

NAYA Family Center NEWS

Empowering the Lives of Native Americans in the Portland Area



Oct/Nov/Dec 2011

Fall Newsletter, Volume 16, Issue 4 of 4

Neerchokikoo Powwow



On September 9th & 10th, NAYA Family Center hosted the second annual Neerchokikoo Powwow. This year we celebrated and honored the center's volunteers and partners whose support and continued dedication sustains the NAYA Family Center and strengthens the community.

We were very fortunate to have elder Buzz Nelson to share a blessing with our community on Friday evening before the kick off of the powwow. The two day event was filled with amazing drumming, dancing and hours of laughter and entertainment by Arnold Little Head, master of ceremonies. Native artists and vendors were in attendance, showcasing their art and selling delicious food. It is always a great sight to see our community come together to share and practice our Native culture.

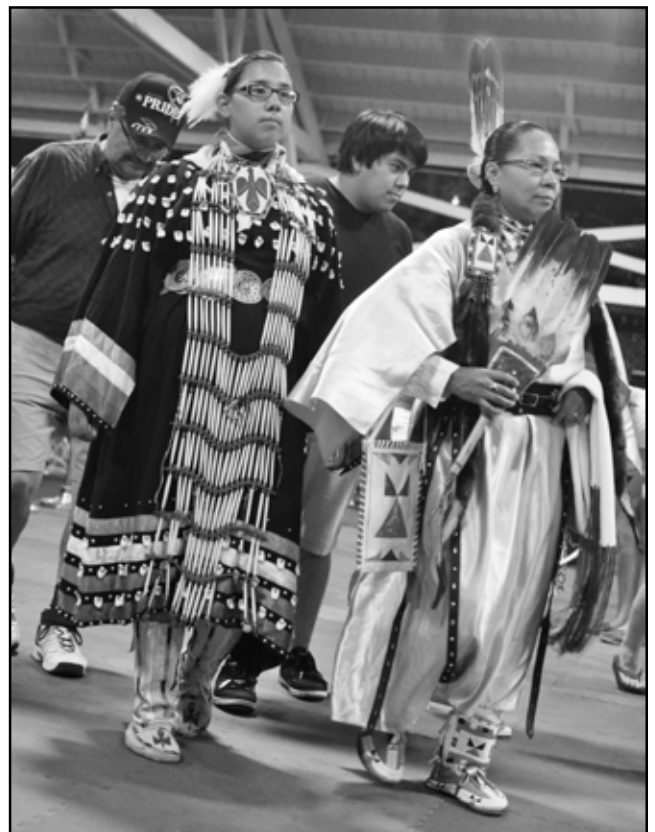
The success of this event was possible because of the support from all community members and the commitment of NAYA staff. Our deepest gratitude to Arnold Little Head, Jason Stacona, Bulls and Bears, Northwest Indian Veterans Association, Dr. Cornel Pewewardy, Buzz Nelson, and our youth, elders and community!

Special thanks to our major sponsor:

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PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



Native American Housing to Homeownership Fair

By Jen Matheson, Homeownership Program Specialist

The 6th Annual Native American Housing to Homeownership Fair was a successful community event that offered the 400+ attendees the chance to meet with 30 different vendors and to attend nine different workshops. Vendors included local affordable housing providers, banks that provide the Section 184 Indian Home Loan and non-profits that offer ways to make our homes and neighborhoods more sustainable. The success of the Fair depends on the support of our sponsors; through the generous sponsorships NAYA can provide the down payment and rent assistance raffles and the lunch prepared by Nawitka catering.

We would like to recognize and welcome our newest Chako Hyas level sponsor, the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC). Since 1974, the National American Indian Housing Council has been working to advocate for housing opportunities and increased funding for Native American housing and community development programs. Although much of NAIHC's work is to support Tribal housing programs, NAIHC also recognizes the need to support and reach out to large urban Indian communities, like Portland, Oregon. Tribal members living in urban communities may not be able to access tribal housing or homeownership programs due to income requirements or location restrictions. We are grateful for the partnership and support of NAIHC in helping us to create opportunities for our community to learn the next steps in their path towards homeownership and housing stability.

To learn more about the fair and NAYA Family Center Homeownership Program contact Jen Matheson at 503-288-8177x297 or jenm@nayapdx.org.



