

## WHITMAN: CTUIR is interested in enhancing regional opportunities for tribal members to obtain higher education

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formally outlines how the school intends to develop "a robust, multi-faceted, mutually rewarding and beneficial working relationship with the CTUIR."

"We are so fortunate to be able to partner with the CTUIR," said Whitman Provost Alzada Tipton. "As the original residents of this region, their insights are invaluable. There is much to gain and learn from this partnership that will allow us to be a better neighbor and a more successful institute of higher education in this region."

Chuck Sams, interim deputy executive director for the tribes, said the CTUIR has similar memorandums of understanding with colleges across the Northwest, including the University of Oregon, University of Idaho, Oregon State University, Washington State University and Blue Mountain Community College.

But until now, the tribes had no such agreement with Whitman, even though the college is just 35 miles away from Mission on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

"There was no active recruitment from the college into our local community," Sams said.

The institutions share an uneasy history that dates back nearly two centuries. Whitman College is named after Christian missionaries Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, who were killed along with 11 others in 1847 by a party of Cayuse who suspected they were being poisoned under the Whitmans' medical care.

Dubbed the Whitman Massacre or Whitman Incident, the violence started the Cayuse War which lasted until the Treaty of 1855. Whitman College was founded as a seminary four years later, before transitioning to a four-year liberal arts school in 1882.

Sams said the relationship between the college and CTUIR had been "very limited" until just recently. About two years ago, Sams said a group of 15 Whitman students arrived on the reservation for a service project during spring break where they did community work, helped to organize a basketball tournament and learned about some of the tribes' culture.

"There was an exchange of education opportunities for them while they got their service project done," Sams said.



Photo contributed by Matt Banderas

**Gary Burke, right, chairman of the CTUIR Board of Trustees, shakes hands with Brad McMurchie, chairman of the Whitman College Board of Trustees, after signing a memorandum of understanding on May 19.**

**"I hope that when people gather on this site 50 or 60 years from now, we can all celebrate the accomplishments that have come since then."**

— Brad McMurchie, Whitman College board chairman,

Sams said the trip encouraged further discussions between the tribes and the college, which progressed into a memorandum of understanding.

"It was very refreshing," Sams said. "The administration was completely open to this discussion."

According to the memorandum, the CTUIR is interested in "enhancing opportunities for CTUIR members to obtain higher education in the region and to provide greater avenues for members to learn for themselves, and to educate others, about CTUIR language, history and culture."

At the memorandum signing, Kat Brigham, secretary of the CTUIR Board of Trustees, said she was pleased to see so many people on hand to celebrate the milestone.

"We have learned that, through collaboration and partnership, we can do a lot," Brigham said.

Provost Tipton said the memorandum will help keep the lines of communication between the school open and organized, giving students a greater understanding of the area and the Whitman legacy.

"I think there was a lot of good-

will and effort on both sides," said Tipton, who arrived at Whitman last summer.

Whitman President Kathleen Murray said in a statement that the memorandum is a natural extension of the college's mission to provide students with a well-rounded education in a multicultural world.

"I think this is a giant step forward in that relationship," Murray said.

As part of the memorandum, the college and CTUIR will provide each other with list of staff and faculty that may have an interest in collaborating on projects, and work with the CTUIR on developing courses with a focus on tribal history.

Brad McMurchie, Whitman College board chairman, said he is excited for what will come from the partnership.

"I hope that when people gather on this site 50 or 60 years from now, we can all celebrate the accomplishments that have come since then," McMurchie said.

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## VETERANS: 36,554 killed in action over the course of the Korean War

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work, which involves helping Umatilla County's 1,800 veterans access the services available to them.

Olson said her stepfather died from cancer after being exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange is an herbicide the Air Force used in Vietnam to deprive enemy guerrillas of cover and food, and clear away vegetation around military bases.

Olson's family has also been affected by the high number of post-9/11 veterans who have died from self-inflicted wounds, her own nephew having committed suicide after serving in the Middle East.

During Memorial Day, she thinks of the veterans with Alzheimer's or post-traumatic stress disorder who can't partake in the barbecues and celebrations.

"Not just Memorial Day, but any day," she said.

Another speaker at the event, Tom Tangney, also has loved ones to remember during Memorial Day.

Tangney, a Korean War veteran and a member of Pendleton Let'er Buck Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 922, said he recently traveled to Prineville, where his brother is buried. Clarence Tangney also fought in Korea and died during the Battle of Heartbreak Ridge.

Although it may not have the same level of cultural awareness of World War II or the Vietnam War, Tangney described the Korea as a "bloody war." There were 36,554 killed in action over the course of the war, or an average of 33 per day.

But Honoring Our Veterans Day wasn't always about what was lost, but also what was gained.

During a breakout session at the high school, Vietnam War veteran Christopher Viking said he originally joined the Marines after getting in trouble with the law.

After returning home from the war, Viking, who is Afri-

can-American, said he experienced protesters calling him a "rapist," "baby killer," and "nigger" because of his service.

"Those people didn't know me from Adam," he said.

Viking said their anger was misdirected at soldiers like him, and there were times he felt like he was used up and churned out.

He had his doubts about speaking at the high school, unsure if students would understand what he went through. But at the urging of his friends, he not only spoke, but came to the realization that speaking about his experiences would help him through the healing process.

The students were clearly moved by his speech, wiping away their tears and hugging him as they filed out of his classroom.

Viking said it "made my heart cry" to see the way veterans were honored at the event, which was back after an extensive 13-year hiatus.

Speeches from local veterans were accompanied by displays from the Oregon Army National Guard, which brought a rock-climbing wall and a Chinook helicopter.

In the afternoon, the gym hosted an honor assembly that included a reading of the names of the Umatilla County residents who died in action from World War I onward and a high school choir performance of "America the Beautiful."

Afterwards, the veterans walked from the gym to the commons as students and staff lined the walls, applauding and cheering them on.

Honoring Our Veterans Day ended when the National Guard Chinook took off from the freshman football field to return to the nearby armory.

As students and staff recorded the scene with the cell phone, the helicopter twirled through its ascent before disappearing over the horizon.

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