

# *Yooyoolah*

**ONE WHO CALLS**



**COWLITZ TRIBAL NEWS**  
**FALL 2022**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> EDITION**

# COWLITZ TRIBAL COUNCIL COUNCIL MEMBERS

The office held and year of term ending are listed below each name. All terms expire at the end of June in the year noted.

## General Council Chair

Patty Kinswa-Gaiser, 2024

## General Council Vice-Chair

Greg Hitchcock, 2023

## General Council Treasurer

Celine Cloquet, 2023

## General Council Secretary

Whitney Mosback, 2024

## Tribal Council Chair

Steve Barnett, 2024

## Tribal Council Vice-Chair

Kimberly Appelt, 2023

## Tribal Council Secretary

William (Bill) Erickson, 2024

## Tribal Council at Large Representative

Robin Torner, 2023

Cheryl Bell, 2025

## Tribal Council Members

Suzanne Donaldson, 2024

Rachael Streitberger, 2024

Timi Marie Russin, 2024

Justice Rhodes, 2024

Rod Van Mechelen, 2023

Cassandra Powell, 2023

Maverick Ryan, 2025

Debra Avila, 2023

Cassandra Sellards-Reck, 2025

Kris Kitz, 2025

Vanessa Robertson, 2025

Larry Kestner, 2025

Kris Dillehay, 2023

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Cover photo by Cassandra Sellards-Reck

## SUBMIT YOUR NEWS TO YOYOOLAH COWLITZ TRIBAL NEWS

Send us your articles, art, business info, photographs and events for our upcoming edition. Submissions must contain the following to be published:

### ARTICLES

Word or similar format  
Less than 500 words  
Title of the article  
Author credits  
Email  
Phone number  
Pictures info

### QUESTIONS?

E: [News@cowlitz.org](mailto:News@cowlitz.org)  
P: 1-877-Cowlitz

We are always accepting submissions. Thank you for the many submissions we received for this edition. We appreciate your time and hard work spent on your articles.

- Yooyoolah Editorial Team

### PHOTOS / IMAGES

High-resolution original  
No embedded pictures  
People, places, etc. clearly named  
Numbered by preference  
Photo credits  
Persons and description  
*Articles may be edited at the discretion of the editorial team and will become the property of the Cowlitz Tribe.*

### DISCLAIMER

This publication does not reflect opinions of editorial staff and should not contain any defamatory, malicious or libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal organizations, administration or the Cowlitz Indian Tribe as a whole.

### 3RD EDITION EDITORIAL TEAM

Patty Kinswa-Gaiser	Lori Goodwin
David Doucette	Racquel Shaffer
Whitney Mosback	Suzanne Donaldson
Shaina Okert	Jill Smith
Tiffini Johnson	Jenee Redecker
	Crystal Leigh

## 2023 TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

9 AM, Virtual & In Person

ilani

Bill Erickson, Tribal Council Secretary: [WErickson@tc.cowlitz.org](mailto:WErickson@tc.cowlitz.org)

JAN 7	FEB 4	MAR 4	APR 1	MAY 6	JUN 2
JUL 8	AUG 5	SEP 9	OCT 14	NOV 4	DEC 2

## GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING DATES



# LETTER FROM GENERAL COUNCIL CHAIRWOMAN

Patty Kinswa-Gaiser

**Nákʷs** (hello),

While it is from a place of sadness, I hope each one of you know how honored I am to be addressing our General Membership as your first Chairwoman. As I am sure you can imagine, I would never have chosen to be in this position as it came to be, but I can promise and assure you all that I will do my very best to work for the good of our Tribe. My term expires in 2024, and until then I will be a strong advocate for doing the right thing and protecting all our members. There are different leadership styles, as you all know — he was a whirlwind; I am more of a breeze. I like to research, listen and then offer input. I believe all Tribal Council members need to read the oath often and adhere to it.

With the passing of our former Chairman so recent in our minds, I want you all to know that he left a very clear path of what his visions were for the Tribe. We are looking forward to following that path for the betterment of every tribal member.

I am Taidnapaum, Upper Cowlitz, from the Ike-Kinswa family. I was born in Morton, Washington, and still live along the Cowlitz River near Toledo, with my husband, Fred, a Muckleshoot Elder. I am the proud mother of two, Suzanne Donaldson, also a Tribal Council member, and Michael Donaldson, who lives with his family in Lyons, Oregon. I have three granddaughters, two grandsons, five great-grandsons and one great-granddaughter.

## **RECENT CHANGES/UPDATES:**

### **ilani Hotel:**

The hotel continues to get closer and closer to completion. I am proud to be a part of the Culture Corridor group, which is tasked with helping continue the “Former’s” vision for our corridor within the hotel. I very much look forward to seeing it through to completion. The hotel itself is scheduled to be completed by mid to late April of next year.

### **Fee to Trust:**

As part of its determination to work toward the betterment of our members, the Tribe has acquired significant properties near the reservation. Those properties are currently in “fee status,” which is the way most property is owned. We are working on having those fee properties converted into “trust status,” which is the way that Indian lands are most often owned. Trust status means that the federal government owns the property as a trustee, and the Tribe owns the land as a beneficiary of that trust. Lands in trust status are not taxable and, like the reservation, are primarily under the Tribe’s and the federal government’s

jurisdiction instead of under state, county or city jurisdiction. The enlargement of our trust lands expands the geographic sovereignty of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and provides a greater area in which to practice self-government.

To accomplish the fee-to-trust transfers, the Tribe has retained the law firm Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, known just as Schwabe (pronounced shwa-be). Schwabe has a team of five lawyers dedicated to fee-to-trust transfers, including two of the most experienced Indian land law attorneys in the country, Sarah Lawson and Jeff Keohane. The Schwabe team is preparing applications right now to have some of our fee status lands put into trust status and expects to file them over the next few months.

### **Housing:**

On January 8, 2022, Tribal Council approved moving the Tribe’s Housing Department under the Tribe’s umbrella, instead of leaving the department as a stand-alone authority.

The beginning of June, the new CIT (Cowlitz Indian Tribe) Housing Department welcomed our new director, Jenée Burnett. She comes to us with a great deal of experience from working within her own Tribe’s housing. She is a Chehalis Tribe member. Please join us in welcoming Jenée!

### **Health and Human Services:**

Michael Watkins joined us a few months ago as our Health and Human Services Executive Director. We look forward to new, innovative things from the Department of Health!

### **Elections:**

In our June elections, the following people were voted to Tribal Council: Cheryl Bell, Maverick Ryan, Cassandra Sellards Reck, Kristopher Kitz, Larry Kestner and Vanessa Robertson. We are all looking forward to working together to continue making your lives better.

In closing, I would like to let you know that my door is always open. I welcome communication from Tribal members and want to make sure you can always reach me. I invite you to share your ideas, as well as your concerns and compliments. I look forward to continuing to serve the Tribe and its members, moving us along the path toward positive changes and growth that will benefit you all.

I send you my very best wishes and hope each of you are safe and healthy.

Blessings to you all,  
Patty Kinswa-Gaiser, Chairwoman  
pkinswagaiser@cowlitz.org, (360) 577-8140 ext. 2230

# UPDATES

## OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL SECRETARY

By General Council Secretary Whitney Mosback



Enjoying our weekly email newsletters? Approximately 2,700 members receive emails through this official form of connection from the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. These engaging communications pieces comprise announcements, program resources, board and committee news, cultural events, Tribal Council meeting agendas and summaries, as well as Teams meeting links and in-person meeting logistics.

The past General Council meeting in June 2022 was a somber and abbreviated agenda after the recent passing of Chairman Dave Barnett. Commemorations were made to pay tribute to his honorable legacy, and members were offered the opportunity to share memories. During the meeting, first reading of the Constitutional revisions were shared. Changes include Article IV Tribal Council, which will reduce the number of Tribal Council members from 22 to 10. General Council will be presented with the changes in November. Additionally, at the meeting, membership learned of positive trends in our treasury and received a sneak peak of the new Cowlitz website to be unveiled this year. Next, the ilani team reported significant reductions in debt and interest rates from 2021. Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Commission reported two openings on the commission board. It was explained how staff and the board work collectively to protect tribal assets at ilani.

This November, General Council will begin at 10 a.m. Planning is underway! The goal is to best assist you during the meeting and to inform all present of Cowlitz news. Please reach out and let me know of special accommodations or recommendations for improvement.

We have volunteer opportunities at the General Council meeting. If you are interested, we would be pleased to receive your help with greeting and signing in members and guests, assisting with vendor booths, and walking microphones to members. In addition, vendors, artists and Cowlitz program representatives are welcome to reserve a booth. Veterans, it would be an honor to have your participation during Color Guard.

Looking forward to connecting with you by text, social media, video and in person. Happy to serve you!

**Warm Regards,**  
Whitney S. Mosback,  
General Council Secretary

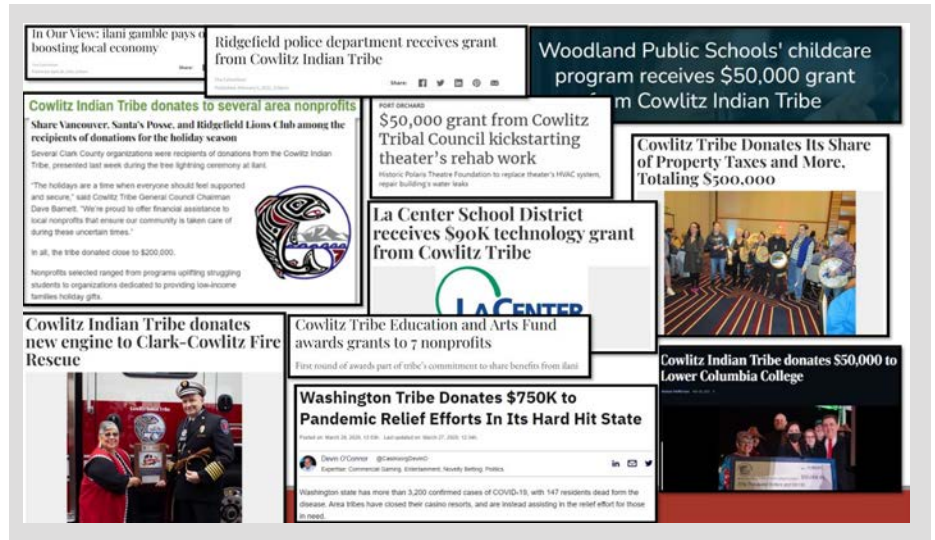
# COWLITZ TRIBAL FOUNDATION

By Timi Marie Russin, Tribal Foundation Manager

As the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, we have been given the incredible opportunity to serve our communities through the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation and its two funds, serving both Clark County and the state of Washington. Grants are funded by a portion of gaming revenue annually, which is applied to each fund.

The foundation, both Statewide Fund Board and Clark County Fund Board, desire to develop partnerships that allow us to grow together; we seek opportunities to create a significant impact in communities and honor people doing good work. Charitable funds support food shelters, organizations addressing houselessness, and funding assistance so everyone can access cultural experiences, the arts and education without barriers.

The foundation, both Statewide Fund Board and Clark County Fund Board, desire to develop partnerships that allow us to grow together; we seek opportunities to create a significant impact in communities and honor people doing good work.

