

Museum honors Native language revivalist

Yakama linguist Virginia Beavert has devoted much of her professional life to revitalizing the Indigenous languages of the Columbia River tribes, especially Ichishkeen, or Sahaptin.

“Why not speak your own language?” Ms. Beavert says.

“The Chinese speak their own language. The Japanese speak their own language. The Hindus. But it seems like English is just so overwhelming this place around the reservation.”

This month the Museum at Warm Springs hosted the Huckleberry Harvest, where the museum presented the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The honor this year goes to Dr. Beavert for her lifetime of work to preserve and breathe new life into the Native languages of the Northwest.

The museum presented the award at the Harvest, held at the High Desert Museum in Bend.

Also honored with the Twanat Award was Howard Arnett for his legal representation of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs on matters involving treaty rights, tribal sovereignty, tribal law development, government-to-government relations, and gaming. Howie has additional expertise in civil litigation and appellate practice.

Lifetime Achievement

Ms. Beavert has been the Washington State Indian Educator of the Year, and in 2004 was honored by the Indigenous Language

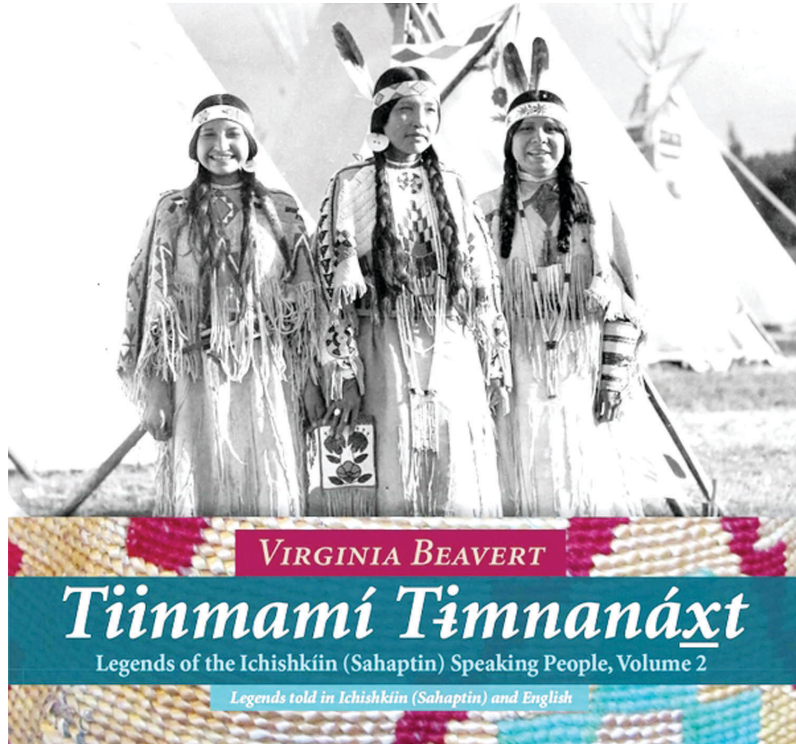


Institute for her lifetime of work on language revitalization.

She was a key planner of the Yakama exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian, and has served on numerous committees and planning councils related to the documentation and preservation of Native languages.

In 2004, Virginia was the recipient of an NEH Faculty Research Award for work on a Yakima Sahaptin Lexicography. She has received numerous fellowships, including awards from the Smithsonian Institute, Dartmouth College, and the Washington State Arts Commission.

She has written and published several articles about Yakima language and culture.



Virginia is the co-author of the Yakima Sahaptin Dictionary with Dr. Sharon Hargus of the University of Washington, and a grammar of Sahaptin with Joana Jansen of the University of Oregon.

She is a 2007 recipient of the Ken Hale Prize, awarded by the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas. And in 2008 she was received the Distinguished Service Award from the University of Oregon for her significant contribution to the cultural development of Oregon and society as a whole.

Virginia was awarded the University of Oregon Doctoral Research Fellowship, the highest honor for graduate study at UO.

She earned her Ph.D. in Linguistics in 2012. Her most recent book is *The Gift of Knowledge / Tinnamí Átawish Nob'inch'imamí: Reflections on Sahaptin Ways*.

The Confluence project partnered with the Museum at Warm Springs to present a new video interview with Virginia and Phillip Cash Cash (Cayuse) of the University of Arizona, a portion of which she spoke in Ichishkiin.

Thank you to museum executive director, and Confluence project board member Elizabeth Woody.

Virginia Beavert (top); and cover of a book (left) by Virginia, *Legends of the Ichishkeen Speaking People, vol. 2*.

Harvest raises \$105,000 for museum

More than 200 guests attended the Museum At Warm Springs Huckleberry Harvest Celebration and Honor Dinner.

The event this year raised \$105,000 for the Museum at Warm Springs. The funding came from dinner ticket sales, sponsorships, additional grants and gifts, and a silent auction.

“The proceeds make it possible for the museum to continue to share the Confederated Tribes’ culture, history and art,” said museum executive director Elizabeth Woody.

The Huckleberry Harvest and Honor Dinner give the guests the opportunity to be immersed in the beauty and culture of our tribes, Ms. Woody said.

“We share traditional foods, music and art, making this a unique event,” she said, “one that we look forward to celebrating year after year.”

This year’s guest speaker was Dr. Phillip Cash Cash, of the Nez Perce and Cayuse tribes.

A renowned linguist and scholar, Cash Cash spoke to the importance of indigenous language preservation in a presentation titled, *The Radical New Plateau Speaker*.

This year’s event included two honorees. Howard Arnett, tribal attorney, was honored with the museum’s prestigious Twanat Award.

Mr. Arnett has served the tribes for nearly four decades. His areas of representation include treaty rights, tribal sovereignty, Indian law development, government-to-government relations and gaming.

Mr. Arnett is also a longtime supporter of the Museum At Warm Springs.

Dr. Virginia Beavert of the Yakama Nation was honored with the Museum’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ms. Beavert is a linguist and scholar, and professor at the University of Oregon.

She is a highly respected teacher and fluent speaker of her language, Yakama Sahaptin. Beavert has worked throughout her life to teach

and preserve her Native language.

In August at the High Desert Museum, the Museum at Warm Springs and the Confluence Project recorded Mr. Cash Cash and Ms. Beavert in conversation in Ichishkiin and English.

Native filmmakers Woody Hunt (Modoc and Cherokee) and LaRonn Katchia of Warm Springs taped the three-hour storytelling and cultural presentation.

Thank you to the event’s major sponsors:

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Ken Smith, Karnopp Petersen attorneys, the University of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, Central Oregon Landwatch, Brooks Resources, Empire Construction, ASI Wealth Management, Oxford Suites and Inns, Pahlisch Homes,

Portland General Electric and Warm Springs Power and Water Enterprise, the Gordon Family, Sunriver Resort, the City of Bend, Miller Lumber, and Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP.

Warm Springs Chief Delvis Heath, Warm Springs Tribal Council Chairman Raymond Tsumpti, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Tribal Council Chairman Delores Pigsley and other Siletz Tribal Council members were among the dignitaries who attended this year’s Harvest and Honor Dinner.

Citizens of the Coquille Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Modoc, Nez Perce Tribe, Tohono O’odham Nation and Yakama Nation also joined the evening’s celebration.



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