

# The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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## Bristol voters give green light to new Hard Rock casino

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Voters in Bristol, Virginia, sent a clear message on Election Day: They're ready for a Hard Rock casino.

The choice on the Nov. 3 ballot was to either allow casino gambling — as approved by the Virginia Lottery Board — or not, with a “yes” or “no” vote.

Approval of the referendum was key for a proposed Hard Rock casino project to move forward.

The final margin was 71.14% (5,490 votes) in favor and 28.86% (2,227 votes) against.

Hard Rock and its partners United Co. and Par Ventures are ready to launch a \$400 million expansion and renovation of the former Bristol Mall site, which closed in 2017. It would include a casino, 300-plus room luxury hotel, indoor and outdoor entertainment space, restaurants, bars, a spa and a convention and meeting center.

The casino would also feature an e-sports simulator — a form of multiplayer video game sports competition.

The site is located at 500 Gate City Highway. It would be the first such project in the state.

♦ See HARD ROCK on page 6A

## Tribe's Lakeland development ready to welcome first residents

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

A new community for Tampa-area Seminoles is about to open its doors.

“They always say good things come to those who wait. Well, today, you waited long enough,” said Brighton Councilman Larry Howard.

His comments are from a brief video prepared for tribal members to showcase the Seminole Tribe's new Lakeland development, which is scheduled to welcome its first residents soon, perhaps as early as January.

More than a decade ago, the tribe purchased nearly 900 undeveloped acres in unincorporated Polk County with an eye toward providing a new reservation for tribal members who had lived on the land that's now home to the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa.

“It was promised by leaders before me that we would buy land and bring the people back to our reservation,” Councilman Howard said.

The new development will feature about 150 single-family homes on one-acre lots. The video says the land “boasts a country feel with abundant water features, trees and other vegetation.”

Councilman Howard described the land as “...one of most beautiful properties ever to be acquired by the Seminole Tribe.”

Some homes have been completed from phase one of the project.

“These are brand new homes, so they'll



Brighton Councilman Larry Howard discusses the Seminole Tribe's new community in Lakeland.

be the first ones to step inside,” Tampa Reservation Administrator Richard Henry said in the video. “We're hoping they're excited like we are. For some of these people it's their first purchase, too, so it's very exciting for first-time homeowners.”

Councilman Howard said it's important that the residents will be able to “look across the street to a neighbor who is a Native American.”

♦ See LAKELAND on page 4A

## Record number of Natives elected to Congress

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

The 2020 election was a historic one for Native American and Native Hawaiian representation in Congress. The U.S. House of Representatives will have its largest number of Natives after the Nov. 3 elections saw four Natives re-elected and two new Native representatives win first terms.

Veteran Republican Rep. Tom Cole, of Oklahoma, was re-elected to the seat he's held in the House since 2003, making him the longest serving Native in Congress. He won with 67.8% of the vote, well ahead of his challenger who had 28.7%. A member of the Chickasaw Nation, Cole represents Oklahoma's 4th District, is the co-chair of the Native American caucus and serves on the House Appropriations and Rules Committees.

Rep. Markwayne Mullin (Cherokee) cruised to his fifth term in office for Oklahoma's 2nd District, garnering 75% of the vote. A Republican, Mullin serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committees, the subcommittees on Oversight and Investigations, Health and the Environment and Climate Change.



Yvette Herrell, R-NM, won her first term to the U.S. House.

New Mexico Democratic Rep. Deb Haaland (Pueblo of Laguna) was voted back for a second term thanks to a 58% to 42% win over her challenger. In 2018, Haaland was one of the first two Native American women ever elected to Congress, along with Rep. Sharice Davids of Kansas. Haaland, who represents New Mexico's 1st District, is the co-chair of the Native American caucus, vice-chair of the Natural Resources Committee, chair of the subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands and serves on the subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples.

After the election results came in on Nov. 3, Haaland tweeted: “Tonight the people of New Mexico have chosen hope over fear, love over hate, community over division, and I am so honored that New Mexican's have chosen me to serve in our nation's 117th Congress.”

New Mexico gained another Native voice in the House with the election of Republican Yvette Herrell (Cherokee) in the state's 2nd District. Herrell won with 56% of the vote over her challenger, who had 46%. Herrell previously served four terms in the New Mexico House of Representatives.

After the victory, Herrell tweeted: “It's the honor of my life to be elected to serve #NM02. My commitment to each citizen of our district is that I will serve each of them with integrity as we work together to rebuild our economy and protect the values that make America great!”

Davids (Ho-Chunk) won her second term representing Kansas's 3rd District. Out of six federal races in Kansas, Davids was the lone Democrat to grasp a victory. She won 53% to 44% against her challenger. Davids, an Army veteran and lawyer, serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure and Small Business Committees and is a member of 16 caucuses including the Native American and LGBT Equality caucuses.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi tweeted a congratulatory note to Davids after the election: “Congratulations @ShariceDavids on winning a great reelection victory to continue your historic and impassioned representation of #KS03 and your hard work on behalf of working families across your district.”

Native Hawaiian Kaiali'i “Kai” Kahele won the race to fill former Rep. Tulsi Gabbard's seat in Congress. Kahele represents Hawaii's 2nd District and is the second Native Hawaiian elected to Congress since statehood in 1959. A Democrat, Kahele



Sharice Davids, D-KS, won her second term to the U.S. House on Nov. 3.



Native Hawaiian Kaiali'i Kahele, D-HI, was elected to the U.S. House on Nov. 3.

served in the Hawaiian Senate since 2016. After his win, Kahele tweeted: “Mahalo Hawai'i! Words cannot express my deep appreciation to everyone who has believed in our campaign, supported us, voted, &

donated! Our challenging work begins now, and I'll do everything I can to bring our state the resources we need to recover and build a resilient Hawai'i.”

## Native American connection to Everglades featured online

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

The Seminole Tribe has always understood the importance of the Everglades to life past and present. Now that two recent lists have noted that bond, perhaps others will understand it a little better as well.

The U.S. Department of the Interior published a list of “10 public lands with powerful Native American connections” on Nov. 8.

The agency is tasked with overseeing public lands and upholding federal trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and Native Alaskans.

“All public land was once tribal land. From the Seminole people of the Everglades to the Athabascans who gave Denali its name, Native Americans have a connection to every national park, wildlife refuge and wilderness across the country,” an introduction to the list said.

The section on Everglades National Park expanded on its connection with the Seminole Tribe and the Miccosukee Tribe.

“... ‘Yat'siminoli,’ means ‘free people’ in the Seminole language. Their namesake pays homage to their history of resistance against both Spanish and American forces,” it said. “The late 1700s and 1800s were marked by many conflicts and unofficial wars. Eventually, more than 3,000 Seminoles were forcibly removed their lands on their own prolonged Trail of Tears. However, a few hundred Seminoles hid in the Everglades and never signed a peace treaty.”

Joining Everglades National Park on the list of 10 are:

- Devils Tower National Monument (Wyoming)
- Effigy Mounds National Monument (Iowa)
- Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (Washington)
- Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site (Montana and North Dakota)

♦ See EVERGLADES on page 8A

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Visit the Tribune's website for news throughout the month at [seminoletribune.org](http://seminoletribune.org)

# Editorial

## Acknowledging USF “resides on the traditional Homelands and territories of the Seminole”

*Editor’s note: On Nov. 24, the University of South Florida Department of Anthropology in Tampa issued the following press release and land acknowledgement statement that it titled “Whose Land are we on—Standing with the Seminole.”*

### • University of South Florida Department of Anthropology

November is Native American Heritage month and on November 26th many people across the country will celebrate Thanksgiving. However, many of our ideas about the origins of this holiday are historically inaccurate, reproducing damaging portrayals of Native Americans.

The USF Department of Anthropology formally recognizes the historical and continuing impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities and are standing with the Seminole in acknowledging whose land we as a University are currently situated on.

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement recognizing the enduring relationship between Indigenous Peoples and lands stolen from them. It is also a commitment to standing in solidarity with them to combat Indigenous erasure. Land acknowledgements have been released by a growing number of institutions across the United States. The University of Florida St. Petersburg Campus also unveiled a land acknowledgement statement this month.

The University of South Florida sits on land that was once home to the Seminole

and other groups including the Calusa and Tocobaga. Today, Florida is home to the Seminole, Miccosukee, Muscogee, and Choctaw peoples. The following land acknowledgement statement has been approved by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, who welcomed it as a “powerful” statement on Indigenous Sovereignty.

“The Department of Anthropology acknowledges that the University of South Florida resides on the traditional Homelands and territories of the Seminole, as well as other historical groups including the Calusa and Tocobaga. Today, the state of Florida is home to the Seminole, Miccosukee, Muscogee, and Choctaw, and to individuals of many other Native groups. As a Department, we recognize the historical and continuing impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities, their resilience

in the face of colonial and state sponsored violence, and fully support Indigenous Sovereignty. We will continue work to be more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.”

Standing in solidarity requires more than a statement, however. The Department of Anthropology also acknowledges and seeks to right the wrongs that our discipline played in the colonizing process. We commit to cultivating a relationship with the Seminole and working to establish fruitful collaborations. A first step toward cultivating this relationship has been the completion of our NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) repatriation inventory, a process that began a few years ago after the USF Department of Anthropology drafted a new collections policy. NAGPRA, enacted in 1990, requires

institutions to work with Native American tribes and nations on the repatriation and disposition of Native American human remains and sacred objects that were stolen from them in the name of science.

We hope that the repatriation process and land acknowledgment statement will open up a new page in our relationship with Indigenous communities, particularly the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and lead to collaborative partnerships aimed at education and community outreach.

Big thanks to USF Department of Anthropology Diversity and Inclusion Committee for working with the Seminole to reach this agreement.

## Dauids: Haaland appointment would be historic

*Editor’s note: On Nov. 18, Rep. Sharice Davids (Ho-Chunk Nation) sent a letter to the transition team for President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris’s showing support for Rep. Deb Haaland (Pueblo of Laguna) to be nominated for U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Here is Davids’ letter addressed to Kevin Washburn, team lead for the transition team.*

### • Rep. Sharice Davids

Dear Mr. Washburn, I greatly appreciate your commitment to ensuring a smooth transition of power to the Biden-Harris administration through your work on the transition team focusing on the Department of the Interior. The Department of the Interior plays a critical role in the administration and management of federal lands and in coordinating government-to-government relationships with and services for federally recognized tribes. It is absolutely vital that the incoming secretary has a firm understanding of the department’s responsibilities and duties to tribes and has significant experience

working and living in Indian Country. I strongly recommend that you consider nominating Representative Deb Haaland, a congresswoman from New Mexico and an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Laguna, as Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

In 2018, Rep. Haaland and I were the first two Native women ever elected to Congress, but she has been a fierce advocate and organizer in Indian Country for decades. She has extensive experience in business development in Indian Country while maintaining her lifelong commitment to environmentally conscious business and policy practices. She has worked in tribal and local administration and social services and organized in Native communities and at the state level. And this is all before her incredible body of work during her time in Congress.



Courtesy photo  
Rep. Sharice Davids

As Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, Rep. Haaland has worked across the aisle and with both chambers to achieve real victories for Indian Country today and has demonstrated incredible vision for its future. Her legislative achievements touch on everything from the crisis of murdered and missing Indigenous women to the conservation and preservation of public lands to addressing the chronic underfunding and mismanagement of federal resources for Indian Country. She maintains a deep understanding of both the realities and challenges that Native communities face across the country as well as the hope and potential they contain with improved federal resources, consultation, and respect for tribal sovereignty.

As chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, Rep. Haaland has been a champion for our environment and a leader in the fight against climate change. She has fought back against the destructive acts and policies of the Trump Administration and the of Secretary David Bernhardt, passing legislation to protect Chaco Canyon and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil and gas drilling. Rep. Haaland has introduced bills including the 30 by 30 Resolution to Save Nature, the Climate Stewardship Act, and

the THRIVE Agenda to deal with the climate and extinction crises and address economic, environmental, and racial injustice that parallel proposals put forward by President-elect Biden. Additionally, she helped craft the boldest climate change platform in history as a member of the DNC Platform Drafting Committee and helped mobilize stakeholders as a co-chair of the Biden Climate Engagement Advisory Council.

As you know, this would be an historic appointment. There has never been a Native member of the president’s cabinet, despite the federal government’s unique relationship with and trust responsibility to tribal members. It is always essential that the Department of the Interior is led by an individual with a deep and profound understanding of the federal trust responsibility and of the inviolability of treaty rights and obligations. In the last four years, we have seen the dangers of leadership by those who do not meet these qualifications – those who advocate for the dissolution of a reservation for the first time since the termination era, who side with state governments against the recognition and honoring of treaty rights, and who fail to adequately consult with and meet the needs of tribal governments during the greatest public health crisis in a century. The

importance of this cabinet position to Indian Country cannot be overstated.

Rep. Haaland has been a warrior for Native peoples for decades and profoundly understands the consequences of federal administration on tribal communities. Her historic nomination and her deep respect and understanding for the fundamental principles that any Department of the Interior secretary must abide by would be an invaluable asset in this position. I have only the highest trust and regard for Rep. Haaland’s integrity and her work, and there is no one more highly qualified and prepared to lead the Department of the Interior during a crisis that has disproportionately impacted and harmed Native communities. I strongly recommend her for your consideration for the secretary of the Department of the Interior.

- Sincerely,  
Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress

*Rep. Sharice Davids, D-KS, and Rep. Deb Haaland, D-NM, are the first two Native American women to serve in Congress. They were re-elected for second terms in November.*

## McGirt ruling could affect tribal gaming

### • Greg Buzzard

Oklahomans are still debating the ramifications of the Supreme Court’s July ruling in McGirt v. Oklahoma. While McGirt’s impacts could be profound in some legal and business sectors, the tribal gaming industry in Oklahoma may see comparatively modest changes. Tribal nations that have reservations reaffirmed under McGirt will likely find one less barrier to future on-reservation gaming facilities. On-reservation online gaming may also become a possibility, although it would be far from a certainty.

In McGirt, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation’s reservation, covering a large area of eastern Oklahoma, including much of Tulsa, was never disestablished and continues

to exist today. The court, after closely examining Creek and Oklahoma history, found no explicit statement from Congress disestablishing the Creek reservation. As the other four of the so-called Five Tribes – Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Seminole nations – share much of that same history, it is likely the same analysis applies to them as well. Cases are currently pending before an Oklahoma appellate court seeking to reaffirm reservations throughout eastern Oklahoma, and decisions may come before the end of the year.

Reservation status is a key factor for tribal gaming. While the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act permitted Oklahoma tribes to conduct gaming on land held in trust by the federal government within their “former reservations,” gaming on reservations reaffirmed under McGirt may not require a tribe to go through the sometimes arduous land-into-trust bureaucratic process.

IGRA allows gaming on land within reservation boundaries, although many other considerations usually influence gaming locations. McGirt could help Oklahoma tribes advocate for regulatory simplification in siting future gaming facilities on their confirmed reservations.

McGirt, however, did not affect the stricter rules that apply to off-reservation gaming. Land taken into trust after IGRA became law in 1988 can generally only host a gaming facility if the Department of the Interior decides, after consultation with local officials and any nearby tribes, that the proposed facility “would be in the best interest” of the gaming tribe and if the state’s governor agrees. Requiring consultation with and consent from non-tribal officials sharply limits off-reservation gaming, particularly in urban areas far from tribal communities.

Reservation status – and particularly the size and population of the reservation –

also affects the possibility of online gaming. Under the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act, online gaming is generally illegal unless it takes place solely within a state permitting such gaming. However, the UIGEA contains an exception for tribal lands. If online gaming occurs entirely on-reservation, which means both placing and receiving a bet or wager on tribal lands, it is regulated similarly to other forms of tribal gaming, rather than prohibited outright.

Oklahoma reservations reaffirmed under McGirt will be the most populous in the country, which may provide a customer base for online tribal gaming. However, online tribal gaming still lacks a successful proof of concept, although interest in the idea is high. Any effort to adopt online gaming on an Oklahoma reservation will raise significant legal questions and may require state cooperation.

The Oklahoma Indian Gaming

Association estimates that tribal gaming had an economic impact of \$7.2 billion on the state economy in 2015. Tribal gaming exclusivity fees contribute over \$1 billion annually to Oklahoma, primarily used for education. By any measure, tribal gaming is one of the state’s largest industries. By modestly reducing the regulatory steps needed to open a new gaming facility and by potentially opening new opportunities for online gaming, McGirt may come to benefit this vibrant Oklahoma industry.

*Greg Buzzard is an attorney with Crowe & Dunlevy, crowedunlevy.com, and a member of the Indian Law and Gaming Practice Group. This article is from The Journal Record (Oklahoma City) at journalrecord.com.*

## Teach the truth about Native American history

### • Matthew Pagels

This Thanksgiving, millions of Americans will express gratitude for what they have and the people they love. But as the national debate over racial justice continues, this holiday’s origin story should be exposed for what it is – a myth riddled with historical inaccuracies.

Conventional wisdom holds that Thanksgiving is a celebration of Native Americans and the courageous pilgrims peacefully breaking bread. In truth, the Wampanoag Indians suffered at the hands of the pilgrims, and were harmed, exploited, even killed through the spread of disease as a result of their presence.

The work to reverse this historical amnesia must start with the U.S. education system, which has largely failed to inform students of the significant history and culture of indigenous individuals. A 2015 report

found that 87 percent of K-through-12 state history standards across the nation include no mention of Native American history after 1900, and 27 states do not name a single indigenous person in their history standards.

November is also Native American Heritage month – a perfect time for the state Board of Regents to revisit this important issue and finally update New York’s public school curriculum to represent America’s true history, one that indigenous people played a key role in shaping.

In addition, the state Education Department’s lack of rules for certifying Native language and culture teachers make it difficult to find qualified individuals for these positions. As many indigenous language teachers lack appropriate certification, they are unable to qualify for tenure and vulnerable to layoffs. The Seneca Nation has identified 34 fluent elders who are important to the transmission of the language to the next generation. They need special consideration.

Other states, particularly in the Midwest

and on the West Coast, have official certifications dedicated to indigenous education. New York must follow their lead.

The federal government has made fleeting efforts to improve Native American education. The Obama administration, for example, launched grants to strengthen partnerships among tribes, states and school districts. More recently, the Trump administration announced \$24 million in grants to expand education options for American Indian and Alaska Native students.

But this is far from sufficient. The challenges facing indigenous individuals are significant – including the disproportionate physical and financial costs we are paying in the coronavirus pandemic. The systemic prejudices we face and disinvestments we have suffered are largely born of a lack of non-Native understanding and knowledge of our people.

American Indian students endure the highest rate of victimization in the United States. The population also has the nation’s

highest rate of suicide. Citing these factors, the Obama administration in 2014 declared that both Native youth and Native education were in a “state of emergency.” Sadly, not much has changed.

For centuries, education-based disenfranchisement has resulted in stereotypical representations of Native people in sports team names, mascots, and state, city, and town seals and place names. In New York, there are more than 100 schools with sports teams named for Native Americans, employing derogatory but widely accepted terms such as Chiefs, Arrows and Red Raiders.

Absent intervention by the state and federal governments, Native tribes and cultural institutions across the country have taken matters into their own hands.

In 2018, the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian developed the Native Knowledge 360 Degrees (NK360) – a multi-pronged initiative aimed at improving how Native American history and

culture is taught in schools across the country. Just this year, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community announced a \$5 million philanthropic campaign to fund resources, curriculum and training on Native American heritage in Minnesota schools.

There are a few promising developments at the local level, including the recent reintroduction in Connecticut of a bill that would mandate the teaching of Native American history in the state’s public schools. But much more is needed, and the time for change is now. New York lawmakers and the Board of Regents must take proactive steps to undo the long-standing practice of excluding Native American history in our education system.

*Matthew Pagels was elected in November to serve as president of the Seneca Nation for the next two years. He was previously the nation’s treasurer. This article is from the Times Union (Albany, N.Y.) at timesunion.com.*

The Seminole Tribune is a member of the Native American Journalists Association.

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# Community



## Willie Johns remembered for service, love of history

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Willie Johns had a lot of passions in his life, and many are intertwined in the titles and affiliations he held over the years.

The lifetime resident of the Brighton Reservation and member of the Wild Cat Clan was not only a Tribal Court Chief Justice, but also a member of the First Seminole Baptist Church and the Florida Historical Society. The longtime cattleman was a former commissioner of the Indian National Finals Rodeo. He was also a well versed and committed tribal historian and lecturer.

Born March 23, 1951, Johns died Oct. 27 in Brighton from complications of diabetes. He was 69.

Tributes quickly poured in from tribal leadership and members, as well as many from outside the tribe. Someone who was close to Johns since childhood is Brighton Board Rep. Helene Buster, his younger sister.

"We were three years apart in age. He and I were close. Pretty tight," Buster said.

Buster recently reminisced about growing up with Johns and many other young relatives.

"We lived in a camp – we were still in the camp setting at that time. We swam and played and worked and did everything together," she said.

Buster said Johns contracted polio at age 3, and was sent to a special hospital until he was 6.

"He had the brace on his knees and all that. They had taken a muscle from above his knee. He wore a brace for a lot of years," Buster said. "But our family never slowed down for him, never gave him any pity. He had to stay up with everybody. It made him the person he was."

That spirit of toughness would give Johns a drive and purpose for the rest of his life, Buster said.

"He was always involved in something," she said.

### Pursuit of history

Johns was intimately involved in the history of St. Augustine and its connection to the Seminole Tribe.

One of his last projects was tracing the life of Coacoochee, also known as Wild Cat.

The leader, warrior and diplomat, led the Seminole resistance against the U.S. Army in Florida during the latter stages of the Second Seminole War. He gained prominence when he was just 19-years-old as the leader of a band of Seminole and Black Seminole, until his father was captured in 1837 and imprisoned at Fort Marion (the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument in St. Augustine).

Johns told the Seminole Tribune in late February that he was proud of a copy of the painting "The Captive Osceola" by Florida artist Jackson Walker that hung in his home. It shows Wild Cat, Osceola and others being marched in to the Fort Marion prison.

They'd famously escape, although how they did is up for debate. Johns has said historians don't really know. But from his research and work with the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum he had three trains of thought.

Johns said they either crawled through an opening in the cell after losing enough weight by fasting; they were never held at Fort Marion in the first place; or the cell was accidentally left open and they walked out.