Leah Miller (Yakama/Wy-am/Nez Perce/Penelakut) shares her family's homebuying experience with workshop attendees



Housing Fair participants check out the vendors in the Siwash House.

Thank you to the 2011 Housing to Homeownership Fair Sponsors

Potlatch ("To Give")
Portland Housing Bureau

Chako Hyas ("To Grow")
National American Indian Housing Council
Home Forward
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage
Healthy Kids

Illahee ("Sustaining Land")
Sterling Savings Bank

NAYA Early College Academy Graduate returns as Americorps Vista

By Bekah Foster, Youth Advocate

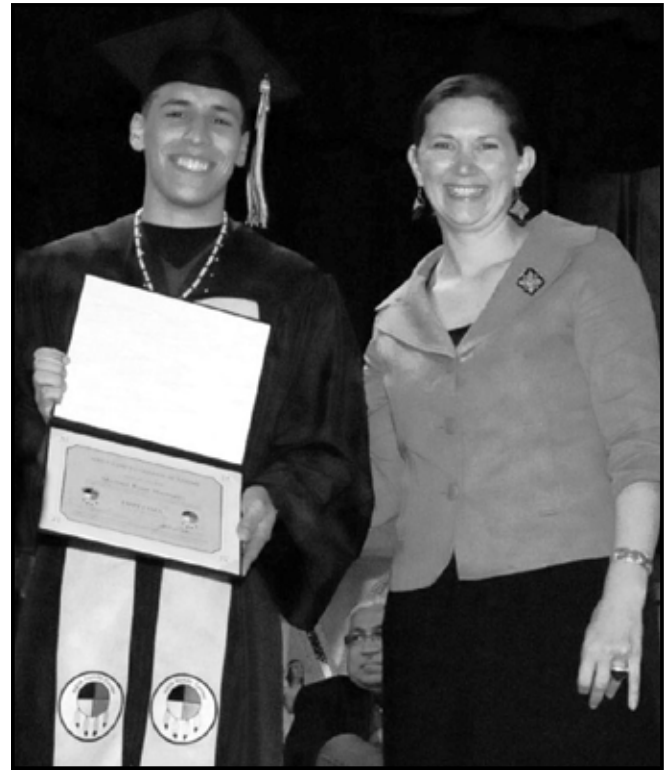
For Michael Marteeny (*Colville/Yakama/Nooksac*) participating as an Americorps Vista for NAYA's 9th Grade Summer Leaders Program was a homecoming. Michael, nineteen years old and currently a sophomore at Portland Sate University has a passion for serving his community through promoting education equity.

Michael began participating in NAYA Family Center activities when he was in the 6th grade. When Michael came to NAYA he had moved around many times; he'd been in the Foster Care system, and was no stranger to poverty. As Michael finished his freshman year at Grant High School, the instability of his younger years was overshadowing his ability to be successful. He was making poor choices and felt like his future didn't have much promise.

"I stopped caring, and felt like college was unattainable and a place that people like me didn't belong."

He needed a change, so he came to where he knew he belonged and enrolled in the NAYA Early College Academy.

At the Academy, with the help of his counselors and the support of the community Michael found his stride. Michael took full advantage of NAYA Family Center's partnership with Portland Community College, and earned many of his college credits during his junior and senior year. Through that experience he learned that college was in fact for people just like him. He graduated high school early and when he walked across the stage to accept his diploma with the class of 2010, he had a head start in college and his first year at Portland State University paid in full through scholarships and grants.



Michael Marteeny receives high school diploma.



Michael Marteeny shows a NAYA youth how to make a drum.

Having Michael come back and serve the youth of his community is what NAYA Family Center is all about. He knows first-hand how kids can get off track their freshman year, but are less likely to do so if they have mentors helping them to open their eyes to what their future can be.

"I want to help students from my community realize that it's tangible and attainable to succeed in college and that there are resources out there for students like us. I also want to let them know that it's tons of fun!"

Michael says that he is still learning who he wants to be, but knows that his community is his base.

"NAYA is my home away from home, my family is far away and this is where I can be connected with my people. Being a part of the NAYA community makes me feel supported and I know that my success is not just about me but the betterment of the whole community."

NAYA Summer Camp

By Daniel Rowell, Education Coordinator

This summer over 80 youth participated in the 4th-8th grade summer camp. Over five weeks our youth spent many hours in the classroom improving their math skills and reading books by Native authors.