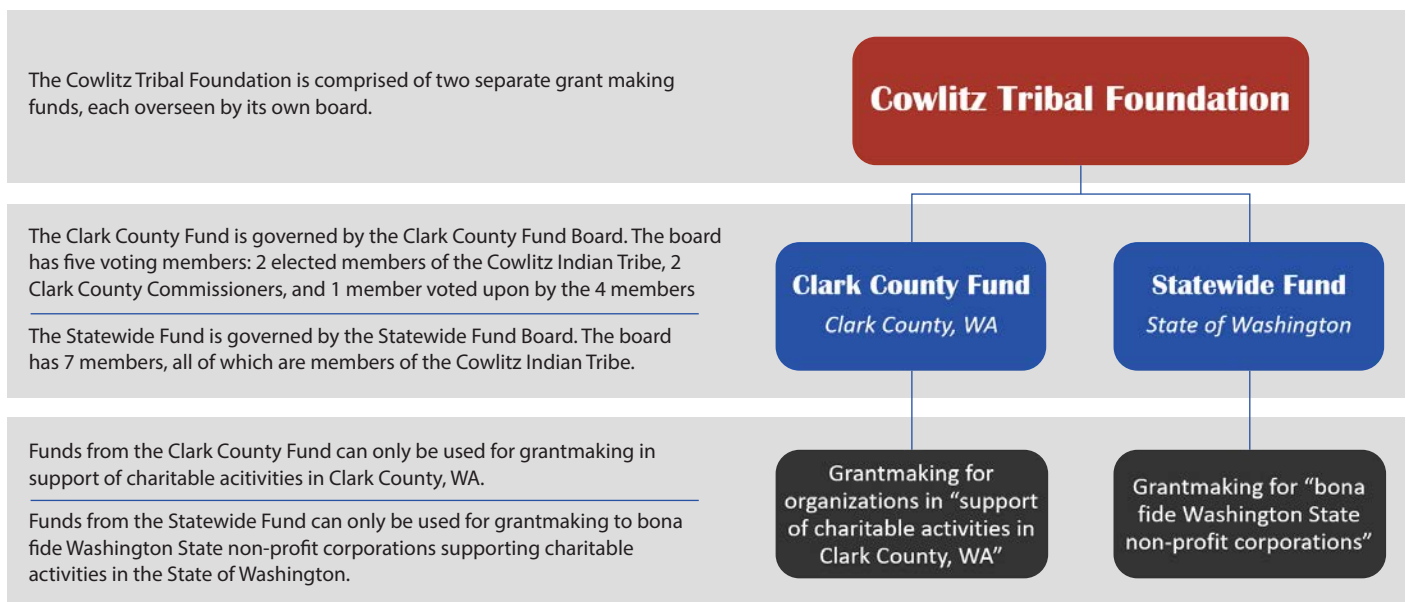


Charitable funds support food shelters, organizations addressing houselessness, and funding assistance so everyone can access cultural experiences, the arts and education without barriers.

In representing the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation has fulfilled over 1,000 grant requests and distributed more than \$25 million in grant funding. We want you to see the excellent

work and share the foundation with friends, family and organizations in your communities. Please refer to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Facebook page each Friday for Foundation Friday.

We have much to be proud of as the Cowlitz Indian Tribe; we are making great strides as a tribal community and can serve others, too. If you have questions or want to learn more about the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation, please contact me at [Trussin@cowlitz.org](mailto:Trussin@cowlitz.org).



# STORIES FROM OUR ELDERS - LESLIE WASHUTA

By Suzanne Donaldson



Cowlitz Indian Tribe member and Skloutwout descendant Leslie Washuta grew up as a farm girl in a family of six children in the Goldendale/Dallesport (Klickitat County) areas. She has resided in the state of New Jersey most of her adult life, raised a family, and enjoyed an extensive career as a registered nurse.

Leslie is immensely proud of her Cowlitz heritage. Growing up, she and her siblings were always proud to identify as Native American, though the family was not accustomed to living the traditional cultural lifestyle or practicing traditions. Leslie and her family lived close to the Columbia River, where her mom often purchased salmon from Native American fishermen. She has fond memories of her mom baking the seasoned salmon in a brown paper bag to absorb the excess oils. It was considered a real treat to this middle-class family! Another favorite memory is of going huckleberry picking with her mom, using her inherited Indian baskets, and of stories shared about her Indian grandmother, who lived in nearby Skamania County.

Leslie's mother was very family oriented, which she passed along to her kids through her good example, honorable deeds and actions. The family has always been an important aspect of who they are, as is being close to one another with a good rapport. During Leslie's childhood, visits to aunts and uncles were often undertaken on Sunday drives to nurture family connections. Leslie and her four sisters have always stayed well connected and are incredibly supportive of one another, which was her mother's greatest desire.

Living on the East Coast has made it challenging for Leslie to attend cultural events that happen in our aboriginal territory. However, on several trips to Washington state, she attended a Tribal Canoe Journey protocol, which was very impactful to her to take part as an observer, taking it all in and appreciating being among our Native family. She has also attended the Salmon Ceremony and our Pow Wow, both of which she found very meaningful.

Over the past few years, by attending virtual cultural classes, Leslie was able to connect with

extended family members, several of whom she had not met, and with several tribal members. She credits these classes, taught by our own Cowlitz teachers, with wonderful opportunities to learn how to bead, make medicine bags, learn about Native plant medicines, and share time and space to learn more about our culture. These events and teachings have spoken to her heart and have been very impactful as she continues to practice these new skills that she learned through the generosity of others.

Leslie is excited about a lot of good developments as the Tribe expands out in multiple directions to include and help members in a multitude of ways. As an example, Leslie has been able to request fish, which was shipped long distance to her, representing a long-cherished throwback to her upbringing. She also attended the yoga, Zumba and cooking classes offered virtually by the CIT Wellness Program, with gratitude for the offerings. She adds that, even though she is not nearby, the CIT garden concept is awesome.

And, speaking of virtual access, over the past few years Leslie has deeply appreciated the opportunity to listen in on board and committee meetings, and she now attends most Tribal and General Council meetings via Microsoft Teams, something that was not readily accessible to her previously. She looks forward to the launch of the expanded Member Portal, as do many others, for easier access to meeting materials and relevant tribal documents.

When asked what "words of wisdom" Leslie has for members of our Tribe, she encourages all to take advantage of any available opportunities, whether it be drumming, youth events, cultural classes, language, or joining boards and committees. She encourages younger people to step in and get involved, be integrated, and learn or expand their cultural knowledge.

Leslie commented that she did not grow up with culture, but in truth she did; she grew up picking berries, eating salmon and having an understanding that family, whether by blood or association, is highly valued.



Photos courtesy of Netflix Animation.

*Top left:* The Spirit Rangers kids, Kodi, Eddy and Summer Skycedar, mid hoop dance performance.

*Top right:* The kids in their superhero "spirit forms." Note the Coastal Salish-inspired markings on Kodi's fur and Summer's feathers and the Chumash-inspired markings on Eddy's shell.

*Bottom left:* Mud, Sticks and Gem. Thluk Tuk Spirits visiting from the Cowlitz Tribe!

*Bottom right:* Mom and Dad performing their park ranger duties. Dad is proud of his Cowlitz culture and often wears his woven cedar hat!

## BRINGING COWLITZ CULTURE TO NETFLIX

By Joey Clift, [joeyclift@gmail.com](mailto:joeyclift@gmail.com)

Hello! I'm an enrolled member of our Tribe (Skloutwout family) and a television writer living in Los Angeles! In August 2020, I received Tribal Council's blessing to include Cowlitz language, culture and characters inspired by our legends in a Netflix series called Spirit Rangers, on which I am a writer and consulting producer.

Spirit Rangers follows the Skycedar family, a modern-day mixed-tribe family of park rangers, with a mom and dad who are members of the Samala Chumash and Cowlitz Tribes, respectively. The show focuses on the Skycedar kids, who are superheroes often adventuring and learning from characters inspired by the legends and stories of Indigenous communities from around the world.

Our show is the first animated series for kids created by a Native woman, Karissa Valencia (Santa Ynez Chumash). Spirit Rangers has an all-Native writing staff, and, in every department, we have Native folks working to create the type of positive Native representation that we wish we had growing up.

Thanks to our Tribe's Cultural Resources Department, Netflix worked with Cowlitz language keepers to make sure that Spirit Rangers cast of Native actors had the resources to speak the Cowlitz language accurately. Cowlitz culture elements, including the dad's cedar hat, were created with input from our Tribe.

Including our culture in a show that people all over the world can watch is one of the proudest achievements of my life. As a former recipient of our tribal scholarship, I'm overjoyed that I was able to use the education that our Tribe afforded me to show the world that the Cowlitz people truly are the Forever People!

We put our whole hearts into Spirit Rangers, and we hope that you are as proud watching it as we were making it. It is being released on Netflix on October 10, 2022.



Photo courtesy of Joey Clift.

# MEMBER UPDATES

## BIRTHS



Congratulations to **Danielle Shive** on the birth of her son **Luka!**



Congratulations to **Jessica Ward** and **Tanaeem Moosa** on the birth of **Kobi Arthur Moosa Ward!** His Cowlitz grandparents are **Kevin and Beth Ward.**



Twins **Micah Crystal McCord** and **Jacob John McCord** were born in July to proud parents **Nicholas and Shannon McCord** and big brother **Lucas Christopher McCord.** We are excited to share this news with our Cowlitz community!



Congratulations to **Matthew and Anna Squires** on the birth of their son **Colton (Colt) Travis Squires!** His Cowlitz grandfather is **Rob Dickerson.** Colt is a very happy baby who loves smiling at everyone. He lights up the room and the lives of everyone he meets. He is a true blessing and miracle! We love him very much.



Our darling newborn girl is here! How wonderful life is now with a family of five, after the birth of our sweet baby. Introducing **Madison Lynn Mosback.** Born in July and weighing in at 8 pounds, 10 ounces to parents **Whitney and Matt Mosback.**

Newly enrolled tribal member **Gwendolyn Estelle Deuel** was born in June, to **Dylan and Destiny Deuel!**





# MARRIAGE



Tribal member **Tristan Peterson**, now **Tristan Poff**, got married to husband **Ryan Poff** on June 25, 2022.

**Terry Michael (Mike) Smithlin** passed away July 7, 2022, at the age of 71. He was a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and proudly wore his Cowlitz Indian Tribe veteran hat.

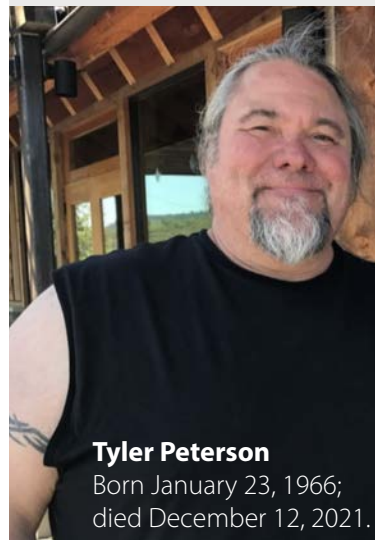
In high school, he was an outstanding cross country runner. He was the subject of an article in the Tacoma News Tribune titled, "Mike Smithlin — a Legend."

After Mike enlisted in the U.S. Army, he was deployed to Vietnam as a heavy equipment mechanic, until one day his sergeant said to him, "Smithlin, you are now a door gunner." He was honorably discharged.

He loved kids. When they would come and visit him, he had to have candy for the kids. Mike also enjoyed his candy!

