

Transition to new location leads to discovery of drum, culture classes at school

Cheela (hello in Siletz Dee-ni language). My name is Tiffany Stuart and I am enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. My parents are Thomas and Marlene Stuart. I come from the Butler, Ben, Simmons and Rilatos families. I am also a descendant of Cherokee, Wasco and Grand Ronde tribes.

Currently I am a doctoral student with the University of Arizona online in educational leadership. I like to write and draw stories and curriculum about American Indian and specifically Siletz culture. I enjoy time with my two children and family, beading, making regalia, and going to pow-wows and Nadosh (Siletz feather dances).

This past year, moving to Siletz was a big transition for my children and me. Nayson Tooya, my son, started fifth grade at Siletz Valley School. I knew that in moving to any school, there would be a colonial settler foundation and framework for the school. With SVS, however, Nayson has been able to attend drum class daily and weekly Siletz culture lessons.

The American Indian cultural classes are the most valuable to myself and my family when selecting the school. In the fall I was able to volunteer twice a week with the drum class, sharing how back-up singers are part of the drum family.

In November the drum group traveled weekly to present American

Indian culture to schools and organizations. Throughout the year the drum group is asked to sing to honor the people, such as at the Siletz Elders Honor Day and the Oregon School Board Association Conference.

As I learn about the history of this class and experienced this class for many days throughout the school year, I have learned these lessons:

To create a drum class, think of SONG.

- S for “seek” your resources. If you consider starting a drum class in your school, you must look at your singers and drum keepers in your community.
- O is for “on.” You need to get on the agenda of the group you would like to partner with. These partners could include your Tribe, school board, city council or your school leaders/principal.
- N for “negotiate.” You need to negotiate with the local partner for release time for their employee to come teach or possibly negotiate funding for the drum teacher.
- G for “go.” Keep going. Be creative, especially when one idea fails.

Each drummer is learning the DRUM.

- D is for “decide.” Throughout the class, drummers are deciding on a song.



Courtesy photo

First Row: Dean Smith (kneeling) and Imani Hammett (holding drum stick)
Second Row: Marlene Stuart, Ryder Williams, Ron Butler Jr., Connor Mason, Vinny Hernandez, Santana Hutchinson and Tiffany Stuart
Third Row: Makai Anderson, Murray Belgard and Nayson Tooya Stuart

- R is for “rotate.” Drummers learn how to rotate taking leads and rotate through different songs.
- U is for “U.” U make sure U are okay. If a drummer is having a hard time, they can tell the teacher they can’t be at the drum that day.
- M is for “manage.” As a drummer, you manage and take care of your own drum, the space and even your own thoughts at the drum.

In June, the drum class attended the United National Indian Tribal

Youth (UNITY) conference in Portland, Ore., and shared their experiences with the drum class. The UNITY conference had 2,600 American Indian youth from across the nation. The drummers shared in four different workshops.

A big thank you to Kent Rilatos, Ron Butler Jr., Reggie Butler Jr., Theresa Smith, Logan Butler, Bo Johnson and Bella Christensen for all the work you put in with our drummers this year. I look forward to the changes and development of our new drum class next year at Siletz.

We ask. We listen.
We help them get support.

When a friend may be thinking about suicide, good relatives can help by saying, “I’m worried about you.”

Call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline or (800) 273-8255, or text **NATIVE** to 741741.
NativeAndStrong.org

We all make us all strong.

Health Committee
Two Current Vacancies
Terms Ending February 2025 and February 2026
Application Deadline is Sept. 11, 2024

Any Tribal member interested in serving on the Health Committee must fill out the following form and return it to the address below prior to close of business on Sept. 11, 2024.

Please mail your application to Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Attn: Executive Assistant to Tribal Council, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380-0549 or email celestal@ctsi.nsn.us.

Name: _____ Roll No.: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: Day _____ Evening _____

Appointment to the committee will be made at the Regular Tribal Council meeting in September.

Need Rental Housing?

The Siletz Tribal Housing Department encourages you to apply for the Low-Income Rental Program waiting list in Siletz (1-4 bedrooms) and Lincoln City (2-3 bedrooms – Neachesna Village).

Applications can be obtained at any Tribal area office (Eugene, Salem, Portland, Siletz) or online from the Tribal website – ctsi.nsn.us; follow links – Tribal Services-Housing-Low Rent Apartments & Home Ownership.

Questions? Call 800-922-1399, ext. 1322, or 541-444-8322; fax: 541-444- 8313

CTSI Jobs

Employment information is available at ctsi.nsn.us.

Note: “Open Until Filled” vacancies may close at any time. The Tribe’s Indian Preference policy will apply. Tribal government will not discriminate in selection because of race, creed, age, sex, color, national origin, physical handicap, marital status, politics, membership or non-membership in an employee organization.

CTSI constantly is looking for temporary employees to cover vacancy, vacations, maternity leave and extended sick leave. If you are looking for temporary work that can last from 2-12 weeks, please submit an application for the temp pool.