Outside of the classroom our youth learned beadwork, pottery and hand drum-making through NAYA’s cultural arts programming. Our youth stayed active this summer by playing sports and were introduced to African dance and the healing art of yoga.

“It was really fun, it was educational, but more fun than school.” Jeanette Jones (*Cayuse/Umatilla/Nez Perce*), NAYA Youth.



Kylie Smith (*Sioux/Warm Springs*) and Jeanette Jones (*Cayuse/Umatilla/Nez Perce*) are all smiles during their time at NAYA’s Summer Camp.

9th Grade Counts

By Maggie O’Keefe, Youth Advocate

Fifteen students dedicated their summer to NAYA’s 9th Grade Counts program in order to start high school on the right foot. The five week program took students to a variety of college and career sites to help our youth understand the opportunities that are available when they are successful in high school.

“[The program] makes you want to work hard, just so you can get [to college], and study and learn stuff,” said Ramzees Gallegos (*Navajo/Umatilla*).

Students also worked in partnership with the Northwest Film Center to produce a film focusing on how they will accomplish their goals in high school. Our youth gained invaluable knowledge and skills this summer and also earned an elective credit, giving them a head start in high school.



Ramzees Gallegos (*Navajo/Umatilla*) demonstrates trust by standing in a structure supported by only ropes and the strength of other NAYA Youth.



From L-R : Quin Clark (*Blackfeet*), Devin Jones (*Navajo/Umatilla*), Davineekah White Elk (*Ute/Apache/Siksika/Blackfeet*) and Ramzees Gallegos (*Navajo/Umatilla*) participate in a competition to build the highest structure out of gum drops and spaghetti noodles.

Summer Ascend

By Nykke Straws, Youth Advocate

This summer forty-four 10th-12th grade youth earned high school credit through their participation in NAYA’s eight week Summer Ascend program. Students dedicated their time to Language Arts, Math, Job Skills, Leadership Development, Post-Secondary Education and Career Skills classes.

Our youth also took field trips to explore possible career paths and visited places such as NIKE, US Fish Biology, Portland Police Bureau and OHSU.

Kyle Stoker, 12th grade NAYA Youth, said, “Summer Ascend was a good experience. I got my math credit and I enjoyed listening to the fish biologist and learning about Lamprey.”



Kyle Stoker (*Navajo*) bravely allows a Lamprey to latch onto his forearm.



Tashina Two Bulls (*Blackfeet/Oglala Lakota*) and Marcus Johnson (*Warm Springs*) working in the NAYA Medicine Wheel garden.



Tillie Nelson (*Dakota/Lakota/Klamath/Modoc*) putting her gardening skills to work.



Youth Advocate, Jeremy Matsen collaborating with Judy Blue Horse Skelton.

For more information on NAYA Camps and Seasonal Programming, contact Ashley Thirstrup, Youth Direct Services Manager at 503-288-8177 ext. 236 or ashleyt@nayapdx.org.

NAYA Family Center Dinner & Auction 2011

By David Roberts, Development Director

We hope that you will join NAYA Family Center in celebrating National Native American Heritage Month at our eighth annual dinner and auction gala event on Friday, November 11, 2011 at the Governor Hotel in Portland, Oregon from 5:30-9:00 pm.

When you attend, plan on enjoying a traditional Native American meal accompanied by a wonderful performance by internationally recognized Northwest Coastal Native artist David Boxley and the Git-Hoan dancers—which you won't want to miss! This year's live and silent auctions will include Native artwork from across the nation, fine antique baskets, original paintings, lithographs, hand crafted jewelry and one-of-a-kind experiences.

The theme of this year's event, "A New Generation of Success" allows us the opportunity to tell stories of the positive impact that the Native American Youth and Family Center has had in the lives of our community. For more information contact David Roberts at 503-288-8177 ext. 240 or davidr@nayapdx.org.

To purchase your seat, visit www.nayapdx.org and click on the NAYA Gala 2011 tab!

Thank you to our sponsors:

Illehee ("sustaining land")

Comcast

Portland Development Commission

Northwest Area Foundation

Tillicum ("relations")

E C Company

Legacy Health System

Kloshe nanitch ("to take care")

Capital Pacific Bank

Cooper Zietz Engineers, Inc.

Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker, LLP

Northwest Evaluation Association

Providence Health System

Quintana Galleries

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

Thank You to the Wells Fargo Volunteers!

By Jen Matheson,
Homeownership Program Specialist

A big thank you goes to the Wells Fargo volunteers who donated their time to add some nice finishing touches at NAYA Family Center's Yamhill House to prepare for an upcoming open house. In just a few hours the team of volunteers completed several projects, including painting the interior of the garage, cleaning gutters and windows, extensive weeding and landscaping. Located in southeast Portland, the three bedroom energy efficient house will be sold to a low-income first-time homebuyer through the Proud Ground and NAYA Family Center partnership.



Wells Fargo volunteers and the NAYA Construction Crew team up to paint, weed and clean.

Val Harjo, a Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Consultant specializing in Native American lending, was thrilled to see such a great home available for the community.

"What a great opportunity for a first-time homebuyer to purchase an affordable and energy efficient home. Wells Fargo is very dedicated to the efforts of NAYA Family Center, it was fun to help out and be a part of this team effort!"

The Yamhill House project was supported through funding from Portland Housing Bureau, Wells Fargo and Community Frameworks. For questions about Yamhill House, please contact Jen Matheson; Homeownership Program Specialist at 503-288-8177x297 or jenm@nayapdx.org.

Saying Goodbye...

By Donita Sue Fry, Portland Youth and Elders Council

On Tuesday, August 23, 2011 friends and family of Louis Pacheco respectfully gathered in the Siwash House of the Native American Youth and Family Center to honor the life and passing of our beloved elder.

Louis Pacheco (*Paiute Shoshone*) was a kind, soft spoken and respectful man. His impact on our community was significant and days after Louis Pacheco departed from this earth to complete his journey home; his spirit was continuing to have a positive affect on many of us who knew him.

Louis Pacheco spent many hours with us here at NAYA Family Center and unbeknownst to most of us gave not only his time, good words and companionship, but many financial contributions. When Louis passed away, his family chose to give his remaining assets to NAYA Family Center because they knew how much he loved what NAYA Family Center did for the Native people of this community.

In an effort to honor his memory, NAYA Family Center has chosen to create the Louis Pacheco Memorial Fund to assist Native families in the event of the loss of a relative in the Portland Metro area. Funds may be used for food for the memorial services, travel for families to return to their reservations for the funeral, funeral services of the mortuary or expenses necessary for traditional burial. Funds will be distributed on an as needed basis and in accordance with NAYA Family Center’s existing policies, with a limit of \$250 per family.

Louie was generous in spirit and gave freely from the goodness in his heart. It is characteristic that through a precious donation — from a man who was not wealthy by monetary means — that his giving will continue to help people in need and continue to touch lives by the way he lived.



If you would like to donate to the Louis Pacheco Memorial Fund to help families in need, send your donation to:

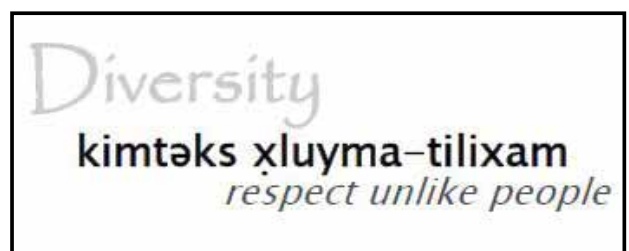
NAYA Family Center
 5135 NE Columbia Blvd
 Portland, OR 97218

Please make checks payable to NAYA Family Center .
 Be sure to note that your donation is for the Louis Pacheco Memorial Fund on your check or money order.

Exploring the Chinook Language

Pronunciation: kum'-tuks hul-o'-i-ma til'-i-kum

Meaning: kum'-tuks = to know; hul-o'-i-ma = different; til'-i-kum = people

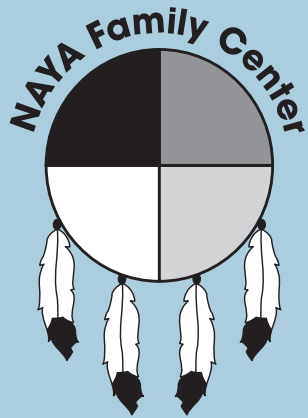




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*Enhancing the diverse strengths of our youth
and families in partnership with the community
through cultural identity and education.*