Mike is missed by his mother and eight siblings. Mike's kitty cat, Daisy, misses her dad. Rest in peace, Mike. We miss you! Thank you for your service in the Army!

# OBITUARIES



**Tyler Peterson**  
Born January 23, 1966;  
died December 12, 2021.

**LaVerne Saint Germaine-Edwards-Jones**, sister of Clyde Saint Germaine-Edwards, passed on September 6, 2021, peacefully in her own bed and in her own home with family. Rest in peace, LaVerne.

**Joann Swanson** passed away on August 18, 2022, at the hospital in Ilwaco.

**Wendy Lee Kinswa** passed away on February 5, 2022.

**Dr. Eugene (Gene) Charles Arthur Wiggins** was born February 18, 1931, and passed away on Wednesday, September 7, 2022, at the age of 91. He was known as a teacher, counselor, minister, writer, artist and storyteller, as well as an avid University of Washington Huskies fan.

As a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, he valued his work with Native American kids and with the Cowlitz Tribe. His work with the Cowlitz was instrumental in their achievement of federal recognition as a Tribe, and he was honored to be given the Native American name Xetup, meaning "Eagle Feather Fan."



In loving memory of our dear Cowlitz Elder, **Justina "Tina" Tuttle**. She was a sister, wife, mother of two, grandmother of four and great-grandmother of six. She was raised Cowlitz, and she raised her children as Cowlitz tribal members as well. As our Cowlitz Tribe has grown and spread out, it has been comforting to know, with the help of the internet, that we are all one family. May she rest in peace. Born March 21, 1941; died August 20, 2022. *Picture of Tina Tuttle taken June 2019 in her front yard.*

# GRADUATIONS

## Congratulations to our recent and upcoming post-secondary Cowlitz graduates.



**Dillon Dobson** graduated from the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law with a JD and a certificate from the Indigenous People's Law and Policy Program. We are incredibly proud of him and know that his presence in the field is going to help uplift and strengthen native communities everywhere.



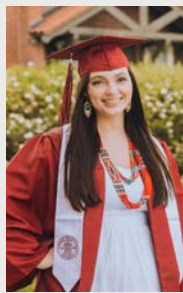
**Olivia Bouchard** earned a master's degree in industrial and organizational information.

**Justine Clason** earned a phlebotomy technician certificate.



**Annica Wilson** graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in political science, pre-law, from Washington State University.

**Sydney Erickson** received a bachelor's degree in English professional and creative writing and in liberal studies.



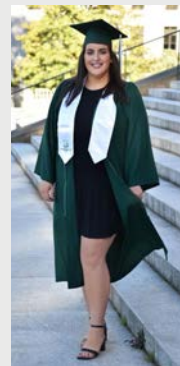
**Ethan Christensen** graduated from Prosser High School on June 11, 2022. He will attend Central Washington University in the fall!

*It is with great pride that I announce my graduation from Saint Martin's University with my Master of Arts in counseling. I could not have done this without the support of my Cowlitz Indian Tribe Tuition Assistance Program, my family and my friends. It has been a long, rewarding journey, and I am excited to see what the future brings! - **Jennifer Greer***



In May 2022, **Brittney Leone** graduated from Saint Martin's University with a major in psychology and a minor in sociology and criminal justice. We are so proud of her and her accomplishments.

**Nevaeh Becerra** graduated from high school, class of 2022.



*I received my Bachelor of Science in biology, and I'm now off to graduate school for a Master of Science in environmental policy. I would not be here today without the support of our Tribe. Forever grateful, **Ilesha Molnes.***





**Michael Hause** graduated from Kelso High School, class of 2022. He is attending Pacific Lutheran University and playing football.

**Kayci Miles**

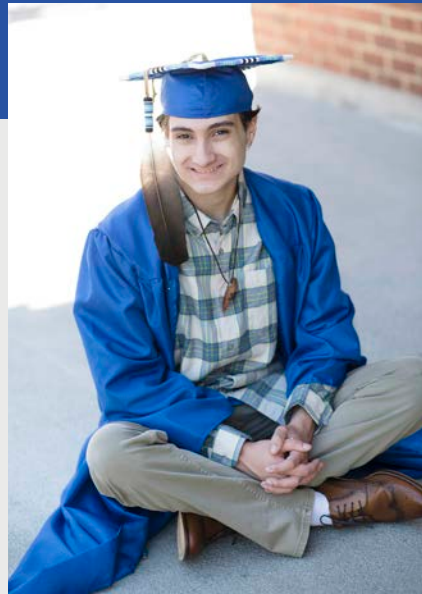
graduated from Washington State University in May 2022.



**Misty Pyburn** (formerly Corwin) received a master's degree in educational leadership.

**Holly Keirns**

graduated, with honors, from Central Washington University with a Bachelor of Arts in law and justice. We are so proud. A big thank you to our Tribe for paying for her education. Cowlitz strong!



**Jesse Milligan** graduated from high school in June 2022.



**Jaden Anderson**

graduated from Mark Morris High School on June 11, 2022. Jaden will be pursuing an associate degree with a business field

of study at Grays Harbor College in the fall, and he will be playing for the Grays Harbor College baseball team. We are so proud of his journey to continue the sport he loves and start a new chapter of life while going to college.

*Thank you to my Cowlitz family for helping me get my degree! I graduated with an associate degree in nursing.*

**- Katie Flood**



**CERTIFICATES**

- Valerie Baker
- Justine Clason
- Kaitlyn Lane
- Shawnee Buckner
- Eric Forsberg
- Shane Miles
- Mandy Caporali
- Gage Groendyke
- Tara Swanson

**ASSOCIATE DEGREE**

- Stacy Androsko
- Katie Flood
- Lacey Nesser
- Reilly Chappell
- Karisa Grubbs
- Cherianne Thayer

**BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

- Ross Amell
- Jaden king
- Jordan Ozier
- Hannah Cottnair
- Brittney Leone
- Miranda Porter
- Sydney Erickson
- Kayci Miles
- Natalia Ross
- Teri Graves
- Cheyenne Miller
- Peggy Sherbon
- Madison Hitchcock
- Ilesha Molnes
- Laura Vilhauer
- Chantz Inskeep
- Alexander Myer
- Levi Warriner
- Holly Keirns
- Christian Newkirk
- Annica Wilson

**MASTER'S DEGREE**

- Olivia Bouchard
- Jonathan Hogue
- Misty Pyburn
- Caleb Garrett
- Janet Myer
- Chelsea Unger
- Jennifer Clark Greer
- Brandon Porter

# DAVID E. BARNETT

## OCTOBER 9, 1960, TO MAY 28, 2022



On the cover of *Washington CEO* magazine

On May 28, 2022, David E. Barnett, Chairman of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, died of a heart attack in front of his Shoreline home at the age of 61.

With his passing, Dave leaves behind a legacy of determination, generosity and leadership that will inspire many for generations to come. Notably, the long, lean,

hardscrabble years he put into the effort to establish the Cowlitz Tribe's initial reservation and its casino, ilani.

Once that was accomplished, he began a new Potlatch tradition to give back to his people, starting in 2019 with a gift of an all-terrain track wheelchair to Skye Morris. He followed this in 2020 with an autographed football for Ryan Cox and treated Ryan and his family to a Seattle Seahawks game. That same year, he distributed hundreds of pounds of frozen fish to tribal members. He continued by assisting many with house payments, college tuition and more.



Dave with Skye Morris at the Potlatch

Beyond this, he demonstrated leadership with his No Cowlitz Left Behind vision for the Tribe to ensure that every tribal member, no matter where they lived, had a voice. This vision was pursued by implementing vote by mail for tribal elections, extending housing assistance and universal health coverage to all members, and continuing to grow the economic base to benefit both tribal members and surrounding communities.

Dave worked hard on behalf of tribal members, and his life took a celebratory turn, particularly upon his marriage to second wife, Jeanine Lundquist. They became good



No Cowlitz Left Behind

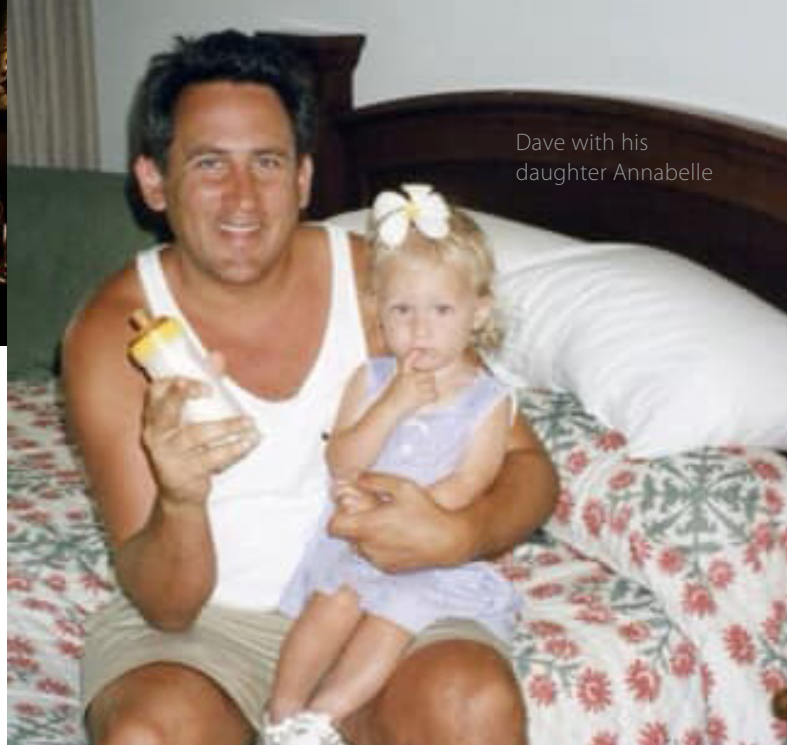
Mr. Orny



No Cowlitz Left Behind with Austin Hicks and Orny Adams, 2020



With Gene Simmons, May 10, 2022



Dave with his daughter Annabelle

friends with actor and comedian Orny Adams, who, with technical support from Austin Hicks, joined Dave on his No Cowlitz Left Behind podcasts. Together, they informed tribal members about tribal issues and tribal family news and lightened listeners' lives during the COVID-19 pandemic with giveaways, contests and more.

One of Dave's happiest moments occurred when he went to Wisconsin to attend the May 11, 2022, Kiss concert and, the day before, got to sit down to dinner with rock legend Gene Simmons. His text message to Tribal Council members said, "FYI I'm eating dinner with Gene Simmons In Wisconsin Can't freakin believe it." He included photos to prove it. But less than three weeks later he was gone, leaving behind a great void where once a great man stood.

Some men become good fathers and some good fathers become great men, but few great men are also good fathers. Having become a great man, Dave set out to also be a good father, and Kristine Vik, his first wife and the mother of his children, shared that — above anything else in the world — he loved his children: Jake and Anabelle.

In Kristine's words, "He was so proud of them both, always telling everyone about Jake's great job and upcoming marriage to Katie and their wedding in Greece, as well as Anabelle's love of fashion and her living in Charleston. He was so happy for her and wanted all her dreams to come true."

