

NAYA Family Center NEWS



Empowering the Lives of Native Americans in the Portland Area

June/July 2008

Bi-Monthly Newsletter, Volume 12, Issue 4 of 6

Spring Gathering-Volunteer Honoring Ceremony 2008

Shilo George, Generations Project Intake/Outreach Coordinator, Ext. 224



Nichole Maher and Bernie Kronberger

Spring Gathering-Volunteer Honoring Ceremony was held March 26, 2008 in NAYA's gymnasium. We had over **500 people in attendance** and were able to honor over **200 volunteers and supports** for their generous support throughout the year.

There were many highlights of the evening including honoring **Mayor Tom Potter** with an eagle feather for his support of NAYA Family Center and Youth and Elders Council. He was given the eagle feather by Buzz Nelson and Nichole Maher. **Bernie Kronberger of Wells Fargo presented NAYA Early College Academy**



Mayor Tom Potter is gifted an eagle feather from Buzz Nelson

canned food and small kitchen appliances. **Thirty NAYA youth** were honored with new regalia for participating in dance classes and performances. At the close of the evening NAYA youth dancers performed for guests.

Thanks to all volunteers and community members who joined us in celebrating this important occasion. Thank you **Wells Fargo, Mayor Tom Potter** and **Interstate Fred Meyer.**

with a \$5,000 donation, which continues a long tradition of giving by Wells Fargo to many NAYA Family Center programs.

Guests and honorees enjoyed a traditional dinner of elk stew and buffalo chili. **Elders** were given **food boxes** full of fresh produce, bread,



NAYA Dancer Devyn Leigh

Summer Gathering

**Youth and Elders Honoring Ceremony
Thursday, June 26th, 5:30pm-9:00pm**

NAYA Family Center • 5135 NE Columbia Blvd. • Portland, OR 97218 • 503- 288-8177

NAYA Family Center invites you to join us in honoring the contributions and accomplishments of our community's Youth and Elders.

Please join us as we honor our youth moving to the next stage of their education and our 2008 High School and College Graduates. We would also like to celebrate the support our Elders and community provided them along the way in their educational journey.

Entertainment will include **Polynesian dancing, Aztec dancing** and a dance performance by our **NAYA dancers** and the **Four Directions Drum**. The evening will also include **community round dancing NIVA Color Guard. A bar-b-que dinner will be provided.**

Questions or to RSVP please call Shilo George at 503-288-8177 x224

Miss Wilder Goes to Washington: NAYA Youth Speaks in Congressional Briefing

Selona Stallings, Foster Care Support Specialist

Childhood is a time for exploring, learning, laughing and growing; preparing for teenage years and adulthood. To make this journey, children need stable homes, loving caregivers and nurturing to weather the storms they will face later in life. However many youth do not get these essential elements. Many are taken from their homes and placed in the foster care system. Some thrive in this system while others do not. We seldom hear the voice of those who grow up in foster care. Rarely are they asked for their insight, their wisdom, or the problems they face everyday. **But that changed on April 14th, 2008 when Tamika Wilder went to Washington.**



Tamika speaks in briefing

for the congressional briefing **“Native American Child Welfare: Challenges in protecting Vulnerable American Indian and Alaskan Native Children”**. She spoke from her heart about her personal experience with the foster care system. She openly shared about her life, how she came into state foster care with her brothers, and gave suggestions on how to improve the foster care system. Speaking of her younger brothers Tamika said, **“I was born their sister, life made me their mother and foster care made me their stranger.”**

Selona Stallings, NAYA Foster Care Support Specialist who accompanied Tamika on her trip, reported Tamika had the attendees laughing, crying and giving her a standing ovation. Her truthful and heartfelt words cut through the room and captivated everyone who listened. Selona Stallings said, **“I was so proud of her for getting up and speaking in front of government staffers and physicians. That takes so much courage.”**

Kelly Moor, M.D., FAAP, who is the Chair for the Committee on Native American Child Health wrote in a