Johns leaned toward the cell was left open scenario.

After his escape, Wild Cat would eventually end up in Oklahoma for a time.

"When I do these [lectures], I always tell them at the end: 'Every morning I get up, I kiss the ground and thank my ancestors that I didn't wake up in Oklahoma. That I woke up in paradise,'" Johns said in late February.

It was Wild Cat's journey that inspired Johns to organize a nine-day road trip that was set to stop at many of the significant locations in Wild Cat's life from his birth to his death.

The goal was to create a video documentary to better inform Wild Cat's descendants and the Seminole Tribe of his life.

The trip was scheduled to begin in

March, but the pandemic hit and derailed those plans.

### Going home

Buster said her brother first began to become ill in March.

"He had gone out to his cattle and was out in the pasture. The wind came up and a gate knocked him down. It caused a wound on his leg that wouldn't heal," she said.

Buster, who is also a nurse, said she was by his side for months.

"I tried to help him, but it wouldn't heal. We had to go to hospital," she said.

Ultimately the leg had to be amputated above the knee. Buster said the situation was naturally a tough one for him to endure.

With diabetes and a heart condition, Buster said he was in and out of the hospital four or five times. He also contracted pneumonia and sepsis, which is caused by an infection.

Buster said in a moment of coherency during the last hospital stay, Johns said: "I'm gonna go home. I want to go home."

"I've always been his health surrogate. Whatever he said, I went along with. He respected that of me," she said.

When Johns arrived at his home, his girlfriend greeted him and said: "You're happy your home?" Johns replied, "I'm not home yet."

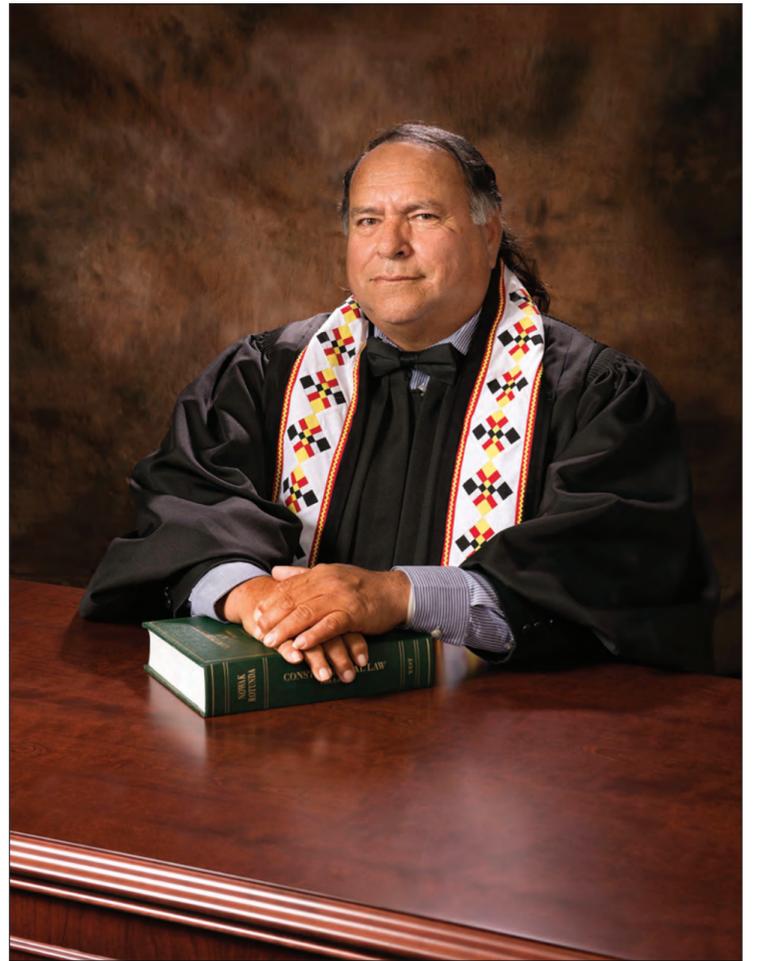
Buster said that happened on a Sunday. By early Tuesday morning, Johns had passed away.

One of his ongoing projects was a book – a historical fiction he'd been writing for years.

It's largely about the life of his great grandmother who died in 1930 at an age surpassing 100. (Johns didn't know exactly how old she was when she died).

The book – "What We Have Endured" – was published by the Florida Historical Society the Friday before he passed away.

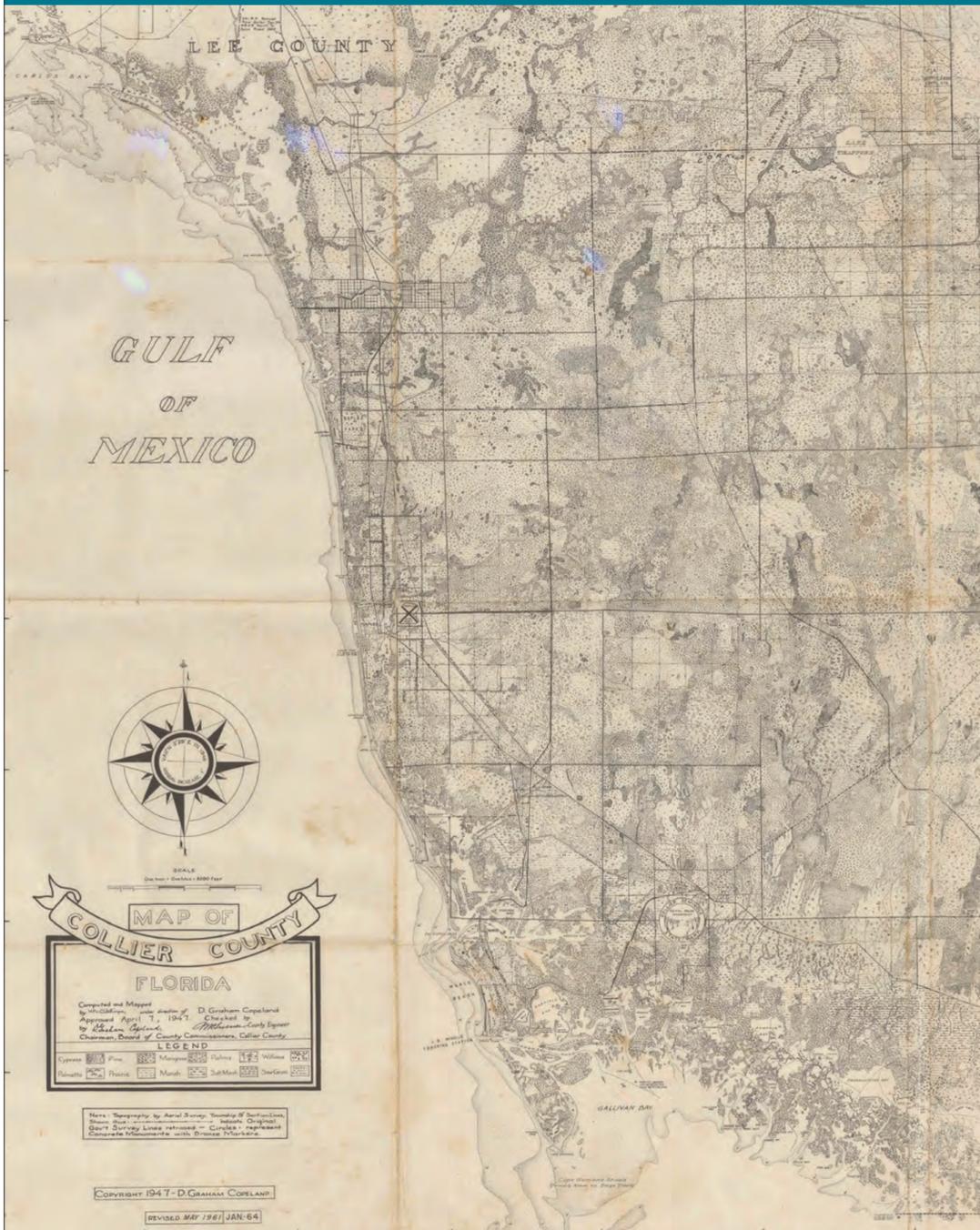
"That was one of his life goals," Buster said. "Between writing that book and Seminole history and cattle – he was the only independent cattle owner – those were three things always on the top of the list of things he wanted to accomplish. And he did."



Chief Justice Willie Johns

STOF

seminoleheritageservices.com



## WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY MAPPING?

ARE YOU TIRED OF HOW OUTSIDERS LIKE THE U.S. ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS IDENTIFIES PLACES WHILE DISCUSSING EVERGLADES RESTORATION?

AS A TRIBAL MEMBER, WOULD YOU LIKE THESE LANDMARKS TO BE SHOWN OR REFERENCED ON A MAP DIFFERENTLY?

Here at the THPO, we are using digital mapping technology to record places and areas of interest to the community. These places will be shared within the Ethnographic Study, to help bridge the gap during discussions regarding Everglades restoration. Please let us know if you want to get involved!

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Seminole Heritage  
Services, LLC





The Lakeland homes feature large lots and plenty of nearby trees and open space.

SMP

◆ **LAKELAND**  
From page 1A

After living apart for years in non-tribal areas, the Tampa-area Seminoles will be able to reunite on one reservation again.

"The land that you walk on here is going to be your property, your reservation," Councilman Howard said. "Memories to come for years down the road; you're going to create those memories on your journey from this point on. Our dream has become your reality."



Tampa Reservation Administrator Richard Henry discusses the Lakeland homes.

SMP



Homes on the Lakeland Reservation.

SMP (2)



# Deb Haaland being considered for Interior cabinet post

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Even with the history of a record-number of Native Americans elected to Congress on Nov. 3, another milestone might happen soon.

As of press time, President-elect Joe Biden was continuing to name members of his forthcoming Cabinet. Some positions have yet to be filled, like secretary of the Department of the Interior.

Several national media outlets have reported that Rep. Deb Haaland, D-NM, is being considered for the position of interior secretary. If selected, she would be the first Native American to hold that or any cabinet position.

Dozens of House Democrats have endorsed her. The Indigenous Environmental Network, along with 25 other organizations, sent a letter to Biden's transition team as well, urging him to select Haaland for the job.

Haaland, 59, is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna. She serves as the vice chair of the House Natural Resources Committee.

"First of all, it would mean a lot to Indian Country," Haaland said recently in a National Public Radio interview when asked about the potential nomination. "When Sharice [Davids] and I got sworn in, everybody was so happy. It means a lot to a group of people who have been here since time immemorial to know that they're truly being represented. I think [being selected] would really change the way people see our federal government. Being able to listen, being able to move issues forward, bringing people to the table — I think that would make a huge difference."

The Department of Interior is responsible for the management and conservation of most federal lands and natural resources. The department manages about 75% of



Rep. Deb Haaland

federal public land and administers programs relating to Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians.

On his campaign website, Biden pledges in his plans for tribal nations that he'd "ensure tribes have a seat at the table at the highest levels of the federal government and a voice throughout the government."

"As historical firsts have occurred in this election, there is an opportunity for another one by nominating a qualified and dynamic Indigenous woman to head the Department of Interior," the letter by the Indigenous Environmental Network reads. "Our belief is that Representative Haaland will help facilitate the Biden/Harris vision for dealing with climate change, addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in Indian Country, ensuring an effective economic just recovery plan for Tribes and communities, overseeing the protection of public lands and fulfilling all treaty and statutory obligations."

Stay up to date on this and other stories at [seminoletribune.org](http://seminoletribune.org).

## Analysis

# In Trump v. Biden, Native American voters played a crucial role

BY JULIAN BRAVE NOISECAT  
Data for Progress, vice president of policy and strategy

On Election Night, CNN broadcast a table showing the results of an exit poll that broke the national electorate down into racial demographics. It read: White — 65 percent, Latino — 13 percent, Black — 12 percent, Something else — 6 percent, Asian — 3 percent. Almost immediately, that second-to-last category, "Something Else," provoked an online uproar among the digital denizens of Indian Country.

We were outraged that CNN had, rather clumsily, grouped the First Peoples of this land in with — well, literally everyone else. "In an election largely driven by race, the media still fails to accurately cover voters of color," Cherokee activist Rebecca Nagle tweeted alongside a photo of the segment. "For Native Americans, we're not even named."

Nearly every post on the Indigenous internet was, for a hot minute, contributing to the "Something Else" discourse. "Last night I went to bed Indigenous," said @kevin\_flyingsky on TikTok. "And this morning I woke up something else!" Someone on Facebook posted a screenshot of the CNN table with "Something Else" crossed out and "Cousins" written in, instead. I even joined in, changing my name on Twitter to, you guessed it, Something Else.

As with most internet phenomena, the posts circled an important truth. Native people are often erased in the media and elections. Every two years, the national parties devote enormous resources to mobilizing their bases and persuading swing voters. Campaigns microtarget voters by geography, race, gender, age, religion, educational background, class and much more, all of which the media covers like it's the Super Bowl. But in this grand scramble for votes in elections that are increasingly decided by razor-thin margins, Native people are almost always overlooked or forgotten.

This isn't because Native people don't care about elections. In Rapid City and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the nonprofit group IllumiNatives put up billboards that read: "Democracy is Indigenous." On Election Day, citizens of the Navajo Nation paraded their horses to the polls. On the White Mountain Apache reservation, crown dancers led voters to the ballot box. And although data quality varies by state, Native voter turnout across the country increased significantly. Among the Navajo Nation, where more data is available, many precincts saw 40 percent to 60 percent increases in participation, according to an analysis by Arizona Democratic Party operative Keith Brekhuis.

Yet the prevailing electoral calculus says those votes are too few to bother putting much effort into pursuing. After all, in the 2010 census, Native Americans accounted for just 1.7 percent of the U.S. population. Native people also face many barriers to voting, including state laws that can prohibit

the use of tribal IDs, restrictions preventing people from using post office boxes to register (some parts of Indian reservations lack street addresses), a dearth of voting materials in Indigenous languages, long distances to polling places without transportation and much more.

Add in that many states with significant Native populations — who tend to prefer the Democratic Party by about 25 points — also happen to be Republican strongholds, and devoting attention and resources becomes an even harder sell for many campaigns. In North and South Dakota, for example, where Native Americans are more than 5 percent of the population, Democrats lost the presidential race by 34 and 26 points, respectively.

But the outcome of the 2020 election proved that line of thinking wrong. In key battleground states, like Arizona, Wisconsin and North Carolina, Native voters played an important, though underappreciated, role in shaping the outcome.

Take Wisconsin, home to about 86,000 Native Americans, which Joe Biden won by about 20,000 votes. Biden won 1,303 votes for 82 percent of the vote in Menominee County, home of the Menominee Nation — his highest vote share of any county in the state.

Or take Bayfield County in northern Wisconsin, home to the Red Cliff Ojibwe, where about 11 percent of the population is Native. Biden won there, as well, 6,147 votes to 4,617. About 1,000 votes in Menominee County and about 1,500 votes in Bayfield County look an awful lot more important when Biden's margin of victory is in the low five figures.

Or consider the Navajo Nation, the largest Indian reservation in the United States, which stretches across parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. In Arizona, which Biden won by just 10,500 votes, it's hard not to argue that the Native vote in general (6 percent of the state's population) and the Navajo vote in particular (67,000 people of voting age) weren't crucial.

Overall, according to Brekhuis' reading of the data, precincts on the Navajo Nation averaged about 84 percent for Biden and 14 percent for President Donald Trump. With Arizona decided by so few votes, the Navajo may legitimately claim that their ballots made the difference. Biden and other Democrats likely couldn't have carried Arizona — its 11 Electoral College votes and its Senate seat — without them.

But we also have to talk about Robeson County, North Carolina, where members of the Lumbee tribe are 40 percent of the electorate. The Lumbee, who aren't recognized as a tribe by the federal government, have been seeking legal affirmation of their nation and identity for decades. Ahead of the election, Trump held a rally in Robeson County promising the Lumbee recognition if he won.

◆ See NATIVE VOTE on page 5A

# Jim Shore recognized for career achievement in legal work

**STAFF REPORT**

Seminole Tribe of Florida General Counsel Jim Shore has received a national award from the American Bar Association for his legal work and career achievement in the areas of environment, energy and natural resources. According to the organization's website, he is the first General Counsel from an Indian tribe to win the award.

The Government Attorney of the Year Award for 2020 was presented to Shore by the American Bar Association Section on Environment, Energy and Resources at its virtual fall conference. The award recognizes exceptional achievement by federal, state, tribal or local government attorneys. Recipients are deemed to have made significant accomplishments or demonstrated recognized leadership in the environment, energy and natural resources legal areas.

Throughout his tenure as Seminole Tribe General Counsel, Shore has worked to preserve natural resources and protect water rights critical to the future of the members of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. His ongoing focus includes the impact of Everglades restoration and Lake Okeechobee water management on the Brighton and Big Cypress Seminole reservations.

Shore grew up on the Brighton Seminole Reservation and graduated from Stetson University and Stetson Law School, becoming the first member of the Seminole Tribe to practice law. He was named Deputy General Counsel of the Seminole Tribe in 1981 and General Counsel in 1982. He is



Seminole Tribe of Florida General Counsel Jim Shore accepts the Government Attorney of the Year Award for 2020 from the American Bar Association Section on Environment, Energy and Resources during a virtual fall conference in October.

a member of the Florida Bar and the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, which makes it possible for him to argue a case before the high court.

In a video introduction for the awards ceremony, attorney Michelle Diffenderfer, president of Lewis, Longman & Walker,

cited Shore's "incredible listening skills and a penchant for knowing just what to do at the right time." Diffenderfer has represented the

Seminole Tribe on environmental issues and worked closely with Shore for decades.

"When you Google Jim Shore, you will find all the accomplishments that the tribe has achieved over the years, and Jim right there alongside the tribe's leaders, helping guide decisions, listening to leadership and doing the due diligence to ensure that the tribe made great choices," Diffenderfer said. "One of Jim Shore's early accomplishments in the environmental arena was the negotiation and approval of the tribe's Water Rights Compact with the State of Florida in 1987. Today, it is still the only water rights compact with an Indian tribe east of the Mississippi River."

In accepting the award, Shore said, "I am humbled to be chosen. The Seminole Tribe of Florida has a proud group of Indians who have never backed away from a fight to preserve our sovereignty and protect the rights of our tribal members."

"We negotiated a water compact with the State of Florida," Shore said. "The compact allows the tribe to quantify water rights, water usage, drainage and the value of these rights is it allows the tribe to participate in the state's permitting system off the reservation, with a mechanism in place that allows both the state and the tribe to be able to work things out without impacting one or the other's resources."

The 2020 awards of the American Bar Association Section on Environment, Energy and Resources were presented in late October as part of the section's fall conference, which was held virtually due to concerns over Covid-19.

## Big Cypress RV Resort reopens with new safety measures

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Tribal members and Florida residents and visitors have a popular option back — an escape from the city to enjoy the great outdoors. The spot is right in the midst of the Everglades on the Big Cypress Reservation.

The tribe announced Oct. 26 that the Big Cypress RV Resort would reopen Nov. 2 after Covid-19 concerns had forced it to close.

"We're excited to reopen and welcome our guests back," Evelyn Mata, the RV park and campground manager, said in a statement.

Campground rules have been updated to allow for a seamless experience during the pandemic. The new safety guidelines for the resort have been established in a similar way that allowed the tribe's Florida casinos to reopen.

The measures include that guests must wear masks and practice social distancing while at the resort. Guests must follow all

tribal government, campground and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) safety guidelines.

The resort is owned and operated by the tribe.

"The Seminole Tribe of Florida is taking every safety precaution needed to ensure our guests stay safe and well as we continue to navigate these trying times," Mata said.

The resort offers visitors 110 grassy and paved RV sites with full hook-ups, tents and air-conditioned cabins. You don't have to have an RV to enjoy the site — the resort is also available to campers.

Guests can also relax under a chickee hut or swim in the heated pool.

Nearby attractions include the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, Billie Swamp Safari and Swamp Water Café. However, due to closures and restrictions because of the pandemic, it's always best to call in advance for updates.

The RV resort is located about an hour from Fort Lauderdale at 30290 Josie Billie Hwy in Clewiston. More information is at bigcypressrvresort.com.



Facebook

After being closed because of Covid-19, visitors to the resort can enjoy cabins and views once again.

## Teens, young adults financial program offered through Native Learning Center

**STAFF REPORT**

**HOLLYWOOD** — A five-day interactive training program offered through the Native Learning Center will highlight financial education training techniques, activities and resources tailored for youth. "Building Native Communities: Financial Empowerment for Teens & Young Adults" will be held online Jan. 25-29, 2021.

Participants will learn about financial education with an emphasis on educating children on how to become financially fit.

Agenda topics include: building thriving native communities; money in Native cultures; banking 101 — check it out; credit journey — thriving, not surviving; credits and loans — understanding, applying and managing; financial milestones; college readiness and understanding student loans;

and managing per capita and lump sum payments.

Trainers are scheduled to be Stephanie Cote and Lanalle Smith, both from Oweesta Corporation.

In order to obtain a certification, participants must participate in 90% of the training and have a working webcam.

Registration is free. For more information, go to nativelearningcenter.com.

## NCAI receives \$1M grant; set to aid Native businesses

**PRESS RELEASE**

**WASHINGTON** — The National Congress of American Indians announced Nov. 23, with support from Google.org, the Small Business Stabilization Grant program — a \$1 million investment in Indian Country. This new funding is an expansion of a \$250k NCAI small business support program, also funded by Google.org.

NCAI is issuing business stabilization grants in the amount of \$5,000 each to a total of 170 Native-owned small businesses that have been severely impacted by the curtailing of commercial activity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Awarded applicants can use the funds to address their most urgent needs to stabilize and strengthen

their businesses, such as (but not limited to):

- making monthly payments on small business loans that have lapsed due to declining business revenues;
- keeping employees employed;
- paying their vendors; and/or
- purchasing equipment/software to transition or grow their businesses online.

"Native-owned small businesses serve as the lifeblood of many tribal communities across the country," said NCAI President Fawn Sharp. "These businesses provide critical jobs and income to tribal citizens and their families, while at the same time enriching the quality of community life by providing goods and services to local residents and the public at-large. We are

humbled by this support from Google.org and look forward to continuing to support American Indian and Alaska Native communities with this funding."

