, it was decided by Bow and Arrow and the rest of the community that NAYA Family Center would be lead agency to serve the community.

While Bow and Arrow continues to be one of our longest-standing organizations within the community, their intent has always been to be a grass roots organization focusing on providing positive family and community activities, as well as passing on culture to youth through powwows. Due to this specific mission, Bow and Arrow is very informal and aside from their regular fundraising specifically for the powwow, they do not have paid staff or an operating budget. A significant struggle for them is in finding affordable and community friendly space that they can regularly count on.

In 2004, NAYA Family Center invited Bow and Arrow to use the Mississippi Ballroom space to hold their Friday night event. The concept was that a positive family-friendly event was to be held each Friday and volunteer community members would run it while NAYA Family Center supported the cost of the facility.

Neerchokikoo

A Traditional community for the Chinook, and a contemporary home for the Native people of Portland today

The first historical documentation of the Indian Village referred to as Neerchokikoo was an entry in the journal of British explorer Lt. William Robert Broughton who explored the Columbia River and its estuaries in October of 1792. On October 29th, 1792 Broughton described a "distant snowy mountain" that he later named Mt. Hood, and logged an encounter with a "friendly old chief" named "friendly reach" who offered to provide them with lodging, and comfort for the night. They reached the village at about 7 pm and their group was accompanied by 25 canoes with some 150 people helping along the journey. Broughton was reluctant to stay at the village, so he proceeded upriver about a mile and camped for the night. (p. 559-560). What is described is a beautiful village site connected to river estuaries, with over 25 plank houses, and an additional 24 structures with straw and bark roofs. There was one large house built with wide boards that was believed to be the central meeting place.

The first maps of the village site drawn in 1804-1805 by Lewis and Clark make a reference to the "Sh-ha-las" people- and once again confirm the village site of Neerchokikoo as a Chinook band, as well as a reference to the Skil-lute Nation. The village site is confirmed again by the Corps of Engineers survey in 1883 showing the Columbia Slough access to river sites as well as the map from the Columbia River Renaissance efforts.

It is reported by Robert Boyd's book "The coming of the Spirit of Pestilence" that the inhabitants of the village died and moved away during the "cold sick" great epidemic of the early 1830's, and that the original inhabitants were subject to illness and death associated with disease as well as murder and intimidation by some of the earliest settlers and founders of Portland.

In November 1959, a two Spanish two reales silver coin with the date 1777 and a hole drilled in it was discovered a few blocks away from the Columbia Blvd/Neerchokikoo site. An article describing the find was published in the December 1st issue of the Oregon City Enterprise courier to discuss the village site and the artifacts found. This marked a difficult time for the site with illegal digs and excavation efforts removing many of the original artifacts from the location and traditional village site (Archaeology of Oregon: Portland: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon State Office, 1993). Today some of those items have been returned to NAYA Family Center, and subsequently to the Chinook Tribe.

For the past 15 years, the Native American community of Portland has adopted this village site as an important historical and cultural place for our youth and families to gather and honor our collective culture and heritage. Native American youth have participated in the replanting of indigenous plants, cleaning up of pollutants in the slough and lakes, as well as bringing back the voices and views of the original inhabitants. In June of 2006 over 700 members of the Native American and larger community gathered to celebrate the move back home, as well as ask permission from the descendants of the village and Chinook Nation if we could make our permanent home in this place. Permission was given and a new chapter in the history of Portland's Native American community has begun.

Chinook Jargon & NAYA Family Center

Chinook Jargon Language History

Chinook Jargon is a Native American language spoken throughout the Pacific Northwest and has been called "the oldest trade language in the history of the northern continent." The story of the Chinook language, or what it is often called "Chinook Jargon," is the story of Native American culture and Pacific Northwest history. It is a trade language; one which has historically been viewed as a unifying tribal language. Prior to European contact and still to this day, the Pacific Northwest is one of the most diverse linguistic areas in the world, home to hundreds of distinct tribal nations and respective languages. Chinook Jargon was used among many Native American tribes to trade and establish intertribal relationships. In later years it was also used to trade and negotiate with settlers and newcomers to the area. Chinook Jargon was used as a way of bridging the communication gap created by the vast indigenous diversity of the area. Chinook Jargon is a clear reflection of the oral tradition and culture of this history, as well as our reality in the place that we currently reside. One of the greatest strengths of this language is the vast geographic area that it was used. Many people are surprised to learn that Chinook Jargon was spoken as far north as the islands off of British Columbia, south to Northern California, and west through Montana and Idaho. Hundreds of tribes used Chinook Jargon for trade, exchange, and every day communication.

As tribes were relocated to reservations and intermixed, the language became more prevalent; on some reservations where multiple tribes were located on the same land, it became the dominant language of communication. For example, the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde has adopted Chinook Jargon as the official unifying language of their nation. This language was also commonly used on the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indian Reservation, among others. This is a living language that is still used today for prayer, ceremony, and every day usage; it is a critical part of their culture and identity. A number of universities, including Oregon State University, Lane Community College, and the University of Oregon, offer Chinook Jargon as an accredited language for college students.

NAYA Family Center History

In 2004, NAYA Family Center held several community and board meetings in an effort to discuss a potential grant application regarding language and cultural preservation. This sparked a long discussion by community members regarding the complexity of offering language classes to a multi-tribal community such as NAYA, which has over 380 tribes represented. Initially, the discussion began around inventory of curriculum and teachers, as well as the numbers of youth that we serve representing various tribes. The conversation was challenging, considering the strong emotion and connection that community members felt about their own tribes; setting priorities around which languages would be taught first; and how we, as a multi-tribal urban organization, could be most respectful. Under the leadership of the elders, it was decided that the most respectful direction to go would be to honor the tradition that most tribes practice—and

honor the tribal land of the Chinook people that we are currently residing on. The elders and community felt that NAYA Family Center should honor the historical land that we reside on by teaching and promoting the Chinook language.