Dave's journey from great man to good father began in Aberdeen, the logging town in Washington state made famous by Kurt Cobain. It was a time when racism was known by overt acts of violence, exclusion and slurs. Excluded from participating in any team sport because he was Indian, Dave turned out for track, in which he excelled; Aberdeen High School still recognizes him as "the greatest distance runner in Aberdeen High School history." (Dave Barnett, Class of 1979, [www.asd5.org/Page/4104](http://www.asd5.org/Page/4104))

After high school, he attended the University of Washington on a track scholarship and graduated in 1984 with a degree in communications. From there, he went to Los Angeles to break into the movie business and got a couple of roles that his father, John, joked

were not talking parts. Deciding it was time to get a real job, he returned home in 1987 to learn the timber and land business from John. By the time he and Kristine had amassed a small fortune, they were raising their two children, Jake and Anabelle, first in Olympia and then in Shoreline, north of Seattle.

Dave also learned about the Tribe from John. Tribal member Kelly Guerra recalls that during a recent tribal meeting Dave remarked how, as he drove John around, he listened while his father spoke on the phone discussing tribal business. "I learned a lot," Dave said, "I appreciate that, now."

The story of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe is very different from most Tribes. For 146 years, Cowlitz leaders negotiated in good faith with the federal government. First, they negotiated for a reservation at Chelatchie Prairie, then for federal recognition as a sovereign Indian Tribe and for the relationship with the federal government that is the inheritance of all members of federally recognized tribes.

Generations passed, during which their land was taken by squatters who, not knowing any better, assumed the Cowlitz were a conquered people. But the Cowlitz never fought against the U.S. government; instead, during the war led by Leschi of the Nisqually, while most Cowlitz remained at a temporary reserve with the Chehalis, many Cowlitz men joined a local militia group called the Cowlitz Rangers to keep the peace in Cowlitz Country. Thus, they were not and are not a conquered people. Like Dave, the Cowlitz are U'Q'D: Unconquered.

In 1928 Congress passed a bill to recognize the Cowlitz, but President Coolidge vetoed it. Officially, the reason



Wrapping Tanna Engdahl, February 4, 2017, St. Mary's

given was that he believed they were “industrious, self-supporting and reasonably intelligent.” But according to Tribal Elder Mike Iyall, Coolidge saw it as a land grab and a money grab.

Despite this setback, they persisted and, with 114 other tribes, submitted a request for federal acknowledgment to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1975. After a formal recognition process was adopted in 1978, 40 tribes submitted their petitions. But as Mike Iyall recalls, “we held back and readied our petition. Cowlitz did not want to be the crash test dummy.”

This proved to be a wise move. After several tribal petitions during the first wave were denied, the Cowlitz, having learned from the mistakes of others, moved forward around 1981. Almost 20 long years later, in the winter of 1999, John Barnett received word that the Cowlitz people would finally be federally recognized.

In anticipation of this victory, at the November 1999 General Council meeting held at the Cowlitz Prairie Grange Hall, John spoke about the commercial prospects of putting land into trust. Members were brimming with excitement. As word spread of the pending announcement, 40 or so members squeezed into the large dining hall at Spiffy’s Restaurant in Chehalis for the December 1999 Tribal Council meeting. The mood was festive, and some of the elders danced a little jig as they greeted John in the parking lot that morning.

Things began to move quickly, and on February 14, 2000, more than 35 tribal members gathered in Washington, D.C., to witness as Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs Kevin Gover signed the final determination to federally acknowledge the recognition of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. But then on May 17, 2000, the Quinault Indian Nation filed a request for reconsideration. Ultimately, they failed; on January 4, 2002, the Federal Register announced that the decision was reaffirmed on December 31, 2001.



John and Dave, Washington D.C., February 14, 2000

By that time John had already directed Dave to secure the Ridgefield property at the La Center exit off Interstate 5. Out of his own pocket, Dave put money down, and he kept putting more money down, all while lending money to the Tribe for operations. He put so much of his personal fortune into sustaining the Tribe that he was struggling to remain financially solvent, and longtime friend Rod Van Mechelen reflected on a day when Dave called about a project that they had put on hold to develop a Native American Cable TV channel. “He said he could sell the [future reservation] property right now for \$20 million, and we could use that for NAC,” but Dave was committed to the Tribe. Despite being crushed by debt, he put aside their plans and persevered with efforts to have the property in Clark County just north of Vancouver, Washington, recognized as restored lands to establish the initial reservation of the Cowlitz people.

One of Dave’s favorite songs, “With My Boots On,” was from the 1986 self-titled album, “The Unforgiven.” The chorus was, “Lord let me die with my boots on.” Joyfully pursuing his passions in life, Dave was at the top of his game when his life came to an abrupt end. He died with his boots on.

*With My Boots On - The Unforgiven* [https://youtu.be/\\_I4vx1iTBIE](https://youtu.be/_I4vx1iTBIE)

Many Cowlitz families have stories worthy of a James Michener novel, and Dave’s life — like his father’s — would require several chapters to tell. What people remember most about him, however, was his love for his family and for the Cowlitz people, his generosity, and his fierce determination to prevail against all odds.

David Barnett is survived by wife Jeanine, son Jake, daughter Anabelle, mother Edythe Hulet and sister Elizabeth Pearson. He was preceded in death by his brother Michael, father John and uncle Werner.

**A celebration of his life was held on July 23, 2022, at Ilani, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe’s casino he founded.**

# THE AMAZING SAGA OF DAN VAN MECHELEN AND HIS LITTLE-KNOWN ROLE IN CHANGING THE INDIAN WORLD

By Tanna Engdahl

This Elder passed and was remembered by his Cowlitz family and friends in January 2022 during a lovely graveside service and a conversational reception afterward. His obituary ([www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/theolympian/name/daniel-van-mechelen-obituary?id=32299263](http://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/theolympian/name/daniel-van-mechelen-obituary?id=32299263)) did not fully mention that he was associated with one of the most explosive Supreme Court decisions in the history of Indian America, in a historic decision that hurled justice for Native Americans forward in an unexpected and mighty leap.

The attendees thought they knew Dan Van Mechelen, but they had no idea his long-serving actions in a momentous litigious event would be associated with a decision that rocked the Indian world.

So, it was fitting that an elderly Indian woman slipped in during the memorial reception and quietly took a seat at a back table. I recognized this tribal woman and for a moment, could not speak, could not swallow.

This modest woman was THE petitioner in suit that went all the way to the Supreme Court, resulting in decisions known as “Mitchell 1 and Mitchell 2.” Helen Mitchell — the Mitchell whose name is now part of case studies for American Indian law students.

Helen Mitchell, Chehalis, and Dan Van Mechelen, Cowlitz, had a near life-long association. Their story comes in two parts: First, the development of the Quinault Allottees Association comprising Indians who owned allotments within the boundary of the Quinault Indian Reservation. (These tribal allottee owners were a mix of Hoh, Quileute, Chehalis, Cowlitz and Chinook people).

The second part of the story is the daring boldness of this rag-tag group to sue the government in the U.S. Court of Claims in 1971, declaring the United States had undervalued timber sales on

the Quinault Reservation (lower Indian timber sales meant bigger gains for the timber companies). Allegedly.

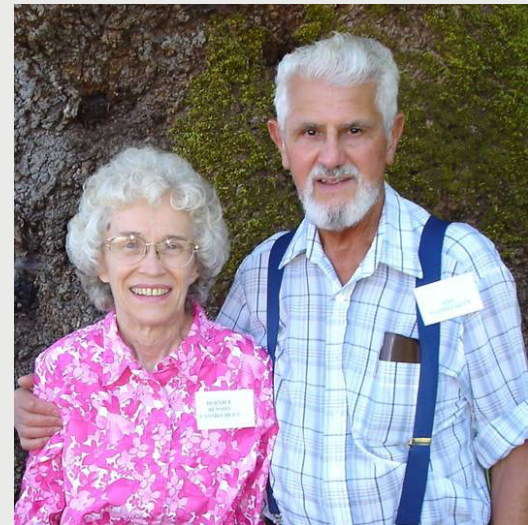
The suit opened a Pandora’s box of claims, counter claims and a library of previous decisions juggled into the litigious process. The case was volleyed back and forth: the plaintiffs won some partial decisions; the United States won some partial decisions. Eventually the suit surfaced back in the Court of Claims, which said it would hear the case again, under the General Allotment Act. The United States appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court agreed that the General Allotment Act did not in itself create a trust responsibility; any grounds for recovery must be based on other laws. So, score another victory for the United States, sort of.

(Now is not the time to doze off reading this.) SO, the case bounced back to the Court of Claims. The United States again asked for a dismissal of the case. Nope, said the Court of Claims, we’ll hear about the other laws (timber sales, regulations, and sustained yield and rights of ways).

Frustrated, the United States again appealed to the Supreme Court, possibly believing the high court would again have its back. The Supreme Court said it would hear the case under “certiorari.” Meaning, hmmm, we’d better take a look at this case again and use a microscope this time. (My words. Courts and lawyers don’t say such things.)

So, the case was heard as United States v. Mitchell. Tribal America was watching the drama with growing concern. The Shoshone Tribe, Wind River Reservation, Wyoming, jumped in with an amicus curiae brief in support of the Washington allottees.

WELL: The arguments were heard, and the decision came down in favor of Mitchell and the allottees(!), a multi,



multi-million-dollar setback by a stunned United States. It was the first case where the Supreme Court ruled that the United States could be liable for monetary damages for a trust relationship. As a result, Mitchell has been cited thousands upon thousands of times by courts everywhere. Since the fiduciary duty has been established, tribes have been using it to ensure that the Secretary of the Interior takes their needs into consideration, especially in the area of mineral and timber resources. *United States v. Mitchell*, 463 U.S. 206 (1983)

Dan Van Mechelen continued as chairman of the Allottees Association for many years and forged ahead living his colorful life. He wrote a fascinating account: “History of the Quinault Reservation” ([www.vanmechelen.net/quines.html](http://www.vanmechelen.net/quines.html)). It is particularly interesting that this account not only deep-dived into history, but it is told through the prism of a Cowlitz Indian. It’s the ghost story of what happened to the Cowlitz. Dan’s paper was enhanced by drawings rendered mostly by his daughter, Becky Scholtz, with some drawn by Dan’s sister, Juanita Clark, and himself. The Van Mechelen account and all the “Mitchell” papers are now held by Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon.

# COWLITZ EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES: SUCCESS STORIES

It is with immense gratefulness that I want to thank the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and, specifically, those in Cowlitz Employment Support Services (CESS).

August of 2020 was a time of transition for me. I had been recuperating from a severe illness, my marriage had just ended in divorce, and it was during the initial time of COVID-19. I had not worked for a company or organization for more than 10 years. However, over that time when married, I had been to Israel many times. I had the privilege to volunteer in Jewish/Christian relations and volunteer with organizations that help women in crisis pregnancy situations.

With the marriage that ended and the world that changed, I now needed to make some new decisions for my life. I needed help as I was without an income, with a house payment and bills that go along with it. And even though I had a lot of skills and experience, I did not have much of a résumé and was lacking the confidence in feeling that I had much to offer in the workforce after not being employed for more than 10 years. This is when I reached out to CESS.

I first spoke with the program manager, who compassionately listened to my situation and understood where I was at. She told me they could help and support this transition. Shortly after, she sent Kris Rister, the Cowlitz Career and Education Services (CCES) case manager, to my home to start the process of assessing my situation and gain the information needed to plan for my new life ahead. Kris drove from Longview, Washington, to my home in Eugene, Oregon, to meet with me. I am so grateful for the time that Kris spent with me then and each week after to help with my transition. She patiently listened with empathy and compassion while asking me what my experiences, gifts, talents and dreams were to help figure out what kind of work I would enjoy and want to do. She helped me with my résumé and job seeking. She encouraged me each week as we met on Zoom. She worked with me to figure out whether I wanted to return to school or simply get a job or both.

