

Dennis Worden Set To Work With Oregon Congressman David Wu

By Angie Sears, Tribal Mentee

Dennis Worden, Hatfield Fellow for 2006-2007 has been assigned to work in Congressman David Wu's office in Washington D.C.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Spirit Mountain Community Fund established the Mark O. Hatfield Fellowship as a tribute to Senator Hatfield. The Fellowship acknowledges his accomplishments as the Governor of Oregon and United States Senator on behalf of the Grand Ronde Tribe. It is also used as a means to provide opportunity and growth for young Native Americans.

Worden, an enrolled member of the Coeur D'Alene Tribe, is the eighth Native American to serve as a Hatfield Fellow since the program was established in 1998.

The fellowship will provide "hands on" experience for Worden, as he gains a better understanding of the legislative process by working side-by-side with congressional staff members in Congressman Wu's office.

Worden will begin his fellowship this November as he attends a month-long orientation seminar conducted by the American Political Science Association (APSA), at the John Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

The orientation seminar will give Worden and other Congressional fellowship recipients an opportunity to gain a basic understanding of Congress and the political process, as well as an opportunity to interact with legislators, congressional

staff, journalists, lobbyists, political scientists, policy experts/subject specialists, current and former members of Congress, and former Congressional Fellows.

Once Worden completes the orientation seminar he will head to Washington for a nine-month fellowship, where he will begin learning the "Congressional ropes." "I'm excited and honored that I was chosen for the fellowship," Worden said. "I look forward to representing and working for Oregon Indian Country."

Worden, a recent graduate of the University of Oregon, plans to pursue a career of practicing Indian Law, and wants to make a difference in Indian Country upon completion of the fellowship.

"I've always had an interest in politics, but it was amazing to find out how much influence the Federal Government had on the lives of Indian people," Worden said. "This helped me realize the importance of changing Indian Law, and improving the lives of Tribal people."

He feels that the fellowship will give him a better understanding of the Federal-Tribal political process, which will enable him to work effectively with the leaders of Indian Country, and use his experiences to make a positive contribution to Oregon Indian Country.

"The fellowship program is important because it provides us with Native Americans who know how to make changes at a congressional level," said Angie Blackwell, Grand Ronde Tribal Council Vice Chair, and member of the Fellowship Se-



Photo by Siobhan Taylor

Hatfield Fellow for 2006-2007 Dennis Worden (l) and Tribal Council Vice Chair and member of the Fellowship Selection Committee Angie Blackwell at the 2006 Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) Conference in Lincoln City.

lection Committee. "We are seeding Indian Country with knowledgeable people."

Julie Tippens, Congressman Wu's Chief of Staff, and member of the Fellowship Selection Committee, said the quality of applicants who applied this year was outstanding, and that she felt Worden would be a great fit in their office.

"The fellowship itself has proven to serve its intended purpose," Tippens said. "Many of the Fellows have remained involved in the political process, and have gone on to be part of the Tribal leadership."

Worden has received a great deal of support from his family, University of Oregon staff, and the Coeur D'Alene and Umatilla Tribes. "I owe much of my success to these people who supported me,"

Worden said.

"I was raised to honor the people who have come before me and who have helped me become the person I am," said Worden. "The Hatfield Fellowship provides a great opportunity for me to contribute to Indian Country, and allows me to honor the people who have supported me."

For more information about the Hatfield Fellowship and updates from Dennis Worden, please contact the Spirit Mountain Community Fund at communityfund@grandronde.org

Keep watching for an up-coming series entitled, "Where are they now?" The series will tell the personal stories of the past Hatfield Fellows. We will provide a new story every month. ■

GRAND RONDE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE!



It's getting to be that time of year again. The days are getting shorter, the nights are getting colder and the holiday season is quickly approaching. The staff here at the Grand Ronde Health and Wellness Center would like you to help us take part in a food drive. Let's show those families who are less fortunate the giving spirit of the season! Please help us by bringing in your donations!

Donations of canned and/or non-perishable food items will be accepted at the Grand Ronde Medical Clinic from October 23 to December 18, 2006. (All food collected will be given to local community food banks.)