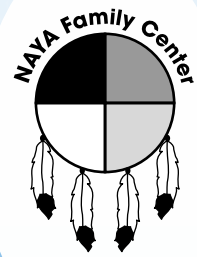


NAYA Family Center NEWS

Empowering the Lives of Native Americans in the Portland area



January/March 2009

Winter Newsletter, Volume 13, Issue 1 of 4

Power at the Polls



Tamra Russell has her hand full of ballots to turn in on Election Day, November 4th



President Elect Barack Obama speaks with Nichole Maher

Increased Voting among Portland's Native Community for 2008 Election

By Donita Fry, Front Office Manager

American Indian and Alaskan Native voters flexed their muscles at the polls. In the 2008 November election in Multnomah County, **over 12,500 AI/AN peoples cast their vote**, whereas about 10,000 voted in 2004. That means that almost one-third of the Portland area's Native peoples voted!

Native Americans were the last ethnic population to receive citizenship in 1925, and up until the 1970's Native people were denied access to vote in their own country. While the numbers may be small compared to the entire US population, the power of **the Native vote can impact** local elections as well as national elections. NAYA Family Center encouraged voting among the Native community by offering voter registration opportunities at community events throughout the fall, and plans to do so in future elections as well.

The **Portland Youth and Elders Council**, which meets monthly at NAYA Family Center, hosted several of this year's local candidates, such as Sho Dozono and Sam Adams at a March 2008 meeting. The PYEC offers one avenue to gather and honor the collective, consensus-based community values of the Native American people, and to discuss and educate others on topics that affect the Native Community.

"American Indians are the only ethnicity that the U.S. Census Bureau doesn't track when it comes to election data."



President Elect Barack Obama meets with Portland area Native leaders

Fall at NAYA: Fall Gathering, Halloween, and Annual Auction



NAYA Dancers at the Fall Gathering, photo by Charles King



Auctioneer Johnna Wells at NAYA's 2008 Auction, photo by Charles King



Pumpkin decorating at Halloween Family Night



Dinner Time at the Fall Gathering



Melissa Waggoner at Halloween Family Night



Guests at NAYA Auction, photo by Charles King

2008 NAYA Auction in Review

By Christine Dupres, Sustainability Officer

The Native American Youth and Family Center celebrated **Native American Month** by holding its **fifth annual auction on Friday, November 14** at the Portland Art Museum Kridel Grand Ballroom! It was the best event ever, with **over 600** guests and volunteers in attendance. Tribal officials and representatives from all over the U.S. attended, including **leaders from the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, Siletz and Grand Ronde**. Many city, county and state officials attended as well, such as current Portland Mayor **Tom Potter** and Mayor elect **Sam Adams**.

National speaker and activist, **Elouise Cobell** (Blackfeet), gave the keynote address, and the oral auction boasted a **remarkable line-up of Native art**, from an exquisitely carved Makah mask to an antique Navajo rug. Despite difficult financial times, **proceeds increased by 25%**. The auction is a critical fundraising event, because every dollar earned is a dollar of unrestricted funding that the agency can spend on critical services and needs.



Marcus Amerman's "The Gathering"

Thank You to Illahee Level Sponsors

By Christine Dupres, Sustainability Officer

For the fourth consecutive year, **Bank of the West** sponsored the NAYA Family Center's annual celebration. **The Bank of the West** is NAYA's primary commercial banker and this year they supported the event with a fabulous **\$5000 Illahee** sponsorship. Bank of the West recently increased their financial support of low and middle-income housing, which made this year's auction theme—"Housing for Our People and a Home for NAYA"—a natural fit to further our mutual partnership.

In 2005, Bank of the West pledged to contribute \$75 billion through 2015 to support local communities where they do business. NAYA Family Center is delighted to continue our long-term alliance, and hopes to continue to grow our relationship with Bank of the West in the future.

