

University of Oregon begins scholars program

EUGENE – The University of Oregon started its Home Flight Scholars Program on Monday, Oct. 10, that is immediately available to currently enrolled eligible undergraduate students and was built in consultation with its Native American Advisory Council.

Through a combination of federal, state and institutional grants, the Home Flight Scholars Program will cover full tuition and fee costs for American Indian/Alaska Native residents, create a new academic advisor position, enhance mentorship opportunities and develop a culture-rich program for new students to help them start successful academic careers.

The program became available immediately to an estimated 150 to 175 self-identified American Indian/Alaska Native undergraduate students who are Oregon residents.

Under the program, once state and federal options are exhausted, the University of Oregon will waive remaining tuition and fees for Oregon residents who are enrolled citizens of any federally recognized Tribe.

“The university is dedicated to the success of Oregon’s American Indian/Alaska Native students,” said Interim President Patrick Phillips. “The Home Flight Scholars Program tackles the unique challenges these students face and prepares them to graduate with an education and the experience that empowers them to return home and make a positive impact in their communities and for their families.”

“With Home Flight, we can provide academic and social guidance that will complement Tribal educational values,” said Jason Younker, assistant vice president and advisor to the president on sovereignty and government-to-government relations. “We hope that each graduate will consider returning to their home Reservation and become future stewards and leaders within their communities.” ■

No in-person voting for BIA constitutional elections

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successful was not answered before press time. Tribal members had until Oct. 7 to challenge the list.

This will be the eighth time since 1999 that Tribal voters will be asked to amend the Constitution. Only two proposals out of those previous seven votes that included 11 suggested amendments received the required two-thirds majority to alter the Tribe’s Constitution.

The proposed constitutional amendment would amend Article V, Section 5 to limit involuntary loss of membership to fraud and dual enrollment, and remove the current language regarding loss of membership for failure to meet enrollment criteria.

The proposal comes in reaction to the divisive disenrollment proceedings that occurred in 2015 during which Tribal members were provisionally disenrolled. Eventually, the Tribal Court of Appeals ruled that the Tribal members who were identified for disenrollment because they allegedly did not meet enrollment criteria were to remain in the Tribe because the government had waited too long to start proceedings against them.

Unlike regular Tribal Council elections, a constitutional amendment election is supervised by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which required Tribal members to register separately to vote. At least 30 percent of those who registered to vote must cast a ballot – 258 of the 858 registered voters – for the results to count and 66.7 percent of those voting must approve the amendment before it can change the Constitution.

Registered voters for constitutional elections

- November 2022: 858
- March 2019: 1,293
- July 2016: 1,546
- March 2015: 1,091
- June 2012: 1,108
- November 2011: About 1,400
- February 2008: 1,491
- July 1999: More than 1,049

In March 2015, Tribal voters were asked to remove the Bureau of Indian Affairs from supervising Grand Ronde constitutional amendment elections, but the proposal was overwhelmingly rejected with 62.4 percent wanting to retain federal oversight.

A voter list was posted on the Governance Center doors on Wednesday, Oct. 4. Ballots were scheduled to be mailed out no later than Oct. 10 and must be returned by Nov. 2. There is no in-person voting for a BIA constitutional election.

Tribal Council Chief of Staff Stacia Hernandez said there would be four hybrid in-person/Zoom educational meetings with the first one held Thursday, Oct. 13, at Portland State University’s Native American Student & Community Center. Future sessions will be held in Tribal Council Chambers in Grand Ronde at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 18; in Salem at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, at the Salem Public Library, 585 Liberty St. S.E.; and in Tribal Council Chambers in Grand Ronde at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26.

For more information, visit the Tribal government’s website at www.grandronde.org or contact Hernandez at stacia.martin@grandronde.org. ■

Drop box installed

The Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department, 9655 Grand Ronde Road, now has a medication drop box located in the front lobby.

Lobby hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The drop box is for any prescribed or over-the-counter medication. If the containers are too large to fit in the drop box, please repackage them in a zip-lock plastic bag. Tribal Police employees cannot handle the medications so the person dropping them off must repackage them.

Needles and liquids are not allowed in the drop box.

Tribal Police suggest mixing liquid medications with cat litter or coffee grounds and then throwing them away with the household trash.

For more information, call 503-879-1821. ■

Health Authority issues lamprey consumption advisory

SALEM – The Oregon Health Authority issued recommendations on the amount of lamprey people should eat from the Columbia River and its Oregon tributaries on Wednesday, Oct. 5.

Fish tissue data from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fishing Commission found PCBs at levels of concern in lamprey for the general population and PCBs and mercury for vulnerable populations, such as children under 6, people who are or may become pregnant and nursing mothers.

Eating too many fish contaminated with PCBs or mercury can cause negative health effects, including damage to organs, the nervous system and the brain.

Because lamprey are consumed mainly by Tribal members in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, Tribal members are also considered a vulnerable population, especially people with thyroid or immune system problems.

The levels of PCBs and mercury were similar among all three rivers tested, which leads scientists to suspect the contaminants came from the lampreys’ time in the Pacific Ocean.

“As Oregon’s largest consumers of lamprey, this consumption advisory will impact Tribal people most of all,” said Fish Commission Executive Director Aja DeCouteau. “We must all work together to make limiting consumption a temporary solution because the Tribes believe that the long-term solution to this problem isn’t keeping people from eating contaminated fish ... it’s keeping fish from being contaminated in the first place.”

The advisory recommends people in the general population eat four servings of lamprey per month and those in vulnerable populations only eat two. A meal is about the size and thickness of child’s hand or an ounce for every 20 pounds of body weight. ■

LAMPREY CONSUMPTION ADVISORY



Oregon Health Authority has issued a Consumption Advisory for Pacific lamprey collected in the **Columbia River and its tributaries in Oregon.**

OHA recommends people to limit consumption of lamprey (eels) to:

2 SERVINGS PER MONTH

4 SERVINGS PER MONTH



Children under 6



Those who are pregnant or who may become pregnant



If nursing a baby



People with thyroid or immune system problems



Children 6+ and teens



Adults

OHA sampled Pacific lamprey from the rivers listed above and found **PCBs and mercury** (both can impair brain development and immune system function, especially in developing fetuses, babies, and children). The levels were similar among all three rivers, which leads scientists to suspect the contaminants came from the lamprey’s time in the ocean.

Cooking and Serving Lamprey



Preparation methods that allow fats to drop off the meat such as **smoking, drying, or grilling** can reduce the PCB concentration levels. The oils and fats in the fish are where PCBs accumulate.

An **adult serving** is 8-oz, which is about one of the pieces in the photo.

A **child serving** is half that (4-oz).

Babies, children, people with thyroid or immune system problems, and those who are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or are nursing should take extra efforts to follow this advisory. The health effects on developing fetuses, babies, and small children of eating contaminated fish can include lifelong learning problems and cancer.

This advisory recommends **limiting** lamprey consumption, **not removing it from your diet.** Fish (including lamprey) are a healthy food source and rich in nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s provide protection from heart disease and are an important brain food for you, your children, and your unborn child.

