

Our planning committee structure includes:

- Canoe and Equipment Supplies,
- Puller Training,
- Curriculum,
- Communications,
- Protocol and Ground Support,
- Partnerships, and
- Resource Development.

While we have made significant progress in achieving our goals through generous support from interested community members, unsolicited donations, and allies, we are a small group and we need you. Your interest, ideas, suggestions, vitality, generosity, time and energy are welcome! Everyone, youngsters, families, friends, neighbors, students, mentors, teachers, elders, beginners, professionals, any and all allies are welcome to join our family. If interested you may call:

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By pulling together we can make this happen. Thank you for taking the time to visit. We'd like to hear your thoughts about our NAYA Family Canoe Journey: *A Relational Worldview Awakening*.

“Water is life. It carries our dreams. It cleanses our souls. The water is blessing us” ...Frank Alby, Inupiat, elder and NAYA Canoe Journey spiritual helper.

“Let us put our minds together and see what kind of life we can make for our children” ...Sitting Bull, Hunkpapa

Ojibwe Water Song

By Dorene Day, Ojibwe

Ni-ibe, gi-zha ge-igo

Water, we love you

Chi mii-gwetch a-we ni-mi -go

We thank you

Gi-zha we ni-mi-go

We respect you

“Continue to contaminate your own bed and you might suffocate in your own waste”

...Chief Seattle, Suquamish-Duwamish

Check out the NAYA Family Canoe Journey on Facebook or the NAYA website
www.nayapdx.org.

Contributions are appreciated.

The Native American Youth and Family Center



NAYA Family Canoe Journey: *A Relational World View Awakening*



Portland Youth and Elders Council Community Initiative



Beginning

Steeped in the mists of history, our ancestors here in the Northwest, traversed the pristine waters of this, our Turtle Island, by canoe. Those tribal journeys required strength, endurance, teamwork, sacrifice and perseverance for not only the individual but for the entire people's survival. So it is today.

The concept of tribal canoe journeys changed over time. For many years journeys were banned, as all traditional ceremonies were, because of their important spiritual emphasis. In 1989 a tribal group from the Seattle area re-enacted the journey for the centennial and the annual journey was reborn.

In the meantime, NAYA Family Center took root, beginning as a support effort for Native youth to engage in healthy and supervised activities. In 1974, a group of Natives saw too many social injustices and knew they could and had to make a difference. They met in small groups to celebrate, discuss and share their heritage and culture. It has been nearly forty years, but today we continue to celebrate the difference that small group made! NAYA has grown exponentially and is now considered a shining model for urban Indian community development.

NAYA utilizes the Relational Worldview Model as their theory of change. This model was developed in partnership with National Indian Child Welfare Association, PSU, and the community. The model is based on one's physical, emotional, spiritual, and social development; they are all inter-

connected and inter-dependent. We see the NAYA Family Canoe Journey as a metaphor of a person's health and development.

Recently

In March 2013, a group of Elders began meeting formally to develop and plan ways to implement the Canoe Journey at NAYA. Our mission:

- to honor our ancestors,
- to inspire our youth,
- to document the history of the Canoe Journey, and
- to contribute significantly in the lives of our urban Native American community by building on cultural strengths and assets.

The NAYA Family Canoe Journey emerged as a community initiative from the Portland Youth and Elders Council, a grassroots advocacy group and community outreach project. NAYA is now located on the site of an ancient Chinook village, Neerchokikoo. It borders the Columbia Slough and Whitaker Pond, perfect settings for aspiring seekers and allies to develop.

In 2013, our Canoe Family met at least 24 times as a planning group, conducted at least 12 site visits and officially presented our project at least 8 times in various community settings. We traveled to the 2013 Quinault Journey, and visited the Grand Ronde Tribal Canoe Journey Family.

At each place we visit we listen, observe and learn new things to pass on to our youth.

In July 2014, the NAYA Board of Directors passed a Resolution supporting our efforts. We conduct workshops, help NAYA staff to continue to incorporate Native culture into all aspects of the curriculum, and are seeking support from other organizations to work on a comprehensive, sustainable future of this effort. In order for this community initiative to continue we need volunteers, allies, training opportunities, and project staff specifically for this project. Most importantly we strive to have a traditional canoe! Our goal is to participate in and be recognized in the 2016 Nisqually Canoe Journey as the NAYA Family Canoe Journey.

The Future – and You

We are a small group of volunteers and community members dedicated to NAYA's mission:

“To enhance the diverse strengths of our youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education.”

NAYA's infrastructure is long-standing and impeccable. Our Family Canoe Journey meets bi-weekly 12:30–1:30pm in the NAYA Family Center's Elders room. All are welcome to participate. Please join us!