Terri Cross, Benjamin Hoffman, Kelly Moore, Tamika Wilder, Kansas DuBray, Selona Stallings, Cindy Pellegrini

letter to Tamika, “You were unquestionably the most important speaker at this event. You showed great courage in telling your story before Congressional staff and others, and I hope you saw how strongly they responded to you. Everyone recognized the tremendous challenges you have faced throughout your young life, and yet we also see that your brave spirit is still strong. Your determination and will to carry on despite such hardship inspired us all and reminded us again why we must continue to work to ensure the safety and protection of all American Indian and Alaska Native children... I hope you will achieve all that you dare to dream because I know you are capable of great things.”

Tamika’s personal experiences shared at the briefing was in effort to **gather support for the following legislation:** Tribal Foster Care and Adoption Access Act of 2007 (S. 1956/H.R. 4688) and many other bills.

We would like to thank **Cindy Pellegrini** from the AAP and **Gina Russo** from PEW Charitable Trust for helping Tamika with her presentation and making the stay in D.C. a wonderful experience. Also many thanks to the staff at **NICWA** and **Terry Cross** for making this trip possible and all of their work for Native children.



Tamika at the White House

“I was born their sister, life made me their mother and foster care made me their stranger.” ~Tamika Wilder

NAYA Youth Accepted to Stanford University with 4.0 GPA

Shilo George, Generations Project Intake/Outreach Coordinator, Ext. 224



Roger Peterson and his father Dan Peterson

Roger Peterson, NAYA youth and member of the Siletz Tribe, has been accepted to Stanford University enrolling fall of 2008: which is an amazing achievement as Stanford only accepts 8% of their applicants. He **attends**

LaSalle High School in Milwaukie.

Roger spends much of his time studying and participating in community service project both through his school and the Siletz Tribe. He is a member of the **National Honor Society** and has volunteered on community service projects focusing on ecological restoration, homelessness and hunger.

So what drives Roger to set high goals and achieve them? More importantly how has he reached those goals? Roger says, "I am ambitious and I knew as a freshman I wanted to attend college. Things were difficult for me my freshman year and I found myself falling behind in school work. My parents were divorced and I went from house to house and had long bus rides to school. **I overcame these challenges by working hard and prioritizing my time to keep my grades up.**"

When asked if he has any advice for his peers struggling with school and life and he says, "Have faith in yourself... **If you have the drive you can be anything... don't let other people convince you differently.** Have fun and don't give up your life."

Roger excels in math and will be exploring other studies the first two years at Stanford. He plans on participating in the various Native American student groups, which organized the largest college powwow in the country on Mother's Day. **Congratulations and good luck, Roger!**

Outstanding NAYA Youth Selected to Attend College Horizons

Daniel Guilfoyle, High School Advocate, Ext. 258

Congratulations are in order to one of our NAYA youth, Carli Matthew. Carli (*Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe/Blackfeet*) is 15 years old and attends Union High School in Vancouver, WA. She is the daughter of Carlos and Cori Matthew. Carli will be attending **College Horizons, a pre-college workshop for Native American Students**, giving youth a five-day 'crash course' in preparing for college held at either Duke University in North Carolina or Lawrence University in Wisconsin. Expert college counselors, teamed up with admission officers, will work with the youth to select suitable colleges, complete winning applications and write memorable essays, learn what turns and applicant into an admitted student, become an SAT testing whiz and most importantly, finding their way through the financial aid and scholarship jungle.

For information about the College Horizons and the Graduate Horizons program, contact Dan Guilfoyle, danielg@nayapdx.org or on the internet at <http://www.collegehorizons.org>.



