

# Tribe signs memorandum of understanding with UofO

By Dean Rhodes

*Smoke Signals editor*

EUGENE – Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno, along with chairs of the other eight federally recognized Tribes in the state, signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Oregon on Friday, May 5, that will ensure a government-to-government consultation process between the university and Tribes.

Tribal Council members Brenda Tuomi, Denise Harvey and Chris Mercier also attended the event.

The agreement formalizes a government-to-government consultation process between the university and Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes.

"The MOU is very symbolic in how the university feels about Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes and their sovereignty," said Jason Younker, assistant vice president and adviser to the university president for Sovereignty and Government-to-Government Relations and a Coquille Tribal member. "The importance is that all the Tribes collectively came together with the university and said we are going to work together on making higher education not only a priority, but also a good experience for Native students who



Photos courtesy of Christopher Trotchie/Oregon Daily Emerald

**Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno speaks to the audience inside the Many Nations Longhouse on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene on Friday, May 5, during a ceremony to sign a memorandum of understanding between the nine federally recognized Tribes in the state and the university. Leno is flanked, from left, by Klamath Tribal Chair Don Gentry, University of Oregon President Michael Shill, Cow Creek Chairman Dan Courtney and Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Chief Warren Brainard.**

come to the University of Oregon. It really lays the foundation for future collaboration."

"I think the importance of it was that, number one, it was a task just to get all nine Tribes there and Tribal leadership there," Leno said. "But I believe it shows the importance of education for all Tribes no matter what Tribe you are from or what state you are from."

"I think that basically every Tribe out there believes that education is a way to better the lives of their

younger people and this is just one of the pieces that will help ensure that. Plus, it is something that all nine Tribes in the state of Oregon have worked on a long time or thought about is we want our history and our culture taught in Oregon. This will be a way to do that."

About 160 University of Oregon students self-identify as Native American and a recent survey found that about half of those are enrolled in federally recognized Tribes.

The memorandum of understanding is another step in the university's collaboration with Oregon Tribes. In the late 1990s, then-university President Dave Frohnmayer established the Native American Advisory Council that includes representatives of Oregon's federally recognized Tribes who meet twice a year to advise the university on issues affecting Native students.

University leaders also created the "Residency by Aboriginal Rights Program," which grants in-state tuition to members of 43 Tribes with historic relationships to

the territory that became Oregon, regardless of where the student lives now.

The school began flying the flags of Oregon's nine Tribes outside the Student Union and as of 2014 students can minor in Native American Studies.

In 2005, the Tribes helped create and pay for the Many Nations Longhouse, where the MOU ceremonial signing occurred. A Native residential community will open this fall in a new dorm next to the longhouse.

The university's School of Law also offers programs featuring Indian law history and policy and the College of Education helps prepare Native teachers in the Sapsik'wala Teacher Education Program.

Younker said he will be framing copies of the memorandum and sending them to the Tribes in about a month.

Tribal Council approved the memorandum of understanding during its April 19 meeting. ■



**Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno receives a pat on the back from Jason Younker, assistant vice president and adviser to the president for Sovereignty and Government-to-Government Relations, while Klamath Tribal Chairman Don Gentry looks on during a signing of a memorandum of understanding between the University of Oregon and the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon on Friday, May 5, inside the Many Nations Longhouse on the Eugene campus.**

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The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is exploring the idea of developing a grocery store in Grand Ronde and is seeking to retain a firm to perform a feasibility study that is a thorough and comprehensive assessment, which may be used later to inform a decision as to whether a grocery store is feasible to site, fund, construct and operate in Grand Ronde and, if so, under what configuration or combination of configurations.

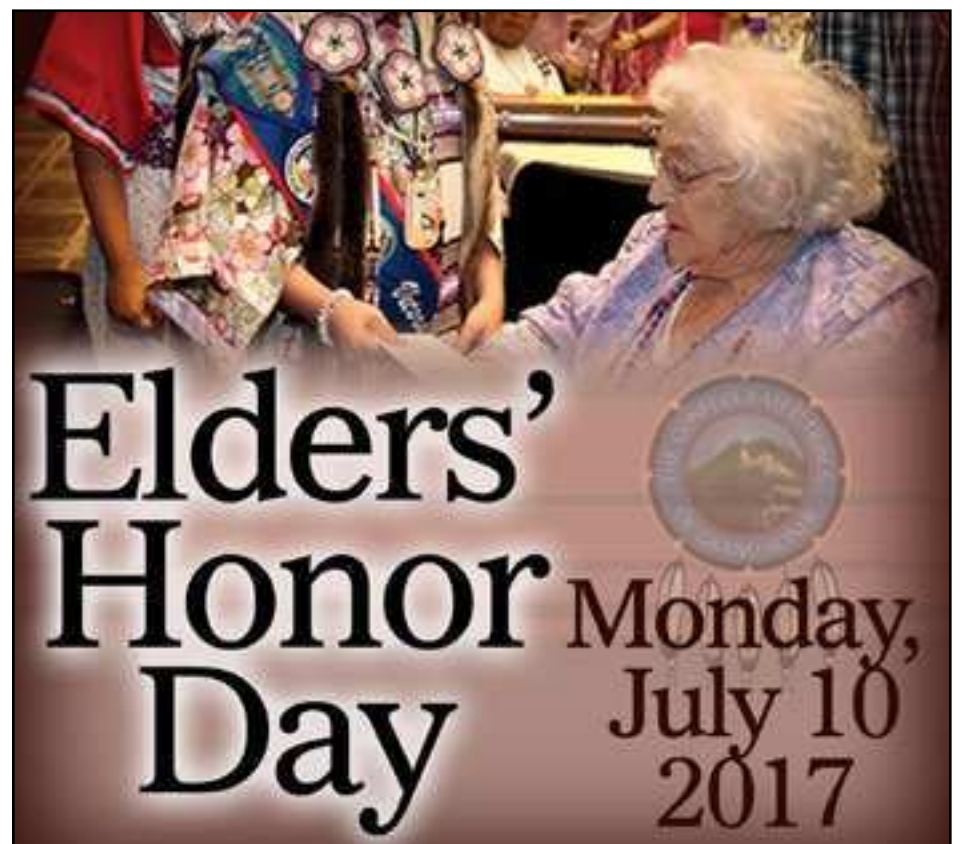
Proposals are due by 5 p.m. Thursday, May 18, 2017. The complete scope of work and additional information, including document submittal procedures and due dates, may be found within the RFP. Electronic copies of the RFP are available by e-mailing Jan Reibach, Tribal Lands Department manager, at [Jan.Reibach@GrandRonde.org](mailto:Jan.Reibach@GrandRonde.org) or calling 503-879-2394.

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### Request for Proposals Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Solar Development Feasibility Study

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