The calling and experiences in my life have been in reconciliation and healing, both in the ministry of the

sanctity of human life and Jewish/Christian relations. This work is where I find satisfaction, purpose and worth. I have found that in having both Jewish and Native American heritage, both these cultures have very similar histories in many ways with a need for restoration, reconciliation, healing and understanding of the sanctity of human life within them.

Through the help of CESS, I found my path forward. I am now working at a pregnancy resource Center helping women in crisis pregnancy situations, while also attending The King's University as a full-time student in their Biblical and Messianic Jewish Studies program.

I did not think that, at this stage of my life, I would be getting a college degree. Again, I am so thankful that I was encouraged to go forth in this and apply for a scholarship through the Cowlitz Education program. I find it to be a real blessing to have been awarded a scholarship to achieve my goals.

It was Kris who was there to encourage me in the beginning, bringing the hope, support and resources I needed to move forward with strength and dignity. She helped me to navigate toward what I really wanted to do with what my life experiences had provided at this time in my life. And it is now Brandy Hopkins, as Kris moved on to a new position, who has stepped in and been so helpful and encouraging to provide the support I need to continue to succeed in working part-time while getting my college degree. Brandy has been there, ready and available any time I call, to help me with the resources I need.

CESS has been invaluable to me. Through a difficult season, they helped build my confidence and provided the encouragement and support I needed to go forth in this new season of life. I am very thankful and feel blessed for the help I have received. I do not think I would be where I am today — enjoying my work and using my experiences, gifts and talents while receiving an education in the field that I love — without their help.

~ LAURA MEDLEY, COWLITZ TRIBAL MEMBER



# THE COWLITZ DRUM GROUP

By Jeramiah Ray Wallace

**Nák's (hello), Səncáyał n sk'ácł (my name is) Jeramiah Ray Wallace, and I am Lower Cowlitz.**

The Cowlitz Drum Group is still meeting on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. at the Fir Complex. The Cowlitz Drum Group's purpose is to perform at events for the Tribe, out in public at meetings, events and conferences, as well as at funerals, services and celebration of life events. The year 2022 has been a busy one for us with all the events, services, gatherings and camps.

Our new goal is to compose more songs for Paddle to Muckleshoot 2022 and make nice giveaways to keep working towards continual growth as we always have. The Cowlitz Drum Group is looking to grow and get more involvement to represent the Cowlitz Indian Tribe with song and dance; we are not an exclusive group, and anyone who wants to sing is welcome.

Gas cards are provided for people who come to participate. Events are posted by CTMS in their weekly emails and on the Cowlitz Facebook groups. If you are interested in participating, contact me at [Jwallace@Cowlitz.org](mailto:Jwallace@Cowlitz.org).

**Nák'łq'ul'as (thank you).**



I just wanted to take a few moments to share with you how grateful we are for the CESS program's support for our son, Gabe, as he has transitioned from high school to his lineman trade school within just a few weeks of graduation. He is thriving in the program and is expected to graduate on October 7, 2022.



Brandy, you have been there for us every step of the way and have been so supportive! Your assistance to get Gabe qualified to receive funding for his tools and equipment for school has really taken the pressure off us financially. Ultimately, with this help and assistance from several other tribal programs, Gabe will graduate from school without any student loans. He also mentioned that you called him last week to check on him, and he was excited to tell me about his conversation with you.

Thank you for all you do and for your support of us as tribal members. You make a difference.

**~ TAMMY WILSON, COWLITZ TRIBAL MEMBER**

I have been participating in the Cowlitz Employment Support Services program officially for about 15 months now. I first inquired about what the program can do to assist me in starting my own small business. I was quickly moved through the process of organizing myself, my goals and my needs to write a business plan. Just taking the time to sort out all those questions gave me a clear path to what I wanted to do. CESS case managers were helpful and acted as a sounding board for ideas and direction on what steps I needed to take. I appreciate the assistance CESS gave me in acquiring necessary training, equipment and software to be successful. I am so very grateful for their guidance and leadership. Without their help, I would not have my own small business that is growing at a pace I can sustain.

**~ ANONYMOUS, COWLITZ SMALL BUSINESS OWNER**

# (CCDP) CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## CCDP PARENTS AS TEACHERS



Parents as Teachers (PAT) has been conducting home visits with family providers for nine months now. PAT works in the homes of our family, friend and neighbor program. Home visitors meet weekly for a 90-minute session with providers working with kids from 4 weeks old to 6 years old (before kindergarten).

PAT is working with families to reach goals and explore how learning

at home is easy. PAT focuses on social-emotional, cognitive, motor and language progress using age-appropriate activities to improve the child's development. Families learn about sleep practices, nutrition, discipline and child development to help the child reach their full potential.

CCDP was just awarded a second grant to expand this service to other families who are not enrolled with CCDP. This will allow home visiting services to be able to serve Native and non-Native families who use Cowlitz services and the community as a whole. Watch for more information to come.



Parents as Teachers.  
*Affiliate*



## CCDP ARPA FUNDS

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) distribution of funds is complete. The grant application that CCDP developed was duplicated and used as a template by other tribes. Tanya Hutton, program manager, reports, "It was important for us to get the funding out to support all child care providers as soon as possible."

We developed a grant application based on federal guidelines and were able to start supporting providers within the first month of funds being released. Justina Wilson, early learning coach, processed and distributed 129 grants throughout our service area, including Lewis, Cowlitz, Clark and Skamania counties. In total, we distributed over \$4.2 million back into our community child care providers.

Providers were encouraged to use the funds for payroll, staff retention and hiring bonuses. They were also able to do some much needed updating and renovations, including securing new playground equipment, replacing roofs and flooring, and acquiring new kitchen and laundry room appliances. Wilson, who oversaw this project, said, "We were able to help several child care centers that would not have been financially able to stay open and care for children. This helped parents be able to work and keep the economy going."

CCDP distributing the ARPA funds had the unforeseen benefit of helping build relationships with child care providers that we hadn't previously worked with and strengthening the bonds with our established providers. One nice benefit for Little Christians in Castle Rock is that they were able to remodel a classroom that did not meet state licensing requirements and make it into a new, much-needed infant room that can care for six infants.

# CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Child Care and Development Program (CCDP) is funded solely with federal grants and is designed to supply and improve child care in the area surrounding a Tribe's reservation. This is the reason why our service area is limited to Lewis, Cowlitz, Clark, Skamania and, soon, Columbia counties. We strive to be able to provide child subsidy to as many Native American families as possible. With that in mind, we were able to petition our funders, the Office of Child Care, to expand our services into Columbia County in Oregon. We are able to do this because there is no other Tribe currently servicing the area, and this coverage aligns with Cowlitz's HHS service area. We hope to start providing services to Columbia County in the beginning of 2023.

CCDP also has had some staff changes. Cowlitz member Nichole (Nikki) Meyers took a position with Problem Gambling. We would like to introduce Jennifer Milliren and Mersady Smith (formally with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Education Department).

CCDP staff are left to right: Ann Little, Recruitment and Compliance Coordinator; Jennifer Milliren, Program Coordinator; Justina Wilson, Early Learning Coach; Mersady Smith (soon to be Hurley), Program Assistant; Tanya Hutton, Manager; and Emily Mathers, Parent Educator.



## STRENGTHENING CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Jen Milliren,  
Intake Support Specialist  
jmilliren@cowlitz.org

The Child Care and Development Program (CCDP) supports families with their need for high-quality child care in Cowlitz, Clark, Wahkiakum, Skamania and, now, Columbia County. Access to quality child care has been a challenge for many of our communities, and the need continues to rise in the context of our changing world.

Sara's was one of the first families we got to work with at the CCDP:

"I will never forget the day I saw the ad posted in the Longview WIC office. The help from the Tribe saved us. I had just bought our first home, and the cost of my mortgage plus child care was a huge strain. I had to take a part time job at McDonald's in the evenings after my full-time job during the days. I will be forever grateful for all those in your office that have assisted me along the way. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

The CCDP continues to grow, build resources, develop engagement and education opportunities, and increase service areas in our aim to help families thrive.

# CCDP NORTHUP SUCCESS STORY

The following is a letter from the fourth family ever enrolled in CCDP:

In 2014, my 3-year-old son and I moved into our first home. We had been temporarily staying with my parents until we found a new place to live. Instead of renting, I was pleasantly surprised to find I qualified for a home loan. During this time, my son was going to daycare for approximately \$650 per month. I knew things would be tight with a mortgage and daycare, but I did not properly plan for other additional bills. I was beginning to fall behind with bills, with my income being around \$300 short per month.

Many single parents have had to work two or more jobs to make ends meet, so I decided it was time for me to do that. I acquired a second job working at McDonald's. I'd start as a property manager at a storage facility in Woodland at 9 a.m., clock off at 6 p.m. and begin working at the cash register of McDonald's in Woodland at 6:30 p.m. After the lobby closed at 11 p.m., I'd sweep, mop, empty the trash and assist with any other cleaning jobs there were until around 1 a.m. After about a month, I felt I was losing a bit of my sanity due to lack of rest and not seeing my child enough. He was in good hands, but I felt a part of myself was missing.

We relied heavily on programs like WIC and any other state assistance. While at a WIC appointment, I saw a flier posted for financial assistance for child care through the Cowlitz Tribe. I am a Muscogee Creek tribal member, and our tribal base is in Oklahoma. Usually when I would seek assistance through my Tribe, I was told I had to be living in the area of the tribal base. Oklahoma was not an option for me after being spoiled by the beauty of the Pacific Northwest, and all of our loved ones lived in Washington state.

Out of desperation, I reached out to the Cowlitz Tribe anyway. Luckily, I did not have to be a member of their Tribe to qualify for the child care benefits. After doing a little paperwork, I was granted financial assistance for child care. Not long after, I gave McDonald's my notice and went back to working one full-time job. The quality of my life was quickly coming back as I did not need to stress over money any longer. Things may have been tight still, but I was making it work.

Then COVID-19 hit. We no longer felt safe with my son going to daycare. My dad, now retired, agreed to watch my son every day after school and during the summers while I worked. The Tribe reached out to me and said they would directly pay my dad, our new care provider, for watching him. Of course, he expected no financial compensation to watch his grandson, but with a little paperwork, the Tribe was now paying him for his help. This

was extremely helpful to my family as my dad no longer had time to work his usual profitable side jobs as a carpenter.

My son is now 11 and is beginning to stay home alone. As our needs are changing, our time working with the Cowlitz Tribe is coming to a bittersweet end. My family and I have been reflecting on all the help through the years, and we couldn't be more grateful. We hope our story will encourage other families to reach out and see what help they could offer them.

To the Cowlitz Tribe and all of the wonderful ladies who have helped us with the CCDP, thank you for your support and patience. From your side, you may not realize the effect you've had on our family, but please know that we will be forever grateful for all of you.

Sincerely,  
The Northrup/McCormick Family



# COWLITZ TRIBAL MEMBER SERVICES WILL DO WHAT THEY CAN TO HELP TRIBAL MEMBERS



Days before the Smelt Dipping Ceremony, which happened on March 6, 2022, Penny Baker called Cowlitz Tribal Member Services (CTMS) after seeing the information announced about the Annual Cowlitz Smelt Dipping Ceremony. She explained to Jamie Marcus, one of the amazing CTMS navigators, that Gerald was getting older and not able to participate in the Smelt Ceremony anymore, and she wanted to know if CTMS could get three pounds of smelt for their family.

