



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
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President's Weekly Update 2.13.21

Wáasá iyatee, Gasing.uu dang Giidang!

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones doing well. Springtime is now 35 days away and the days are beginning to feel longer and brighter. I'm happy to share this week's update with you to give a glimpse into the work that Tlingit & Haida has going on. To stay up to date on our events and programs, be sure to follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ccthita.

I hope you have a great and safe week ahead. Please reach out if you have any questions.

2nd Annual Tlingit & Haida Youth Summit

Tlingit & Haida's second annual Youth Summit will be held virtually March 17-19, 2022. The summit will provide youth (ages 16-27) with opportunities to use their collective voice to influence change and learn how to engage in the tribal government process. The goal of the Youth Summit is to inspire pride in our culture and heritage and foster a network of sharing, discussion and community building. If you know a youth that would be interested in participating in the summit, encourage them to let their voice be heard and register today: www.tinyurl.com/THYouthSummit22.

The Youth Summit is also seeking speakers. If you are interesting in sharing information with our youth at the upcoming summit, please consider submitting a speaker proposal: www.surveymonkey.com/r/2022THyouthsummit_callforproposals.

Questions? Contact the Navigators program at 907.463.7752 or Navigators@ccthita-nsn.gov.

Letter to Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District

Last week I was made aware of an incident that occurred during the basketball games between Ketchikan High School and Metlakatla High School. I am certain you were all just as appalled as me to hear Ketchikan pep club students dressed in cowboy-themed attire as their team played against students from Metlakatla.

In response to this incident, I issued a letter to the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District interim superintendent and school board president urging them to take a critical look at their policies and leadership that allowed an incident like this to take place.

As I shared in my letter, a 'Cowboys vs. Indians' theme is intolerable and blatant racism. The very fact that no student, advisor, teacher, or coach had the foresight to see the issue in this, speaks to the desperate need for Alaska Native history education and greater racial equity in the Ketchikan school system.

This is a teachable moment for everyone. We must hold up our youth, but also hold them accountable. We must be the model first and continue to work towards critically needed education and healing.

Tlingit & Haida Issues Support for Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization

Tlingit & Haida has issued support for the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA) which was introduced to the U.S. Senate last week by Senator Lisa Murkowski and her three colleagues. The bill is finally moving forward after nearly a year since the U.S. House of Representatives passed the reauthorization of VAWA with Alaska specific provisions.

The legislation brought forward to the Senate is the result of strong bipartisan work and includes a tribal title that reflects years of input from tribal communities and work with tribal advocates to ensure Alaska tribes.

The proposed legislation is critical to ensuring Alaska Native and American Indian women, children and families are provided the safety and resources they need. Tlingit & Haida is encouraged the Senate is considering this legislation that will remove barriers and fully recognize the inherent authority of tribes to strengthen criminal justice response systems in our communities to protect our people.

Tlingit & Haida's Violence Against Women Task Force, co-chaired by 1st Vice President Catherine Edwards and Sitka Delegate Patricia Alexander, along with former Chief Justice and currently serving Seattle Delegate Michelle Demmert, have worked tirelessly advocating and providing testimony to bring us to this moment.

Please stand with Tlingit & Haida and contact your senators to support this vital legislation.