Carli Matthew snowboarding on Mt. Hood this winter

Talking Circle: Many Youth Enter the Circle

Glenn LaMotte, NAYA Prevention Specialist

This has been a great year for Talking Circle and our circle of youth participation has grown. Youth attended in record numbers of **22 youth per week on average**. That is double the amount from years past. Throughout the year we used the **Relational World View Model** to talk about the Mind, Body, Spirit, and Community and the connectedness between them. All of our activities and conversations were planned and built around the concepts of the Relational World View Model. We have also worked to incorporate Native values such as respect and humility in relationship building. Youth participated in activities such as painting a mural, learning about body image, participating in a lacrosse workshop presented by local professional players and spirited conversations about the upcoming presidential election in middle school Talking Circle. Twice a week youth were treated to a home cooked meal and throughout the year youth enjoyed special visits from elders and community members. We watched many youth overcome fears and prove their strength through sweat lodge ceremony, rock climbing, and trying new food cuisines.

Thanks to the following people, organizations and businesses that helped provided activities, learning and support during Talking Circle this year: **Robert Van Pelt, Tryon Life Farm, Les Sinclair at Adventist Academy, Ruth Knight at The Movement Center, Rudy Serna, Al High Horse, Harold Hill, Roanne Little Light and Peter Jacobs and Dan Dawson of the Portland Lumber Jax Lacrosse Team.** Thanks to **Ryan Pinkham, Brad Dennis, Glenn LaMotte, Shari Moore, Selona Stallings and Shilo George** for facilitating Talking Circle all year long.

3rd Annual Native American Housing to Homeownership Fair at NAYA Family Center

Saturday July 26th, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Join us for the third annual **Native American Housing to Homeownership Fair, Saturday July 26th, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** This year we're excited to announce we're hosting the fair here at NAYA Family Center for the first time!

This day long family event features **fun, informative workshops on housing and homeownership and specific resources for the Native community, including the Section 184 Indian Home Loan.**

Meet staff from local banks, non-profit affordable housing and homeownership organizations, and realtors, enter a drawing for a Down Payment Assistance Grant of \$2,500 and eat a delicious lunch by Tawna Sanchez and Co.'s "Daybreak to Dinner" - all for **FREE!**

For more information contact Sara Libby, Homeownership and Resident Services Coordinator, at 503-288-8177, X232 or at saral@nayapdx.org.

NAYA Family Center has three homeownership grants of \$70,000 left! These grants are for income qualified first time homeowners who want to buy in the city of Portland with the Portland Community Land Trust. Contact Sara Libby at extension 232 for qualifications and to secure a referral for the grant!

NAYA Wish List

Chris Dupres, NAYA Sustainability Specialist, Ext. 240

If you are interested in donating any of the following please contact Chris Dupres.

All donations are tax deductible.

Art & Craft Supplies

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Construction paper | Sinew |
| Clay | Beading thread |
| Coloring books | Beads |
| Paint brushes | Beading needles |
| | Beading how-to books |

You Can Now Sign Up for Food Stamps at NAYA

Nancy Weed, Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force

Thanks to a concerted effort to get more Oregonians on food stamps, approximately 80% of eligible people are getting assistance, returning more than **\$480 million in federal tax dollars to Oregon communities each year.** Due in large part to this increase, Oregon’s hunger rate, which just a few years ago ranked dismally among the highest in the United States, now stands at the national average. **Only 30% of seniors who are eligible for food stamps actually receive them.**

If all eligible Oregonians applied for and received the food stamps they are entitled to, Oregon communities would be infused with more than **\$90 million more federal food dollars spent at local businesses.** Federal dollars increase sales and revenue for local grocery stores and farmers markets, creating stronger businesses and a healthier economy. **The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that every \$5 spent in food stamps generates more than \$9 in economic activity.**

If you are in need of food stamps you can now sign up at NAYA. When you come in a staff member will help you fill out the form, research if you are eligible for further assistance and send off your form to the Department of Human Services (DHS). **For questions or help about this process please contact your NAYA case manager. If you do not have a NAYA case manager you can contact a staff member in Family Services, Employment, Housing and Community Development or Youth Services.**