This challenge was accepted by CTMS coordinator Shaina Okert, who was able to attend the Annual Cowlitz Tribal Smelt Dipping Ceremony. Shaina brought back 10 pounds of smelt, which was the maximum limit allowed. Shaina was able to fulfill our tribal elder's request and have extra to share with others who could not attend the ceremony. Okert spent the morning of March 7 making sure the smelt was properly kept for when the Bakers were able to pick it up at the Cowlitz Tribal Building in DuPont, Washington. Please do not hesitate to call CTMS at 1-877-COWLITZ. They are here to help!

## CTMS WHO & WHY

It is our greatest goal to serve each member where they are. Cowlitz Tribal Member Services (CTMS) strives to assist and connect members with all services throughout the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and diligently finds resources throughout Indian Country. We also include guiding members to their state benefits, as needed. The CTMS program was created to bridge a gap between Cowlitz tribal members and Cowlitz tribal programs.

Our team makes every effort to keep up with Cowlitz tribal programs and learn what is new within the Tribe and lead members to those services. CTMS also works hand in hand with some of our tribal members that carry cultural knowledge to share and provide Cowlitz tribal members with cultural teachings at our Dupont building location. We work hard to keep tribal members from all over the world in touch with their inherent culture by mailing out culture kits by request, which include smudging kits, beaded necklace kits, traditional medicine, and much more. If you have an interest in learning about Cowlitz Culture no matter where you are, we would love to hear from you.

CTMS knows how important health care is, and we care about our members' well-being. We have Tribal Assisters on hand each day to help members sign up to Washington Healthplanfinder to secure medical and

dental insurance for their families through the state's health benefit exchange. Reach out to CTMS to get in contact with the nearest available Assister. We are working diligently to serve every member all over the nation to secure health insurance. In addition to your health care needs, we also provide Cowlitz tribal members and their immediate family with at-home COVID-19 testing kits to stay healthy and safe.

CTMS has teamed up with Northwest Justice Project's Native American Unit to serve our community and other natives in the state of Washington with their legal matters. Starting in January 2023, Cowlitz tribal members can sign up again on our [www.cowlitz.org](http://www.cowlitz.org) website and request to be added to the appointment schedule or through our newsletter that is included in the communications weekly email blast sent each Friday. Northwest Justice Project provides legal consultations to members and our native community in person as well as virtually in Dupont on the last Tuesday of each month.

If you are a Cowlitz tribal member who needs assistance filling out applications or seeking services, please contact one of our CTMS Navigators for assistance; we are waiting by the phone at 1-877-COWLITZ or email us at [CTMS@cowlitz.org](mailto:CTMS@cowlitz.org).

# HEALTH CLINIC - INCREASES CANCER SCREENINGS

By: Alyssa Fine, [afine@cowlitz.org](mailto:afine@cowlitz.org), Cowlitz Tribal Health Clinic

Call the clinic today to schedule: 360.575.8275

## WOMEN'S CANCER SCREENINGS

Pap smears help identify "pre-cancers" that may develop into cervical cancer.  
Mammograms help identify early signs of breast cancer. Detecting cancer early saves lives.

Get your screening(s) and receive your free Pendleton Bag and other self care products.

Colon Cancer can be prevented

Screenings are recommended for ages 45+

Return your completed FIT kit or fulfill your colonoscopy appointment and receive your \$20.00 Safeway gift card!

Call the Cowlitz Tribal Health Clinic for a colonoscopy referral or to order your FIT kit.  
360-575-8275

## PARTNERSHIP INCREASES CANCER SCREENINGS FOR CLINIC PATIENTS

In May 2021, the Cowlitz Tribal Health Clinic launched a series of partnerships with the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) and the Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA) to improve our cancer screening efforts. Initiatives have included enhancing our electronic health record processes, developing and disseminating educational materials, systematizing client reminders, training staff, and offering patient and staff incentives.

A series of informational cards on cervical and breast cancer were developed featuring Cowlitz tribal members who are also cancer survivors. Their voices and stories are important reminders to our clients about the power of early detection. These cards are available throughout the health clinic and have been a useful tool for our clinicians as they educate clients.

Since January 2022, our clinical team has been meeting with NARA once a month for a series of lunch and learns. Topics have included cervical cancer, trauma-informed care for women's wellness exams, integrating colorectal cancer screening into women's wellness exams, and breast cancer risk assessment via telehealth. Annette Sampson, a DNP student, also shared the results of a series of interviews she did with our clients to help identify barriers to cervical cancer screening. Her presentation, entitled "Identifying Cervical Cancer Screening Challenges at a Tribal Health Center: A Qualitative Patient Perspective," has informed our quality improvement efforts.

We also provide incentives to patients to encourage them to stay up to date on their cancer screenings. Those who complete all their women's cancer screenings receive a Pendleton tote bag filled with self-care products. Anyone who completes their colon cancer screenings can receive a \$20 Safeway gift card. These incentives are promoted in-clinic as well as in our patient reminder cards that all clients receive in their birthday month, if they are due for preventive health care.

We have been closely monitoring our screening rates to determine whether our health system partnership efforts have been successful. Currently, about 55% of our clients are up to date on their cervical cancer screenings, up from 25% in May 2021. In addition, our breast cancer screening rates have jumped from about 29% to 58% in that same time period. Clinic staff are excited to continue our efforts to connect our clients to these life-saving preventive health services.



## What is Purchase Referred Care?

A federally funded program providing assistance with the cost of necessary medical & dental treatment.

## To Whom is the Program Authorized to Assist?

Cowlitz Tribal Members residing within the Service Delivery Area (SDA) along with non native woman pregnant with a Cowlitz child who also maintain residency in the SDA.

## What is the Tribes Service Delivery Area?

The following counties were Federally approved and include Clark, Skamania, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Lewis, Thurston, Pierce, King and Kittitas in WA & Columbia Co OR.

## What are the Most Important Aspects of the Program?

Eligibility to be determined upon completion of the PRC registration process. Each year an "update" request will be made ensuring information is as up to date as possible. One must apply for and utilize all other resources of payment available. Those who are uninsured or underinsured will be asked to apply for other state or federal resources. The PRC program is considered a payer of last resort and is not adequately funded to cover 100% of the cost of care. Each of us share the responsibility of making decisions that improve the likelihood of PRC coverage throughout the year. Prior authorization of each and every visit enables staff to set funds aside on your behalf and inform your provider of your PRC eligibility along with other benefits to the members

**On behalf of your PRC Team, we thank you and look forward to working with you.**

**Please feel free to reach out anytime.  
chs-prc@cowlitz.org 360-575-8275 Opt 2**



# CULTURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT FALL UPDATE

As Tribal Citizens, our relationships to one another and the natural world and how we maintain those important relationships are essential aspects of Tribal Sovereignty. A major foundation of Tribal Sovereignty is found in the exercising of inherent rights.

Inherent rights encompass attributes of a group of people that bring us together as a Tribe, a family. These include our relationships to one another — our family lineage and where our people live within traditional territory, homeland and waters. The relationship we have with our natural world — our homeland and waters — is foundational to being a Tribe and being sovereign.

One could say you are as sovereign to the degree that you exercise inherent rights. Exercising inherent rights includes the very activities that make us Cowlitz — hunting, fishing, gathering, ceremony, engaging in trade and commerce, and tribal governance.

We maintain relationships to these activities day-to-day and year-round. Maintaining these relationships is exercising Tribal Sovereignty. We see sovereignty in action by witnessing tribal governance and decision-making, returning to areas to fish, hosting ceremony in sacred places, hunting for elk or deer, picking huckleberries, welcoming and

hosting other tribes, speaking Cowlitz Coast Salish, and teaching our youth those values and morals that bind our Cowlitz people in unity as a Tribe.

It has been a busy summer with numerous campouts and traditional activities in Cowlitz homelands. Let us remember that our relationships to one another and the natural world are basic tenets to remaining Cowlitz people. As we send our kids back to school, with our love supporting their hopes and dreams, let us remember to take care of each other. I look forward to meeting more of our people, and please reach out to our department if you have any questions. Much love to our Cowlitz community!



GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE, ON BEHALF OF THE COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE AND ilani, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT!



Thank you to Governor Inslee and his staff for visiting ilani and meeting with Cowlitz tribal leadership last week. We appreciated the engaging conversation around mutual priorities like economic development and mitigating the impacts of climate change. We look forward to continuing to partner with you and your office and are excited to visit with you again soon.

GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE  
On behalf of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and ilani,  
Thank you for your leadership and support!



SOARWORKS  
November 2021



SAMHSA  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) / Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) model helps increase access to Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits for eligible adults and children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment and/or co-occurring substance use disorder. Use of the SOAR model's critical components can increase approval rates on SSI/SSDI applications, resulting in a significant step toward housing stability, resiliency and recovery. The SOAR model's culturally sensitive engagement process and holistic approach to SSI/SSDI application assistance can be a critical support for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) community members whether residing on or off reservations.

(518) 439-7415

[soarworks.samhsa.gov](https://soarworks.samhsa.gov)

To read the full article:

<https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/article/soar-enhances-income-stability-in-american-indian-and-alaska-native-communities>



# A CELEBRATION OF HERITAGE

By Cheyenne Miller

When the opportunity to process salmon within my tribal community arose, I was honored to take part in the process from nearly start to finish. To me, these salmon represent a maintaining and strengthening of intertribal relations; an act of practicing food sovereignty; and an act of celebrating shared heritage. For me, these salmon represent reawakened understanding of what it means to be Cowlitz.

A member of Lummi provided the fresh sockeye, which Jeramiah Wallace and myself drove to obtain. In the end, most of these salmon were gifted to the Kalama Days Heritage Festival Committee for use in the Kalama Days celebration. In this way, the salmon not only fed bodies and spirits, but fed and upheld a sense of shared heritage and connection.

The processing itself was completed in a good way, with seasoned fish-handlers and learners working hand in hand to honor the process. We gathered on Cowlitz land and set intention; we shared prayer and joy and knowledge. We each contributed our strengths, and each humbled ourselves to the process. I don't think anyone involved walked away without learning something, either about the work itself or about themselves. I personally learned a ton about both!

Some of the filets were smoked in a cold-smoker made on the spot by tribal carver Robert Harju. Others were canned in a lengthy process that involved many hands. The fresh filets donated for Kalama Days were graciously direct-fire-cooked through the collaboration of Cowlitz and Hawaiian individuals: this having been another amazing opportunity to acknowledge connection, not only to one another but to the land. The land which, to some extent, birthed the distinctive cooking methods used within each culture.

I am beyond thankful for the opportunity to have learned to process salmon. I give thanks to every being who participated in my being empowered with those skills (salmon included). Even more, I am enamored of the insight on shared connection that these experiences have offered me, and I wish this joy and understanding upon everyone.