NAYA would like to extend a warm thanks to **Haglund, Kelley, Horngren, Jones & Wilder, LLP**. They are a small and prestigious law firm that represents Indian tribes throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Their practice focuses on tribal rights and sovereignty in such critical areas as economic development, cultural and natural resource preservation and Indian Child Welfare. Their continued support of NAYA and its gala event at the substantial **\$5000 Illahee** sponsorship level ensured that our auction would be a great success.

Request for Auction Item Donation :

All donations are welcome. Items currently needed for the auction include Native artwork, instruments, jewelry and crafts; guided hikes and tours; health and wellness products; romantic and other dining and travel amenities.

Items can be dropped off or sent directly to:
NAYA Family Center Attn: Chris Dupres
5135 NE Columbia Blvd
Portland, OR 97218

Please let us know how to get in touch with you so we can properly thank you for your generosity. To donate larger items, one-of-a-kind experiences, or other items that cannot be mailed easily,

contact Chris Dupres at 503-288-8177 ext. 240 to make arrangements.

Native-Owned Business: Cupcake Jones

By Lai-Lani Ovalles, Indigenous Community Engagement Coordinator

“We have what you crave” is the motto of Cupcake Jones – **a Native American, locally owned family business in Portland’s Peal District.** Owners Lisa Watson and Peter Shanky opened the doors to their cupcake bakery on July 11, 2007, realizing Lisa’s dream of owning her own business. Lisa and her family have **active ties with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde.** Robert Jones Watson, Lisa’s father and namesake of Cupcake Jones, led the Housing Authority and the Gaming Commission for the Grand Ronde Tribe. Kathryn Harrison, Lisa’s aunt, is the former Tribal Council Chair. Many of her relatives are involved in various other tribal agencies and organizations.

Cupcake Jones is a lively and vibrant business that **specializes in high quality, fresh, made-from-scratch cupcakes.** Their menu changes monthly to take advantage of the fresh and seasonal ingredients. They use fresh fruit in their icing, instead of food coloring, and they hand-make chocolate chip cookies, peanut brittle, candied ginger, marshmallows, and more. A popular cupcake this holiday season is the Holiday Chocolate Truffle – a delicious devil’s food cake filled with sour cream chocolate ganache and topped with rich fudge icing and a chocolate Christmas star.

NAYA Family Center proudly recognizes Cupcake Jones as a successful representative of Native-owned businesses in the Portland area! For more information on their great service and wonderful treats, contact them at 503-222-4404 or see their website at www.cupcakejones.net.



Just a few samples of what Cupcake Jones has to offer



Amee Pastores enjoys a cupcake from Cupcake Jones

Look for more stories about local, Native-owned businesses in upcoming issues of the NAYA Newsletter!

Coming to NAYA? Remember to Sign In and Out!

Hundreds of people come in and out of NAYA Family Center on any given day, and we are dedicated to keeping all “guests, staff, and clients” safe. In order to do so, we ask that **all visitors sign in and out at our Front Office.**

Sign-in and we can direct you to whomever you need to speak to or wherever you need to go in the building. **Sign-out** and we can’t wait until you come back next time! We want all our **friends and guests to remain safe and accounted for**, and we keep all information confidential.

Thank you,

NAYA Family Center Front Office



Room 208, currently being remodeled to become the Elder's Room

A Room with a View

By Tawna Sanchez, Director of Family Services

Two and a half years ago elders walked into the then new NAYA Family Center building and asked, **"Which room is ours?"** Which room will they have their potluck gatherings, bingo, quilting, and chat with their friends and community? Today we know the answer to that question, and I would like to take this opportunity to **thank the Spirit Mountain Community Fund** for their generous grant to create a room for the elders of the community.

Room 208 is in the process of being remodeled to create that Elders space. A larger door to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers, and windows to allow more light into the room are being added to create a more inviting room. The room will be furnished with comfortable folding chairs and tables that can be easily moved to accommodate various uses for the room. New carpet, cabinetry for storage, and computer stations that will be available for elders to learn new skills.

