



# NAYA NEWSLETTER

EMPOWERING THE LIVES OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE PORTLAND AREA

SUMMER 2018

## A DECADE OF THE OREGON LEAD PROGRAM

**CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF NURTURING INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP**



On Saturday, June 9th, NAYA LEAD graduates gathered at the Historic Overlook House in North Portland to celebrate their accomplishments. It was an important time to reflect on the history and future of LEAD, and to recognize the impacts of the program in the community.

Oregon LEAD (Leadership and Entrepreneurial Apprenticeship Development) is one of six culturally-specific leadership development programs housed by the Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) Bridges initiative. This initiative honors cultural specificity while building a multicultural movement for collective action.

Our tenth Oregon LEAD cohort convened last November, and its 19 participants graduated this April. Each cohort brings together a diverse group of young leaders from many tribal and professional backgrounds and offers a range of skill building opportunities, covering topics like values-based budgeting, power analysis, and advocacy trainings at Portland City Hall. Just as important are the friendships that people make over monthly gatherings.

Many LEAD alumni have made major career advancements: 2014 graduate Anna Allen, *Shoshone/Bannock*, is now the Policy and Engagement Advisor for the Office of Multnomah County Chair, Deborah Kafoury; 2017 graduate Amber Faist, *Coquille*, is the Marketing and Business Intake Coordinator at the Oregon Native American Chamber (ONAC); 2016 graduate Amber Schulz-Oliver, *Celilo/Yakama*, is the Executive Director of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Economic Development Corporation; 2017 graduate Amory Zschach, *Cheyenne/Arapaho*, is Strategic Communications Manager at the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA); 2014 graduate Leah Altman, *Lakota*, is the Development Director at Verde, and 2017 graduate Lluvia Merello, *Inca*, is the Collaborative Organizer for the 350pdx Portland Just Energy Transition. We are very excited for the great work these graduates are doing in the community.

At the celebration, NAYA Executive Director Paul Lumley, *Yakama*, spoke about the great challenges still lying ahead in areas like housing, health, education, environmental stewardship and building wealth within the local Native community. Lumley shared with the group that LEAD is a big part of the solution.

"Each cohort is an experience," says Lumley. "They come together for nearly a year, and they develop bonds and friendships that transcend through time."

Lumley also says that LEAD is particularly important for its cultivation of Native leadership – focusing on connection to the air, land and water, keeping in mind connection to elders and the responsibility to future generations.

"We need to stick together as leaders, support each other and show up in a responsible way," said Lumley.

"We also need to hold each other accountable when necessary, because if we stick together we can overcome these challenges, and we can make change a reality."

# NAYA'S NEW SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

## AN INTERSECTION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

This summer NAYA received funding to develop a pilot project in experiential Indigenous education. With support from the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC), NAYA will host youth from July 2nd to August 3rd in the Resurgence Summer School. This year's theme is "Responsibility to Ourselves, Our Land, and Our Water," connecting modern sustainability to personal responsibility, and maintaining traditional relationships with the land.

We will be partnering with the Columbia Slough Watershed Council and Wisdom of the Elders to provide outdoor excursions, community gatherings and opportunities to cultivate inter-generational relationships.

The school will kick off with a traditional salmon bake directed by Chief Wilbur Slockish, *Klickitat*, who will be guiding students through construction of a traditional salmon pit on the NAYA campus, where it will remain for future events to prepare healthy and spiritually-rooted traditional foods.

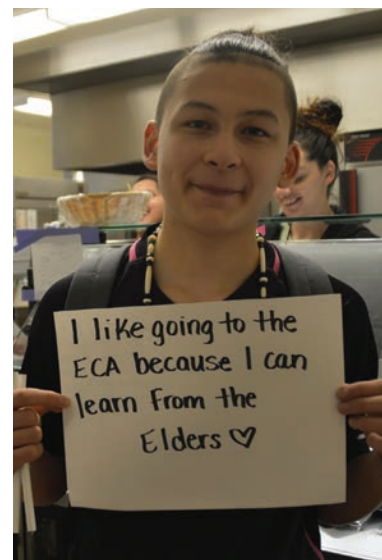
Every day will begin with a smudge, prayer, and storytelling. The school will also include weekly hikes to natural areas to help students make connections to their local environment.

"We know that being out in nature contributes to well-being – that's backed up by traditional knowledge and by modern science," says ECA Principal Lisa Otero. "Our goal is to have our youth get connected with nature, show them the benefits of being outdoors, and show them how accessible it is – because these places are very close by."