"Google.org is proud to continue supporting NCAI to provide direct relief funding to the Native small business community," said Olivia Hoeft, Google.org spokesperson and Google American Indian Network lead. "We're also working with NCAI to provide free Grow with Google training and support to more than 5,000 Indigenous business owners in the US to access digital tools and skills needed to grow."

For more information, visit [www.ncai.org/Covid-19](http://www.ncai.org/Covid-19).

### ◆ NATIVE VOTE From page 4A

Trump won 59 percent of the vote and Biden won just 40 percent, compared to 58 percent for President Barack Obama and 41 percent for Republican challenger Mitt Romney in 2012. The Lumbee, as Laguna Pueblo journalist Jenni Monet predicted, played a significant part in delivering North Carolina, its 15 Electoral College votes and a Senate seat to the Grand Old Party.

Trump, for all his faults, understood the value of the Lumbee vote, which helped him win a state that many polls had him losing. His willingness to pursue the Lumbee with

explicit and concrete policies that would benefit Native people and their tribes suggests that future campaigns would be wise to do the same.

Indeed, around the country, Native people seem to vote at relatively high rates. Although candidates may have been able to plead ignorance about this in the past, wonks like University of Michigan professor Stephanie Fryberg are providing detailed survey-backed research. The Indigenous Futures Project — based on a survey of 6,400 Native people representing 401 tribes — found, for example, that 77 percent of respondents said they voted in the last election (though, to be clear, a poll isn't a perfect proxy for the real world,

because people can lie, forget or otherwise misrepresent their actions).

If nothing else, campaigns and the journalists who cover them should pay more attention to Indian Country because the stories — and memes — are just too damn good: Navajos on horseback, crown dancers in full regalia, a coordinated clapback heard round the World Wide Web. I mean, us Natives, we're really something else, right?

*Julian Brave NoiseCat is vice president of policy and strategy at Data for Progress, senior media fellow with NDN Collective and narrative change director of The Natural History Museum. This article is from nbcnews.com.*

**RICHARD CASTILLO**  
FLORIDA CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
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The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice since 1996. In 1995, he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

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**HARD ROCK**  
From page 1A

**Country connection**

In Bristol in mid-September, Hard Rock officials had unveiled a 3D model of the proposed hotel and casino, along with several pieces of country music memorabilia for the public to see.

The Virginia General Assembly and the Bristol City Council had previously authorized that voters would see the local gambling referendum on the ballot in November.

Bristol, Virginia, is the twin city of Bristol, Tennessee — just across the state line. It has been nicknamed the “birthplace of country music.”

Memorabilia pieces at the new Hard Rock development are expected to include country music legends Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn, Garth Brooks, Taylor Swift, Carrie Underwood, Buck Owens and Hank Williams.

Bristol’s approval was by the largest margin of four gambling referendum’s that were approved in Virginia. The others were in Danville, Norfolk and Portsmouth.

All four communities are considered to be struggling economically. The

proposed projects in each (by different casino operators) are designed to spur local economies through new tax revenue from visitors. The projects will also create new jobs.

Hard Rock and its partners said in a statement that they were grateful for the strong support from Bristol voters.

“The final referendum result reflects the unified elected officials who fully embraced the project early on and voters confidence in the jobs and tax revenue the proposed resort will bring to Bristol,” the statement said.

**Next steps**

Hard Rock International Chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen spoke to local media after initial voting results came in.

“Obviously, with [an] over 70% majority of the citizens saying they support this entertainment complex, we’re hopeful there will be great acceptance at the local level to get all the additional approvals needed and moving forward,” Allen said. “Certainly, if those things come in a normal time frame and there is no issue whatsoever, the opening will be in the fourth quarter of 2022.”

Allen said that he thought it could be sooner, however.

The partners were expected to submit a gaming license application to the Virginia Lottery Board. The board has one year to make a decision on the application.

In the meantime, Allen has expressed interest in opening a temporary casino at the site, which is permitted for up to one year — with an option for a second year — once a gaming license is secured.

**Closer look at the numbers**

Hard Rock officials said they expect the project will eventually:

- Attract more than four million visitors each year.
- Create up to 2,000 jobs.
- Generate between \$15 and \$20 million in annual tax revenues for the city.
- Include millions more in gaming tax revenues for Bristol and 11 other Southwest Virginia localities.

There are Hard Rock venues in more than 70 countries. Its two most successful flagship properties are in Hollywood, Florida — where the world’s first Guitar Hotel opened in 2019, and in Tampa.

The Seminole Tribe of Florida is the parent entity of Hard Rock International. More is at [hardrock.com](http://hardrock.com).

# Seminole Hard Rock, Guitar Hotel earn top gaming awards

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**HOLLYWOOD** — Seminole Hard Rock and its Guitar Hotel at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood were big winners in the seventh annual Global Gaming Awards (GGA), which held a virtual online program Oct. 27.

Seminole Hard Rock earned top honor as Land-Based Operator of the Year. It notched first place over nine other casino operator finalists from hundreds of casino operators around the world. The Guitar Hotel captured first place as Property of the Year. Leaders from throughout the gaming industry serve as judges for the awards.

“We’re excited about the acknowledgement, and on behalf of our 50,000 employees around the world, we sincerely appreciate it,” Hard Rock International chairman and Seminole Gaming CEO Jim Allen said in an interview on the awards show. Allen was a finalist in the American Executive of the Year category.

According to GGA, the Land-Based Operator of the Year honor “looks to recognize the achievements of casino operators who have not only excelled in terms of financial performance, but led the pack in terms of innovation and enhancement in the last 12 months. In many ways land-based venues are considered to be the backbone of the global gaming industry, this category rewards the company who has

gone above and beyond to create the best possible customer experience.”

The guitar-shaped Guitar Hotel, which towers over the Hollywood property, was part of a \$1.5 billion expansion that debuted in November 2019. It includes 638 guestrooms and provides nightly light shows that can be seen for miles around.

“Certainly it was an amazing project and there’s no other building like it in the world,” said Allen, adding that “[we’re] really happy with its early results.”

All Seminole Gaming properties in Florida reopened this summer under Hard Rock’s “Safe + Sound” guidelines after being closed in March due to the pandemic. Allen said the Florida business is “good.”

The awards come on the heels of other recent honors for Seminole Hard Rock, including winning the Corporate Social Responsibility Award from the National Council on Problem Gambling in August. Also, data and analytics company J.D. Power named Hard Rock Hotels as one of the top-performing hotel brands in the firm’s 2020 North America hotel guest satisfaction study.

GGA is organized by the business-to-business “Gambling Insider” gaming publication.

Hard Rock will hit a milestone in June of 2021 when the brand turns 50 years old. The brand’s parent entity is the Seminole Tribe of Florida.



This rendering shows what a new Hard Rock project in Bristol, Virginia, would look like once completed.

Hard Rock

## New holiday items from Hard Rock Cafe

Hard Rock Cafe’s Rock Shop has a menu of new items for holiday shoppers. For more information go to <https://shop.hardrock.com/en-us>.



Clockwise from upper left: Hard Rock (4)

**Special edition 2020 red guitar ornament features red glitter highlights on the headstock and guitar base while snowflakes add a festive touch.**

**A limited edition T-shirt features a shade-wearing rocking Santa.**

**2020 Hanukkah pin features a bright blue guitar base with the Star of David that leads up to the Menorah with its nine glowing candles.**

**2020 holiday stocking pin brims with presents and sporting a special woven dangle tassel.**



## Hard Rock Tampa to hold career fair

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**TAMPA** — Job seekers will have an opportunity to join Seminole Hard Rock Hotel Casino Tampa. The venue is looking to fill 400 jobs and will host a career fair Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Positions available are in the areas of beverage, cash operations, culinary, guest services, front desk operations, housekeeping, custodial, restaurant outlets, in room dining, maintenance, security, retail

outlets, spa operations and locker room attending.

Candidates are asked to bring at least 15 copies of their resume, a valid ID, social security card and, if required, a work authorization.

Perks include full-time benefits, on-call positions with flexible schedules, a free meal every shift, provided wardrobe and career growth opportunities.

Job offers may be made on the spot. Visit [gotoworkhappy.com](http://gotoworkhappy.com) for more information and a full listing of open positions.

## Hard Rock to host Lucky Hearts Poker Open

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**HOLLYWOOD** — Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood is bringing back major poker tournaments with the return of the Lucky Hearts Poker Open (LHPO), kicking off Jan. 14, 2021. Primary events kick off with the \$600 Deep Stack No Limit Hold’em opener featuring six opening flights and a \$300,000 guaranteed prize pool. The tournament culminates with the \$3,500 World Poker Tour (WPT) LHPO Main Event from Jan. 22-26 boasting a \$1 million guarantee. For more information visit [SHRPO.com](http://SHRPO.com).



The Guitar Hotel and Seminole Hard Rock won Global Gaming Awards that were announced Oct. 27.

## Hard Rock Hotel Bali earns recognition for safety protocols

STAFF REPORT

Hard Rock Hotel Bali, located on the island of Bali in the Indian Ocean in Indonesia, announced in November that it received Certification for New Era Life Protocols given by Bali Tourism Office (Disparda Provinsi Bali) after detailed inspections and assessment. The hotel said the certificate is a testimony of the hotel practicing high standards of pre-cautions

measures and safety protocols toward Covid-19.

“We’ve worked closely with Bali Government and Tourism Office, as well as industry experts to ensure our hotel exceeds the authorities’ requirements for hygiene and health, this is to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all of our guests and band members,” Shane Coates, general manager of Hard Rock Hotel Bali, said in a statement.



Hard Rock Hotel Bali general manager Shane Coates (third from right in front row) receives a safety certificate from Disparda Bali.

Hard Rock Bali

# DOT task forces don't back toll roads; recommend more economic, environmental studies

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Three Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) task forces wrapped up more than a year of meetings and open houses to consider how three Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) could be built in rural areas of the state.

The final reports suggested there is no need for toll roads at this time and recommended more economic and environmental impact studies be completed before the M-CORES can be built. The reports were sent to Gov. Ron DeSantis and lawmakers Nov. 12.

The M-CORES program was signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis in May 2019. The purpose is to revitalize rural communities; encourage job creation and provide regional connectivity while leveraging technology; enhance the quality of life and public safety; and protect the environment and natural resources.

The areas under consideration in M-CORES are the Southwest-Central Florida Connector extending from Collier County to Polk County, the Northern Turnpike Connector from the northern end of the Florida Turnpike in Wildwood to the Suncoast Parkway, and the Suncoast Connector from Citrus County to Jefferson County.

Specific maps have not been drawn, but M-CORES would go through or near counties near reservations including Collier, Hendry, Glades, Highlands and Polk. According to M-CORES, the intended benefits of the program include areas such as hurricane evacuation; congestion mitigation; trade and logistics; broadband, water and sewer connectivity; wildlife protection; energy distribution; and other transportation modes, such as shared-use nonmotorized trails, freight and passenger rail, and public transit.

FDOT appointed the 40 members of each task force, which included representatives from state agencies, regional planning councils, metropolitan planning organizations, water management districts, local governments, environmental groups and the community.

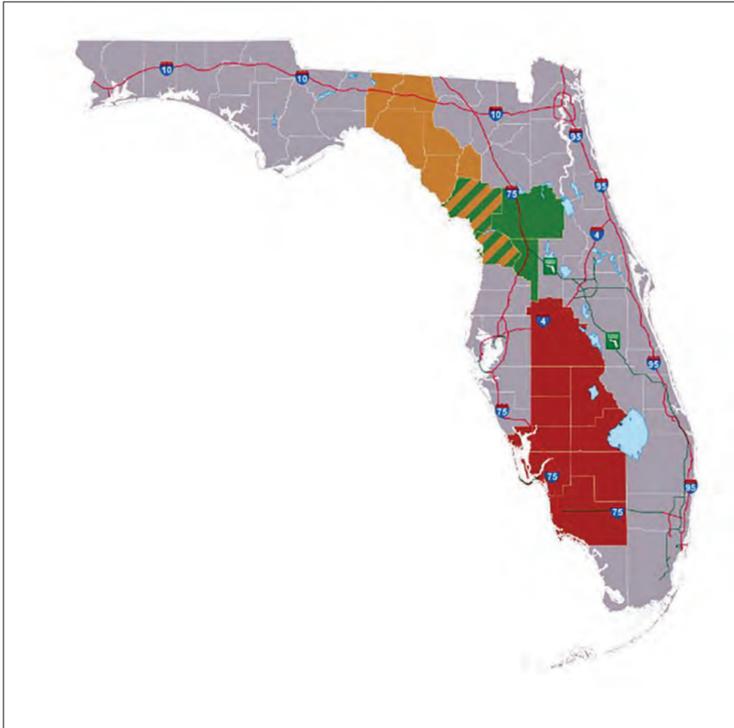
The task forces began their work without a specific plan for the roads from the FDOT and the panels each determined it was unable to reach a conclusion based on the information available.

"Since the Task Force process was designed to occur prior to the corridor planning and development process, the Task Force was not able to review data on nor discuss every potential impact of the corridor in detail," the report read.

The reports stated that FDOT must develop project-specific needs, environmental feasibility and economic feasibility for future projects.

The report for the Southwest-Central Florida connector included the need to address the habitat for endangered Florida panthers, which is in the area the connector will be built.

"The Task Force did not reach a conclusion based on the information



The shaded parts are areas of M-CORES studies.

available at this time that there is a specific need for a completely new greenfield corridor or modifications of existing facilities through the study area," the report states.

A "greenfield" corridor is considered to be a new road through areas where roads do not currently exist.

The task forces expressed a preference for improvement or expansion of existing highway corridors instead of building new roads and urged FDOT to consider a "no build" alternative until a final recommendation about each project is made.

During the 15 months of public hearings, about 10,000 people commented on the program. According to FDOT Secretary Kevin Thibault, a significant amount of the feedback was related to protecting the state's environmental resources.

Environmental organizations spoke out after the final reports were submitted.

"The Task Forces have protected Florida's natural areas and rural lands from what could have been a disaster," Charles Lee, director of Advocacy of Audubon Florida, said in a statement. "In effect, the Task Force recommendations have directed DOT to use rigorous criteria in considering any road expansions, declared that there is not any immediate need for these corridors and rejected the rush to build projects that seemed to fuel the original 2019 Legislation."

Vivian Young, communications director of 1000 Friends of Florida, wrote in a letter on the organization's website, "The recommendations do not do enough to stop the toll roads, if they are built, from fueling

low-density residential and commercial development — urban sprawl — that would ruin this unspoiled part of Florida."

Florida Sen. President Bill Galvano, R-Bradenton, who has championed the Southwest-Central Florida Connector, said it could lead to positive impacts, from business growth to improved hurricane evacuations.

The next phase of the M-CORES project will be the Alternative Corridor Evaluation, during which the criteria will be established to develop and evaluate each potential corridor. Using the criteria, each potential course will be evaluated to determine which options should be considered for further study. This is the time the corridors will be evaluated for environmental feasibility, along with the no-build option. The second phase is expected to begin in the next several months.

Whatever work is done in M-CORES, it is expected to be completed by 2030.

The final report stated, "The statute charges FDOT, to the maximum extent feasible, to adhere to the recommendations of each Task Force in the design of the multiple modes of transportation and multiple types of infrastructure associated with the corridor. The Task Force recommended, and FDOT committed to, an action plan for future activities in this study area consistent with the guiding principles and instructions."

In other words, FDOT must follow the recommendations of the task forces final reports.

For more information go to [floridamcores.com](http://floridamcores.com).

## OBITUARY



Mike Tiger

# Mike Tiger, 70, former tribal treasurer, 'Fearsome Five' member

FROM LONG HOUSE FUNERAL HOME

Mike Tiger, 70, Wolf Clan, continued his journey on November 20, 2020 surrounded by his loving family following a period of declining health while at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva, North Carolina. Mike was an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Born March 7, 1950 to his late Seminole father Howard Tiger and his mother, Winifred (Sneed) Tiger of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. He is also preceded in death by maternal grandparents Cam and Minda Bradley Sneed of Cherokee, North Carolina; his paternal grandmother Ada Tiger of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Snake Clan; as well as his two brothers Clyde Tiger and Vernon Tiger. Mike is survived by his wife of 46 years, Judy Gloyne Tiger and his four children: Ernest Dwight Tiger, Ruscilla Bree Tiger, Cateuce Vernon Tiger (Katie) and Katie Tiger Smith (Elijah). He also leaves behind six grandchildren: Ali Skye, Mikah Day, Lil Cateuce, Shaligugi, Hagan and Ani Unole. In addition, he is survived by his loving sister, Ruscilla Tiger of the Hollywood Reservation. He is also survived by his first cousin who was more like a brother to him, Moses "BigShot" Jumper, as well as his childhood friend, Dan Miller, who Mike also considered as a brother. He also leaves behind many, many caring members of the Sneed family in Cherokee, North Carolina.

Along Mike's journey he made many friendships through his love of hunting and fishing. He also left a mark while enjoying coaching, athletics and his professional career.

Mike grew up on the Dania-Hollywood Reservation in Hollywood, Florida. He was very proud of his Seminole Tribe of Florida and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian Heritage. Mike grew up living in a "chickee" until his father moved the family into a house on the Hollywood Reservation.

As a young man, Mike was an outstanding athlete at McArthur High School. Together with four other Seminole teammates: Joe Osceola, Moses Jumper, Max Osceola, and Moses Osceola; these Seminole players were dubbed "The Fearsome Five." They were instrumental in helping win the 1967 District Football Championship. Mike went on to attend Tampa University to play football.

Mike joined the National Guard and served from 1969-1974.

Mike began his long career in 1971 at the age of 21 when Mike was elected to the board of directors of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Inc. He is the youngest person to hold public office of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. In 1973, he came to work full time for the Seminole Tribe as the Human Resources director. Eventually he was promoted to executive administrator of the Seminole Tribe. In 1982, Mike moved his family to Nashville, Tennessee, to work for Indian Health Service (IHS). The IHS Nashville office manages all the resources for providing health services to American Indians and Urban Organization funding for American Indians living from Texas to Maine to as far south as Florida. Over the next 22 years, Mike worked in many different positions with IHS, from executive officer to deputy director. The latter 10 years of his time with IHS, he served as area director. Mike retired from IHS in 2004 after 22 years of service and went home to Florida to work for his people the Seminole Tribe as the tribal treasurer.

A memorial service for Mike Tiger was scheduled to be held Monday, November 23, 2020 at Cherokee Baptist Church. Mike will be interred at First Seminole Baptist Church in Hollywood, Florida, next to his family home. Donations in Mike's memory may be made to the Cherokee Baptist Church Building Fund, P.O. Box 395, Cherokee, NC 28719. Long House Funeral Home assisted the Tiger family with final arrangements.

# New memorial recognizes generations of military service by Native American Veterans

BY QUIL LAWRENCE  
National Public Radio

Twenty-five years in the making, a new monument on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., opened on Veterans Day — the National Native American Veterans Memorial.

"It's an article of faith in Indian country that Native Americans serve at a greater rate than basically any other group," said Kevin Gover, the director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and a citizen of the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma. He said the steel ring sculpture over a carved stone drum, in a wooded area near the museum's entrance, will become hallowed ground.

"When people bring their memories and bring their prayers to a place, they make it sacred," he said. "We wish for this to be a sacred place, not just for Native Americans, but for all Americans."

For now, most of those prayers and memories are being sent virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic, but plenty of Native veterans are hoping to sanctify the site when it becomes safe to travel there. For now, most of those prayers and memories are being sent virtually because of the coronavirus pandemic, but plenty of Native veterans are hoping to sanctify the site when it becomes safe to travel there.

"My ancestors were warriors. Rain-in-the-Face who fought in the Battle of the Little Bighorn or Greasy Grass that they called it," said Marcella LeBeau, a 101-year-old former Army nurse. "My father was a Spanish American war veteran. My brother, oldest brother was a veteran. All down the line."

LeBeau is a citizen of the Two Kettle Band, Cheyenne River Sioux. She recalled hearing a constant barrage of German "buzz bombs" during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, while she worked as a surgical nurse at the 25th General Hospital in Liege, Belgium, just miles from the front.

"To me it was a great honor," she said — and one recognized by her tribe when



Alan Karchmer/National Native American Veterans Memorial

A new monument on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., opened on Veterans Day — the National Native American Veterans Memorial.

she returned home to South Dakota. With the memorial, she's hoping recognition of Native service will be nationwide.

For other Native veterans, a tradition of military service isn't something they heard so much about.

"For a lot of years, I thought I was a first-generation military person," said Army Col. Wayne Don, a Native Alaskan.

"Came to find out both of my grandfathers and uncles had served in the Territorial Guard during World War II," he said.

Don has served 27 years so far, including tours in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Learning about his family history of military service was emotional and complicated.

"Not just Native Americans, but some of the other minority groups — ultimately they chose to serve, to represent their people and also to serve a country that sometimes didn't have what proved to be their best interest in mind. But they still did it," he said.

Don said now that the country is wrestling with questions about racial justice, he hopes the memorial can play a part.

Army vet Allen Hoe feels the same. He's native Hawaiian and was drafted in 1966. He then volunteered as a combat medic in Vietnam. Both his sons followed

in his footsteps and served in the Army after Sept. 11. His oldest son Nainoa K. Hoe, was killed in action in 2005 at age 27, in Mosul, Iraq.

"He was a young man who felt the same I did and the same way his ancestors did. For me, his loss obviously very painful as his father, but I look back and say the greater feeling is that he worked so hard to do so much for this country and he will not be able to enjoy that," Hoe said.

"His younger brother is a staff sergeant. His name is Nakoa. The meaning of Nakoa is 'the warrior who is brave and courageous.' And you know, from the two sons he's had to carry the heavier load than his big brother did, simply because he's left with the legacy of his older brother's accomplishments, as well as now having to make sure Mom and Dad are OK," Hoe said.

Those are the kind of stories of service and sacrifice Hoe wants Americans to learn about at the new Native American Veterans Memorial For Native visitors, Hoe wants it to be a validation or maybe even an inspiration.

"Maybe some young Native who experiences that memorial for the first time, in 50 years from now, he'll be the president of the United States. Who knows? Or he'll be the next great general?" Hoe said.