Our hope for the future is to be able to secure funding for a position that will be able to assist community elders with accessing services, navigating the Social Security and Medicare systems, transportation to medical appointments and assistance with food resources.

The Importance of the 2010 Census

By Christine Dupres, Sustainability Officer

Census 2010 is coming soon! The national Census, conducted every ten years, gathers national and state information about the country's population. State and local governments use this information for a variety of programs that help determine government planning and spending. For Native peoples, the most important thing to remember is that **Census data on race are used to determine funding** for fair housing, mortgage lending practices, equal access to education and health care services, and equal employment opportunities.

Native people nationwide have been **historically undercounted**, leading to a reduction in resources that might otherwise be available. Especially in the cities, urban Native Americans tend to be grossly undercounted. You will have the opportunity to ensure that you and all Native Americans are appropriately counted if you complete the 2010 Census.

NAYA Family Center will be writing more about this important issue in the following months. Stay tuned and be sure to fill out the census form - we are all proud of our heritage and identity.

United States™
Census
2010

Tax Prep Assistants Needed!

Volunteer Tax Prep Assistants are needed for the 2009 tax season to help the Native American community prepare their **Federal and State Tax Returns**, including **Earned Income Tax Credits!**

We work with CASH Oregon to **help you get trained and certified by the IRS.**

Shifts available February 2nd - April 15th, Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 12-8pm.

Contact **Bethany Zollner** for more information or to sign up. 503-288-8177 ext. 280 or bethanyz@nayapdx.org



The first seven graduates of the Financial Wellness Class Series

Financial Wellness Class Graduation

By Ben Helgren, Financial Skills Coach

On October 22, the NAYA Family Center had its **first seven graduates of the Financial Wellness Class series**. Graduates completed four 2-hour sessions on budgeting, bank accounts, and credit. Since completing the class in October one class member has gone on to pay off old collections, one has re-financed a home loan, and one has made positive steps to becoming a homeowner.

The Financial Wellness Class series are **designed to promote economic independence within the urban Native American community**. The classes use a curriculum developed by the First Nations Development Institute and the FannieMae Foundation that focus on individual values and goals. Completion of the class requires attending **four 2-hour sessions on Monday evenings**. Each class session has a different topic and builds off information obtained in the previous class. Dinner is provided for class participants.

Financial Wellness classes will continue to be offered now on Monday evenings at NAYA Family Center. Parents with children over 6 may have their children participate in Culture Night (contact Melissa Waggoner at NAYA 503-288-8177 x204).

Financial Wellness Class Series

*Mondays at NAYA Family Center from 6-8pm
Contact Ben Helgren about coming to a class,
503-288-8177 ext. 273*

NAYA Family Center has the Solution for your Home Buying Jitters

By Deanne Goforth, IDA Program Coordinator

NAYA Family Center's **Individual Development Account (IDA) Program**—designed to help members of the community buy their first home—is now a **3:1 matched-savings program**. This means that for every \$1 you deposit into an account, another \$3 will be deposited into that same account.

No matter how the economy is doing, if you're ready to buy your first home then NAYA Family Center will make every effort to help you. Whether you're ready to buy in six months or three years, the IDA program can **help you save up to \$12,000**, design a personal monthly savings plan, and **provide coaching every step of the way**. Participants are required to attend the Financial Wellness and Pathways Home classes. **This is a free service** with a minimum monthly deposit of \$25 dollars and allows you access to your own home buying team.

For more information and to see if you qualify, please schedule a meeting with Ben Helgren, our Financial Skills Coach, at 503-288-8177 ext. 273.

FREE Tax Preparation Assistance!

You don't have to pay high fees to commercial tax preparers. The NAYA Family Center will have **certified volunteer Tax Preparers to help you with your taxes**. Maximize your refund, see if you're eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, and file your taxes over the internet!

If you're like millions of Americans, you work hard but don't earn a high income. The federal government has several resources including the **Earned Income Tax Credit**—a tax credit for low-income workers who meet certain qualifications—that helps keep **more money in your pockets**. If you qualify, you could pay less federal income tax, pay no tax, or receive a refund.

