

TRIBAL MEMBER NEWS

Martin Selected as Gates Millennium Scholar

by Nick Sixkiller

Psyched, hard to believe and extremely grateful are some of the words used by an excited Savannah Martin, daughter of Siletz Tribal member Virgil Martin, between bites of a juicy roast beef sandwich at the Annual University of Oregon Pow-Wow.

She had learned a few days earlier that she had been chosen as a recipient of the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship. The scholarship program aims to help outstanding, financially needy minority students.

Savannah has demonstrated leadership potential, has always excelled academically and has risen to the top echelon of her graduating class by maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She has maintained a 4.0 GPA during her entire time at school and has received many awards (boxes full) for her academic accomplishments.

She also was accepted to all of the colleges and universities to which she applied, including UO, Williams College, Amherst, Davidson College, Reed College and Swarthmore, to name a few.

Savannah has chosen to attend Dartmouth College this fall, where she has dreamed of going since she was 13, partly because of its historical ties to American Indians.

Now in its 10th year, the Gates scholarship program pays for unmet needs or what students otherwise would have to pay themselves, relieving the pressure and worry of paying back loans or gaining employment to make ends meet while attending school. The scholarship also provides ongoing mentorship and academic support.

Savannah has dreams of becoming an astronaut and is relieved that the Gates scholarship will still be available to her during graduate school. A goal of the scholarship program is to increase minority representation in certain fields, such as computer science, education engineering, library science, mathematics, public health and the sciences.

Savannah's father, Virgil, is the coordinator of the Title VII Indian Education Program in Springfield, Ore.

Savannah has been very active in the Native community by helping her dad with many functions and attending the weekly get-together at the Many Nations Longhouse on the UO campus. Savannah also is an enrolled JOM student with the Eugene Area Office.

Listed at right are a few highlights of what Savannah has been up to during the last few years of her very active life:

Savannah Martin, recipient of a Gates Millennium Scholarship, which she will use at Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H.



- 2005-2008, Oregon Young Scholars Program in Eugene
- 2007, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) in San Francisco
- 2007, Student Conservation Association at the Bitterroot Selway in Idaho, 30 days of volunteer work repairing forest trails
- 2007, Leadership for a Diverse America at Princeton University for six weeks
- 2008, first place in the Springfield School District's Martin Luther King Essay Contest

Wisdom Teaches on Nez Perce Rez

by Tiffany Wisdom

This spring has been a full one of teaching experiences on Native culture.

I was first able to teach Grandpa Ben's Song to both fourth-grade classes at Clearwater Valley Elementary School (CVES) on the Nez Perce reservation. The song was introduced as a Chetco Coastal Song in the Lewis and Clark play in January.

In Idaho, fourth-grade social studies curriculum is geared toward learning about the Lewis and Clark expedition, Tribes of Idaho and Idaho history. I taught two girls how to dance to the song. The students were eager to learn this new song and dance in their play.

The kindergarten at CVES practiced for the musical *Three of a Kind* in March and April. I worked with the kindergarten-

ers on a tiny tot pow-wow song, *Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Pluto Too!*

The students learned about pow-wow culture, especially the drum. During their evening performance in April, the Nez Perce Tribal Council was their special guest. The Nez Perce Tribe funded all-day kindergarten in CVES and in Kamiah Public Schools.

I was invited by Jim Spencer, CVES councilor and Nez Perce Tribal member, to present to middle school students from Garfield Palouse School in Washington. These students learned about Nez Perce and pow-wow culture from him. They learned about the Siletz dress and history from me.

The teacher accompanying them on the trip stated that in the farmlands where the students live, there are no multi-

cultural activities or other groups from which to learn. The Nez Perce reservation is the closest place where they can learn about another culture.

I was invited to go to their public school and present to other classes on Siletz culture, American Indian history and pow-wow culture.

I knew I wanted to be a teacher one day. I like the idea of teaching art. In college my favorite practicum was art. I volunteered to teach art to first-graders in April and continued until school ended. This classroom of 24 students was an eye-opener for me on the challenges and blessing of public schools.

The non-profit UCCF (Upper Clearwater Community Foundation) sponsored the Vintage High Tea for Mother's Day.

The president of UCCF, my friend, asked if I could bring and organize the middle school cheerleaders as the servers.

The girls and I had a great time serving and learning about all the different teas and foods. The UCCF funds activities such as midnight basketball, ski trips and the \$25 tickets to *The Nutcracker* and the bus to Spokane, Wash. It supports many activities for the community.

The Girl Scouts at CVES earned badges for knowing their community and technology. As their teacher for these badges, I organized a schedule of events at the Heart of the Monster, a sacred site to the Nez Perce.

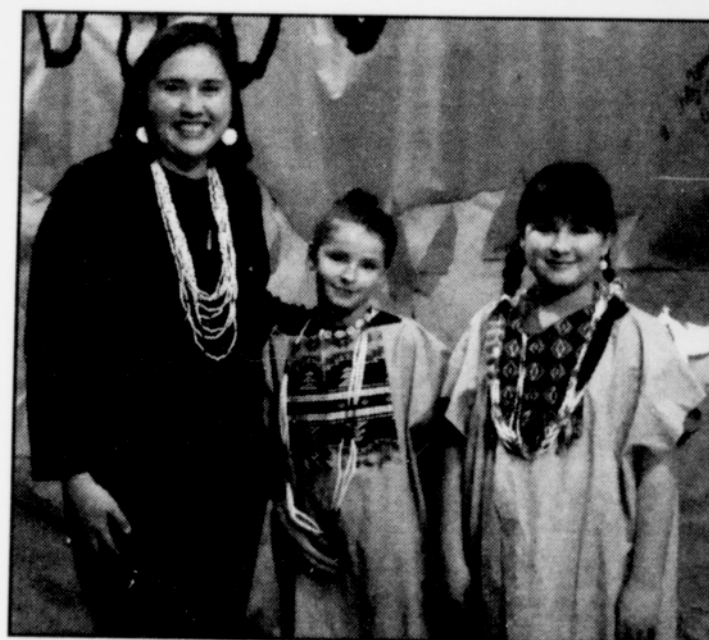
The day of events consisted of making necklaces, learning the Heart of the Monster story, playing traditional games and viewing traditional dress. Another day was spent on making a Pow-wowPoint of the trip, learning about Internet safety, searching for Nez Perce and Tribal sites and the Girl Scout resources online.

This summer I will be at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho, for an eight-week program (to finish three courses for this endorsement). At the end of the program I will take PRAXIS (national test) and the ICAL (state test) and I will be a certified reading specialist for kindergarten to 12th grade.

I am glad I can share my journeys with my family and friends. Thanks to all those who are supporting me in my endeavor as a teacher.



Tiffany Wisdom leads kindergarten students in a tiny tot pow-wow song at Clearwater Valley Elementary School



Tiffany Wisdom and the fourth-grade students who were taught how to dance to Grandpa Ben's Chetco Song.