

## General Council briefed on Community Fund

By Danielle Harrison

Smoke Signals staff writer

Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Michael Cherry briefed Tribal members on highlights of the fund's 2019 annual report during the Sunday, Dec. 6, General Council meeting held via the Zoom video conferencing application.

During the meeting, Cherry shared more about the Community Fund, its mission, and various goals and objectives.

"We really want to honor our sovereignty and our culture as a Community Fund, and those generations that come after us," Cherry said.

The Community Fund was founded in 1997 as the philanthropic arm of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. In accordance with the Tribe's gaming compact with the state of Oregon, the fund awards 6 percent of net income from Spirit Mountain Casino in grants. It is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees.

The number of grants awarded in the past 23 years is 2,908 for a total of \$84.97 million. Grants have been distributed to nonprofit organizations in 11 northwest Oregon counties for the purposes of supporting education, health, arts and culture, environment, historic preservation, public safety and problem gaming, and to the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon under a Tribal Grants program.

Community Fund programs also include the Hatfield Fellowship, Junior Hatfield Fellowship, Yelan Lima Helping Hands and a new youth grant making program called Tenes Palach-Kilapay. Implementation of that program was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're hopeful we'll be able to start that in 2021," Cherry said.

Community Fund goals are to increase knowledge and understanding of Tribal culture, history and values, contribute to the well-being and success of the Tribe through responsible Community Fund management, be positive ambassadors of the fund, build and strengthen new and existing relationships with community partners, and strengthen the fund in Oregon as a key partner in Tribal philanthropy.

"Our main objectives are community awareness, engagement, operating efficiently and training to make sure we are doing the work we set out to do," Cherry said.

Accomplishments in 2019 included:

- Hosting eight grant writing workshops;
- Four "meet the funder" events;
- Two Tribal funder panels and four Hatfield presentations;
- Conducting 28 site visits;
- Creation of two youth programs;
- New Community Fund display at Spirit Mountain Casino;
- Four check presentations with 180 attendees representing 115 organizations;
- And adding two new priority grant funding areas to the health category.

"We usually do a lot of outreach, but this year we had to keep it all virtual because of the pandemic," Cherry said. "We conducted 12 grant writing online workshops. It's very important to help keep these connections."

Cherry said she is excited to have the display wall installed at the casino.

"It was in the works for a number of years," Cherry said. "I'm happy we can showcase the work and our response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Following her presentation, Cherry took two questions from Tribal attendees.

Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy noted that it is a "great thing" the Tribe is in a position to help during uncertain times.

"We have been able to help many people in the state of Oregon," she said.

In other action, it was announced that the next General Council meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 3, via Zoom with a program report from the Education Department.

Since the annual Tribal Council Christmas party was canceled due to the pandemic, an online raffle drawing was held instead. Winners included Eric Bernando, Charles Haller, Angella Schultz, Debi Anderson and Joanna Brisbois, \$50; and Dave Leno and Toby Ambrose, \$100.

Elaine Robertson won a Pendleton blanket donated by the Community Fund, and Tiny Gibbons, Val Alexander and Anthony Quenelle won necklaces.

The meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government's website at [www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org) and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos.

The 2019 Community Fund annual report can be viewed at [www.thecommunityfund.com/media/1307/2019-smcf-annual-report-final\\_digital.pdf](http://www.thecommunityfund.com/media/1307/2019-smcf-annual-report-final_digital.pdf). ■

## Campbell hired as first Indian Education director

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

SALEM – Grand Ronde Tribal member and Dallas resident April Campbell has been appointed as Oregon's first director of the Office of Indian Education, according to Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Colt Gill.



April Campbell

tive American curriculum be taught in classrooms across Oregon.

"It is an honor to accept the Oregon Department of Education Office of

Indian Education director position," Campbell said. "I want to thank my Tribe for supporting me through my educational journey and granting me the chance to serve as the Education manager from 2006-13. I believe these opportunities prepared me for the position I have today.

"In reflecting, when I started at ODE in 2013, we only had one full-time staff member dedicated to supporting our government-to-government relationships with Tribes in Oregon and American Indian students, youth and families. Now, ODE has created the Office of Indian Education with four dedicated staff members supporting this work. Although graduation rates are not the signal indicator of student success, we have seen unprecedented graduation rates for our American Indian/Alaska Native students and youth, growing 11 percent in the past five years. I appreciate ODE's continued commitment to growing this office and expanding resources to support our AI/AN students." ■

Gill said that Campbell will lead the state Department of Education's Indian Education team and continue to focus on the state's commitment to honor Tribal sovereignty, build authentic relationships and serve to elevate Native American voices in the state.

"As a first-generation high school graduate, April has a passion for learning and helping others on their educational journey," Gill said.

As adviser to the director, Campbell led efforts to revise the American Indian/Alaska Native Student Success Plan, as well as efforts to implement Senate Bill 13, which mandates Na-

## WIC visits Community Center monthly

Pregnant? Breastfeeding? Does your family include a child under the age of 5? If so, you may qualify for the Women, Infants and Children program.

With WIC, people can receive answers to nutritional questions and access fruits and vegetables, whole grains, eggs, milk, cheese, juice, cereal and more.

A WIC representative visits the Tribal Community Center on the third Tuesday of the month, which will be Dec. 15.

Walk-ins are welcome between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 503-879-2034. ■

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**12/17/20 at 6pm**

Join local food experts online for an open discussion on all things food related in the West Valley Area.

Invited Speakers

OSU Extension Services

OSU-ES Food Hero

OSU-ES 4H

OSU- ES Master Gardeners

OSU-ES Master Food Preservers

CTGR Youth Empowerment & Prevention

CTGR NRD - Native Plant Propagation Program

**ISKAM**  
Mok'Mok-Haws

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