Income Guidelines for Food Stamps

Gross Income.

| Household Size | Monthly Income |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | \$1,604 |
| 2 | \$2,159 |
| 3 | \$2,714 |
| 4 | \$3,269 |
| | Add \$555 for each additional person |

Ready to Rent

Delores Herrera, Housing Specialist, Ext. 235

Never rented before? Have an uncertain rental history? Don’t have any credit? Come and strengthen your rental skills a Ready To Rent class. **The NAYA Family Center Ready To Rent class** will help you learn your rights and responsibilities as a renter. This class will also help you overcome rental barriers and gain access to landlords willing to consider Ready to Rent graduates—even if the graduates have had past rental difficulties. The next class begins in July and is scheduled for **Friday July 11th, 25th, and August 1st from 4:30-7pm.** Space is limited so sign up quickly, call Delores Herrera (503) 288-8177 ext. 235.

NAYA Early College Academy Finds Success in its First Year

The Academy is finishing up its first year of existence, and we are very pleased with the results. We had a **96% passing rate** and an **85% attendance rate** though the first semester. Our students also were provided opportunities they never would have had in large standard schools, such as speaking on the Mayors student leadership panel, The Connected by 25 student panel and the Governors student leadership forum. Our students have had the opportunity to meet **Mayor Potter** and **Speaker of the U.S. Representatives Nancy Pelosi.** We were also very excited that our very first entry into the **MESA Engineering competition resulted in a third place finish.** A group of students have been meeting with the Elders for lunch weekly. As part of our success, we would like to **thank Mark Laverdure** for keeping the school clean and healthy, **John Walker** for all his work on the food program, and **William Revet** for his technology support.

YOU ARE INVITED!!!

Native Professionals Night

*Lai-Lani Ovalles, Indigenous Organizing Coordinator,
Ext. 213*

NAYA Family Center invites you to join us for an evening of delightful conversation, delicious snacks and refreshments in **July at Lewis & Clark College, 5:30 – 7:30 PM**. We recognize the importance of bringing people together to share stories and experiences and the value of expanding our networks by meeting new people. Our intent is to generate deeper connections and conversation among Native professionals and our extended community. Because Portland is the 9th largest Native American communities in the United States, we have many Native professionals who work in various fields. These include fields such as computer technology, social services, education, law, health care, construction, finance, community based organizations, amongst many other fields. This event focuses on Native professionals and all are welcome.

A \$25 suggested donation in cash or check at the door will benefit NAYA Family Center and support the cost of the event. Contact Lai-Lani Ovalles at 503-288-8177 x. 213 for more info.

Congratulations to the NAYA Employment Program Participants

Tamra Russel, Employment Program Manger, Ext. 203

Congratulations to the 58 clients who successfully completed three years in NAYA Family Center's Employment Program! On May 10, 2008 the City of Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development (BHCD), along with Mayor Potter, held a graduation in City Hall to celebrate the success of clients who completed three years in the program. Participants who attended the graduation were **Aarontino Yazzie, John Anderson, Laura Thompson, John (Yamni) Thompson, and Brandon Meanus**.

BHCD and Mayor Potter recognized NAYA Family Center's program along with other programs funded by the Economic Opportunity Initiative including Central City Concern, Oregon Tradeswomen and SE Works.



**Graduations of employment program
with Mayor Tom Potter**

Portland Youth and Elders Council Upcoming Events

Interested in joining the Youth and Elders Council?
Contact Brad Dennis at 503-288-8177 x217 at NAYA.

June 3, 2008 from 5-6:30p — Communication Sub Committee - Food and Coffee will be provided.

June 5, 2008 from 5-6:30p — History of Native Organizing in PDX

June 10, 2008 from 6-8p — General Council Meeting. Food and Coffee will be provided.

