

## Sol Seed wins Eugene's Next Big Thing event



Contributed photo

Reggae-rock band Sol Seed, which features Tribal member Kenny Sequoia Lewis, third from left, on lead guitar, won Eugene's Next Big Thing competition at the Lane County Fair on Saturday, Aug. 24.

By Dean Rhodes

*Smoke Signals editor*

Sol Seed, the Eugene reggae-rock fusion band that features Tribal member Kenny Sequoia Lewis on lead guitar, won Eugene's Next Big Thing competition at the Lane County Fair on Saturday, Aug. 24.

The contest began in April with 75 bands competing. In a three-step competition, Sol Seed survived a fan-based vote to become one of the top 16 bands to perform live on stage at the Lane County Fair, where a panel of judges narrowed down the semi-finalists to the final two bands.

The finalists performed in "The Crescendo Show" and Sol Seed was the last band standing.

"They are really a hard-working

group," said Ann Lewis, Kenny's mother and the Tribe's Commercial Real Estate manager.

The win is just another award for Sol Seed. The band was named the Eugene WOW Hall Awards' "Best New Act" in 2011 and "Favorite Local Band" in 2012 and was named Eugene's Best Band 2012-13 by Eugene Weekly readers.

Sol Seed has performed at the Oregon Country Fair, Northwest World Reggae Festival and Jefferson State Hemp Expo, as well as at Spirit Mountain Casino.

Other members of Sol Seed include Michael Lennon, Michael Sorensen, Benny Pezzano, Sky Guasco and Graeme Pletscher.

For more information on the band, visit [www.solseedmusic.com](http://www.solseedmusic.com). ■

## 'She is exactly what we need'

CAMPBELL continued  
from front page

most seven years leading the Tribal Education Department and start with the state on Sept. 16.

"It was a unanimous decision by the five-member interview panel," said David Bautista, assistant superintendent of the Department of Education's Office of Education Equity. "She is a well-known person who has done an outstanding job (at Grand Ronde). She is exactly what we need. We need a vision for the state and she has that. She will be a strong representative for Native Americans at the Legislature."

Oregon employed a full-time Indian education specialist in the 1980s, but the position was reduced to quarter-time because of budget cuts and it was eliminated in the early 1990s.

The proposal to return an Indian education specialist position has been around since at least 2003 as part of the Indian Education Plan, which was developed by Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes as a way to work with their respective school districts to improve Native American student achievement.

But returning the position to the Department of Education's budget ran into a major roadblock after the recession hit in 2008 and getting new employees approved in a stressed state budget was almost impossible.

The Grand Ronde Tribe has long pushed for the position's return, mentioning it at almost every meeting Tribal Council held over the last six years with former Superintendent of Public Instruction Susan Castillo.

With state revenues rebounding along with the economy, the position was included in the Department of Education's 2013-15 budget. The job pays between \$61,176 and \$89,496.

Ironically, Campbell testified in support of the position on March 12.

"This position is essential to the success of our youth and will help Oregon become a model for other states," Campbell told members of the House Ways and Means



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

April Campbell has been hired as the Indian education specialist for the Oregon Department of Education. She will be leaving her position as the Tribe's Education Department manager on Sept. 9.

Committee during state budget hearings. "The Indian education specialist position will be devoted to Indian education issues and will collaboratively work with Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes to develop initiatives that will preserve and foster the teaching of indigenous languages, create and implement accurate and culturally responsive curriculum and history, and develop strategies for the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students."

"Our Native American students and parents need more support to achieve academic success," the Department of Education recruitment ad for the position said. "Students are in need of additional educational, physical and cultural activities that pertain to their native language, culture and history. Additionally, teachers, administrators and other staff can benefit from cultural competency training to explore their understanding of the unique cultural attributes of the communities they serve, including the nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon."

Campbell has a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership from George Fox University in Newberg and a master's degree in business administration from Corban Uni-

versity in Salem.

She will work with Tribes, educators and school districts to "improve the educational outcomes for Oregon's Native American students."

Campbell said one of her first goals is to update the state plan for Indian education.

"It's out there, but it needs some TLC ... updating," Campbell said. "It's just a really exciting time to transition to the Education Department at the state. There's a lot of energy in terms of change and doing things differently, and truly focusing on student outcomes."

Campbell said she also will work to establish relationships with the nine federally recognized Tribes and be a facilitator to determine how state educational resources can complement those of the respective nine Tribes.

"What I mean by building relationships is trying to identify what exactly is the need out there, what's working and what's not working, and how we can duplicate what's working in those communities so that Native American students can be successful," she said.

According to the Department of Education, graduation rates for Native American students in Oregon were 51.7 percent, 50.3 percent and

51.2 percent from 2005-06 through 2007-08, respectively.

In addition, there is a disproportionately higher dropout rate for Native American students, who make up 2 percent of the high school student population in the state but represent 4.1 percent of dropouts.

"I see myself as facilitator," Campbell said. "My current background has been with the nine Tribes because that is what I'm most familiar with, but this position will work with all Native populations, including the Oregon Indian Education Association and the Oregon Indian Coalition of Post-Secondary Education, and other Tribal communities throughout the state."

"April exemplifies the balance of being a great manager of people and keeping her department running in a fine-tuned fashion while still moving our young people constantly forward with their education," said Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. "She will be missed and very hard to replace. I see her doing great things on behalf of Tribes on the state level."

"I could not be prouder of April's achievements," said Tribal Council member June Sherer. "She has been a very valuable asset as a Tribal member and an employee to our Tribe and our community. While I hate to see her go, I know that the road she walks in her chosen path will continue to be an example for all of our Grand Ronde people. April is truly one in a million and I know that she will serve all of the Indian community in the most positive and beneficial manner."

"As April's friend, I could not be prouder of her," said Tribal Council member Jon A. George. "She has been a true educational leader for her Tribe and membership. I am honored to know that the Department of Education has chosen the right leader for the right job. I am of mixed emotions to see her leave, but can only be happy to see her in a greater capacity to serve Native people regarding their educational needs. This is a great day for Native peoples who strive to a higher standard of education." ■