The group's nature hikes will be led by ECA math teacher Laura Payne, who has experience leading youth camping and backpacking trips. Other ECA staff teaching this summer include Spanish instructor Mare Ramirez, science teacher Kristy Cordero and Principal Lisa Otero. With the goal of "decolonizing our drinks" through the Drop Sugary Drinks Campaign, funded in part by a grant from the Notah Begay III Foundation, NAYA Community Health Worker Jennifer Brixey, *Choctaw*, will provide students with a variety of healthy drinks and teas using foods harvested on student field trips. The school will wrap up with a field trip and a two night camping trip.

ECA staff is developing the program for the short summer session with the hope of expanding it throughout the school year. This experiential, project based curriculum, offered through our culturally specific lens and designed with a framework for 21st Century Learning, will prepare our students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in work, life and citizenship.

We respectfully thank Chief Slockish for sharing his knowledge with our students.







# 2018 ECA LUNCHEON IS A HUGE SUCCESS

**RAISING IMPORTANT AWARENESS AND MUCH NEEDED FUNDS FOR OUR CULTURALLY SPECIFIC SCHOOL**

On April 25th, more than 270 guests gathered for our Ninth Annual Early College Academy Luncheon, and it was a tremendous success! With generous support from event sponsors and donors, we raised a record breaking \$70,000 for our students, teachers and culturally specific education.

The event showcased the powerful voices of our youth through the spoken word of our Sacred Poets, Veronica Green, *Klamath*, and Talise Mendoza Green, *Klamath*; the honor song from language keeper Aldo Scott, *Nez Perce*; and the keynote speech of DeVonntae Amundson, *Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo*, who shared his personal story of hardship, perseverance and reconnection.

NAYA deeply appreciates our students for their hard work, and our many supporters who have helped them to succeed.

*Congratulations to the ECA Graduates, Class of 2018!*

Thank you to our Major Sponsors

Turquoise



Coral



Abalone



*L: Sacred Poets, Talise Mendoza Green and Veronica Green*

*M: DeVonntae Amundson delivering keynote speech*

*R: Aldo Scott performing honor song*

## SEND A STUDENT TO COLLEGE

**SUPPORT THE ECA SCHOLARSHIP FUND TODAY AND DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT FOR OUR YOUTH**



With your help, our Early College Academy graduates will be able to take that next important step and go to college. Thanks to the generous support of our partners at Portland Community College, the first \$4,700 in donations received will be matched 100%!

Many of our students would have never considered the possibility of going to college if not for the ECA. The Early College Academy changes lives, and you can help our students sustain their momentum with your timely and important support.

Please make a donation to our scholarship fund **TODAY**, and help our students realize their dreams through higher education.

Donate online at [nayapdx.org/scholarshipfund](http://nayapdx.org/scholarshipfund)



# FOR THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN

## THE BEST INDICATOR OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

NAYA's Family Services Department offers a suite of Early Childhood programs to help improve outcomes for children, and to empower families with the resources they need to support their child's development. Three programs working together to provide culturally specific learning opportunities for parents are NAYA's Positive Indian Parenting program, Community Education Worker program, and Chxi San Playgroup.

Classes in Positive Indian Parenting provide parents with effective techniques rooted in Native traditions, with topics like Traditional Behavior Management and Lessons of the Cradle Board. Each class is open to parents, grandparents and child caregivers of all ages.

"When you have a child, it can bring up any trauma you experienced growing up," says Parent Support Specialist Jennifer Scheib. "The Positive Indian Parenting class helps parents identify practices that are most aligned with tradition, and also identify practices associated with historical trauma and assimilation."

During biweekly home visits through the Parents as Teachers program, NAYA staff work with families to identify their developmental goals and create a roadmap to reach them. Staff also help families access the additional resources they need, including energy assistance through our Community Development program and counseling referrals through Family Services.

Weekly group activities are also offered through our Chxi San Playgroup (Chxi San means "New Day" in Chinuk Wawa), providing a space for families to play and engage in cultural activities while giving parents an opportunity to connect with each other. Chxi San also coordinates field trips with parents and children to nature parks, farms, and science museums.

As summer approaches, Chxi San participants have been able to spend more time outside. In May, Abigail Mendez, Bilingual Parent Support Specialist, and Brandi Starbird, Parent-Child Support Specialist, were able to take the Chxi San playgroup on a walk around Whitaker Pond, where children spotted ducks, jumped off logs and shared a hammock. During each playgroup, children are able to enjoy free healthy snacks, and parents are able to step outside and take a break.

"Child development is centered around play," explains Mendez. "Play allows children to develop in many ways, including problem solving, fine motor skills, language and imagination. We take play seriously in Chxi San."

