

Flier stresses education for her success

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

It started at her grandmother's backyard swimming pool in south-east Portland, says Meagan Flier (pronounced Fleeer), 24, the Tribe's latest success story to benefit from Tribal education funding.

That pool is where her love of water, and then the whole outdoors, began.

Flier accounts for her success in a couple of ways.

"My mom, who prepared me for college," she says. "She gave me a lot of support. She said, 'Get good grades in elementary school so you can get into a good high school.' And right through college. I always strive to go above and beyond. Having those expectations was a really good driving force.

"Also, sports really help kids by teaching discipline and teamwork, exercising patience. I did soccer, softball, swimming and roller skating. Three sports a season; no big deal. I would've done more if I could have."

She also points to College Horizons, a company that makes an appearance at different universities to help Native students get through the college application processes and exposes high school students to "a ton of different colleges. Tribal members can get into that."

"Aspirations to go to college really helped me," she adds.

Today, after college at Stanford University and graduate school at the University of Miami, she is the Natural Resources Department's Environmental Resources specialist.

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"I've always kind of strived to live in a way that I can be a role model for others," she says. "Grand Ronde helped put me through a lot of my schooling, so I always wanted to find a way to give back to the Tribe."

She also says that this work is a good fit for her. "I can use my education and my passion for water and the environment to help the Tribe with its commitment to the environment."

She says she aims to be a good steward of Tribal land and water resources.

In her new position that she started on June 2, she is responsible for many things, from ocean planning to designating wetlands on Tribal property.

She also is looking at the Tribal position on climate change to see if it needs to be updated. "To assess our vulnerability and see if there is more we can do to adapt," she says.

Natural Resources Manager Michael Wilson says that one of the big things Flier has been hired to do is environmental compliance.

"To help the Tribe to take control of its environmental resources," Wilson says, "to ensure that the Tribe will be a leader on environmental resources issues."

Flier brings to the job a 2012 bachelor's degree in Earth Systems and a 2013 master's in Professional Science in Marine Affairs and Policy.

This schooling, she says, pointed her to environmental problems and

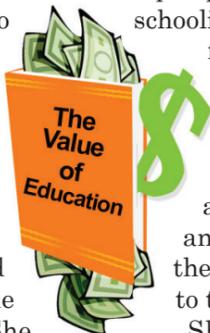


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Meagan Flier is the Tribe's new Environmental Resources specialist in the Natural Resources Department.

a way to develop solutions.

"I knew I loved the water," she says, "and I love math and science in general."

The Natural Resources position is essentially her first job, but she also has had internships, including one at the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries and at Oregon Health & Science University, doing a lot of work with ocean and estuary planning.

"They are working to bring Natives in," she says. The program is not an obvious choice for a medical center like OHSU, but it exists there because ocean health is related to human health. Water is the basis of human life.

She also interned with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Miami. Her goal in Grand Ronde is to

help the Tribe accomplish goals already set out, to work toward being the best environmental steward the Tribe can be.

"I want to be the best representative for the Tribe that I can be, and act as a bridge between scientists and other government entities," she says.

When Flier was younger, she remembers, she used to get education awards at the Tribe for good grades and educational success.

After her travels in education and sports, she returned to the Tribe, all these years later, by joining Chinuk Wawa classes at the Portland office. It was November 2013, and it led to this year's job, a good match for both and a story worth telling again and again for those still on the way ■

CTGR Tribal Youth Prevention, Youth Education and Cultural Education Programs

Family Tutoring Night

(tilixam munk-ye?lan pus kəmtəks pulak^hli)

For Who:
Native American JR/HS School Students; includes Home school & their Families

Where:
CTGR Youth Education Building

Dates/Days/Time:
♦ Tuesdays 5pm - 7pm
♦ October 28 - December 16
♦ (Not on Nov 11 due to Veterans Holiday)

Dinner:
Provided for those attending the tutoring and culture activities only.

Cost: FREE

Family Tutoring Night is an opportunity to build academic skills, receive homework support and culture activities in a safe and healthy environment

Contact Cristina Lara at 503-879-2040 or cristina.lara@grandronde.org

Thank you for respecting Grand Ronde's tribal community and our culture by not displaying gang affiliation or by bringing drugs, alcohol or weapons to this event.

ATTENTION TRIBAL MEMBERS

COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL EVENT BOARD VACANCIES

The following Committees and Special Event Boards have vacant positions.

Social Services Committee	1 Vacancy
Cultural Trust Board	1 Vacancy
Powwow SEB	2 Vacancies
Culture Committee	1 Vacancy
Fish & Wildlife Committee	1 Vacancy

Please send completed applications to Stacia Martin, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.

Youth Education Presents:

Portland State University & OHSU College Visit Trip



For: Native Youth 6-12 grade
When: December 15, 2014
Departure/Arrival: Leave YED 7:30am - Arrive back at YED approximately 5pm

Youth Education will be taking a trip to explore PSU and OHSU colleges for campus tours. Learn all what is offered at both of these colleges, meet students, explore the campus and more.

Lunch will be provided



Limited Openings: There are limited openings, pick up your permission slip at Youth Education to secure your spot!

For more information: Contact Tiffany Mercier @503-879-2101