# Hard Rock International honors U.S. military veterans through exclusive partnership with military exchanges

PRESS RELEASE

**HOLLYWOOD** — Hard Rock International announced Nov. 11 that it has signed a licensing agreement to develop limited-edition custom graphic T-shirts and other apparel products exclusively for the military exchanges serving all branches of service. These products began being sold at AAFES (Army & Air Force Exchange), NEX (Navy Exchange) and MCX (Marine Corps Exchange) on Veterans Day, Nov. 11 and on [shopmyexchange.com](http://shopmyexchange.com) and [mynavyexchange.com](http://mynavyexchange.com).

"We are thrilled to partner with military exchanges nationwide to honor all branches of service and celebrate our U.S. military heroes for Veterans Day," said Mark Linduski, director of licensing at Hard Rock International. "This new and exclusive apparel line is a great opportunity to extend Hard Rock's reach while emphasizing our brand's identity that's firmly built on music and entertainment."

A series of special music performances were scheduled to be broadcast on Veterans Day across all military resale social channels.

Performances from artists Hanson and Ashanti were filmed at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino locations in Tulsa and Atlantic City respectively.



Hard Rock

Hard Rock T-shirts honoring branches of the U.S. military are available online at military exchange websites.

# SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM

A PLACE TO LEARN, A PLACE TO REMEMBER.

## What are we up to? Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum during the 2020 public safety closure – part 2

BY JIM PATRICK  
Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

**BIG CYPRESS** — During the temporary closure at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, the exhibits division is both looking back and moving forward. Realizing the increased importance of distancing and hygiene forces us to create alternative ways to interact and learn. Preparing for in-person attendance challenges us to re-imagine our spaces. Always ready for opportunities to engage with the community, we strive to tell the Seminole story in different ways and places.

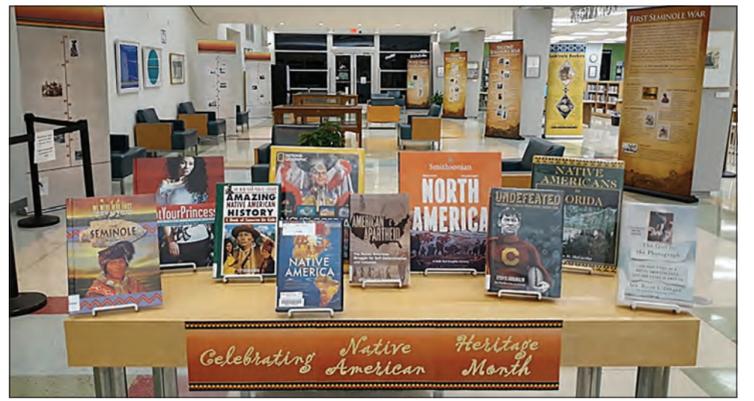
We have three galleries that typically rotate out short-term exhibitions to cover different subjects, showcase different artists, and highlight different aspects of the culture and history of the Seminole people. Prior to replacing any of them, steps are now being taken to make them available electronically. This includes 3D renderings and animations which go into more detail than the recently available virtual tour. Currently

we have a link to one such animation available for the Mosaic Gallery <https://www.ahtahthiki.com/mosaic/> where our local Ahfachkee School (K-12) artists are showcased – more to come! Another way we memorialize these exhibits is by recording a guided video walkthrough. Look for this feature soon from our West Gallery to experience our popular alligator wrestling exhibition.

One way we are moving toward re-opening is by removing dividers that

create confined spaces, thus providing the opportunity for more physical distancing for the visitor. We are also exploring alternatives to physical and touchable components. One alternative is the use of personal cell phones for audio programs as opposed to handsets handled by the public. Other methods for gaining confidence are installing appropriate hygienic safeguards including gloves, disinfectants, reminder signage and a controlled direction of foot traffic.

Coming soon to our Selections Gallery,



The Kendale branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library is celebrating Native American History Month with displays of books and banners borrowed from the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum.

we are preparing an exhibit on Buffalo Tiger. This important and influential leader was not only paramount in the independence of the Miccosukee Tribe, but also an inspiration to the balance between progress and tradition. This exciting new exhibition will focus on his contributions to the sovereignty and education of native people and his lead in the fight to protect the Creator's gifts.

In celebration of Native American Cultural History Month in November, we have banners on display at the Kendale branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library. These banners inform and celebrate the

history and culture of the "Unconquered People" and will be on exhibit throughout the month.

Our plan is to continue to provide a safe, engaging, and educational experience, while adding alternatives to a typical visit. We are recording and making available the current exhibits, developing new exhibits to be ready for the re-opening, and identifying areas where we can increase confidence of safety for the visitor and the community. Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki, a place to learn, a place to remember.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

Check out Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum's newest virtual exhibit, celebrating the unique artwork of Ahfachkee students, at [ahtahthiki.com/mosaic/](https://www.ahtahthiki.com/mosaic/).



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum

This virtual gallery represents an exhibit currently being developed about the life and contributions of Miccosukee leader Buffalo Tiger.

## Seminole art on display at 'Circle of Unity' exhibit

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — History Fort Lauderdale marked the occasion of National Native American History Month in November to highlight the contributions of local Native American artists.

The "Circle of Unity" mixed media fine art exhibit launched Nov. 9 and will be on display through Jan. 12, 2021.

History Fort Lauderdale is part of a museum complex operated by the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society.

Organizers described the exhibit as intergenerational and multidisciplinary – "presenting a contemporary perspective of Seminole artists on the cycles of solidarity and patterns of resilience that have always existed within the histories of the Seminole and Miccosukee."

Tara A. Chadwick, curator of exhibit at the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, said Circle of Unity features more than 20 Seminole artists.

Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Oliver Wareham's art piece serves as the name and face of the exhibit. Wareham also serves as a trustee for the History Fort Lauderdale board.

History Fort Lauderdale is a nonprofit supported by memberships, grants and charitable contributions.

"It is an honor and a privilege to host Circle of Unity in the very spot that the original people of the land we now know as Fort Lauderdale helped build and cultivate," Patricia Zeiler, executive director of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, said in a statement. "We are grateful to the Native American artists for sharing their tradition, culture and vision with the community and to the Seminole Tribe of Florida for its unwavering support."

The museum complex includes the 1905-built New River Inn, the 1907-built Pioneer House Museum and the 1899-built Ivy Cromartie Schoolhouse Museum and the Hoch Research Library.

The Circle of Unity exhibit is located in the New River Inn building at 231 SW 2nd Ave.

Admission is \$15 for adults; \$12 for seniors and \$7 for students (through age 22 with a valid student ID). Admission is free for members, military and children ages six and under.

For more information and ticket options, go to [historyfortlauderdale.org](https://historyfortlauderdale.org) or call (954) 463-4431.



History Fort Lauderdale

This work by Hollywood Board Rep. Gordon Oliver Wareham is on display as part of History Fort Lauderdale's exhibit "Circle of Unity" that runs through Jan. 12, 2021.

## NMAI receives \$5.6M donation from Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

PRESS RELEASE

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian has received a \$5.67 million gift from the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a federally recognized tribe in Northern California. This gift is the largest to date dedicated in supporting the museum's national education initiative, Native Knowledge 360° (NK360°). These funds will allow the museum to underwrite, pilot and launch the first national, state and local model, which will produce content that can be easily integrated into education curricula throughout the nation. The model also includes professional development for educators.

"It cannot be overstated: Native history is American history," said Kevin Gover, director of the National Museum of the American Indian. "Native people need to be involved in the telling of the American story. Native Knowledge 360° is our museum's way of ensuring that Indigenous people are in that conversation. This generous gift from Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria makes it possible for the museum to work with Native scholars and knowledge-keepers to include Native narratives in educational materials at the national, state and local levels."

"Understanding more about America's collective roots will help us succeed in the

future," said Greg Sarris, chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. "We're excited to make this important gift to the National Museum of the American Indian to provide much-needed access to historically accurate Native history for generations to come. It's time to look at our past, present and future in the United States with transparency and truth."

The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria are descendants of Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo tribes. The Miwok of west Marin County have, through the years, been referred to as Marshall Indians, Marin Miwok, Tomales, Tomales Bay and Hookoeko. The Bodega Miwok (aka, Olamentko) traditionally lived in the area of Bodega Bay. The neighboring Southern Pomo Sebastopol group lived just north and east of the Miwok. The town of Sebastopol is located about one mile midway between the north boundary of Miwok territory and the southern edge of Southern Pomo territory. In 2000, President Bill Clinton signed into law legislation restoring federal recognition to the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. The legislation also provided for the restoration of land.

Native Knowledge 360° (NK360°) is a set of teaching resources that provides educators and students with new perspectives on Native American history and cultures.

## ◆ EVERGLADES From page 1A

- Bryce Canyon National Park (Utah)
- Kobuk Valley National Park (Alaska)
- Crow Canyon Petroglyphs (New Mexico)
- Trail of Tears National Historic Trail (crosses nine states)
- Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site (North Dakota)

For more, go to [doi.gov](https://doi.gov).

### 'Grassy waters'

Meanwhile on Nov. 7, Insider.com published its list of "10 landmarks you didn't know had Native American origins."

"Native Americans built vibrant communities in what is now the United States before colonizers arrived," the introduction said. "Some of their villages, sacred sites, and names remain, while others have been razed, renamed or forgotten."

The Everglades made the list of 10, and while its section doesn't mention the Seminole Tribe specifically, it notes the Tequesta, Calusa, Jeaga, Ais and Mayaimi.

"The Everglades in Florida were full of Native American communities," a citation reads. "The plains region south of Lake Okeechobee once contained small camps and was used for canoe travel, and buildings on the western edge appear to have been more permanent. The area was known as 'pa-hay-okee,' translating to 'grassy waters.' When Europeans arrived between 1500 and 1750, they found five separate, well-established tribes totaling about 20,000



Images via [insider.com/doi.gov](https://insider.com/doi.gov).

A U.S. Department of the Interior list about public lands with 'powerful Native American connections' includes a section about the connection of the Everglades and Seminoles.

people." Joining the Everglades on the list of 10 are:

- Grand Canyon Skywalk in Arizona (built on sacred Hualapai land).
- Gateway Arch National Park in St. Louis (name was changed to honor Native Americans).
- Alcatraz Island in San Francisco (used by Native communities to house those who broke tribal laws).
- Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado (contains remnants of the ancestral pueblo culture).
- Niagara Falls in New York (name comes from the Native American village of Onghiar).

- Four Corners Monument in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah (run by the Navajo Nation Parks & Recreation).
- Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho (has 26 tribes connected to areas and resources within it).
- Mount Rushmore in Keystone, South Dakota (was carved into the Black Hills – a sacred site for the Lakota Sioux).
- Denali, the tallest mountain in the U.S. located in Alaska (central to the Athabascans' traditional beliefs about the creation of the world).

To read the full citations on each, go to [insider.com](https://insider.com).

# Health



## Tribal leaders discuss pandemic's impact on hard-hit Indian Country

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Covid-19 is running rampant across the globe and, as of late November, nearly 60 million cases worldwide and 10 million cases in the U.S. have been reported.

Indian Country has not been spared. Native Americans are 5.3 times more likely than white people to be hospitalized with Covid-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Native communities have mobilized in the battle against the virus.

A group of tribal leaders gathered Nov. 9 for a webinar on Covid-19 and Native American health, which was convened and moderated by U.S. News & World Report as part of its Community Health Leadership Forum.

Jonathan Nez, Navajo Nation president; Stacy A. Bohlen, chief executive officer of the National Indian Health Board; and Kevin DuPuis, chairman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Minnesota, shared their strategies of how their tribes have handled the pandemic.

"The virus penetrated Indian Country disproportionately because of the direct results of colonization and underfunding of the Indian Health Service," said Bohlen (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians). "It's no surprise that it hit our people the hardest."

Bohlen said that multiple generations often live together in the same house, which makes social distancing nearly impossible. She cited the vast numbers of people in Alaska and on the Navajo Reservation who don't have running water and can't wash their hands often.

"This is a problem that can be solved with the political and public will to solve it," Bohlen said. "It can save many lives, not just during the Covid era, but in everyday life."

On the Navajo Reservation, the most vulnerable population suffers from diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. Nez said his people got hit hard, but they have been carefully following recommendations from public health experts.

The Navajo Nation has tested about half of its citizens — more than nearly every state — and utilized its ability to govern

themselves. Masks were mandated in April; curfews and lockdowns followed. Nez said communication with tribal members is one reason there was no resistance to the policies.

"Since time immemorial, we all have stories passed down from generation to generation about monsters," he said. "Now we have Covid-19. We framed it in a way to be a warrior. What is the armor you need to wear and what is the weapon you need to fight this? The armor is the mask and the weapon is following the guidelines."

So far during the pandemic the Navajo Nation has tested about 151,000 people with nearly 19,000 being positive. According to the Navajo Times, as of Nov. 25 at least 638 people have died on the Navajo Nation from the coronavirus and recoveries are at 8,271.

"People just need to wear masks," Nez said. "It's about taking care of those you love around you."

DuPuis established a state of emergency with 12 other tribes in Minnesota on March 13 and shut down the casinos.

"We look at our teachings and stories and the past," DuPuis said. "It took only one blanket infected with smallpox to wipe out a community."

The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa was prepared for the shockwave that came with the pandemic. Three-quarters of the tribe lives off the reservation and a lot of those members wanted to come home. There are also non-Indigenous people living with and near the tribe.

"It's everywhere. Can we stop it?" DuPuis asked rhetorically. "Probably not, but we can try to control it so it doesn't affect our elder population, our storytellers, those who carry our history. If we lose an elder, it's like a library burning down. We are an oral teaching people and we need to pass down our stories. We protect the unborn to make sure our people will continue."

With resorts near the reservation, many visitors flocked to the area for the fishing and other activities as businesses in the state reopened. The Fond du Lac Band used social media, newspapers and public service announcements on the radio to communicate the tribe's stringent safety measures to people who don't live on or near the reservation.

"With all the medical disparities we have, it makes sense to wear a mask all the time," DuPuis said. "Wearing a mask is about

protecting someone else, the other human being. There is only one race of people, the human race. We need to protect all."

DuPuis said the CARES Act from the federal government, which earmarked \$8 billion in Covid-related funding for Indian Country, needed to be dispersed quicker and more efficiently.

"The money helped, but there are too many restrictions," he said. "No other community has to put up with being told how to spend the money from the government. We are sovereign governments and they should give us direct funding. When will they recognize tribal governments as true sovereign entities? Let us determine what our need is so we can take care of our people the right way. We have been self-governing for over 528 years."

Bohlen said it was vital to get existing programs passed and funded, such as the Indian Health Service's Special Diabetes Program for Indians, which ends Dec. 31.

On the importance of tribes developing strong relationships with state governments, DuPuis said the leaders from the 12 nearby tribes began daily calls at the beginning of the pandemic. They communicated with Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan, who is a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, and other state and federal partners every day. The state has an executive order for tribal consultation and there are tribal liaisons on every statewide commission.

"That relationship allowed a lot to happen in Minnesota that didn't happen elsewhere," DuPuis said. "The bridges we built ensured leadership had the ability to have direct contact. It paid off and showed what can be done in Indian country, but you have to be able to build that bridge. Rebuild those broken bridges, you owe it to your people."

As for media attention, Nez reported that every national outlet came to the Navajo Reservation because it was hit so hard by the coronavirus. Some said the virus could wipe out a tribe, which was discouraging for the people, he said.

"It was like poor, poor Indians," Nez said. "That's why I stopped doing taped interviews. I'd rather do it live so I can get my point across. The media doesn't talk about our determination, what we did



Clockwise, Kevin DuPuis, chairman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; Devon Haynie, U.S. News World & Report assistant managing editor; Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez; and Stacy A. Bohlen, chief executive officer of the National Indian Health Board and member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians participate in a webinar Nov. 9 to discuss how tribes are handling the pandemic.

to govern ourselves, our way of life, our teachings. Native American communities have contributed to the freedom of everyone in this country, yet we continue to be pushed aside. Now is the time for congressional leaders to understand the nation-to-nation relationship."

Nez said while everyone else around the country received their relief funds, tribal nations had to wait.

"We took it upon ourselves to help our people," he said. "That's the story that should be magnified throughout the country."

When the funding did come through, the Navajo Nation used it to repair water and electric lines for some who didn't have either.

"This administration didn't put aside one penny for tribes," Nez said. "It wouldn't have happened if our congressional leaders didn't fight for Indian Country. They fought and got \$8 billion for us."

DuPuis said Congress made a difference for his tribe as well. He also said it's important to learn from the ordeals created by the pandemic.

"People see a problem and go back into the woods looking for plants and medicines out there," he said. "The pandemic is a bad thing, but we need to look for good things that come out of this. We are going back to who we are as a people and going back to our way of life. We have to carry on as a people. We need to survive and go forward. It is so important to wear the mask; it is one thing we can do to protect us and slow this down."

From her position at the National Indian Health Board, Bohlen receives perspectives from many tribes.

"Some things Native people have are resolve, resilience, spiritual grounding and faith that make us strongest in a crisis," she said. "I am blessed to have amazing tribal leadership around me who were steady in the storm and worked with Congress effectively to get resources for our people. President Lincoln said you find out what your character is in the worst of times. Tribal leaders listened and fought for us."

## Dr. Irina Beyder named director of Center for Behavioral Health

FROM CBH

**HOLLYWOOD** — Dr. Irina Beyder is the new director of the Center for Behavioral Health (CBH).

For more than 20 years, Beyder has dedicated her career to making a difference in the lives of individuals struggling with mental and behavioral health challenges. She has led behavioral health organizations and developed innovative health care programs. Her passion is to ensure that individuals receive care that is of high quality, effective, culturally sensitive and person-centered.

Beyder earned a bachelor's degree in psychology, Master of Science degree in marriage and family therapy, Ph.D in family studies and public health with specialization

in program management, business administration and policy development, and Master of Business Administration with a concentration on data driven decision making.

Over the years, her professional journey has taken her from directing outpatient mental health start-ups, behavioral health treatment facilities, and hospital operations to leading large government agencies.

Beyder grew up in the Ukraine and came to the United States when she was 17. Education became the means by which she was able to explore her interests and develop her abilities in mental/behavioral health. She was fortunate to have a wide range of experiences that allowed her to give back to the communities that she had served.

Beyder passionately believes that



Dr. Irina Beyder

everyone should have an opportunity to enjoy a healthy life and to receive the care that they may need to achieve their full potential. She is excited that her journey in pursuing this belief has brought her to the Seminole Tribe of Florida. She is looking forward to leading the team of dedicated, skilled, and highly talented professionals who are eager to provide a healing experience to the tribal members.

Under Beyder's leadership, the CBH team will continue to grow and develop effective therapeutic skills, including cultural sensitivity and trauma informed certification, to meet the needs of the community. We will start offering a variety of educational and support groups that address issues and topics that are important to the community. We know that due to the pandemic, the entire

country is hurting. Throughout the United States and all over the world, individuals are experiencing increased number of mental health issues, substance use, and suicidal ideations. We are here to serve all of the tribal members and their descendants. We want to hear from all of you on what CBH can do to meet your needs and provide support to help you get through these difficult times. Our staff will be reaching out to the members of the community to offer support wherever and whenever it is needed.

Beyder is excited to meet as many of the tribal members as possible. Please feel free to email her at irinabeyder@semtribe.com or call the office at (954) 962-2009 ext. 14372 to say hello and provide feedback.

## Native healthcare conference scheduled for June 2021

STAFF REPORT

The 11th annual Native American Healthcare Conference, hosted by Native Nation Events, is scheduled to be held on June 14-15, 2021 at Pechanga Resort &

Casino in Temecula, California.

Through a series of panels, roundtable discussions and networking opportunities, healthcare directors, decision-makers and tribal leaders will hear from the industry experts on preventative disease, wellness

and other health-related topics facing Indian Country. Tribal communities generally experience numerous health disparities and now are among the most vulnerable and least resourced to address the current COVID-19 outbreak. Tribal

healthcare clinicians, IHS representatives and healthcare professionals will come together to hear healthcare updates, such as the newest treatments, equipment and opportunities, as well as discuss the current state of the industry during this pandemic and trends for the future.

Topics on the agenda include Covid-19 in Indian Country, cannabis post 2020

election, telehealth and caring for patients in their homes, diabetes issues in Indian Country, Native wellness, planning a new healthcare facility, mental health impact on Native American communities and the opioid crisis.

For more information visit [nativenationevents.org](http://nativenationevents.org), call (201) 857-5333 or email [sales@nativenationevents.org](mailto:sales@nativenationevents.org).

**As you share holiday traditions, ask your family members about their medical history.**

Knowing your family's medical history can help you make the best decisions for your medical care.

Contact your local Indian health care provider for more information, visit [Healthcare.gov](http://Healthcare.gov), or call 1-800-318-2596.

**RICHARD CASTILLO**  
**954.522.3500**

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**24 HOURS A DAY**

Since 1990 I have protected rights like yours. My office defends DUIs, drug offenses, suspended licenses, domestic violence, and all felonies and misdemeanors throughout Florida and the United States.

The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice since 1996. In 1995, he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

**RICHARD CASTILLO**  
FLORIDA CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
[WWW.CASTILLOLAWOFFICES.COM](http://WWW.CASTILLOLAWOFFICES.COM)

# SEMINOLE SCENES



Courtesy photo (2)

**NEW POOL HALL:** Immokalee's youth ranch event center near the rodeo is undergoing a transformation into a brand new pool hall. When complete, the facility will have 14 new pool tables, new lighting, a new bar area and flooring. A dartboard and surround sound television will complete the ambiance at the billiards center. A grand opening will likely open the pool hall when the pandemic is over.



Cheyenne Kippenberger/Facebook

**THOUGHTFUL THANKSGIVING:** Current Miss Indian World and former Miss Florida Seminole Cheyenne Kippenberger spent Nov. 19 delivering holiday food on the Hollywood Reservation. "Today my Poppa and I went around our rez delivering hams to our elders. I haven't seen most of them since February so it really made my heart happy to see them even just for a quick hello. Thank you to our councilman for providing hams to the community," Kippenberger posted.



John Anderson music video

**BIRTHDAY BOY:** December 13, 2020, is the 66th birthday of country music legend John Anderson, whose 1992 hit about the Seminoles called "Seminole Wind" is often played at tribal events.



Hard Rock/Facebook (2)

**HARD ROCK HELPS:** Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City (above and below) kicked off the holiday season by packing and delivering more than 500 bags of Thanksgiving meals to its neighboring senior homes Best of Life and Community Haven. Each bag was filled with a frozen turkey, potatoes, canned holiday favorites and stuffing.