Available by appointment only,

February 2nd through April 15th,
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12-8pm.
Contact Bethany Zollner to schedule your free tax preparation at 503-288-8177 ext. 280,
or bethanyz@nayapdx.org.

Volunteer Corner

*By Joel Schneier, AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer Program Specialist*

Thanks to **Bow and Arrow Culture Club**, the **2008 Auction Staff**, and many others who gave **hundreds of hours** this fall to help NAYA Family Center!

If you would like to give back and be a part of the community, then NAYA Family Center has some opportunities that might be great for you! We currently are looking for:

Kitchen Crew Members— cook and serve with us in our brand new kitchen that serves NAYA students, staff, and the community. Mondays-Friday for Lunch and Breakfast.

Administrative Assistants— help our Front Office and Academy Office keep NAYA staff and students running! Mondays-Fridays 8am-6pm.

Tax Prep Assistants— help members of the community file their taxes and get their Earned Income Tax Credits. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 12-8pm, from February 2-April 15.

Evening Programming Hosts— greet and direct guests to their appropriate evening event. Monday-Friday 4-8pm.

Lunch-Time Hosts— hang out with NAYA students and staff during lunch-time, Mondays-Fridays.

Maintenance Assistants— keep NAYA Family Center looking beautiful for the staff and community. Mondays-Fridays 11am-8pm.

Teaching Assistants— lend your knowledge or assistance to NAYA students in the classroom. Mondays-Fridays, dependent upon schedule and needs of teachers.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Joel Schneier at 503-288-8177 ext. 227 or joels@nayapdx.org.



Peggy Ross, Eddie Sherman, and Donita Fry

Portland's Human Rights Commission Includes Native Representatives

*By Joel Schneier, AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer Program Specialist*

Portland's newly created **Human Rights Commission** has included three key figures in Portland's Native community: **Eddie Sherman, Peggy Ross, and Donita Fry**. In doing so, Portland's Native community will be represented as the Commission seeks to **"serve the residents of Portland by advocating for the rights of all people."**

Eddie Sherman is the Development Manager at National Indian Child Welfare Association; Peggy Ross is the Director of the Governor's Affirmative Action Office as well as a member of NAYA Family Center's Board; and Donita Fry is the Front Office Manager at NAYA Family Center. Eddie Sherman and Donita Fry have been appointed as members of the Commission, while Peggy Ross will serve on the Honorary Board of Advisors.

The Human Rights Commission was created on March 19th, 2008 and held its first meeting on November 5th, 2008. The Commission will use the **principles of the UN Declaration of Human Rights** in order to "eliminate discrimination and bigotry, to strengthen intergroup relationships and to foster greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in the City of Portland."



Volunteers keep the children entertained at Fall Gathering

Native American Youth and Family Center

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Portland, OR 97218
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Fax: 503.288.1260



*Serving Native youth and their families
through cultural identity and education.*

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www.nayapdx.org

Attention Friends of NAYA Family Center:

The NAYA Family Center Newsletter is now a Quarterly Publication

Look for the Newsletter in
your mailbox in **January,**
April, July, and **October**
of each year.

If you need to update your
mailing address please
contact Joel Schneier at
joels@nayapdx.org or
503-288-8177 ext. 227.

A letter from Kathryn Harrison, an elder from Grand Ronde,
who spoke at NAYA Family Center on October 3rd, 2008:

To my NAYA Family:

*Many thanks for honoring me by requesting me
to speak to you today. At age 84, it's always an honor to be
remembered!*

*Remember who you are—always be yourself—I saw
great potential here today—I heard some of your trials—i.e.,
getting to school every day—and you did and were here!*

*May the Creator wrap His loving arms around each
and every one of you and give you strength, wisdom and good
health and happiness.*

*With Best Wishes &
Fond Memories,*

*Kathryn Jones Harrison
10-03-08*

An Elder from Grand Ronde