Are you a parent interested in joining Chxi San? The playgroup meets twice a month on Thursday or Friday from 10:00 am to noon. Please check our calendar for details at [nayapdx.org](http://nayapdx.org). For more information contact Abigail Mendez, Bilingual Parent Support Specialist at 503.288.8177 ext. 347 or [abigailm@nayapdx.org](mailto:abigailm@nayapdx.org).





# HEALING A COMMUNITY

## BRINGING AWARENESS TO THE CRISIS OF MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN

Violence against women is a long neglected crisis across the country, doing damage to families, children, mothers and daughters, and affecting everyone in their lives.

Sadly, Native American women face more violence than any other ethnic group. Compared to the national average they are twice as likely to be stalked, six out of ten are physically assaulted in their lifetime, and on some reservations they are ten times more likely to be murdered. Statistics show that more than 80% of such crimes that take place on reservations are committed by non-Native men, yet it was not until 2013 that Congress gave tribal governments permission to prosecute these offenders.

Despite these alarming statistics, there is currently no national database tracking how many Native women have been abducted or murdered, and many crimes against them go uninvestigated. Most people are not aware of the intense threats facing Native women.

On March 29th, the City of Portland declared May 5th a Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIW) – supporting the US Senate Resolution that passed on April 27th. Also in May, Metro Council passed a matching resolution which observed that “the lasting effect of colonization and a history of oppressive policies directly correlates to the rise of violence against Native women and girls, which is in direct conflict with tribal cultural values.”

On March 15th, Washington Governor Jay Inslee signed a new law that will require the Washington State Patrol to produce a study showing how it can increase its reporting and investigation of missing Native American women across the state.

The City of Portland resolution was the first major accomplishment of Portland’s new Tribal Liaison, Laura John, *Blackfeet/Seneca*, who was hired in December 2017 by Mayor Ted Wheeler. With this declaration, the City of Portland became the first in the country to declare a MMIW Day of Awareness, and to call for congressional action on the epidemic levels of violence against Native women.

NAYA’s Family Services department has engaged in this work for many years, helping women and families harmed by violence find safety and stability, helping people make safety plans, get legal support, access shelters, stay in motels and even relocate to a different state.

“The women and families we work with are very impacted by this,” says Abby Gassama, NAYA Healing Circle Manager. “We have worked with folks who have been trafficked. We have worked with folks who later lost their lives. We live in a society where violence against women is rampant - especially Native women. Elevating and talking about these things is a big deal.”

Gassama says more community events are needed to get people talking about violence against women, and what it will take to stop it. She highlights a May 2nd event co-hosted by the City of Portland, Future Generations Collaborative and NAYA, where the public learned about MMIW, hearing directly from family members and survivors, as well as speakers from the Native Wellness Institute and NAYA.

“We’re at the Gateway Center three times a week and at the Midtown Child Welfare Office. We’re about to be at the Gresham Women’s Shelter. There are many places we’d love to be, but the need is so great, and our resources are limited,” says Gassama.



*Declaration signing at Portland City Hall*



# HOME HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

## CRITICAL HOME REPAIR STABILIZES OUR COMMUNITY, ONE HOME AT A TIME

NAYA is helping homeowners address both weatherization and critical home repairs, stabilizing our community one home at a time. By leveraging funds provided by the Portland Housing Bureau and Northwest Natural, and coordinating grant programs offered by other organizations, NAYA helps to remove the barriers homeowners face when seeking home repair services.

“There are funds available to homeowners that provide ‘band aid’ type approaches to home repair – a few thousand dollars here and there, when many homes actually need more extensive repairs in the \$15,000-\$20,000 range,” says Eron Riddle, Community Development Project Coordinator. “Applying for these funds can be challenging for people. We are able to take that burden away by pooling money together for the homeowner so we can fully repair their homes.”

Two homeowners who benefited from this program last winter are Frank and Rosa Alby, prominent Elders in both NAYA and the broader Native community. Frank, *Tlingit*, and Rosa, *Haida*, were among the original co-founders of the Alaska Native Brotherhood in Portland.

Because of the location of their home, NAYA was able to access three funding sources totaling \$18,000, which helped pay for a new roof, new insulation, and plumbing repairs.

“This was made available through NAYA – I cannot thank them enough. It’s just amazing what they’ve done for my family. I’m so very thankful for the benefits of their program,” says Frank Alby.