@TheAlexisRoos/Twitter

**STAN THE MAN:** Hard Rock Girls pose in November with the Stanley Cup at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa. Hockey's most prized trophy, and perhaps the most recognizable trophy in the entire sports world, was captured by the Tampa Bay Lightning in September.

# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

## Indigenous man and granddaughter, 12, handcuffed after trying to open bank account

**VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Canada** — An Indigenous man in Canada has launched two human rights complaints after he and his 12-year old granddaughter were arrested and handcuffed as they tried to open a bank account.

Maxwell Johnson, a member of the Heiltsuk Nation, visited a Vancouver branch of the Bank of Montreal in December to open an account for his granddaughter Tori-Anne.

But bank staff did not believe the two were Indigenous after failing to verify the authenticity of their government-issued Indian status cards. Staff were also suspicious about the size of a deposit in Johnson's account, prompting an employee to call the police.

In a transcript of the call to police, released by the Heiltsuk Nation, bank staff alleged the two were committing fraud, telling police the two had presented "fake" identifications. The employee also told the dispatcher that Johnson and his granddaughter were "South Asian".

"It gets so tiring trying to prove who you are as a First Nations person," Johnson told the Canadian Press.

Bank staff expressed concerns after numbers in Tori-Anne's status card didn't match a database and they saw a recent C\$30,000 deposit in Johnson's account — part of an Aboriginal rights settlement — even though Johnson presented bank staff with his status card, birth certificate and client card.

When police officers arrived, they put both Johnson and his granddaughter in handcuffs. According to a police report, the officers believed Tori-Anne was "16 or 17", but removed the handcuffs after they realized she was 12.

Johnson has accused the Vancouver police department and the Bank of Montreal of racism in complaints at the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal and the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

"It's affected me quite a bit," said Johnson. "When this happened to us, my anxiety just went through the roof. I started counselling again. It's affected my motivation, my thought process, quite a bit of stuff."

The bank and Vancouver police have apologized for the incident. The bank has created an Indigenous advisory council and new training for staff. Vancouver police said they are reviewing current policy, but both organizations deny the incident that race was involved.

Members of the Heiltsuk Nation, however, say Johnson is owed justice.

"From the BMO manager deciding our members didn't belong, to the 911 call to police, to the cuffing, detention and questioning of Max and his granddaughter about how they came to be at the bank, this was a clear case of racial profiling and systemic racism," Marilyn Slett, chief councillor of the Heiltsuk Nation, said in a statement.

"Max and his granddaughter deserve justice for the pain this incident caused, and BMO and the VPD must take steps to ensure this never happens again."

- *The Guardian*

## Bay Mills Indian Community, Michigan settle suit involving gaming

**VANDERBILT, Mich.** — A decade-long legal battle over a now-shuttered casino in Vanderbilt is coming to an end.

The Bay Mills Indian Community said on Nov. 19 it has reached an agreement with the state of Michigan to resolve a court battle over tribal gaming on land in Vanderbilt. The Bay Mills community and the state had sued each other to determine whether the tribe could engage in gaming on the land.

Under the agreement, both the tribe and the state will dismiss their lawsuits. The tribe also agreed it won't attempt to operate a gaming facility on the land for at least five years. The agreement to dismiss the cases ends the litigation, but doesn't include any other terms regarding whether the land is eligible for gaming.

The lawsuits between the tribe and the state began in 2010. The dispute reached the U.S. Supreme Court where the Bay Mills community won a ruling affirming that Indian tribes have sovereign immunity from lawsuits. The case was sent back to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan, where the parties remained in a dispute until this settlement.

The tribe acquired the land in Vanderbilt under the Michigan Indian Land Claims Settlement Act, which allows the tribe to use certain trust funds to acquire additional tribal lands. The tribal community said its goal in developing a gaming facility on the Vanderbilt parcel was to provide new economic opportunities for the tribe and partner communities.

With the Bay Mills Indian Community set to become one of the first tribes in the U.S. to engage in statewide internet gaming, the tribe decided that continuing the litigation would not be an effective use of its resources.

The tribe said ending the litigation will help improve cooperation on economic development between Michigan tribes.

"The dismissal also preserves the tribe's ability to restore and enhance our tribal homelands to better serve its people," reads a statement from the tribe.

The Bay Mills Indian Community opened a casino in Vanderbilt on Nov. 3, 2010. It bought the land with interest earnings from a settlement with the federal government over allegations that it had been

inadequately compensated for land ceded in treaties from the 1800s.

A court order from a federal judge in 2011 ruled the casino opened without state approval and must be closed. In 2012 that court decision was reversed by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

In 2014 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Circuit Court ruling and decided in favor of the tribal sovereign immunity rights. However, the casino hasn't reopened.

The Bay Mills tribe operates two casinos on its reservation in Brimley, about 40 miles north of the Mackinac Bridge.

- *Gaylord (Michigan) Herald Times*

## Sand Creek Massacre statue to replace torn down soldier monument in Colorado

**DENVER** — The Civil War soldier statue toppled during the summer of protests at Colorado's Capitol will be replaced with a sculpture of an American Indian woman mourning the atrocities of the Sand Creek Massacre.

The decision came Nov. 20 in a 7-2 vote of the Capitol Building Advisory Committee. Representatives from the tribes, which suffered at Sand Creek 156 years ago, spoke to the committee.

"They were wiped out," Otto Braided Hair, of the Northern Cheyenne and a descendant of Sand Creek survivors, told the committee. "Their voices are no longer heard. Their wishes and concerns were no longer heard. Those are the people we speak for."

Now that the location of the statue has been decided, the issue now goes before the legislature to iron out how big the monument and its pedestal will be and how it will get to Colorado from Oklahoma where a seven-inch high prototype has already been approved.

Harvey Pratt, a Sand Creek descendant who was commissioned to create the statue by One Earth Future, said the idea to use a grieving Native American mother for the statue came to him in a dream.

"It's really about the women. The women carry the men in the tribes on their backs. I wanted to depict a woman," he said. "She's in mourning and she's kneeling, just sitting down. She's lost her baby and maybe her grandparents. She's got cuts on her legs and she's cut her finger off."

The woman bears an empty cradleboard symbolizing the loss of her child. She is reaching north with one arm, symbolizing the direction of the tribes' retreat.

"She's not asking to be spared. She's saying 'Remember us, don't forget us. I've lost my whole family,'" Pratt explained.

Two hundred and thirty Cheyenne and Arapahoe, mostly women, elderly and children, were slaughtered on Nov. 29, 1864, when volunteers from the 1st and 3rd Colorado Cavalry regiments ambushed them at sun-up. The soldier statue that had been at the Capitol — it now temporarily lives at History Colorado — has been intertwined with the massacre as it was designed by Capt. Jack Howland, a member of the 1st Cavalry.

The 700 Cheyenne and Arapahoe had been promised a peaceful existence by the government. After the attack, Army soldiers burned the camp and took trophies from the bodies, which they displayed in a parade through Denver, where they were initially hailed as conquerors.

The massacre was a toxin to relationships and a catalyst for wars between the U.S. Army and Native Americans for years.

Pratt's great-grandparents escaped the massacre in their bare feet, running through late-November snow and ice. He told the committee that as a child he was told to keep his shoes by the bed in case the family should have to flee in the middle of the night.

"In case something like that happened again, at least we wouldn't be barefoot," he said.

A Renaissance Man and Vietnam veteran, Pratt has a multi-layered career that includes half-a-century with the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. There, he created witness description drawings in over 5000 cases, such as high profile investigations as the Oklahoma City Bombing, Ted Bundy, "BTK killer" Dennis Rader and the "I-5 killer" Randall Brent Woodfield.

He also developed a process called soft tissue reconstruction and has drawn hundreds of sketches that demonstrate a missing child's progression to adulthood.

The Civil War soldier which fell this past June had stood on the west side of the Capitol since 1909. In 1999, lawmakers worked to correct the whitewashing of history by the statue and affixed a marker that noted, "By designating Sand Creek a battle, the monument's designers mischaracterized the actual events."

In 2014, then-Gov. John Hickenlooper formally apologized for the Sand Creek Massacre.

As a law enforcement officer, Pratt did not agree with the destruction of property he saw during the summer of protests.

"I think there's ways to protest. It's just gotten plumb out of hand, he said. "I have a hard time understanding that. Based on the way I was raised and being respectful."

He was commissioned to sculpt the "Warriors' Circle of Honor" for the American Indian Veterans Memorial and was present at the dedication this past Veterans' Day.

- *Colorado Public Radio*

## Cherokee, Choctaw tribes tell Congress recognizing Lumbee tribe would be 'devastating'

**LUMBERTON, N.C.** — As one of

North Carolina's largest Native American tribes seeks federal recognition, other tribes are pushing back.

The Lumbee Recognition Act recently passed a vote in the House of Representatives. It now is being debated in the Senate.

The bill would give the Robeson County-based tribe full federal recognition and potentially millions of dollars in benefits. That money could be used for workforce development and healthcare for the more than 66,000 Lumbee who call North Carolina home.

"Our children and our elders have not had access to the same types of health services that you see on the Cherokee reservation. If the Lumbee's had been recognized in the '50s with services, we would have most likely had a huge hospital in our county," said James Hardin of the Lumbee Regional Development Association.

However, the bill is not without controversy. Representatives for the Cherokee and Choctaw tribes wrote a letter to Congress officially opposing the Lumbee Recognition Act.

"For over a century, the Lumbees have claimed to be Cherokee, Croatan, Siouan, Cheraw, Tuscarora, and other unrelated tribes but have never been able to demonstrate any historical or genealogical tie to any historical tribe. Instead of demonstrating credible ties to historic tribes, they abandon one claim for another when challenges to their identity are asserted. H.R. 1964 would even prevent a serious review of the Lumbee claims that its current membership has Native American ancestry," the letter read.

The Cherokee and Choctaw tribes say the Lumbee trial should seek federal recognition through the Office of Federal Acknowledgement, which has experts and procedures in place to evaluate Native American history.

When the bill passed in the House of Representatives, Principal Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Richard Sneed released the following statement:

"Tribal recognition should not be granted when so much doubt and uncertainty remain over the Lumbees' lineage and genealogy. It is dangerous to pass legislation that short-circuits an established process designed to protect Native American history and identity. That is exactly what H.R. 1964 does and we urge the Senate to reject this bill."

If the bill passes the Senate this year, it will likely become law. President Donald Trump has voiced support for the bill; President-elect Joe Biden's stance on the bill is unknown.

- *ABC11 (Raleigh, North Carolina)*

## Debra White Plume death: Oglala Lakota environmental and civil rights activist dies aged 66

**RAPID CITY, S.D.** — Debra White Plume, a prominent Native American activist who faced down police bullets, uranium mining companies and oil pipeline projects in trying to protect the traditional Oglala Lakota way of life, died Nov. 10 in Rapid City, South Dakota. She was 66.

The cause was cancer, which was found in her lungs and abdomen, according to her husband, Alex White Plume.

In 1973, Debra White Plume was among the first people to join the American Indian Movement's occupation of Wounded Knee, on the Pine Ridge Reservation in southwest South Dakota, over demands that the U.S. government respect its treaties with Indigenous tribes from the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The police surrounded the town — the site of an 1890 massacre by U.S. cavalry troops — and a 71-day standoff ensued. Both sides traded fire almost nightly, leaving two Native Americans dead and one federal agent paralysed by a gunshot.

White Plume came to see that the biggest challenge facing Native Americans was in protecting their water supply. She and others feared that uranium mining, just outside the reservation, could contaminate water with radioactivity and chemicals like arsenic, used in the extraction process. And they saw two major oil pipelines in the works — the Keystone XL and the Dakota Access — as threatening not only ancestral burial sites but also aquifers.

- *The Independent*

## 244-year-old remains to be moved from museum to Indian burial ground

**NATICK, Mass.** — The remains of a Native American who joined the fight for America's independence more than 200 years ago will finally be put to rest after spending 164 years in a Boston museum.

Alexander Quapish, who records show joined the Continental Army which fought against the military forces of King George III during the American Revolution, will be buried in consecrated ground in Natick.

Quapish's remains had been stored in the Warren Anatomical Museum at Harvard University. He will finally rest at the Natick Praying Indian Burial Ground at 29 1/2 Pond Street. A date hasn't been set.

"I am honored and humbly accept the grace of officiating the interment of our Praying Indian ancestor and am proud to bring my people home to rest in our Sacred Burial Ground," Chief Caring Hands of the Natick Praying Indians said in an email. "I look forward to working with the Town of Natick and the Peabody Museum. This is an opportunity to heal the past with the present."

The Warren museum, along with another Harvard museum - The Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology - investigated

the remains that were in their collection. The federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act required an inventory of human remains held in the anatomical museum's collection. The act also required outreach to Native American communities who might have a connection to them.

Three Massachusetts Wampanoag tribes worked with the museums to examine the remains, including the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head and the Assonet Band of the Wampanoag Nation. The tribes have a cultural affiliation with the remains because Quapish was from Yarmouth, which is Wampanoag territory. As a result, they determine his final resting place.

Quapish will be buried in Natick because records indicate he married Sarah David, a member of the Natick Praying Indians. That account was stated by Jim Peters, executive director of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Commission on Indian Affairs, moments after the Select Board voted unanimously Monday night to authorize re-interment in the Natick burial ground. The town owns the burial ground land.

"Thank you all for doing this for us," Peters told the board. "We like to bring our ancestors back to their final reposing place, and have them protected as well so it won't be disturbed again."

"We are honored to be able to set (Quapish) to rest once more," said Bettina Washington, tribal historic preservation officer in the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head.

Historical records indicate Quapish and David may have settled together in Dedham, which is part of a network of Native American settlements converted to Christianity, including the Natick Praying Indians.

Quapish joined the Continental Army shortly after his wife's death in 1774. He reportedly died in 1776 in Needham, and may have been buried in Needham or Natick.

- *MetroWest Daily News (Framingham, Massachusetts)*

## Poarch Band of Creek Indians supports Sweet Grown Alabama

In November, Sweet Grown Alabama, the state's agricultural branding program, added the Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PCI) as a founding member of the non-profit organization.

The program represents over 170 farmer, restaurant, market and business members across the state who play a role in bringing local products to Yellowhammer State consumers.

"I am excited to announce our support of Sweet Grown Alabama," stated Stephanie A. Bryan, PCI tribal chair and CEO. "We are always looking for ways to support Alabama's economy and this important initiative will educate Alabamians about products that are grown and bred in our own backyards."

The program's mission is to enhance marketing opportunities for the state's farmers by connecting retailers and consumers to Alabama-grown foods and other agricultural products. Sweet Grown Alabama earlier this year unveiled a searchable database which members of the public can use to search for locally grown products in their area.

According to a release, PCI's financial support will help Sweet Grown Alabama connect Alabama farmers and families. Funds will be utilized to encourage purchasing of locally grown products through traditional and digital marketing.

"This financial support from the Poarch Creek Indians will have a positive ripple effect on Alabama's economy," said Ellie Watson, Sweet Grown Alabama director. "The Tribe has a strong reputation of community support and economic development, and we are incredibly grateful for their sponsorship of Sweet Grown Alabama at the highest level."

The tribe also has deep roots in agriculture. In fact, PCI's Perdido River Farms is one of the largest cattle operations in the Yellowhammer State. In addition to operating this commercial cattle herd, Perdido River Farms supports youth agricultural programming through 4-H and sells Sweet Grown Alabama beef direct from the farm in Atmore.

- *Yellowhammer News (Alabama)*

## 'A new era for California tribes'; Agreement breathes new life into Klamath River Dam removal

Berkshire Hathaway's PacifiCorp has signed onto a new agreement with Oregon, California, the Yurok and Karuk tribes paving the way forward toward Klamath River dam removal in 2023.

The memorandum of agreement advances the "most ambitious salmon restoration effort in history," establishing the Klamath River Renewal Corporation as the entity in charge of removing four obsolete dams, California Department of Fish and Wildlife Director Charlton Bonham announced during an online event that included governors Gavin Newsom and Kate Brown as well as Yurok and Karuk tribal officials Nov. 17.

The agreement retains the liability protections for PacifiCorp's customers that were established in 2016's Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement, Bonham said, and advances the planning and permitting work needed to finish the project.

In January, the five parties in the settlement agreement will submit another application to FERC removing PacifiCorp from the project's license and adding

California, Oregon and the KRRC on as co-licensees to remove the dams.

Joseph L. James, chairman of the Yurok Tribe, called the new agreement "a new day and a new era for California tribes."

"We're a natural resource tribe," he said. "It is our duty and our oath to bring balance to the river. In this effort, we're fulfilling that duty."

Karuk Tribal Chairman Russel "Buster" Attebery also called the occasion a "special day," noting that since the beginning of time his people have depended on the river's salmon, steelhead, sturgeon and eels for sustenance.

- *Wild Rivers Outpost*

## Over 50 First Nations supplied with PPE by Indigenous-owned company

**WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Canada** — A small company based in Winnipeg's exchange district is distributing advanced personal protective equipment to remote First Nations communities across Canada.

Exchange PPE opened a store on Bannatyne Avenue in mid-September after selling exclusively to First Nations communities since May.

"We have customers ranging from Akwesasne, Ont., all the way to B.C. now. All of which who trust our ability to get them the products they need in a timely manner," said the company's CEO Noel Bernier.

Ten full-time Indigenous workers are employed at Exchange PPE, with four of them on assignment out of province.

"Especially to be able to be Indigenous and helping other Indigenous communities in the fight against COVID, it feels really good to help the general public as well," says customer service representative Kenzie Wilson.

Bernier says the company began selling the basics like gloves and N95 masks in May.

They shifted towards more innovative equipment as the pandemic progressed.

"We learned a lot over the last eight months both in technology and in science, methods we can fight the disease with. That innovation is really what our company became about."

Exchange PPE has grown to carry some of the newest supplies on the market including a wide range of fogging machines and digital screening tools.

"We know we have a short period of time to which our need is there and so we act quickly. We're there to respond to those needs in the current time," said Bernier.

- *Global News*

## Native Americans feel 'trapped in a house on fire' as coronavirus surges in South Dakota

Tensions are rising between Native American tribes in South Dakota and the state's governor over the handling of the coronavirus outbreak.

South Dakota has one of the highest rates of positivity and deaths per capita in the U.S. Earlier this month, the state of nearly 885,000 residents reported a record high of more than 2,000 new cases in a single day. South Dakota has reported 71,170 cases and 849 deaths over the course of the pandemic.

Despite the severity of the outbreak, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem (R) has remained steadfast in her decision not to impose statewide mask mandates, lockdowns and the restrictions of businesses and other venues.

"Unfortunately, the spread of #COVID-19 is rising in nearly every state, regardless of if they have mask mandates in place. Here in South Dakota, we're focusing on solutions that DO good, not on responses that FEEL good," Noem said last week.

Noem's approach is at odds with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Earlier in the pandemic when South Dakota had very few cases, the tribe implemented checkpoints on roads going through the Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservation as part of a contact tracing program as well as to limit nonessential drivers coming onto the land.

Tribal officials also put a mask mandate in place over the summer and rolled out testing events.

Following the record number of new infections this month, a 10-day lockdown of Eagle Butte, where the tribe's headquarters are located, went into effect on Monday.

Tribal members, however, worry the lack of response by state officials to tackle the outbreak is undermining their attempts to curb the spread of the virus.

"It's like we're trapped in a house on fire, and we're doing our best to put it out," Remi Bald Eagle, a Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe spokesperson, told NBC News.

"We see the firetrucks coming in the form of a vaccine, and we're wondering if it will get here in time before the fire burns us to death."

The Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservation has reported more than 1,000 cases along with 13 deaths since the pandemic began. While Native Americans in South Dakota make up only 9 percent of the state's population, they make up 14 percent of all cases and 15 percent of all deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

"Some of those who died were our elders," Bald Eagle told NBC News. "They're some of our magnificent treasures. When they die, they take with them some of our language and our culture and our heritage, and we won't get that back."

- *The Hill*

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# Education

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## PECS students, staff honor veterans

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BRIGHTON** — Although Pemaeyt Emahaky Charter School students, teachers and administrators are learning and teaching remotely, the school celebrated Veterans Day together with a video presentation Nov. 11.

Narrated by Principal Tracy Downing and produced by media specialist Amber Summeralls, the video included photos of veterans in the families of students and staff members.

Downing read the following text:

"Today is Veterans' Day. Our morning announcements are dedicated to honoring and paying tribute to our veterans of the armed forces.

More than 70 years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, one of America's presidents, said that he looked forward to a world founded on four essential human freedoms: The freedom of speech, the freedom to worship god in our own way, the freedom from want and need, and finally to be free from fear. These freedoms should be universal, but there are places in the world where they are just dreams.

We are fortunate to live in America, the land of the free. Our soldiers of yesterday and today have and continue to secure these freedoms President Roosevelt talked about so long ago. Each year on Veterans' Day, we pay homage to our members of the armed forces. We thank them for their service to our country.

They sacrificed and are sacrificing today so that we may enjoy the blessing of liberty. We pay tribute to them by remembering them and their accomplishments. We honor our veterans by cherishing the freedoms they paid such a price to defend.

They keep the torch of liberty burning in the oldest democracy of Earth. Each and every one of them are heroes and gave to every child thereafter a precious and irreplaceable gift. Our nation shall remain eternally grateful.

Many of us have family members and friends who are serving today or who have served in the past. Today we come together to show respect for our veterans and to thank them. Let's honor them during this tribute video."

Prior to Veterans Day, students were asked to send photos of family members who served in the military and to write a note about why they are thankful to veterans. Here are some of those notes.

"Thank you Uncle Timmy for serving in the army even though I never really have spoken to you, I'm still thankful for you and how you protected our family. Happy veteran's day. Love, Bobbi."

"I am thankful for my Mom's dad John, I think he fought in the Vietnam war and I am also thankful for every veteran. I am thankful for everyone that sacrificed their life to make my life good," wrote Jesse.

Logan wrote, "I'm thankful for my grandpa. He was a veteran in World War II. His name is John French and he is 76 years old. He was in the Air Force and he got to fly the planes. I also am thankful for them because they fought for our country and sacrificed their lives. He is loved."

"I would like to thank all of our veterans for their sacrifices for our great country. Thank you for my freedom, thank you for serving and thank you for your bravery," wrote Braylen.