Current Volunteer Opportunities at NAYA Family Center

With the changing of the seasons there is a lot of upkeep in the landscape of the NAYA Family Center grounds. Volunteers are needed to help keep the native plantings and building beautiful throughout the summer. Contact us if you're interested in getting out in the warm weather for a few hours a week to help.

Want to brush up on your office administration skills? We are in need of regular and on-call volunteers to help out in the front office to greet people, answer phones, and work on special projects.

Summer Institute Tutors Needed! The Summer Institute will run from June 23rd – August 15th from 9am-2:30pm. Students will be working hard throughout the week to complete coursework in math, English, science, culture, and employment. If you're interested in tutoring students in their classes let us know!

Volunteers are always needed to make community events a success. Here's what's coming up!
 Summer Gathering – June 26th, Thursday at NAYA Family Center
 Native Professionals Night – July 22nd, Tuesday, at Lewis and Clark College
 Housing to Homeownership Fair – July 26th, Saturday, at NAYA Family Center

NAYA Offers Financial Wellness Workshop

Feeling overwhelmed by bills? Do you want to buy a house, yet you think you could never afford it? If this sounds like you please come to our **NAYA Financial Wellness Workshop on Saturday, July 19th from 10am-4pm at NAYA Family Center.** Deborah Kroeker of Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde will present valuable information to help you reach your financial goals. The workshop is **FREE** and a free lunch will be provided.

If you would like to take this class please call Deanne Goforth at 503-288-8177 x214 to sign up.

Now Accepting Lightly Used Clothing for NAYA's Clothing Closet

NAYA Family Center is now accepting donations for lightly worn clothing on **Tuesdays from 2pm-5pm** by a NAYA staff member. We are in need of **plus size clothing for women.** All clothing donations **must be washed, lightly used, and on a hanger.** Our community can greatly benefit from your kind donations. If you need to access the clothing closet, please call your case manager or a NAYA employee to assist you. We are happy to provide this service and look forward to watching our clothing closet grow.

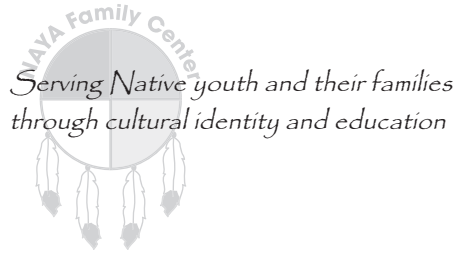
Individual Development Accounts: NAYA's New Expansion of Financial Education Services

Do you dream of owning your own home, but you never seem to be able to save enough money? Well, an **Individual Development Account (IDA)** may be right for you. As NAYA Family Center continues to grow, we recognize the need for our community to be financially independent and knowledgeable. NAYA Family Center will soon have an IDA program coordinated by Deanne Goforth. She will promote a 3:1 matched savings program for community members that want to save for an asset, such as purchasing a home! More information will be available in the future about this exciting program and we look forward to expanding our services to better serve our community.



Native American Youth and Family Center

5135 NE Columbia Blvd.
Portland, OR 97218
Phone: 503.288.8177
Fax: 503.288.1260



NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PORTLAND OR
PERMIT NO2851

We're on the web
www.nayapdx.org

M.A.S.A.P. Camp Starting in June

Daniel Rowell, NAYA Learning Center Tutor, Ext. 212

This summer the Native American Youth and Family Center will be holding its annual **Math and Science Augmentation Program (M.A.S.A.P.) Camp**. This 5 week day-camp will be held from **June 30th thru August 1st** from **9:00 am until 4:30 pm**. This camp is for students entering the **4th thru 9th grades** this coming fall. Our focus will be on science and environmental education in addition to community service projects. Field trips to OMSI and the Oregon Zoo will be included in addition to various recreational activities. Once a week we will be going swimming as a reward for the hard work and focus of our students. **There are 40 camp spots available and sign-ups are on a first come basis.** We have applications available here at NAYA and can fax or mail them if requested. If you have any further questions please call Daniel Rowell at (503) 288-8177 ext. 212.

