



Watchlist: ‘Welcome to Native American Heritage Month 2021’

(Editor’s note: It is estimated that there are approximately 149 billion videos on YouTube, and the number continues to grow. Grand Ronde Tribal member and Social Media/Digital Journalist Kamiah Koch sifts through those myriad videos twice a month to recommend a worthwhile Indigenous video to watch. Follow her bimonthly recommendations and enjoy!)

By Kamiah Koch

Social media/digital journalist

To honor Native American Heritage Month in 2021, the Salem-Keizer School District posted a video to its YouTube channel with a Grand Ronde focus.

Salem-Keizer School District Superintendent Christy Perry and Native Education Program Associate Shelby Maerz begin the video by introducing what Native American Heritage Month is in front of Grand Ronde’s Chachalu Museum.

“This month we are honoring the unique heritage and culture of the Native American community,” Perry says. “Our district serves more than 1,800 students who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native, and they represent more than 65 Tribes.”

Perry shares that the school district has a Native American Education Program that supports almost 700 families with learning resources.

The video then switches to Grand Ronde Tribal member Seq’hiya Simmons sharing a land acknowledgment.

“Land acknowledgments are a way to resist erasure of Indigenous people and the land that we all live and learn on,” Simmons begins.

Simmon’s father, Grand Ronde Tribal member Kevin Simmons, also shares a blessing in Chinuk Wawa and in English.

“The importance of a blessing – the importance of starting out this way – is it provides us with an opportunity to align our hearts, our minds and our spirits in the true value of Indigenous education,” Kevin Simmons says.

Toward the end of the video, more Grand Ronde Tribal members join to sing a song as a way to welcome the school district, its employees and its students on to ancestral Tribal lands.

You can watch the entire video for yourself at www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAAPjRdjgSk or find it linked in the Watchlist playlist on the *Smoke Signals* YouTube channel. ■

White House slates Tribal Nations Summit

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Biden White House will hold its second Tribal Nations Summit on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 at the Department of the Interior.

The event will build on the 2021 summit and the progress made to strengthen nation-to-nation relationships and invest record levels of resources to Tribal communities, the White House said.

The summit will feature new administration announcements and efforts to implement key policy initiatives supporting Tribal communities. It also provides an opportunity for Tribal leaders to engage directly with officials in the highest levels of the administration.

Started by the Obama administration, the Tribal Nations Summit was not held during the four years of the Trump administration. ■

‘We don’t have to do it all alone. We were never meant to.’
–Brene Brown

iLAUNCH presents

Mental Health Texts!

On Fridays you will receive a message about mental health, a social emotional tip or a simple quote or message of encouragement.

Text JOIN to
(971) 318-3459

Veterans, do you want to file for a service-connected disability?
This is all you need (the 3 legged-stool):

To file a successful claim for service-connection

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