Melanie wrote, "I am thankful for our veterans because without them our lives wouldn't be the same as right now. If we didn't have any veterans, we would probably still have to defend our freedom. I appreciate our veterans because they sacrificed themselves for us to have freedom. I am grateful that we have veterans that protect us from getting harmed. I hope my grandpa is reading this from Heaven and if he is I hope he sees that I really appreciate him for doing all of his work."

"The Civil War is an important part of our history. Many great people served as soldiers back then," wrote Layda. "I am thankful for my great-grandpa, who was in the Army at some point. He is on my dad's side of the family. My grandpa talks about him sometimes. He doesn't remember what he served as. I hope all the veterans are doing well. I know many people got hurt during the war. Thank you for protecting our country," wrote Layda.

## Seminoles deal with challenges of being college students during pandemic

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

Homecoming, sports, clubs, student activities and even dorm life look different across college campuses this year; the pandemic made sure of that.

Depending on the college or university, classes are held online, in person or a hybrid of the two. Seminole students across the country are figuring out how to make the most of it.

There are some real challenges and some distinct advantages to attending school in this environment. Here are some reports about their "Zoom University" experiences.

### Kaleb Thomas

Kaleb Thomas, a freshman at Clarks Summit University in Pennsylvania, is living on campus and attends classes in person. He is the only student interviewed for this story who is having a traditional college experience.

Clarks Summit is a small school with about 500 students. All classes are held in person with students seated about six feet apart. They must wear masks and practice social distancing in class and around campus.

"They have done an amazing job with preventing Covid-19 from coming onto the campus," said Thomas, who is from Brighton. "Everyone is cooperating. We have to wipe down the desks and chairs and sanitize everything before we leave a classroom and the next class comes in. We take every precaution possible and haven't had any problems. We are all doing great. It's an amazing blessing we've received."

Being away from his family is an adjustment, but Thomas is dealing with it well. He is studying pastoral ministries and wants to be a pastor at a non-denominational church after he graduates.

### Jessi Harmon

Jessi Harmon attends Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, where she is a sophomore. She is in the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps and is studying biomedical sciences with an emphasis in pre-med and a minor in military leadership and strategy. She will be commissioning into the U.S. Army after graduation in 2022 and plans to attend medical school while there.

Harmon's university experience is a hybrid. She lives on campus and attends classes online. Since there is no standardization of teaching methods in virtual classes, she said it is difficult to adjust to different teaching styles online. Some teachers record lectures for students to view any time and answer questions via Zoom during class time.

"It's always difficult to ask questions, even with the live Zoom classes," said Harmon, who is from Flagstaff. "It's a lot harder in general to communicate with the professor during class. It feels so much more disconnected."

Professors have office hours, but Harmon can't always get in touch with them then because their schedules may conflict with her other classes. That said, she is pleased that she hasn't gotten sick this year.

"DJs have gone down, there has been a reduction in sexual assaults in dorms and campus is more closed down so strangers can't come into the dorms," she said.

Campus culture has changed as well. Instead of clubs and activities, a lot of students are going on hikes, running and walking outdoors. Since the university offered the hybrid option, a lot of students stayed at home. Dorms aren't as full as usual, so students have been condensed into a few dorms. Two dorms are empty and another one is used as a quarantine center for students who have tested positive for Covid-19. Common rooms in the dorm are closed, so socializing is limited.

"We are closer with students in our dorm halls than we were in the past," Harmon said. "That increases the diversity of your friends group; you are friends by chance, not by choice. A lot of my friends this year are friends because we live in the same place and going through the same thing. It creates unlikely bonds."

Not everything on campus is positive, according to Harmon, who said some students are cheating.

"I hear a lot about people cheating more than people studying," she said. "The level of academic honesty is going down. You aren't supposed to use notes or Google during tests, but the university doesn't have a proctoring system. A few of my friends at other universities around the country see the same thing happening. It puts the validity of a degree into question. I could not imagine doing that, cheating."

### Ahnie Jumper

Ahnie Jumper is a senior studying social work at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. Her social work classes are held in person, but other classes are online.

"There isn't much of a difference between them for me," said Jumper, who is from Big Cypress. "I can see how it could be hard for people with attention deficit, but for me it's fine."

Students on campus must wear masks and check in on an app before entering the



Kaleb Thomas

campus. Jumper's in-person classes are held in the afternoons, when the campus is mostly closed. Since social work is deemed an essential service, she goes to class and to her internship at the Community Cooperative Soup Kitchen in Fort Myers. She works in the food pantry and helps homeless people in many ways, including with paperwork.

the field and have been for about 40 years," Fuentes said. "It's interesting when they show us how they used to do things."

When he completes the program in 2021, Fuentes plans to take the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certification testing.

### Deandre Osceola

Deandre Osceola is studying for her associates degree at Oklahoma City Community College. She's a sophomore and plans to study fashion design in Tulsa after she graduates. Online classes have been a challenge for Osceola.

"It's easier for me to learn in a classroom setting, to be able to ask questions," said Osceola, who is from Oklahoma. "Now online, you have to catch your professor during office hours and they don't always get back to you right away."

None of her classes are live, so she can take them any time. She interacts with her professors through email.

Osceola's 4-year-old son Bennett is doing online pre-kindergarten, so she has to find time at home to help him and get her own work done. Her sister-in-law helps with her son or he plays with toys when Osceola is studying. In spite of the challenges, there are some advantages to taking classes from home.

"I like that I'm able to work ahead on my classes and don't have to wait for it to be assigned," she said. "I can get my work done whenever I can. When I was on campus, it felt like I was always at school or in the library researching mostly every day of the week. It's nice being able to spend time with my son at home. And I save money by not putting him in daycare."

According to Osceola, the worst part about virtual college is not being able to meet new people and make friends in classes.

### Amy Johns

Amy Johns is a visiting student at the University of Florida law school and a third-year law student at the University of Montana. The visiting status allows her to still receive her Juris Doctor from UM, where she has a concentration in federal Indian law. She will be a graduate of UM's Alexander Blewett III School of Law, class of 2021.

The agreement between UF and UM makes it possible for Johns to complete her electives and concentrate on Florida law courses to prepare her for the Florida bar exam in July.

Johns, who is working from home in Brighton, notes one of the challenges of online school is internet connectivity. Decent broadband isn't available, so she relies on satellite internet. A lack of personal interaction with classmates has also been an adjustment.

"Sometimes you develop camaraderie with classmates and can commiserate on assignments," said Johns, who also serves as an associate justice on the Seminole Appellate Court. "On Zoom University you only see your classmates when you are logged into class. The ability to lean on each other's shoulders isn't there anymore."

Back and forth exchanges with professors and classmates are also limited online. Some professors are less adept at technology than others, technical glitches are not uncommon and PowerPoint screen sharing doesn't always work well. Regardless, Johns is confident that when she graduates she will hit the ground running.

Johns said the best part of online learning is the lack of a commute. She just has to walk to her computer. However, discipline is the real key to online learning.

"Treat it like a job," Johns said. "Get ready for the day, get dressed, have your coffee. Don't wear pajamas. When you walk into that room that has your computer, it should be like going to work. Take breaks, but put your time in. Read, study and stick to it day after day. It won't be like this forever. Tomorrow is going to be a better day."

### Cara Osceola

Cara Osceola, a senior at Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma, is studying sports and exercise science. She isn't sure what she will do after graduation, but is considering coaching basketball or softball in a middle or high school, learning physical therapy or pursuing a master's degree in athletic training. She's in the midst of online learning from home.

"You have to do everything from home and find the motivation yourself," said Osceola, who is from Oklahoma. "I keep telling myself I'm almost at the finish line."

While attending college from home, Osceola is home-schooling her 8-year-old son and has a 9-month-old daughter as well.

"I have my hands full," she said. "But getting to stay home, I don't have to rush around and get ready for school, take my kids to their school and day care. Most of the work is done on my own time; I like that I can squeeze it in here and there."

### Kaylene Osceola

Kaylene Osceola is studying photography at the Academy of Art University online. She attended Miami International University of Art and Design before transferring to the online program. The biggest challenge for her is staying diligent with her studies.

"...you have to make sure you do the work within the week and meet the deadlines," Osceola said.

Students are given assignments and have one week to complete them, after which students and the professors participate in online discussions and critiques about each student's work. Osceola likes the interactions and said she gets the support she needs from teachers and classmates.

However, she misses being in a classroom with students, going on photo assignments together with the teacher and talking to other photographers about their work. But there are some positive aspects of online classes.

"I have more flexibility and freedom," said Osceola, who is from the Miccosukee reservation. "I don't have to wake up early and go through Miami traffic to get to school. I can do it when I want to."

Her goal is to travel to reservations around the country, capture their cultures in photographs and publish them in books.

"I want to educate people about Native Americans," Osceola said. "I want to give a voice, preserve our cultures and help other tribes to do it."

### Colton Vazquez

Colton Vazquez is a freshman at Florida Technical College in Kissimmee, where he studies culinary arts and hospitality. He's been drinking a lot of coffee to help him with the challenges of online school.

"Focusing and staying on top of the ball and communicating with teachers are the most important things," said Vazquez, who lives about 30 minutes from the campus. "There is no hands-on cooking yet, but they are preparing us for that. I was expecting to make friends; we are trying to do our best on live chat, but social interaction isn't really happening. Sooner or later, everyone will be in the kitchen together."

Despite the challenges, Vazquez said communication with the teachers is really good and they are helpful when students ask for help.

"You just have to ask for help when you need it," he said. "Once you get your mindset right, it will all fall into place. Ask questions, that's the most important part. And drink coffee."

### Aaron Tommie

Aaron Tommie is a graduate student at the University of Florida and will graduate with a Masters of Business Administration degree in December. This is the first time he's taken classes online, which is more of a challenge than being in the classroom.

"I like to be around people and I feel I learn a lot more in person," said Tommie, who lives off reservation in Broward County. "The interaction and engagement isn't the same and classes are shorter. A lot of the classes in person were discussion based. Online isn't the same, there isn't as much participation in discussions."

The curriculum includes group projects, which Tommie and the other students adjusted to easily through Zoom, Slack and WhatsApp. But the students don't spend time physically together, as they did in the past. Instead they meet a couple of times a week online, communicate daily and provide each other updates on the group project.

However, Tommie enjoys the convenience of online classes.

"I don't have to get up and drive to class," he said. "Communicating with professors through email and telephone calls has improved because there are no in-person interactions. They are more available outside of office hours. If I email a question, they respond quickly and more in-depth."

# Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School students of the month - October 2020



# Dedman School of Hospitality becomes FSU's newest college

**PRESS RELEASE**

**TALLAHASSEE** — The Florida State University Board of Trustees on Nov. 20 unanimously approved the renaming of the Dedman School of Hospitality to become FSU's 18th college.

The board's decision positions the Dedman College of Hospitality for growth in a number of ways, said Don Farr, Dedman professor of hospitality management and dean of the new college.

"I think it gives us a little more independence and a bit more control of our destination as far as our vision is concerned," he said. "We are re-doing our five-year plan because —through hard work — we've been fortunate to achieve many goals ahead of schedule. But there are things, such as a new Ph.D. program, that hopefully we'll add in the future."

Farr credited Sally McRorie, provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs, for helping to shepherd Dedman from being part of the College of Business to becoming its own school and now a college.

McRorie said the change acknowledges the success and commitment of Dedman's faculty and students.

"The Dedman College of Hospitality has a long history and great recent expansion of working with hospitality industry leaders and preparing our graduates for outstanding careers," McRorie said. "This latest milestone brings the college into the same highly competitive market as its peers, both those we already outperform and those that remain aspirational. This recognition will give the college a clear advantage as it looks toward new opportunities in the state of Florida, nationally and around the world."

Farr said that becoming a college will engage Dedman alumni which could also have a financial benefit.

"Our alumni are very excited," he said. "We expect — and we hope — giving will go up."

This spring, the college will add a new

undergraduate degree program in recreation, tourism and events. The program was previously housed in the College of Applied Studies at FSU Panama City.

With the addition of degrees offered at the college, Farr said he expects enrollment will tick upward, too. The school's current enrollment is about 600 students.

Farr said increasing the number of students is great but not at the expense of the quality of education and service Dedman currently offers.

"Slow, steady growth is important to maintain that high level that we are at now," he said.

The Dedman School of Hospitality was founded in 1947. Since that time, the school's slate of academic offerings has grown to include two undergraduate degrees, two minors and a master's program. Hands-on experience is a large feature of Dedman programs and students have internship and study abroad opportunities around the world including Ireland, Switzerland, Australia, and Italy.

In recent years, the school has leapt up the rankings for the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, the preeminent university hospitality rankings.

In the most recent rankings, Dedman was No. 7 nationally and No. 15 in the world.

While the global pandemic has hit the hospitality and tourism industry especially hard, Farr said he is optimistic for the future of the newly minted college as well as the industry it educates its students to lead.

"In my opinion, it's the best time in the world to become a hospitality student," he said. "Hospitality and tourism will drive the economic recovery that we have ahead of us, certainly here in Florida, and around the world."

The announcement comes on the heels of a \$1 million donation to the school in October by Deen Day Sanders to establish and support a slate of academic initiatives at the school.

For more information go to dedman.fsu.edu.

## Advancing a 'strong healing heritage' in nursing education

BY LINDSEY HENDRIX  
Texas A&M Health

Since 1990, November has been recognized as National Native American Heritage Month (under variations of the name), a dedicated time to celebrate the rich heritage and significant contributions of Native people on the culture, history and achievements of the United States. For R. Cody Bruce, MSN, Ed, RN, CNE, clinical assistant professor at the Texas A&M University College of Nursing, his Native American heritage has guided him to a career in healing, educating, researching and mentoring.

**What inspired you to work in your chosen profession?**

As a nurse educator, I credit my chosen career to my family of teachers and healers. I inherited a strong healing heritage from my Choctaw-Apache ancestors, who nursed locals with poultices and teas. They were the Nightingales of their day. When someone fell ill, a family member would send for my ancestors. They would brew a tea out of the roots and serve it with a smile. We do not know if it was the root that would cure them or the taste, but they got well. Many of my ancestors were leaders and educators and even built the first tribal school for our people. Growing up hearing these stories of their dedication sparked my desire to heal

others through nursing.

**Which of your accomplishments are you most proud of, and why?**

Perhaps the accomplishment I am most proud of is my current doctoral research, which investigates methods of increasing Native American students' success in nursing programs. As a Native American, I witnessed first-hand the lack of resources and support available to minority students seeking nursing degrees. Native American students may have difficulty envisioning themselves positively in an academic setting due to the historical trauma of assimilation programs and racism, which continue to influence Native American youth's social problems. One solution is to pair Native American learners with Native American mentors, who have successfully navigated college challenges. But this is only one solution. Native Americans and other ethnic groups will continue to be disadvantaged until academic institutions adopt a truly holistic admission method and retention activities are funded.

How do you feel your Native American heritage has contributed to your success?

I am a proud member of the Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb, Louisiana. I grew up with a strong connection to our tribe's rich cultural heritage and history. One of the qualities that I inherited from my ancestors that I feel daily is resiliency. Our tribe was

forcibly displaced from our native lands in the 1960s with the Toledo Bend Dam's construction on the Sabine River at the Texas-Louisiana border. Our people lost everything they had known for generations: homes, hunting grounds, religious ceremonial sites, and even our cemeteries. We came back stronger than before, rebuilding everything that was lost through this tragedy, and we are now one of the largest Native American Tribes in Louisiana.

**Why is it important to celebrate the contributions of Native Americans to the history, culture and achievements of the United States?**

Celebrating the contributions of Native Americans is of the utmost importance. Without growing up learning about my ancestors' sacrifices and achievements, I may not have chosen the field of nursing education. Only through education can we address cultural and social issues such as social exclusion, racism, stereotyping, and prejudice, which continue to be experienced by Native Americans.

**What does Diversity & Inclusion in health care mean to you?**

Diversity and inclusion in health care means we acknowledge, respect, and celebrate every individual's differences, no matter their race, creed, color, cultural identity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and religion. Our list of differences is



R. Bruce Cody is a Texas A&M University clinical assistant professor in the College of Nursing.

growing; ten years ago, we would not have considered sexual identity with respect to diversity. We have to make a conscious effort to educate ourselves and others about these differences to set the example of diversity and inclusion for others to follow.

## AIAN embarks on collaborative college data project

**PRESS RELEASE**

**DENVER** — Only 14.5% of American Indian and Alaska Natives (AIAN) age 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher—less than half of the rate of the overall population, at 31.5%, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The American Indian College Fund is embarking upon a \$1 million, five-year research project, titled "American Indian and Alaska Native College Students: Building Collaborative Data Capacity for Assessing College Access, Persistence, and Graduation Success," funded by The Spencer Foundation. The project, in collaboration with three other national Native American scholarship-providing organizations, will create data capacity across organizations.

The research project will explore ways to increase AIAN students' access to and graduation from college as well as ways students interact with institutions once they are in college.

The organizations will build a shared database, which will combine the number of students served across organizations to provide a larger, more robust sample when conducting qualitative and quantitative research.

◆ COLLEGE  
From page 1B

**Rochelle Osceola**

Rochelle Osceola, is a junior at Everglades University and is working toward her Bachelor of Science degree in alternative medicine. As a two-time cancer survivor, she is glad to be here.

Osceola and her two children, one in kindergarten and the other an 11th-grader, live on the Hollywood Reservation. She was originally at the school's campus but switched to online right before the pandemic hit. "It's easier to accommodate our schedules," Osceola said. "I can log in anytime. Being organized is the best way to do online school. Student life doesn't seem to exist, instead it all revolves around family life. I'm not in touch with friends from school."

Some of the challenges of online learning are making time to read the books and not having the professor there in person to help her through things.

"The professors have time for online students on the telephone or email," Osceola said. "They are really good at it. You have more work online than in the classroom and every day you have to participate in discussion groups so they can take attendance."

After graduation, Osceola would like to work in the Tribe's integrated health department or become a cancer advocate.

"I feel like a lot of people aren't aware of alternative medicine, but you can integrate it together and use fewer pharmaceutical drugs. It's about using herbs, yoga, meditation and diet. Alternative medicine is more preventative than anything."

**Marissa Osceola**

Marissa Osceola is a pre-med student at Florida Southwestern State College in Fort Myers. After she earns her associate's degree, she plans to transfer to a university in North Carolina, preferably Duke.

This is her first experience taking online classes and said one of the challenges is being able to make connections with teachers.

"I'm very much a learner by explaining or having conversations about the topic," said Osceola, who is from Naples. "You don't get to speak in class or to other students online, but you can have student to teacher interactions."

As a mother of two, Osceola appreciates the flexibility of being able to control her schedule. Since everything is assigned on a weekly basis, she can complete the coursework on her own schedule within the week. Students have a 24-hour window in which to take the exams.

Although there isn't much of a student life, Osceola attends seminars and lectures for extra credit. One lecture was by a professor from Harvard University who spoke about how Covid and evolution are related.

"You can study Covid through evolution and see how closely or not this strain of the virus is compared to other virus strands," Osceola said. "You can track its progression to this point and study the virus the same way you study anything else in evolution. This is something we wouldn't get without Zoom; more people are available now to do more of these Zoom talks."

But overall, Osceola said virtual school is an isolating experience.

"I could be at any school, not just FSW," she said. "When I'm with classmates, I get a sense of community. Not being able to bond over our struggles with online learning is a hard thing to get used to. Online learning is an adjustment for me and for the teachers as well."

# Connecticut bill calls for teaching of Native American history in public schools

BY BRIAN HALLENBECK  
The Day (New London, Conn.)

Connecticut state Sen. Cathy Osten, a Sprague Democrat, is renewing her push to mandate the teaching of Native American history in the Connecticut's public schools.

Osten announced Nov. 19 that representatives of Connecticut's five state-recognized Indian tribes will join her Nov. 23 outside the Capitol in Hartford to announce the resubmission of a bill seeking to add Native American studies to social studies curriculums.

The General Assembly's Education Committee held a public hearing on the measure in March, just days before the 2020 legislative session recessed — for good, it turned out — due to the coronavirus pandemic. The legislature is scheduled to reconvene Jan. 6.

Senate Bill 314, which Sen. Eric Berthel, a Watertown Republican, and Rep. Robin Comey, a Branford Democrat, joined Osten in sponsoring, called for local and regional school boards to include Native American studies in their districts' social studies curriculums. It would have authorized the use of materials made available by the State Board of Education as well as other "appropriate" materials, provided the curriculum focuses on "the Northeast Woodland Native American Tribes of Connecticut."

Osten said the bill has the backing of the state-recognized tribes, four of which have reservations in southeastern Connecticut: the Eastern Pequots of North Stonington, the Mashantucket Pequots of Ledyard, the Mohegans of Montville and the Golden Hill

Paugussets of Colchester.

The fifth state-recognized tribe, the Schaghticoke, occupies a reservation in Kent.

The Mashantuckets and the Mohegans also have gained federal recognition, which enabled them to develop casinos on their reservations.

"We are ecstatic and in full support," Rodney Butler, the Mashantucket chairman, said of Osten's bill. "Cathy has shown time and time again how government-to-government collaboration works for the benefit of all. She worked directly with all five of the historical tribes of Connecticut in drafting this legislation and we look forward to supporting her at the Capitol next week to celebrate this milestone and Native American Heritage Month."

Katherine Sebastian Dring, the Eastern Pequot chairwoman, also lauded Osten's efforts.

"The Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation is an essential part of U.S. history," she said in a statement. "As a First Nations People with a reservation established by the colonial government in 1683 and continuously occupied and controlled by the tribe since that time, it is extremely important that the educational system include our tribal history."

In March, Lynn Malerba, chief of the Mohegan Tribe and a former chairwoman of the tribal council, submitted testimony in support of the bill, as did Michael Thomas, a former Mashantucket chairman.

"As you are well aware," Malerba wrote, "the narrative about our American Indians and Alaska Natives, the first peoples of this land, varies widely from positive to negative, employing many stereotypes and

beliefs that may or may not be grounded in fact. ... I think the story of resilience, and nation rebuilding is important for our students to understand not just the historic context in which we lived, but our continued survival as tribal nations."

Miguel Cardona, commissioner of the state Department of Education, had some doubts about the bill.