Chinook Jargon has been selected as the primary language focus for NAYA's first language preservation project, due to its unifying qualities and the historical connection. However, it is not meant to take the place of any individual's own language or tribal dialect, if different. It is only a starting place to begin the effort of learning language and culture as a common practice each and every day at NAYA Family Center.

The goal of the Language and Culture Committee at NAYA Family Center is to use Chinook Jargon as a starting point from which we can grow and refine the process of language preservation, with the aim of incorporating other languages as part of our scope of work in the future. In the next several years, we would like to focus on incorporating Chinook Jargon into the facility and culture of the organization, as well as teaching and sharing the history of the Chinook village site, Neerchokikoo.

Role of the Language and Culture Committee: This committee is a small working group charged with the implementation of the Chinook Jargon language project, as well as prioritizing other critical language and culture activities.

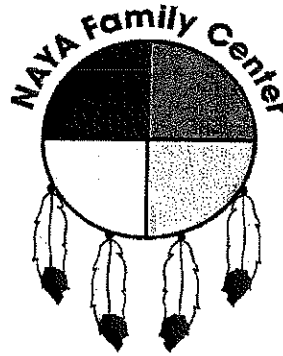
Things We Have Accomplished Thus Far:

- Signage project
- Room naming project
- Curriculum development and library creation
- New staff member orientation
- Youth field trips and language instruction groups

Future Language and Culture Projects and Goals:

- Language preservation weekly meetings for staff members
- Signage recognizing the Chinook that we regularly use in the community
- Expansion of other language offerings
- Regular Chinook jargon and Native language classes as part of the daily schedule in the Academy
- Educational information pertaining to the Neerchokikoo history inside of the NAYA building
- Completion of the culture statement for the NAYA organization
- Increasing the number of culture trainings and learning opportunities

The NAYA Family Center Emblem



The medicine wheel is circular with a balanced cross. The circle represents life, and the two intersecting lines represent the two roads in life, the good road "the red road" and the bad road, represented by black. The red road is most difficult to travel while the black is a wide and easy way to go. These are the two basic choices in life. We chose one of the two roads in every situation in life.

The wheel also symbolizes the equality that applies to all living beings. No one living being is greater or lesser than any other living being. We are all different but, the differences aren't interpreted as greater then or less then. We all share a common journey Maka Wiconi "life on earth".

The Four elements of the medicine wheel represents four realities of life, the four seasons, the four directions and the four basic elements of life. The four sacred colors are also included in the medicine wheel. Black Red Yellow and White:

Black: West, Purity, Strength, Self Understanding: West is the spirit of water. It is the direction from which darkness comes. It is the power of change, the place of dreams, introspection and the unknown.

Red: North, Wisdom of Experience. North is the spirit of wind. The cold wind blows from the north. It is the power of wisdom. Here we take time to reflect on what we began in the east, in the morning, in our youth, which provides the wisdom of experience.

Yellow: East, Power of Knowledge, New Day. East is where the sun rises. The eastern spirit of sun or fire brings warmth and light. It is the place of beginnings. Its light brings wisdom. It is the power of knowledge.

White: South, Gift of Life, Power to Grow. South is the sun at its highest point. It is the direction from where warm winds blow. South is the spirit of earth, the power of life. It represents peace and renewal.

Eagle feathers are also included in the NAYA Family Center Medicine wheel logo. The eagle is the strongest and bravest of all the birds. It will ride the updrafts until you can

no longer see it, the eagle will carry your prayers to the creator. For this reason, the eagle and its feathers are sacred and have been chosen as a symbol of the bravest and holiest. Its feathers are given to another in honor, and are worn with dignity and pride. They are treated with great respect.

Eagle feathers are used all over the world as ceremonial instruments and are considered to be the most sacred healing tools. They are a symbol of power, healing and wisdom. Eagle represents a state of grace that is reached through inner work, understanding and passing the initiation tests that result from reclaiming our personal power.

It is to live in balance with heaven and earth.

The Honoring Necklace

In 2001 the role and attendance of the spring Youth and Elders event increased significantly at the same time that volunteerism and community engagement was on the rise within the organization. At that time, it was clear that an honoring strategy that could be built upon was necessary to recognize those community members that have continued to volunteer and contribute year after year. We also wanted to identify an honoring tradition that was recognized by an Oregon Tribe with historical ties to the Portland Area. Sasha Shoemaker, who held the Miss Siletz title at that time, gifted the tradition of the honoring necklaces to NAYA in May of 2001 and made the first 20 necklaces that we gifted.

The history and the culture of the necklace are very important and are directly related to the purpose of our honoring event. The shells represent community wealth, as demonstrated by giving to others and the community, not monetary wealth. The shells that we use are collected on the Newport and Lincoln City coast by a Native elder. Many different colors and styles of beads are used in order to make each necklace unique and individualized. The two strands symbolize the connection between the past and an investment by the community in the future. The necklaces are constructed throughout the year by staff, elders, community members and volunteers. The NAYA tradition is that individuals are gifted a necklace each year that they invest in the community. Over the years they will collect multiple necklaces and wearing them at the honoring ceremony or other gathering is an opportunity to show how treasured that individual is in the community.