# 23RD ANNUAL COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE

Honoring the Spirit of All Cowlitz People

# POW WOW



**Grand Entries  
1pm & 7pm**

**Salmon  
Dinner 5 pm**

**Head Staff:**

MC - Carlos Calicia - Warm Springs  
AD - Gary Villa - Warm Springs  
Host Drum - Bad Soul - Grand Ronde  
Honor Drum - Star Horse - Warm Springs  
Head Judge - TBA  
Head Man - Anthony Quenelle - Grand Ronde  
Head Woman - Ramona Quenelle - Pit River

**Dance Categories:**  
Golden Age 55+  
Women's Traditional  
Men's Traditional  
Women's Fancy / Jingle  
Men's Fancy / Grass  
Teen Boys Combined 13-17  
Teen Girls Combined 13-17  
Jr. Boys Combined  
Jr. Girls Combined  
Tiny Tots

# Saturday

# October 15th, 2022

**Cowlitz County Event Center  
1900 7th Ave, Longview, WA 98632**

**For Further Information Contact:**  
General Inquiries: Kris - [Krisdil43@gmail.com](mailto:Krisdil43@gmail.com)  
Vendors: Cindy - [Ckswenson@gmail.com](mailto:Ckswenson@gmail.com)  
Volunteers: Angie - [Alepoidevin1989@gmail.com](mailto:Alepoidevin1989@gmail.com)

Pow wow Committee & fairgrounds are not responsible for Theft, injuries or travel expenses. NO Drugs, Alcohol, Firearms or disrespectful behavior allowed

# THE WEAVERS WEEKEND



By Sandee Spahr

The Weavers Weekend was amazing. I love learning new things when it comes to culture. Thank you to Rita and the Culture Department, Teri Wright, and anyone else who had a hand in making the weekend a huge success! It was a fun experience. I witnessed lots of laughs, friendships made, and instant joyfulness from the artists when they were announced finishing their projects by their teacher. I love getting to learn more about my culture.

Thank you to the Chehalis Weavers for teaching the class. They are incredible teachers who come with a lot of experience. Some have been teaching for more than 50 years. I will be forever grateful, and because of that I will be able to teach, in the future, my elders, peers and the next generations of Cowlitz! We must keep cedar weaving and our cultural tradition alive!

I look forward to taking more classes in the future!!



### **WEAVERS CONFERENCE THANKS**

Náxw̓łq̓'ul'as and my hands are up to our Chehalis relatives who came to teach us cedar weaving, and to everyone at Cowlitz who helped put on a beautiful event!

It was a weekend full of friends and family, song and prayer, and spiritual work. Something that really struck me were the words of a Chehalis Elder explaining that these teachings are a gift to us that cannot be taken away. It is restorative. Our families lost many traditional teachings over the generations through things like boarding "schools" and laws against our native ways. Cultural work is healing work, and everything we are able to learn strengthens our future generations.

Working with our hands with the cedar is medicine. Basket making holds our energy, our burdens and worries, our hopes and our prayers, for us. We were reminded it was not about perfection; it was about the process.



# ENROLLMENT

By Marissa Longtain, Tribal Enrollment Program Coordinator

**Our current total enrolled population is 4,796 with multiple applications coming in monthly. Our Tribe is expanding! Since January 2022, we have enrolled 207 new tribal members.**

**THE CURRENT ENROLLMENT CRITERIA STAND AS (applicant must meet all three):**

- 1) Applicant must be a direct lineal descendant of a Cowlitz Indian.
- 2) Applicant must have a parent (mother/father) on Cowlitz Tribal Roll.
- 3) Applicant shall be no older than 18.

To receive an enrollment application, please contact Catherine Raphael at (360) 575-3310 or send an email to [cowlitzenrollment@cowlitz.org](mailto:cowlitzenrollment@cowlitz.org) with the applicant's full name, date of birth and current mailing address. Each application is required to be signed in front of a notary and accompanied by the official, original state-certified birth certificate and your provided family tree completed to the best of your knowledge. Once we receive these items and the completed application, the birth certificate will be returned via USPS-certified mail. The application is then prepared for the Enrollment Committee, and once confirmed sent for ratification by Tribal Council at their next meeting.

**"A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies. It brings us together again and again."**

— *Maya Angelou*

## WE REMEMBER

Benjamin T. Schultz  
 B. Louise Spicer  
 Chairman David Barnett  
 Charles T. Myers  
 Charlotte I. Crain  
 Daia D. Swearingen  
 Daniel L. Van Mechelen  
 Derek R. Sterling  
 Edwin R. Goulter  
 Elaine B. Kennedy

Elizabeth L. Hitch  
 Lana J. Wiggins  
 L. JoAnn Swanson  
 Lenore I. Monohon  
 Mark L. Miller  
 Monty D. Anderson  
 Terry M. Smithlin  
 Justina M. Tuttle  
 Vernon L. Zawistowski Jr.  
 William B. Hodges

## ELDERS PROGRAM UPDATES

By Cowlitz Elder Care Advocate, Trynity Manning

Fall is here again, and the Elders Program would like to give an update on what we have accomplished so far in the year 2022. After two years of pushing, we have finally obtained a new Elders bus! We can now transport our Elders comfortably and in style. We have gone on several trips this year — to Tulip Town, Mount St. Helens, Talking Cedar brewery and Lincoln City, with more to come next year.

The Elders Program continues to support hundreds of our Elders through the distribution of meals, care packages, resources, transportation, trips, activities and more. Monday through Thursday, at noon, congregate meals are served and enjoyed in our dining room at the Cowlitz Village in Toledo. Please call prior to 10:30 a.m. if you are coming to join us. If you are an Elder in need or know of someone that might need assistance, please contact us via email at [EldersProgram@Cowlitz.org](mailto:EldersProgram@Cowlitz.org) or call (360) 864-7003.

We are also gearing up for some fall events. Our intertribal Elders luncheon will be held at the Cowlitz Village on October 6, with sign-in at 10 a.m., lunch at 12 p.m., raffle prizes, food and more. Please join us!



# COWLITZ TRIBAL TUITION ASSISTANCE



By Gregg Ford, Education Committee Chair,  
g.ford@ctgc.cowlitz.org

The Tribal Council's continued support of the Tuition Assistance Program has provided tuition assistance to over 230 students during the 2021-22 academic year. Cowlitz members from 28 states, Australia, and Canada received tuition assistance to attend vocational, undergraduate, and graduate programs. Even though most of those receiving this award are recent High School graduates, many are older Cowlitz going back to school. The COVID-19 outbreak has dramatically changed the access people have to higher education and vocational schools. With schools providing more remote learning and digital platforms, many adults with jobs and families have the opportunity to start or continue their education.

Years ago, the Tribal Council not only understood the value of a traditional education, but the importance of providing the opportunity for vocational training. Students in vocational education and training can have the credentials they need to get started immediately in their chosen profession. The practical experience they receive is invaluable.

In January, applications for the 2022-23 academic year became available. The academic year is May 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023, and many Cowlitz members have already applied. For our present 2022-23 period, we currently have awarded 193 Cowlitz members Tuition Assistance. They are working toward degrees and certificates in Agriculture Production, Biology, Business, CDL, Communications, Computer science, Criminal Justice, Ecosystems and Environment, Education, Forensic Accounting, Health Care, Law, Literature, Psychology, Political Science, Veterinarian Medicine and Welding

For more information about the Cowlitz Education Tuition Assistance Program, visit the Education page under services on the Cowlitz Tribal website or email us at [education@cowlitz.org](mailto:education@cowlitz.org). Carol Burnison, our Assistance Coordinator (at 360-353-9588), would be glad to help you. Please make sure you follow the application instructions completely, so your application can be processed in an efficient manner. Students must be enrolled in a course of study leading to a certificate or degree from an accredited trade/vocational/professional school or an accredited college or university.

Beginning in the 2021-22 academic year, an annual Educational Costs GWE (General Welfare Exclusion) Benefit became available to all Tuition Assistance Award recipients in the first education term of the student's academic year. This \$1,000 annual benefit for educational costs may be used for, but is not limited to, books, computers, calculators, musical instruments, sports equipment, supplies for studies, tutors, clothing, room and board, and transportation to and from school. The new GWE Educational costs benefit has been greatly appreciated by our college and vocational students.

If you are a high school graduate or have a GED and are enrolled in a certificate or degree program at an accredited vocational school, college, or university and are not receiving Cowlitz Tuition Assistance; you may be eligible for the Educational Costs GWE Benefit. For more information, contact the Tuition Assistance Office at [tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org](mailto:tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org) or 360-353-9588.

## TUITION ASSISTANCE AND LIFETIME AWARD AMOUNTS

Cowlitz Tribal Funding Supports:

### **ONE Vocational Certificate**

Funding up to \$12,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$30,000.

For those interested in an academic degree, tribal funding will support:

### **ONE Associate Degree**

Funding up to \$6,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$15,000.

### **ONE Bachelor's Degree**

Funding up to \$11,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$50,000.

And if you wish to continue your education with a graduate degree, tribal funding will support you. There are three pathways to a graduate degree. In no case will a student's total maximum lifetime limit exceed \$70,000.

### **ONE Master's Degree**

Funding up to \$16,500 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$35,000.

### **ONE Doctorate following a Master's Degree**

Funding up to \$16,500 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$35,000.

### **ONE Doctorate bypassing a Master's Degree**

If a student bypasses a master's degree and moves from a bachelor's degree to a doctorate program, funding will be up to \$16,500 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$35,000.



## HEALING OF THE CANOE (HOC) SUMMER CULTURAL CAMPS

Healing of the Canoe had a very active and amazing summer yet again! We had six weeks of workshops rotating youth daily. These youth were engaged with us through our virtual workshops and in-person workshops throughout the year. Besides our drum making, hiking adventures and swimming to beat the heat, we were able to work with Alyssa Fine and her amazing team, sharing her knowledge of all things related to plants, trees and healthy traditional foods. Thank you for always taking time to work with our youth.

We worked with Tessa, Emma and Nichole to learn about healthy food choices and harvesting; they were even able to make pizza for our Elders. We had tobacco education with Deanna, and the youth were able to make sand candles while learning her history of making them. We even built a new partnership with a local gym. With most of our youth engaged in sports, they were able to learn proper techniques needed to help improve their skill levels.

We also headed up to Mount St. Helens, where the youth harvested plants and worked with Elders to make honey, which they were all able to take

home. The most new and exciting lesson for me came from John O'Brien when he taught us all how to properly filet fish, and the youth were able to take some home. Thank you, Charity Sabido-Hodges, for your help with this.

We ended our camps with taking some youth to Lower Columbia College where they learned some local options they can start working on in high school. Thank you, HOC families, for trusting us with your youth, always wanting to be part of the program, and all your support! For more HOC info, please call Vashti Langford at (360) 353-9547 or email [vlangford@cowlitz.org](mailto:vlangford@cowlitz.org).





# HOUSING DEPARTMENT - SUCCESS STORIES

"I had a really great experience with housing for the Down Payment Assistance Program. In April, I requested an application for down payment assistance. On April 12, I sent in my completed application to Mindi Young along with the required documents. The very next day, Mindi sent me an email back letting me know I qualified for the \$35,000 down payment assistance. Mindi needed a copy of my mortgage pre-approval letter, which I immediately sent her, then she was able to provide me with an award letter for my mortgage company. I provided my award letter to my mortgage company, and they worked with Mindi on the wire transfer for the funds. My mortgage company and escrow company provided housing with the rest of the documents needed. As soon as escrow was complete, I signed some paperwork and Mindi wired the funds on May 27. We were able to start moving into our new home during Memorial Day weekend! We are very thankful our Tribe has such an amazing program!"