"We believe that learning about Native Americans is crucial to understanding their lives and culture, however we are concerned regarding the added burden placed on the Department, as well as the unfunded mandate being placed on districts," he testified. "Districts are just now moving to a less prescriptive system to allow students more flexibility with the classes they are taking, and continuing to add new courses year after year is against the spirit of that transition."

Ray Rossomando of the Connecticut Education Association, which represents active and retired teachers across the state, also expressed concerns about expanding curriculum requirements.

"Increasing the number of topics legislatively each year is not a sustainable practice and represents a significant shift of curricular decisions from teachers, administrators and locally elected boards of education to the legislature," he said.

In 2019, Gov. Ned Lamont signed into law a bill requiring that African American and Black studies and Puerto Rican and Latino studies be included in public school curriculums, starting with the 2021-22 school year.

# 'Winter Counts' delves into blurred justice on reservations

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Denver-based author David Heska Wanbli Weiden's debut novel "Winter Counts" is a crime fiction that's part mystery, suspense and thriller.

It takes a sobering look at the convoluted justice that often comes when crimes are committed on reservations by Native Americans. How the federal government gets involved, or doesn't, can have jarring consequences.

"The tribal police couldn't do anything. The feds prosecuted all felony crimes on the rez, and they didn't mess with any crime short of murder," Virgil Wounded Horse, the book's local enforcer on the Rosebud Indian

Reservation in South Dakota, says at the novel's outset.

It sets the stage for one of the book's main thrusts: Weiden's examination of the Major Crimes Act — a law passed by the U.S. Congress in 1885 — as part of a final section of the Indian Appropriations Act that year. The law places certain crimes under federal jurisdiction if committed by a Native American in Native territory.

But its effect has often been an uneven one for Native American communities.

The rollicking novel is something of a case study of justice denied by the American legal system, or in some cases by a tribal council.

In Winter Counts, Wounded Horse is hired to fill in the gaps when that happens.

But the book also examines other

subjects affecting Native Americans, including addiction, substandard care by the Indian Health Service and the need for a return to Indigenous food and cuisine for health and sustainability.

But the issue of crime and justice stands out.

## Chief Spotted Tail

Weiden recently published a children's book that has a connection to Winter Counts — "Spotted Tail."

"I wrote it because I wanted Lakota kids from my particular band to have a book of one of their own," Weiden said.

The book features the former leader of the Lakotas by the same name. The Major Crimes Act came about in the wake of his murder.

In 1881, a Lakota on the Rosebud Indian Reservation killed Chief Spotted Tail. The Americans arrested the offender, but the Lakota people got involved and wanted him to face restitution for his crime.

"But the Americans didn't like that because of European justice. They were outraged because they loved Spotted Tail and thought it was outrageous that the Natives wouldn't punish him more severely," Weiden said.

The killer was sentenced to death, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of a lawsuit brought by the Lakotas arguing that they were a sovereign nation.

In response to the court's decision, the U.S. Congress passed the law taking away the authority to prosecute felony crimes on a reservation.

Felony cases would be referred by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to the U.S. Attorney's office. However, Weiden said, the feds ended up refusing to prosecute 30% to 40% of felony crimes that didn't rise to the level of murder.

The lack of prosecution meant offenders that, for example, hurt women and children were often set free. It's a situation that happens today.

"The Major Crimes Act is a disaster," Weiden said. "It contributes to crimes committed on the reservation — and to missing and murdered Indigenous women across the country."

Weiden hopes Winter Counts will bring more attention to the little known and understood law that's harming Native American lives.

"When an offender is set free, sometimes the families will go hire their own vigilante. Beat them up for a price. [The book] is based upon real life. It's a really terrible situation on reservations," he said. "I study the statistics; they are continuing to let a high percentage of offenders go free."

Winter Counts is very personal for Weiden, too.

"My aunt and cousin were murdered on the Rosebud Reservation when I was a very small child," he said. "Because of this terrible incident, I've always had an interest in criminal justice, especially on Native lands."



Aslan Chalomo

Author David Heska Wanbli Weiden

Weiden would like to see the law terminated and Native nations given precedence over their own affairs.

He said the Tribal Law and Order Act that was passed during the Obama administration was a good step forward, although it hasn't completely solved the problem.

The 2010 law expands the punitive abilities of tribal courts operating in Indian Country and allows them to increase jail sentences handed down in criminal cases.

## 'Under prosecution, over incarceration'

The Major Crimes Act has also had an effect on how long someone is incarcerated.

As it stands today, because Natives that commit a felony crime have to be prosecuted in the federal correctional system instead of the state system — sentences are more punitive.

"Maybe a person gets an aggravated assault charge from a bar fight — somebody makes a bad choice and goes after someone with a beer bottle," Weiden said. "In most state courts, you'd get six months at most. But the federal system is more rigid. Under the guidelines you could get five years and there is no parole. We have an issue of under prosecution and over incarceration."

Weiden hopes the book will spark a dialogue among tribal leaders and decision-makers in Washington, D.C.

"I'm hoping that my little voice will spur a discussion. Hopefully this can be a nonpartisan issue," he said.

Meanwhile, Weiden is already working on a sequel to Winter Counts. It will likely be released in 2022. There is also movement on a film adaptation of the novel.

For more, go to davidweiden.com.

## Native American TV drama — 'Sovereign' — to air on NBC

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Audiences will soon be able to watch a Native American family drama on network television for the first time ever.

"Sovereign" is a project headed up by award winning Black filmmaker Ava DuVernay. She's partnered on the project with NBC.

The series will run a pilot episode — a testing ground to gauge whether it will continue on with more episodes. Sovereign chronicles the "lives, loves and loyalties of an Indigenous family struggling to control the future of their tribe against outside forces and themselves."

It's not yet known when the pilot will air.

DuVernay is one of the most sought out directors in Hollywood. She's known for her work as the director of the motion picture "Selma," and "A Wrinkle in Time."

In 2017, she was nominated for the Academy Award for best documentary feature for her film "13th." The following year she got critical acclaim for her work on the Netflix drama "When They See Us," based on the 1989 Central Park jogger case.

DuVernay posted on her Instagram page about Sovereign after the project was first announced in late October.

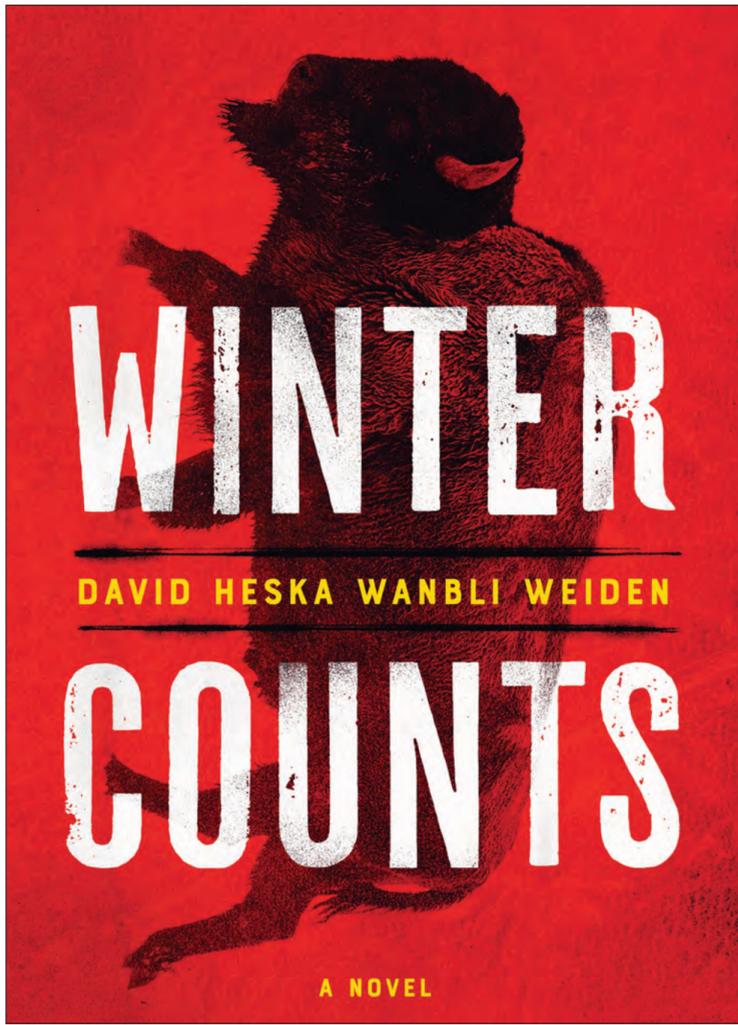
"We all deserve to see ourselves on television. Period. Proud to work with Bird Runningwater, Sydney Freeland and Shaz Bennett on the first Native American family drama developed for broadcast television," her post read. "SOVEREIGN is built to give you epic tales of power, politics, perseverance and passion a la Dynasty, Dallas and Empire — but with an epic Native cast and creators."

◆ See TV on page 4B



Facebook

Ava DuVernay is the force behind the NBC show "Sovereign."



Ecco Press

"Winter Counts" is David Heska Wanbli Weiden's debut novel.

## Opportunities increasing for Indigenous actors, but still a ways to go

BY ARI RIOSECO  
Special to The Tribune

Historically, cinema has not provided Indigenous communities with the opportunity to represent themselves in the modern world. From Western films to animated shorts, Native American actors have been mostly limited to stereotypical, inauthentic, and culturally-insensitive roles. Yet, with every year that passes, Native talent is further appreciated; films now have Native directors, television series now have casting directors prioritizing Native actors, and there is a demand for authentic Native content. Cinema is shifting and Indigenous communities are finally experiencing the results of their determination to be recognized.

Native actors such as Chief Dan George, Tantoo Cardinal, and Will Sampson have shaken the industry with their powerful roles, paving the way for Indigenous actors. Today's Native actors continue to challenge societal limitations and fight for the right to narrate their own stories. Their resolve throughout cinematic history has become a source of encouragement for Indigenous people and a foundation for accurate representation of Native culture and community.

In a virtual panel hosted by Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) on Nov. 17, "Fear the Walking Dead" actor and Blackfeet descendant Kalani Queypo discussed his experience as a child when Native representation was scarce in cinema.

"The majority of the time, they didn't look like you," he shared. "You wanted to see yourself in them and you wanted to see yourself on screen."

Yet, with the release of every film came the reminder that Native roles were scarce and Native talent was unappreciated.

Soon, a shift occurred and Native roles appeared more frequently in cinema.

"Anytime there would be somebody who popped up on-screen, it would be super exciting... You thought, 'My goodness, they look like my uncle, they look like my mom, my cousin. They look like me,'" Queypo said.



Courtesy image

The Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists hosted a livestream panel discussion with Native American actors Nov. 17.

When Indigenous communities are accurately represented on-screen, in literature, in art, and throughout history, new perspectives can emerge in non-Native populations: the understanding that Indigenous communities have always belonged here.

"The one thing that's worse than being misrepresented is to be invisible... There's nothing more tragic than feeling like you don't belong in the country that our ancestors originally walked upon," Queypo continued.

With this shift in the industry, white-washed roles in cinema are becoming less frequent, and opportunities for Native parts are flourishing.

Today, Native actors take on an additional responsibility, explained by "Chicago Fire" actor Glenn Stanton.

"Suddenly your career is not your career

and you...are representing something that is so much more than you..." he said.

Every Native role on-screen and behind the scenes is a representation of Native communities and a chance to reclaim their stories. Queypo witnessed the increase in Indigenous representation on the set of "Trickster."

"It's based on a trilogy of books from an Indigenous writer. We've got primarily Indigenous cast, Indigenous show runner and director... Every single department throughout the entire thing...had at least two indigenous people," Queypo said.

This accomplishment, however, does not mean the battle has ended. Opportunities for Native roles are still vastly outnumbered. Without more modern opportunities, Native actors are restricted to what Cherokee actor DeLanna Studi refers to as "leather and

feather" roles. If the only films portraying Native communities are period pieces, then society's understanding of Indigenous people risks being limited to one perspective.

"That's why I went back to get a screenwriting degree," Kimberly Guerrero explained. Guerrero, a Native actor from Oklahoma starring in "The Cherokee Word for Water," is creating the opportunities Native communities deserve to have available.

"I'm just going to put my time into writing roles for native people," Guerrero said.

Guerrero is not the only one creating greater opportunities for Native communities; casting director Rene Haynes is known for her active role in casting Native people for Native parts. When discussing Irene Bedard's role in "Lakota Woman,"

Haynes considered it a turning point for indigenous communities.

"It was one of the first portrayals of a Native woman carrying a film and being remarkable," Haynes stated. Irene Bedard went on to receive a Golden Globe Nomination for her role in the film.

For the first time, stereotypes and misrepresentations are being consistently quelled and replaced with accurate portrayals of Native people, played by Native actors. Native representation in the film industry is experiencing a positive change.

"I think we're really at a great spot," Queypo said. "It's not this pendulum that has swung and...now we've got to wait another five years until it becomes a little chic and a little bit trendy to have Native content."

Native content in cinema is at its most authentic today because it is written, directed, played, and led by Indigenous people.

Amber Midthunder, a Native actor from New Mexico with a role in the FX series "Legion," hopes the representation of Indigenous people will continue to develop. She aims to represent the history and culture of her native community, as well as their everyday life. "We walk around, we go to the grocery store, we're doctors, we're this thing, we're that thing... We're all sorts of regular things also," Midthunder stated.

Society's understanding and appreciation for Native communities is slowly shifting as a result of Native actors playing more leading and contemporary roles. After 28 years of acting, Guerrero said she recently took on the first role that did not end in her character's death.

"I believe it's just the beginning," Guerrero said.

At the conclusion of the SAG-AFTRA panel, the speakers shared a hope for more contemporary roles for Native actors, as well as a continued increase in opportunities. The goal to amplify Native voices is not one task, but a progression of numerous actions.

Ari Rioseco is a freelance writer and a Seminole Tribe employee.

# Native American Soldier welcomes chances to tell others about her culture

BY FRANKLIN FISHER  
army.mil

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** — Back when she was a youngster of 10 or so, Lynette Eriacho remembers how on a sunny day in New Mexico people at the Native American parade were thrilled with pride as a float bearing World War II Navajo Code Talkers came into view.

Eriacho, now 33 and a staff sergeant with almost nine years in the Army, sees that moment as one that started her thinking about maybe someday joining the military. It wasn't the only thing that made her think of it. Economic stability was a big one too, among considerations. But to someone being reared in the Navajo culture, the role of the Code Talkers was a source of deep pride, she said, not only to the Navajo but to other Native American peoples.

Code Talkers were Native American service members who used their tribal languages to encode messages that left enemy codebreakers stumped. Many were Navajo but came from other tribes, too. Code Talkers had first been used in World War I and their success led to much wider use in World War II. Some served in Europe but most served in the Pacific with the Marine Corps and Army.

"That's a huge draw for a lot of younger adults to enlist in the military," Eriacho said of the Code Talkers.

Eriacho, who's of both Navajo and Apache descent, enlisted in 2012, became a wheeled vehicle mechanic, and later trained to be a drill sergeant. She recently finished two years as a drill sergeant with Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 58th Infantry Regiment, part of the 198th Infantry Brigade here. The brigade trains recruits attending Infantry One-Station Unit Training. She's slated for a new assignment next month, also at Fort Benning, she said.

She was born in Gallup, New Mexico, about a two-hour drive west of Albuquerque, and grew up in Pinedale, about a 30-minute drive east of Gallup. In that region are the sprawling lands of the Navajo Nation.

"It spreads out from Arizona, parts of New Mexico and Utah," she said. There are also Zuni and Hopi reservations in the area.

After high school she lived for a time in Northern California, in places that were not predominantly Native American.

"It was very different for me to be a center of attention because where I grew up everyone's Native American," she said. "Everyone's Navajo or Zuni or Apache, and it's like, where I started traveling more, that's when people, non-Native American personnel, were more interested in me and my culture."

In those places in California, El Cerrito

or Richmond, people sometimes "assumed" she was Hispanic, she said.

"And I was like, 'No, I'm actually Native American.' And then just seeing the excitement of others, who were like, 'Wow! You're Native American? You Native Americans are still alive?' 'What tribe are you from?' And I would respond, 'I'm from the Navajo Nation tribe.' And do I have an Indian name? What am I doing so far away from home? 'Do you know any of your tribe's food?' Like am I able to cook it or prepare any type of meal?"

"And every time I go home I talk to my mom or dad they would tell me, 'All right, well teach them about our tribe whenever you can. Let 'em know we're here.'"

So when it comes up she tells others of some of the things Navajo culture holds important, which she said include: resilience, patience, hard work, respect for others, including elders, honoring earlier generations of Navajo who demonstrated courage, endurance and resilience in the face of hardships.

"Respect our elders — very definitely taught," she said. "They went through, endured a lot. They grew up with very little. Our goal is to not send them to a nursing home. We want to take care of them. They took care of us, and our parents. Definitely, respect is a big one, that we're very, very head-on about."

"Being very dedicated to learning" is also highly valued, she said.

But above all, said Eriacho, she tells people about a Navajo focus on "Walking in beauty," which she sums up as living daily with an attitude of calmness, courtesy, and good will.

"We're told to 'Walk in beauty,'" she said. "That's just like this quote, saying how we should go about our lives."

Its "main premise," she said, is that to the extent possible, people behave in a way that's "balanced, disciplined and loving. Everyone we've encountered, every job we've done, that we've just left great things behind."

Each November is National Native American Heritage Month, and Eriacho thinks the Army's participation in it and similar observances can benefit all its members.

"I think it's a good way to acknowledge and give recognition," she said. "It gives a learning point for those who are working in the military. It does give some people time to pause and recognize their peers. It lets us reflect and be able to learn more and know that, wow, the Army's made up of many unique cultures."

*This article is from the U.S. Army and appears on army.mil.*



Markeith Horace

Staff Sgt. Lynette Eriacho, a Soldier of Navajo and Apache descent, at Fort Benning on Nov. 17. Eriacho, who was born and raised in New Mexico, recently completed a two-year assignment here as a drill sergeant training recruits for the Infantry. She says telling others about the Navajo culture, along with the Army's participation in annual observances of Native American Heritage Month each November, helps foster cultural insight across a diverse military.



Markeith Horace

Staff Sgt. Lynette Eriacho with her 10-year-old daughter Diedra at Fort Benning on Nov. 17.

## TV From page 3B

Runningwater is of the Cheyenne and Mescalero Apache Nations. He is a producer who is known for his work on "Freedom Riders," "American Experience" and "Native Shorts" — part the Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous program.

Freeland is a transgender Navajo filmmaker from Gallup, New Mexico. She wrote and directed the short film "Hoverboard" and the film "Drunktown's Finest," which caught the eye of critics after premiering at the Sundance Film Festival. Her second film, "Deidra and Laney Rob a Train" debuted at Sundance and was released on Netflix in 2017.

Bennett, who is a writer, filmmaker and performance artists, has worked on a variety of film and TV projects.

As of press time, there was no word on which Native American actors would appear on the series.

### Changes ahead?

Native American and Indigenous People have generally not been visible in mainstream Hollywood over the years, at least not in positive and accurate ways.

Recognition by those working in the industry has been hard to come by as well. Recent years have shown some progress.

The 2019 film "Jojo Rabbit" won the Academy Award for best adapted screenplay during this year's event, and was nominated in five other categories, including best picture.

The director and one of its producers are Indigenous — Taika David Waititi and Chelsea Winstanley. Waititi and Winstanley are married and identify as Māori — the Indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand.

But it's rare to have any Indigenous nominees; there have only been a handful in the more than 90-year history of the Oscars.



Facebook

Bird Runningwater is working with Ava DuVernay and others on the groundbreaking TV project.

Notably, the Indigenous Canadian American and musician, Buffy Sainte-Marie, shared an Oscar for best original song for "Up Where We Belong" from the film "An Officer and a Gentleman."

Recognition has been even more elusive for Native Americans in film and TV.

Only one Native American has been awarded an Oscar — actor Wes Studi. He was given an honorary award for career achievement in 2019. Studi did appear in a previous best picture winner — "Dances with Wolves" — in 1991.

The 72-year-old has also appeared in the films "Avatar," "Heat" and "Street Fighter." Native American actor August Schellenburg, of Mohawk descent, was nominated for an Emmy in 2007 for outstanding supporting actor in a miniseries for his role in "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

He is the only known Native American actor to be nominated for an Emmy.

# First Native American U.S. Poet Laureate appointed to third term

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

The first Native American U.S. Poet Laureate will serve a third consecutive term.

The Library of Congress announced Nov. 19 the appointment of Joy Harjo (Muscogee (Creek) Nation), who has already served two terms as U.S. Poet Laureate. The appointment makes Harjo the second laureate to receive this extension since terms for the position were established in 1943. She began her laureateship June 19, 2019. She was a guest speaker at the Seminole Tribe's Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki-Museum lecture series in November 2019.

The third term, which begins in September 2021, will allow Harjo time to complete projects and programs whose timelines have been impacted by Covid-19.

"Throughout the pandemic, Joy Harjo has shown how poetry can help steady us and nurture us. I am thankful she is willing to continue this work on behalf of the country," Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden said in a statement. "A third term will give Joy the opportunity to develop and extend her signature project."

For her third term, Harjo will focus on her signature project, "Living Nations, Living Words," which was launched as part of the Native American Heritage Month celebration in November at loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/living-nations-living-words/. The digital project features an interactive ArcGIS story map, developed with the Library's Geography and Map Division, which maps 47 contemporary Native American poets across the country — including Harjo, Louise Erdrich, Natalie Diaz, Ray Young Bear, Craig Santos Perez, Sherwin Bitsui and Layli Long Soldier.



Beverly Bidney

U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo speaks at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki-Museum's lecture series Nov. 22, 2019, in Big Cypress.

The map provides a connection to a new online audio collection developed by Harjo and housed in the Library's American Folklife Center, which features the participating poets reading and discussing an original poem. Each chose their poems based on the theme of place and displacement, and with four focal points in mind: visibility, persistence, resistance and acknowledgment.

"This has been a challenging year for the country, for our earth. Poetry has provided doorways for joy, grief and understanding in the midst of turmoil and pandemic," Harjo said in a statement. "I welcome the opportunity of a third term to activate my project and visit communities to share Native poetry. The story of America begins

with Native presence, thoughts and words. Poetry is made of word threads that weave and connect us."

