

Alvis Smith III

My name is Alvis Smith III. I am 38 years old, and work as project manager for the Warm Springs Housing Authority.

On Tribal Council I would look to tribal members for their input. There are a lot of good answers out there that are not being heard. I would try to have open ears and an open mind.

Growing up as a teenager I developed leadership skills that led me to Washington, D.C., BYU and other conferences. I have two years of general studies in college. I am a U.S. Army Veteran.

But most of all I was raised here on the reservation. I acquired a Journeyman License as a carpenter and several workshop certificates for job related trainings. I feel the most important qualification is the respect and pride I have for this Nation and the tribal people living here.

I think that lack of communication is due to the amount of issues we have here on the reservation, and how we tend to become overwhelming to our leaders. I do believe every voice has a right to be heard and it just as important as the next, but at the same time we need to come together and remember what is important to us as a nation, and set our personal conflicts aside to think and pursue short and long term goals as a one tribe, because segrega-



tion is a weakness which has overcome not only our tribe but also individual families.

I think all the problems evolving here are due to personal interest becoming a factor. How many individuals have pursued education and outside experience only to come home to be looked down upon for exposing the necessary changes needed to prosper, and then shut down and sent away because these ideas are a threat to individual status that has been a part of a falling nation due to an ongoing system that is not working for us as a whole.

We have a high unemployment rate and nothing to offer because every venture we seek we want high revenue. Let's pursue ventures that will feed our people and not just for wealth.

This is when never forgetting your past comes at hand. I grew up with a generation where sports and grades were priorities. I feel it started in the household but the tools were supplied by the tribe.

Self discipline, pride and teamwork were taught in the ring, on the mat, on the field and on the court. It is also taught in youth workshops and conferences. We need to address the lack of attention to these extra-curricular activities that keep our youth excelling, and see what we can offer all our kids, regardless of their talent.

In 1986 I was one of four students elected as a youth council, and its purpose was to report to Tribal Council on the necessities and needs we felt our youth needed. I feel this should happen again and on a monthly basis minimum.

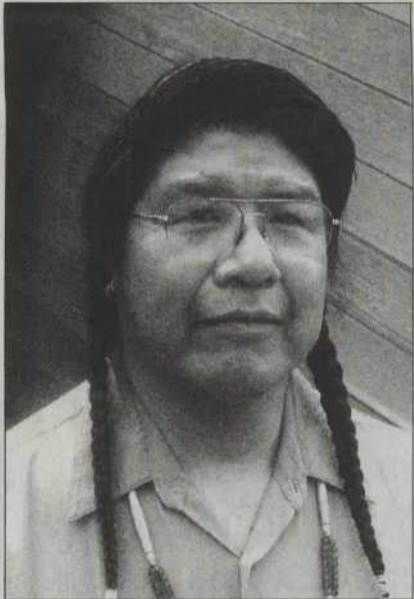
As a tournament director and founder (with wife) of the Lil' Springers HEART (Health, Education and Recreation Tourney), it has become obvious how to get these youths' attention, which is the first step to education.

I believe we are investing too much in pursuing convicts and not enough in educating people not to become one. The best way to get rid of a drug dealer is to take away their customer. Teach kids to say no. Invest more in courts, fields, stages, Boys & Girls Club, heritage and education.

I believe our weakness is segregation. I also believe in my people being our number one resource.

Alvis Smith III.

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