



Watchlist: 'How the U.S. stole thousands of Native American children'

By Kamiah Koch

Smoke Signals social media/digital journalist

The history of residential schools in North America is once again in headlines. The Associated Press reported on Thursday, June 24, that 751 unmarked graves were found at a former Native American residential school in Saskatchewan, Canada.

For this edition's Native American Watchlist video, we chose the Vox video "How the U.S. stole thousands of Native American children." This video published in 2019 is 14 minutes long and narrates the history of stolen children from Native lands. Contrary to what some may think, the story of stolen children did not end when residential schools closed.

Instead, Vox's video follows two eras: The boarding school era and the adoption era.

The story starts by introducing the goals of the American government to exterminate the Indigenous people and take their land. The video explains schools were started to assimilate the vulnerable Native children and what life was like for them. They cite mental, physical and sexual abuse, forced manual labor, neglect, starvation and what we are still uncovering today, death.

"By stripping the children of their Native American identities," the narrator says in the video, "the U.S. government had found a way to disconnect them from their lands and that was part of the U.S. strategy."

By the time the video is halfway through, the narrator has brought us up to the 1960s. Around this time schools were closing, but another assimilation tactic was taking shape.

The adoption era started with Native children being represented as "forgotten children." Adoption was cheaper than running federal boarding schools so it was encouraged for Native children to be removed from their families and placed with non-Native families.

Vox interviews Native people who explain their painful experience being placed in new non-Native families.

"Children were taken and believed – like I believed for a long time – that there was something wrong with me, versus something wrong with the system," says Jane Harstad of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

This video says the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1977 was passed and required states to finally provide services to prevent separating Indigenous families and keep children within extended family. It was a move to protect Native families, yet almost 50 years later, it's still under attack.

To watch the full video, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGq-WRyBCHhw or visit the *Smoke Signals* YouTube channel and see our playlist "Watchlist."

Tribal Council approves grant applications for Portland MAT clinic

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

The Tribe has yet to open its second medication-assisted treatment clinic for opioid dependency in east Portland, but Tribal Council approved two grant applications during its Wednesday, June 30, meeting that will, if received, help staff the site.

Tribal Council approved a State Opioid Response grant application to the Oregon Health Authority that would bring the Tribe \$200,000 that would help fund a peer support counselor at the Portland clinic.

It also approved a Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant & Substance Abuse grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice that would bring the Tribe \$600,000 over three years that also would help fund staff at the Portland clinic, as well as possibly a school resource officer within the Willamina School District.

The Tribe opened its first medication-assisted treatment center, the Great Circle Recovery clinic, in Salem in March at 1011 Commercial St. N.E. The Tribe purchased a former dental office off Southeast 82nd Avenue in Portland in July 2020 for the Portland clinic.

"We are still working through the permitting and construction process, so we don't have a definite timeframe for opening (the Portland clinic)," Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Approved an application to receive \$333,654 over a three-year period from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to fund the Tribe's 477 employment and training program within the Social Services

Department and to consolidate general assistance, Native employment works and job training programs into a single, coordinated plan;

- Approved a Tribal Transportation funding agreement with the Department of the Interior that will bring the Tribe \$1.4 million in funding during fiscal year 2021;
- Approved the enrollment of 13 people into the Tribe because they meet the requirements outlined in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance;
- And approved the long-term management plan developed by Portland General Electric for the Harborton site on the Willamette River because it will provide significant fish and wildlife benefits for species affected by hazardous chemicals released into Portland Harbor.

Also included in the June 30 Tribal Council packet was an approved authorization to proceed that will permit the Cultural Resources Department to transfer \$10,000 to Oregon State University Press to support publishing of the second edition of "Indians Fire and the Land in the Pacific Northwest" edited by Robert Boyd.

In addition, Tribal Council Vice Chair Chris Mercier announced that the Tribe's popular Small Loan Program will receive more funding in the near future to allow loans to up to 300 more Tribal members. The initial budget was expended in about two months, he said.

To watch the entire meeting, visit the Tribal government's website at www.grandronde.org and click on the Government tab and then Videos. ■

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Sheridan, SW Polk and West Valley Fire Districts are recruiting volunteers for fire response, emergency medical response, and support functions. Please see our websites for volunteer applications and instructions.

sheridanfd.org – swpolkfd.org – westvalleyfd.org

"New Program"
Opening July 1, 2021

Are you moving?
Do you need help with First, Last, and Deposit?

This program has limited funding and will be a first come, first served program.

Contact Social Services for more information
(503) 879-2034 or (800) 422-0232

You can also email us at
ssdinfo@grandronde.org