Harjo was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on May 9, 1951. She is the author of nine books of poetry. Her memoir "Crazy Brave" won the 2013 PEN Center USA literary prize for creative nonfiction. She is also the author of a children's book, "The Good Luck Cat," and a young adult book, "For a Girl Becoming."

Harjo has recently released her co-edited anthology, "When the Light of the World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry" (Norton).

# Houston launches its first virtual Native American museum

HOUSTON PUBLIC MEDIA

**HOUSTON** — The Houston region is home to about 68,000 Native Americans from all tribal nations, according to the 2010 Census, and Native American history is deeply embedded in Texas' frontier past.

The city now has a platform to celebrate and educate the public about Indigenous histories. The virtual Southern Plains

Museum and Cultural Center in Houston was launched by the nonprofit Southern Apache Museum — which had formerly existed as a physical museum until 2017 — with a \$10,000 grant from the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.

The announcement comes during Native American History Month and in the wake of City Council's vote earlier this fall to officially recognize Indigenous Peoples'

Day in Houston as the second Monday in October.

Through renderings of art, artifacts, videos and virtual exhibits, visitors can learn about Indigenous nations, including the Alabama-Coushatta, Choctaw, Comanche, Cherokee, Lipan Apache, Navajo, Ponca, Tunica Biloxi, Muskogee Creek and Aztec. The online experience — which has an interactive component available through a

downloadable application — takes the viewer through a full virtual experience, including a Southern Apache Museum and American Indian Genocide Museum. There is also a virtual library, garden, and more.

The public can access the Southern Plains Museum and Cultural Center at apachemuseum.org.

Organizers hope the virtual space will eventually lead to a physical venue for

Indigenous collections in Houston.

"Mayor Sylvester Turner will go down in history as the Mayor who finally recognized the Indigenous community in Houston, and the Native American Indian community will always remain grateful for the recognition," read a statement from Chance L. Landry, founder of the Southern Apache Museum and Lipan Apache artist.

# Sports



## Shortened Moore Haven football season ends on senior night

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**MOORE HAVEN** — The Moore Haven High School football season was abbreviated — only four games on the field — but memories of playing in the midst of a global pandemic will no doubt last a lifetime.

It was no surprise that the Terriers — similar to many other Florida high school football programs — endured their share of obstacles along the way. Postponements, cancellations, forfeits and interruptions were the unfamiliar parts of the season, but making it to the playoffs — which the Terriers did for the fourth consecutive season — was nothing new.

In a season like no other, Moore Haven went 1-2 in the regular season and advanced all the way to the Class 2A regional semifinals after receiving a bye in the play-in round and a regional quarterfinal forfeit win against St. John Neumann-Naples, which cancelled the remainder of its season due to a Covid outbreak.

Unfortunately for the Terriers, they met an all too familiar foe in the 2A regional semifinal Nov. 20. Speedy Champagnat Catholic School, a defending state champion from Miami-Dade County — and the heavy favorite to win another title — overwhelmed young Moore Haven, 49-18, at Moore Haven High School. It was the fourth straight year the Terriers season has ended with a playoff loss to Champagnat.

Champagnat flexed its power and took advantage of Terrier miscues to build a 35-0 lead just six minutes into the game. Moore Haven, shaky early with miscues, eventually settled down. Early in the second quarter the Terriers completed an impressive 80-yard scoring drive with a short touchdown run by Johnny Crawford III.

Prior to the game, Moore Haven honored its players from the class of 2021. The senior night procession with family members included the Seminole Tribe's Ramone Baker, who was escorted by his parents Preston and Mona; and Donovan Harris (Seminole Nation of Oklahoma), who was joined by his mom Cheryl and aunt Angie Fish.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven senior Donovan Harris is escorted by his aunt Angie Fish and mom Cheryl.

Due to the pandemic, the atmosphere at Joe Brown Stadium wasn't nearly as electric as it normally is for a senior night and playoff game. The school announced earlier in the week that ticket sales would be limited to 300. No band in the stands meant a far quieter night, although Terrier cheerleaders did their best to keep up the home fans' spirits.

Baker, a running back and linebacker, played in every game this season; Harris, a fullback and defensive end, played in two. They provided plenty of versatility on both sides of the ball, including in the offensive backfield where they were among the team's key blockers and even carried the ball at times. Harris barreled his way for 11 hard-earned yards on a carry in the second quarter against Champagnat, although it was called back due to a penalty.

Baker's senior night on the field didn't last long. Less than four minutes into the first quarter, he was ejected from the game along with a Champagnat player following a

face-mask tussle.

Before their final game, Baker and Harris said the highlight of the season was a 21-15 win against Glades Day on Oct. 23. Harris said making a big tackle in the game was his favorite memory of the season.

Finding consistency during a pandemic season was among the challenges Moore Haven had to deal with this fall. Baker, a two-year varsity player, said the lack of games and practice cancellations made it difficult for the team to get into a normal rhythm.

Moore Haven finished with a 2-3 record. With football season done, Baker and Harris have shifted their focus to the boys basketball team, where they'll be key players along with football teammate Jaytron Baker. "We're going to be good," Ramone Baker said.

The team is coached by Preston Baker, who was the head coach of the school's varsity girls team last year.



Kevin Johnson

Moore Haven senior Ramone Baker is joined by his parents Preston and Mona at the senior night ceremony Nov. 20.



Kevin Johnson (2)

Above, Donovan Harris wraps up a Champagnat player during a battle on the line. Below, Harris powers his way for a big gain while carrying the ball.



Kevin Johnson

Ramone Baker (9) and Donovan Harris (28) look for blocks while on offense in the Class 2A regional semifinal against Champagnat.



## Moore Haven finishes volleyball season with winning record

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**MOORE HAVEN** — Despite not being able to play volleyball at their school, Preslynn Baker and Yani Smith still managed to gain valuable experience on the court this fall.

The pandemic forced Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School, which has been conducting classes virtually this fall, to cancel its volleyball season. Baker and Smith took their volleyball talents to Moore Haven High School, where they were able to play a short season in the Terriers program.

Moore Haven's varsity team, which is led by head coach Shawn Crosky and assistant coach Mona Baker, enjoyed a solid season with a 3-2 record. The season, which was halted for a few weeks in September due to a Covid outbreak at the school, concluded in October.

Facing older competition — Baker is an eighth-grader who made varsity and Smith is a seventh-grader who played JV — should benefit the players in the years to come.

"They picked up well. They adjusted really well," said assistant coach Baker, who is also the mother of Preslynn. "If you want to be better, you've got to play better



Courtesy photo

From left, the Tribe's Yani Smith, Summer Gopher, Mariah Billie and Preslynn Baker were part of the Moore Haven High School volleyball program this fall.

[teams]."

Baker and Smith weren't the only Seminoles in the volleyball program. They joined freshman Summer Gopher and senior Mariah Billie, who was honored in a senior night ceremony at the team's final match.

Meanwhile, a few other PECS students were also part of Moore Haven's middle school team that was coached by Dallas Nunez. The team lost only one match.

## NABI sets dates for 2021

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

The Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI), which annually features more than 1,000 young players from Indian Country, including the Seminole Tribe, is planning for the tournament to be held in 2021. The Seminole Tribe is one of seven major sponsors of NABI.

Organizers announced Nov. 2 that they are shooting for July 11-17, 2021, for the invitational's return in Phoenix. If all goes according to plan, games will be played in the Phoenix area with championship tilts set for Talking Stick Resort Arena, home of the NBA's Suns and WNBA's Mercury. Similar to just about everything in the sports world these days, the dates and location are subject to change.

The 2020 edition was cancelled due to Covid-19.

"Though it was a tough, heart-wrenching decision to cancel the [2020] program, it will remain the right decision," GinaMarie Scarpa, president & CEO of the NABI Foundation, said in a statement. "We did what we had to do to keep our youth and communities safe. We look forward to bringing the program back in 2021 (virus willing) and will continue to work closely with CDC guideline, state and tribal health departments to ensure the NABI

Foundation implements safety measures to protect our youth and communities."

The foundation said the 2020 tournament was scheduled to have 136 teams and more than 1,300 Indigenous players from North American and New Zealand. If held next summer, it will be the 18th edition of NABI.

In addition to hundreds of games, NABI also provides the players with a vast array of other opportunities, including educational and instructional. The foundation plans to offer its educational youth summit, college and career fair, parade of teams and the junior NABI camp.

"The NABI Foundation will continue to monitor the situation and amend the program according to imposed safety guidelines closer to the program dates. A full schedule of events will be released mid-June" said Lynette Lewis, director of basketball Operations and program development.

NABI also plans to officially launch its own brand of sports apparel called NABI Nation, which will include custom team uniforms. The brand is scheduled to be made available throughout 2021. Previously, the line has only been available during the week of the invitational.

The foundation will host year-end fundraising campaigns that will be posted on @NABI Foundation social media and the foundation's website — nabifoundation.org — starting in November. All proceeds will benefit foundation programs.

## Alena Stockton snags seven rebounds in Florida SouthWestern preseason victory

STAFF REPORT

**FORT MYERS** —Former Ahfachkee School basketball player Alena Stockton, from the Big Cypress Reservation, played in her first home game for Florida SouthWestern State College on Oct. 24.

Stockton, a 5-foot-6 freshman guard, played nearly 19 minutes coming off the bench in the Buccaneers' 84-75 preseason win against Florida College at Suncoast Credit Union Arena in Fort Myers. Stockton didn't score any points, but she was busy on the boards as she grabbed seven rebounds, which tied for second most on the team. Her five offensive rebounds tied for game-high. She also had two assists and two steals.

Stockton is one of eight freshmen on the 13-player roster.

FSW, which went 5-0 in the preseason, is scheduled to start its regular season Jan. 16. The Bucs went 24-7 last season and reached the National Junior College Athletic Association Tournament.



Florida SouthWestern State College freshman guard Alena Stockton, second from right, prepares to defend against an in-bounds pass in a preseason game Oct. 24 against Florida College.

Courtesy image

## Native cowgirls among top all-around contenders at Women's Rodeo World Championship

*Editor's note: This article from the World Champions Rodeo Alliance was posted Nov. 10 as a preview for the Women's Rodeo World Championship, which was held Nov. 8-15 in Texas.*

BY KENDRA SANTOS  
World Champions Rodeo Alliance

Navajo cowboys Erich Rogers, Aaron Tsingine and Derrick Begay have been constants in the world-class team roping conversation for years. Now here come Navajo cowgirls Danielle Lowman, Bailey Bates and Serena Dafozy, who are serious three-event threats here at this week's \$750,000 Women's Rodeo World Championship at Will Rogers Memorial Center in Fort Worth, Texas.

"We've never had a chance like this, so it's a great opportunity to be here," said Lowman, 28, who grew up in White Cone, Arizona, and now lives in Gilbert. "Growing up on the Rez, it's a point of pride being able to handle a rope."

Classic Ropes cowgirls Lowman, Bates and Dafozy have grown up competing together. Here at the WRWC, Lowman is heading for Dafozy, heeling for Lari Dee Guy and breakaway roping.

"I team roped first, then learned how to breakaway rope from Bailey and (National Finals Rodeo barrel racer) Kassidy Dennison (who's also roping here)," Lowman said. "Rodeo is huge in our Native American culture. We have horses, cattle and goats to take care of, and grow up working hard outdoors. Then we go inside and help Grandma cook. We're raised to work hard and be tough."

Lowman has admired the ultimate all-around icon all her life.

"I've always looked up to The King, Trevor Brazile (who last week surpassed \$7 million in career earnings and won his 26th world championship at the National Finals Steer Roping in Kansas)," she said. "I love watching Trevor and how he presents himself. He's a real hand."

Bates, 27, calls Nakaibito, New Mexico, home and bulldogger Michael Bates brother. While she's here in Fort Worth, she's heading for Serena, heeling for Cindy Welling and breakaway roping. Bates is bullish on being at the richest women's rodeo of all time, too.



Native cowgirls Serena Dafozy, Danielle Lowman and Bailey Bates.

Kendra Santos

"It's awesome to live in this era, where women's rodeo is picking up and coming out of its shell," Bates said. "Being a Navajo kid, what prepared us for this amazing opportunity was growing up on the Rez and competing at Indian rodeos, where they have ladies team roping and breakaway roping. We've all been roping a long time."

"Dani, Serena and I have roped together forever, so it's pretty special being here together. An event like this makes me think about our roots. It's a big deal to be here competing for this amount of money, especially where we come from."

Dafozy, who's also 28 with just one day's difference in age from Lowman, is from the heart and capital of the Navajo

Nation in Window Rock, Arizona. Her big brother, Brooks Dafozy, is a professional team roper.

"We have no chance at money like this anywhere else," said Serena, who's heeling for Lowman and Bates here, and also breakaway roping. "To be here with my friends, who both rope so good, is special. And to recognize the all-around like they do here, of course we're going to enter up."

The Women's Rodeo World Championship All-Around Titlist will take home a trophy saddle and \$20,000 check.

"Twenty grand is a lot of money," Dafozy said. "That's enough for a new horse. I just feel so blessed to be here."

## Nike N7 collection pays homage to Kyrie Irving's Indigenous heritage

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

Nike released its most recent N7 collection to coincide with Native American Heritage Month in November. The collection of footwear and apparel highlights NBA player Kyrie Irving's Indigenous heritage.

Nike said the color pattern includes a design drawn from the star quilt and medallion Irving received during his Standing Rock

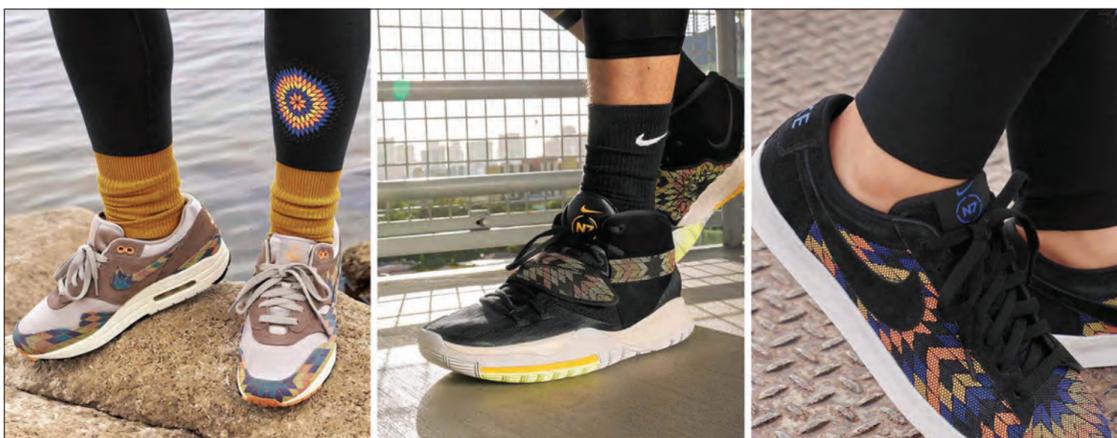
Sioux Tribe naming ceremony in 2018. The new footwear features a haptic graphic that references the gifts he received during his ceremony.

"I'm extremely proud to be Lakota Sioux, and at the same time, I'm still in the process of diving deeper into discovering who I am and where I come from," Irving said in a statement. "Everything that comes with my background is something I've always accepted, but I didn't necessarily understand it until now. The immense pride

I feel comes from this journey I've been on, this rediscovery I've made in my adult life."

Irving's mother, Elizabeth Larson, was a member of the Standing Rock Sioux. She died when he was 4. During the naming ceremony in 2018, Irving was given the tribal name Little Mountain by the Standing Rock Sioux.

Irving plays for the Brooklyn Nets. Cleveland made him the first overall pick in the 2011 NBA Draft out of Duke University.



Nike's N7 2020 winter collection includes these new footwear.

Nike



Evan Radford/Prince Albert Daily Herald

Fred Sasakamoose, one of the first Indigenous players in the National Hockey League, passed away Nov. 24. He had been hospitalized with Covid-19.

## Fred Sasakamoose, Indigenous NHL pioneer, dies at 86

*Former Chicago Black Hawk player was being treated for Covid*

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS  
NHL.COM

Fred Sasakamoose, one of the first Indigenous players in the NHL, died Nov. 24. The former Chicago Black Hawks forward was 86 and had been hospitalized with Covid-19.

Sasakamoose, who had lived on the Ahathkakoop Cree Nation reserve in Saskatchewan, was tested for Covid-19 on Nov. 19 and the test came back positive two days later, according to his son, Neil Sasakamoose.

He received antibiotics intravenously and was placed on oxygen, but his lungs could not recover, his son said.

"This Covid virus just did so much damage into his lungs, he just couldn't keep responding, his body just couldn't keep up," Neil said in a video posted on Facebook. "When I talked to him, I asked him how he was feeling, if he was scared. He said, 'I'm not scared, I'm ready to go, if I gotta go, I'm going to go.' I said, 'You know what, Dad? If you're tired, you go. You go and don't worry about us over here.'"

Sasakamoose did not have a point in 11 games with the Black Hawks in 1953-54.

"Only 125 hockey players and six teams, and I was one of them," he told Global News in 2018.

Family, friends and the hockey world mourned the loss of a man who overcame Canada's abusive residential school system to become the first Indigenous player with treaty status in the NHL.

"Fred Sasakamoose was a Canadian original who attained one of his life goals at the age of 19, by becoming the first Cree player to appear in an NHL game, and then dedicated the rest of his long life to serving the First Nations community -- using hockey and other sports to provide opportunities for Indigenous youth," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "The story of Sasakamoose's groundbreaking, 11-game NHL career with the Chicago Black Hawks in 1953-54 was the culmination of years of dedication to overcoming adversity in pursuit of a dream, and the pivot point at which he turned his focus to helping others pursue their dreams."

"On a personal note, I will always treasure meeting Fred at the 2019 Heritage Classic in his native Saskatchewan, getting to spend some precious time getting to know him and the gift he gave me that day -- a statue depicting his NHL rookie card. The National Hockey League mourns the passing of this special man and sends its condolences to his family and the countless young men and women of the First Nations community whose lives he touched."

Sasakamoose's NHL career was brief, but he blazed a trail for players and coaches of Indigenous heritage, including Carey Price, Jordan Tootoo, Bryan Trottier, Reggie Leach, George Armstrong, Ted Nolan, Craig Berube, Sheldon Souray, Gino Odjick and Theo Fleury.

Trottier, a Hockey Hall of Fame center who scored 1,425 points (524 goals, 901 assists) for the New York Islanders and Pittsburgh Penguins and won six Stanley Cup championships, called Sasakamoose "a pioneer, somebody looked at with First Nation blood who was an achiever, broke barriers."

"He didn't realize how inspiring he was, which makes him a humble man, which, to me, is much like Jean Beliveau and Gordie Howe and all of those guys who we hold in such high regard."

Leach, who scored 666 points (381 goals, 285 assists) in 934 games with the Boston Bruins, California Golden Seals, Philadelphia Flyers and Detroit Red Wings and was voted the Conn Smythe Trophy winner as the most valuable player in the 1976 Stanley Cup Playoffs, said he didn't know about Sasakamoose until he was 16 and playing junior hockey in Flin Flon, Manitoba.

Leach said that when he learned Sasakamoose was First Nation, he was instilled with pride.

"He was one of the players that we wanted to be like him and play in the National Hockey League," Leach said. "He accomplished his goal and that was a big feat at that time in the 50s, being First Nation

and playing in the NHL. If you think back, it's unbelievable the things he had to go through and what he went through going to residential school and accomplishing what he did. It's just amazing."

Sasakamoose made his NHL debut Nov. 20, 1953, against the Boston Bruins and played against the Toronto Maple Leafs two days later. He was then sent back to junior but was informed on the night of his final game with Moose Jaw of the Western Canadian Junior Hockey League that the Black Hawks wanted him to report for a game at the Toronto Maple Leafs on Feb. 27, 1954.

"That night. I was on that train," he told the Edmonton Sun in March 2014. "Going to Toronto. Going to play. Three days on a train. I don't know how the word got out that fast that there was an Indian going to play."

"I was warming up on the ice, and somebody skated up to me and said, 'Somebody wants to talk to you over there.' I'd never seen (broadcaster) Foster Hewitt in my life. He was just on the radio. He said, 'How do you pronounce your name?' ... It was big news. It was a big deal. I was an Indian with an Indian on my sweater."

Sasakamoose went to training camp with the Black Hawks in 1954 but was sent to the minors. He played minor and senior hockey until retiring in 1960.

"Today we lost a luminary in the hockey world with the passing of Fred Sasakamoose," the Blackhawks said in a statement. "Fred inspired many across the sport and throughout North America after becoming one of the first Indigenous-born athletes to play in the National Hockey League when he played 11 games with the Blackhawks during the 1953-54 season. Fred's family spoke of his love for his culture, his people and his language. That lasting impact of his legacy will forever be celebrated and continue to bring people together for generations to come."

"To the entire Sasakamoose family that includes his wife, Loretta, four children and over 100 grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the Chicago Blackhawks organization extends our deepest condolences."

After his playing career was over, Sasakamoose returned home to the Ahathkakoop First Nation to help give others the same kind of opportunities he received. He worked to build and develop minor hockey and other sports in the community. Tournaments, leagues and sports days followed as a result of these initiatives, as well as the Saskatchewan Indian Summer and Winter Games. Sasakamoose also was on the NHL Diversity Task Force as well as the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

Sasakamoose had a long, difficult path to the NHL, which included being taken from his family's home and shipped to the St. Michael's Indian Residential School in Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. The school was part of a government-sponsored, religious education system designed to assimilate the country's Indigenous children. The schools, which began in the 1880s and closed in 1996, were rife with abuse.

But Sasakamoose never abandoned his language, cultural beliefs or way of life. He testified before Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2012 about his experiences at the residential school.

He was inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame in 2007. The Blackhawks honored him in November 2002, and the Edmonton Oilers did the same in 2014 as part of their Celebration of First Nations Hockey, with Sasakamoose performing the ceremonial puck drop before a game against the New York Rangers. In 2017, Sasakamoose was invested in the Order of Canada, an honor that recognizes Canadian citizens for outstanding achievement, dedication to community or service to the nation.

Sasakamoose's death came a week after he finished the final edits on his memoir. "Call Me Indian: From the Trauma of Residential School to Becoming the NHL's First Treaty Indigenous Player" is scheduled for release April 6.

"At least his story is documented and now it's done," Neil said.