

Youth Ed hires team of employees

Matthew Mosley Recreation Coordinator



Matthew Mosley, 31, started as Youth Ed Recreation coordinator in mid-May.

The 6-foot, 6-inch athlete from Dallas studied health education at Linfield College in McMinnville and will complete his bachelor's degree on the job. The Tribe's Youth Ed programs will fulfill the internship requirements for his degree, he said.

That degree has been eight years coming, he said. Married to a Native of Hawaii, Iwalani, the couple moved to Maui, where she is from, following completion of his Linfield coursework. He enjoyed an early career working with the non-profit Maui Youth and Family Services, where he oversaw a program serving up to 16 youths, ages 13 to 17.

"I liked working with the kids," he said. "A lot of them came in in really bad shape, so it was good to see the impact we had on kids just starting out in life." It was a particularly good experience, he said, because "it was a collaborative effort. Everybody really cared about them."

During his Hawaii years, he also coached Pop Warner football for eighth-graders and was junior varsity girls' basketball coach at schools serving students with Native Hawaiian heritage.

"The biggest thing for me," he said, "was just being around the whole culture. It was something I'd never experienced. It's centered around family with history and tradition. People told me I wouldn't be welcomed the way I was."

Iwalani earned her nursing degree and the couple returned to Dallas last February for job opportunities. Their children are Isaiah, 5, and Jace, 3.

"My personal philosophy is," he said, "they don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Guidance means nothing unless you care, and kids know the difference."

Tahnae Baker College Intern



Tahnae (T-nay) Baker, 19, came on as a college intern for the Youth Education program in late May. Enrolled Siletz, she has faced an uphill battle "from the day I was born," she said, living in 19 foster homes along the way.

She was only about 8 years old when potential foster parents "started judging me," that older children are harder to work with, and, she said, "I just gave up."

"I didn't want to do good in school and didn't want to make friends anymore because I didn't know how long I would be at any location."

Today, she is the first in her family to have graduated high school and intends to be the first to graduate college. She works three jobs in addition to her internship and a full class load at Western Oregon University. Nearly finished with her sophomore year, she is studying criminal justice to become a probation officer.

"I just love working with kids," she said, "anything I can do to help better them."

The change came, she said, when she had given up hope, when a foster family "put me in a lot of study groups. They said, 'You can change your life around. You don't have to be like your family.'"

"From that day, I would wake up and think, 'What can I do to better myself, and make things better for other kids in need and in foster care?' because myself, I always feel that youth have a second opportunity whether they made the bad choices, or the family."

In her last foster placement, when she was 14, she met her father, Steve Holmes of Dallas, a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe, for the first time and lived with him.

"I felt like I finally belonged," she said. "I always knew I was Tribal, but the state never wanted the Tribe to step in," and until then, she never had a Tribal placement before.

"I think it's really beautiful, the culture," she said. "From all this, my goal is to be a youth probation officer to help youth get that second chance."

In both high school and college, she said, she found people and resources that helped her through.

"And I had faith that I could do better." As for hobbies, she said, "I love sports cars." She has a '96 Eclipse. Her boyfriend has an '89 Prelude that they've fixed up.

"I enjoy going to the drag races," she said, and she also plays softball — pitcher and first base. "I have a lot of hobbies."

Now, she said, "I'm showing my family that we have something better than drugs and gangs and violence."

Jacintha (Jay) Stanley Youth Recreation Assistant



A member of the Navajo Tribe, Jacintha (Jay) Stanley, 27, started work as Youth Recreation assistant in February.

Raised in Arizona, Stanley moved to Oregon in 2009 when she was accepted into the Sapsik'walá Project in the graduate program at the University of Oregon.

In 2010, she earned a master's degree studying Curriculum for teaching Social Studies in secondary schools.

She returned to the Navajos for a year to teach at Monument High School in Kayenta, Ariz., a public school that is about 90 percent Navajo, she said.

She returned to Oregon, she said, "because I wanted to work for another Tribe, to see what other Tribes do. I want to continue my education either in Indian law or Native American Youth Education."

Her first undertaking for the Tribe is the community survey (see page 10).

"There will be a hard copy and a Web presence for the community survey, and we'll be passing it out at Family Night Out in June and also at the upcoming Youth Ed barbecue."

Stanley is a lifelong runner, starting when she was a child. "My dad said, 'I could run before I could walk,' because he would put me up on his shoulders when he ran. It's a big part of my life, and it's part of our cultural beliefs: getting up early, greeting the day; it lets our ancestors and the gods know you are still alive and capable of doing things."

She sees value in the exchange of cultures. "I like to bring culture, especially my own culture, into the programs. It helps the kids see a lot of what they might be missing in their own cultures. It's also interchangeable: they do Canoe Journey stuff and that helps me understand the traditions and the values that I learned from my Tribe. I see how much the kids here embrace where they've come from; I commend them for that and it makes my job a little easier."

"It's been a great, welcoming community," she said.

Tiffany Mercier Secretary



Tiffany Mercier, 28, was named secretary for the Youth Education Department in May. She is Tribal spouse of Colby Mercier and a member of the New Mexico Tribe Ohkay Owingeh.

"It's smaller than Grand Ronde, but just as proud," she said.

Mercier grew up in Georgia, visited her Tribal homelands a few times and moved to Grand Ronde in March 2011 when she began working at Spirit Mountain Casino's buffet, where many Tribal members and Elders knew her as "Smiley."

A year later, she sought the job in Youth Ed "to spend more time with my family. I wanted to be close to my children as they grow," she said, and added, "I am very grateful for all that the Tribe has done for me and my family. I feel that by doing my best to be a positive role model in the lives of our Tribal youth, I am able to make a small return contribution to the community."

Her daughter, Mikayla, 4, is enrolled in the Lilo Chinuk Immersion class, and her son, Ian, almost 2, is enrolled in the Early Head Start program. Both are members of the Grand Ronde Tribe.

"My goal," she says, "has always been to work in education." She would like to be both history teacher and archaeologist — "a little bit of culture and a little bit of education," she said.

"This job will be a real big learning experience that I'm very excited about," she said.

Chinuk Family Language Retreat scheduled

A Chinuk Family Language Retreat will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, June 28-29, in the Tribal gym.

The retreat will be a fun, family language-learning experience in which participants will learn some of the language and traditions of the Grand Ronde Tribe. Previous Chinuk Wawa language experience is not required. The event will require that the Lilo preschool class close so that all Tribal language employees can participate. In addition, children must be accompanied by an adult.

Dinner and lunch will be provided both days.

For more information, contact Esther Stewart at 503-879-1443 or Ali Holsclaw at 503-879-1490. ■

Recycle Center moved

The Recycle Center has been moved temporarily to 9675 Grand Ronde Road. For more information, contact Tribal Facilities Manager Michael J. Larsen at 503-879-2407. ■