When NAYA staff and contractors arrived at the home of Lois French, *Blackfoot*, to fix electrical wiring, a home inspection uncovered an unsafe heating system that was releasing carbon monoxide in her basement. We were able to fully address the electrical issues and carbon monoxide concerns, as well as provide home insulation upgrades that will lower Mrs. French’s monthly energy costs.

“I can’t wait until summer to see what my gas bill looks like,” says French.

With the decreased availability of affordable housing and increased costs of living, the importance of keeping families in their homes has never been greater. Through this program we are helping to stabilize and improve the living conditions of our most vulnerable households by coordinating funding sources, producing economic opportunity and addressing potential public health issues.

In 2017, NAYA served more than 40 families by investing roughly \$550,000 in critical repairs and efficiency upgrades to homes. Homeowners tell us that paying for repairs and updates would often exceed their limited resources, resulting in delayed repairs and creating hazardous living conditions. With these repairs finished, our community members are feeling safe and secure, and able to stay in their homes for years to come.



Frank and Rosa Alby at the 2017 Neerchokikoo Powwow



Lois French outside her home



# NATIVE GAMES AND SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

## FIELD TRIP TAKES STUDENTS TO SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

This spring, six students from our Early College Academy went on a field trip to Southern Oregon University, led by the Youth and Education Services College and Career Center staff. There they competed in a Native Games Tournament put on by the Southern Oregon Indian Education Program, experienced two plays at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and met with Native students from across the region.

Students played traditional games like Shinny, Double Ball, and Rock in Fist with Native youth living in Southern Oregon. The students exchanged gifts as a part of the Rock in Fist tournament – a common practice for youth at NAYA. Using traditional cultural items like deer hide, cedar and wild turkey feathers they harvested, students were able to present hand-made feather wraps with traditional medicine packets.

Students also attended the 50th Anniversary performance of the Rogue Symphony at the invitation of Brent Florendo, *Wasco*, who opened the performance with his drum group Dancing Spirit. Florendo is a storyteller and dancer from the Warm Springs Reservation, the Native Nations Liaison for Southern Oregon University (SOU) and Director of Konaway Nika Tillicum, a pre-college program and academy that provides students with culturally appropriate preparation for college.

At the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, ECA students enjoyed a performance of *Manahatta* by Mary Kathryn Nagle, *Cherokee*. With free tickets generously provided by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, students were also able to see the opening performance of *Oklahoma*, with a cast that predominantly featured performers of color, and representation from queer and gender non-conforming actors.

“We deeply appreciate this partnership we have formed with Southern Oregon University and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival,” says Tamara Henderson, *Laguna Pueblo*, Youth and Education Services Director.

“The bonding time that happens on these road trips is really unmeasurable. It’s a time when we get to talk to the students about their lives and ambitions, and take them to places they wouldn’t normally access.”

NAYA’s Youth and Education Services department offers these university field trips as an incentive for students researching colleges and scholarships in the College and Career Center. These visits help to show them that their efforts can reap rewards, and that college is within reach. One student on this spring’s field trip has learned this firsthand – they have already made it through SOU admissions, and plan to enroll this fall.



## CLYDE BELLECOURT VISITS NAYA

### MUCH GRATITUDE IN INDIAN COUNTRY FOR THIS ICONIC LEADER

This February, we were thrilled to welcome Clyde Bellecourt, *Ojibwe*, to our campus. Bellecourt is iconic in the American Indian Movement (AIM) and Indian country has a great deal of gratitude for what he has accomplished. Bellecourt visited with the students at NAYA’s Early College Academy, met with NAYA Executive Director, Paul Lumley, and shared lunch with NAYA elders. We thank him for all he has done for Indian country.



Clyde Bellecourt and Paul Lumley



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**Our mission** is to enhance the diverse strengths of our youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**CELEBRATE NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURE AT TWO FABULOUS EVENTS!**

Please join us at the **15th Annual NAYA Gala & Auction, Friday, November 16th at the Portland Art Museum**. The largest celebration of Native American Heritage month in the Northwest and one of Portland's premier events, this wonderful evening of friends and community showcases Native American culture and offers beautiful works of art and exciting experience packages for your bidding pleasure. The 2017 Gala and Auction raised nearly \$400,000 for our wraparound programs that impact the lives of 10,000 people in Portland's Native community. To learn more about sponsorship and to purchase tickets visit [nayagala.org](http://nayagala.org).



**AND, SAVE THE DATE!**

## NEERCHOKIKOO POWWOW

Saturday, September 15, 2018 • 1:00 pm Grand Entry  
We hope to see you at our 9th Annual Neerchokikoo Powwow!  
[nayapdx.org/powwow](http://nayapdx.org/powwow)