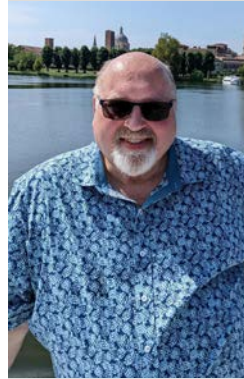
~ SHAINA OKERT

"When the COVID-19 shutdown first happened, I was good! I had adequate child care, and I was able to work every day, eight hours a day, 40 hours a week. Then my daycare provider got COVID-19 and shut down permanently. There were no other child care options out there, due to daycares shutting down or not accepting new kids. I was stuck between a rock and a hard place... Dave Barnett stepped in, and I was able to work from home. My little guy had just started kindergarten online, so I was not able to work 40 hours a week anymore. I had to reduce my hours, ultimately reducing my pay. I applied for the COVID-19 housing assistance and was approved! We would not have survived without the support from housing!! I was able to return to in-office work in December 2021. Fast-forward to March 2022,

I moved into a beautiful rental house. I applied for student rental assistance, and I was approved! I am able to attend college classes full-time, work from home and mother my child with the support of housing!! I do not qualify for food assistance through DSHS, so the support of Cowlitz Housing is essential to our survival! I am able to buy groceries, pay for gas and pay my bills! I do not know the situation we would be in without the support of Cowlitz Housing, and I don't want to know!! Thank you, Tribal Council, for supporting Cowlitz Housing; thank you, Cowlitz Housing, for supporting my family and many other Cowlitz families!!

~ BRANDY JOHNSON

## DAN MEYER TO RETIRE



Dan Meyer, Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, will be retiring this fall after a career spanning more than four decades. A lifelong tribal member, his tenure in this position reaches back to February 2014, and he has been instrumental in leading, managing and supporting the information technology and systems for all non-casino enterprises of the Cowlitz.

Prior to becoming CIO, Dan was already involved with tribal service, joining the Economic Development Committee in 2009 and being elected to the Tribal Council in 2011. He spent nearly a decade on the Tribal Council and served for more than eight years as General Council Treasurer. Although his Tribal Council service ended in late 2020, Dan has continued his involvement through committee memberships, including the Clark County Fund of the Cowlitz Tribal Foundation.

We wish Dan well in his retirement and look forward to sharing who will step in upon his departure, as human resources is actively recruiting for this demanding position.



**TUKWILA SUD CLINICAL SUPERVISOR BRETT SANDLIN** (Turtle Mountain Chippewa) dancing men's traditional style at the 2022 Seafair Indian Days Powwow at Daybreak Star.

# COWLITZ TRIBE PREPARES FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF RESTORATION PROJECTS ON THE CISPUS RIVER

In 2020 and 2021, the Restoration Program of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Natural Resources Department implemented the first two phases of its Cispus-Yellowjacket Habitat Restoration Project. These projects are meant to establish tree- and shrub-covered islands using planting and engineered log jams. These islands will create and maintain braided river channels that improve the quality of habitat for spawning, rearing and juvenile salmon.

The project site is located south of Randle, Washington, in eastern Lewis County, adjacent to the Cispus Learning Center, an outdoor education facility that hosts students year-round.

Land-use changes on the Cispus and other rivers have resulted in less structure on their floodplains. When the rains start or glaciers melt, the river rises. The resulting flows take out emerging plants and rearrange the floodplain, wiping out fish nests and young trees and shrubs. These islands create stability, shelter for young

plants, and provide places for fish to emerge from their eggs and grow big enough to make the journey downstream and then out to sea.

Cispus-Yellowjacket phases 1 and 2 placed 22 log jam/islands into the project area. Phase 3 will place an additional 18 structures into Yellowjacket Creek and on the Cispus River. These projects will be followed up by the fourth phase of projects as well as the realignment of 2801 Forest Road. These projects, when combined, will treat enough floodplain and river habitat to give young spring Chinook, winter steelhead and coho a better chance at leaving the system bigger and healthier, which significantly increases their chances of returning as spawning adults in the years to come.

Funding for the Cispus-Yellowjacket suite of projects comes from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), the Salmon Recovery Board (SRFB) through Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and Tacoma Power.



"Cispus before" is a collage of several drone photos taken of the project area. From below right Yellowjacket Creek flows into the Cispus River, which flows from east to west in this area (right to left in the image). The images were taken in November 2019.



"Cispus after" shows the confluence of Yellowjacket Creek and the Cispus River, the location of Cispus-Yellowjacket phases 1 and 2. You can see several log jams and the new braided creek and river system. Visible in the image is the Cispus Learning Center in the bottom right of the drone image.

# CYBERSECURITY: YOU AND YOUR EMAIL

By Troy Bouchard, ilani's Cyber Security Specialist, Saghali@me.com

In today's world, email can be your main form of communication. I remember about 35 years ago email was just a myth, although DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) was using it for themselves since they basically built the internet.

I can still recall getting on the computer and connecting to the internet and never thinking twice about joining a bulletin board system.

Nowadays you need to make sure you are safe from bad actors (naughty hackers) by using an anti-virus program; however, sometimes your anti-virus program gets tricked and lets in a message that is going to try to deceive you.

This is where you need STOP, LOOK and THINK. Resist that urge to immediately open the email or text message. If you get an email that is from "FedEx," ask yourself, "Did I order anything that is being shipped with FedEx?" Then, check the tracking number. Go to the FedEx site and enter that number in the tracking section of FedEx, and see if it is actually a package for you — nine times out of 10 it will be an invalid number and not anything for you.



## OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF IN AN EMAIL:

- Is the date current?
- Is everything in the email credible?
- Is the email trying to evoke a strong emotional reaction from you?
- Is the email threatening you in any way?
- Is the email giving you a sense of urgency?



Don't let the fish pass you by!!

## Cowlitz Tribal Members Fish Distribution Program

Sign up to be on the distribution list  
P: 360.206.0972 | E: fishdistribution@cowlitz.org

If you would like fresh fish, contact Kirk Russel at 360.772.9935

Elders needing filleted fish please call 360.864.7006

## HEALING PRAYER

By Traci Johnston-Ruiz

*Dear Creator and our protective eagles, soar over our tribal lands and protect the generations before us — here, now and in our future. I pray for all Cowlitz people. Actions speak louder than words. Let our creator blow winds of mercy and healing; cover our people and our legends with a protective covering of good faith and healing, removing any stains on our soil brush. The eagle feathers of serenity and love and peace over our nation remand justice and peace, never forgetting where we came from. Dust to dust, our creator, cover us all. Wash the sins clean, amen. Great eagle, watch and protect us from injuries, and let us soar again in our inner peacefulness and mindful spirits as we stand together as a Tribe and strive to be as one nation under our creator. Bring us peace, protection and healing, amen.*

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

By Christine Duitman, Tribal Court Administrator



In addition to engaging in daily activities and providing safety and service to all that visit the reservation and ilani, the Public Safety Tribal Police Department is continuing to reach out to our neighbors and provide backup support, protection and assistance when needed.

The department was able to utilize the remaining grant funds that were

available to purchase much-needed equipment for the officers and to provide the costs for a Human Trafficking Seminar for all law enforcement officers and personnel in the state. We have space for 100 participants, and the class is currently overfilled. We will have presenters from the attorney general's office and Portland human trafficking detectives and research analysts in addition to other experts in their fields.

Along with the Youth Fair in June, the Public Safety Department participated in the Ridgefield Fourth of July Parade & Festival, Amboy Frontier Days Parade, Toledo Cheese Days parade and Ridgefield National Night Out. National Night Out is geared towards law enforcement and is an opportunity to share the stage with the community and to show residents the abundance of resources available in the surrounding communities and Clark County. There were over 25 community resources represented at this event including local law enforcement agencies from Clark County, Ridgefield, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Clark County

Sheriff's Office. Hosted by the City of Ridgefield and the Ridgefield Police Department, this event had something for everyone to learn and take with them, which encourages all first responders in the surrounding areas to come together in a common place where the community can ask questions, see police vehicles, play games and have an enjoyable experience

As the reservation's commercial ventures continue to grow and with the completion of the hotel forthcoming, the Public Safety Department anticipates there will be an increase in services and assistance calls to the department. The Public Safety Department is preparing for this growth and development of additional properties and is ready and available 24 hours a day.

Looking ahead, the department is excited about participating in the upcoming Cowlitz Tribe Pow Wow in Longview, Washington. This is always a great time to meet tribal members and introduce our officers to the Cowlitz Tribe. Look for our booth there and come have your picture taken in our police car.





## Pathways to Healing

**SK ʷƏNÍNUWASMITSTAWT Ł TIT SNXMÁNTNK**  
**(We are thinking about our relatives)**

It is our mission to honor traditional values and beliefs that promote safety and well-being for Native American/Alaska Native families and individuals by providing a holistic approach to inform, educate, and heal our communities affected by violence.

Our services are offered to any Cowlitz Tribal member no matter where they live and support individuals and/or families who are currently, have experienced, or know someone who has experienced, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex-trafficking, stalking and/or elder abuse at any time in their life.

*Come visit our honoring table for Missing and Murdered Cowlitz Tribal Members at the next General Council meeting. The display has taken shape with the guidance of our tribal elders and ancestors.*



Vancouver Office  
7700 NE 26th Ave.  
Vancouver, WA 98665  
360-397-8228

Longview Office  
928 Fir St.  
Longview, WA 98632  
360-575-6239

Tukwila Office  
15455 65th Ave. S.  
Tukwila, WA 98188  
206-721-5170



Pathways to Healing has launched an online store with our **“Thinking about our Relatives”** MMIW shirts! The QR code will take you directly to the site where you can find them or you can go to [www.bonfire.com/store/cowlitz-indian-tribe---pathways-to-healing/](http://www.bonfire.com/store/cowlitz-indian-tribe---pathways-to-healing/)



### SKLOUTWOUT FAMILY REUNION

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the Skloutwout family resumed their tradition of more than two decades by gathering again the last Sunday of August for a family reunion at Lewis and Clark State Park near Toledo, Washington. Those in attendance shared the traditions of a potluck meal, the passing on of family knowledge, pictures, stories, and the addition of names to the large family tree that represents the many branches of the descendants of Skloutwout of Cowlitz heritage. Because of other simultaneous tribal or family events, the attendance was not as large as anticipated, but the perfect weather, the beauty of the park in aboriginal Cowlitz territory and the reconnection with others made for a very special afternoon together.

If you desire additional information about the Skloutwout reunion or wish to be added to the Skloutwout family email list for future announcements, please contact Linda Foley at (206) 276-6010 or email her at [foley.ls@gmail.com](mailto:foley.ls@gmail.com).



## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The Public Works Department continues to serve our Tribe with the highest regard for safety and quality standards in meeting the everyday demands of our clients. With newly elected Tribal Council members and tribal leadership, we stand ready to change and adapt our 5- to 10-year strategic plan to meet the new administration's objectives for the Cowlitz Tribe. We at the Public Works Department encourage change, and we are ready and willing to adapt to the changes as directed by tribal leadership.

Calling all Native business owners! If you or someone you know owns a business, we want to hear about it. The Public Works Department is prioritizing working with and supporting Native-owned businesses. We may be able to utilize your services or refer your business to others. Please contact us with your scope of work and business details, so we may add you to our contacts.

The mental health remodel was the first major project that Building and Planning managed from beginning to end. The project started in 2020 when we reached out to find a bid for the design of the suite. We coordinated meetings with Health and Human Services (HHS) leadership, along with our architects, repeatedly throughout the design process until a complete design was developed in 2021. That same year, we put the project out to bid for construction and quickly began construction soon after awarding the project. In December 2021, construction began. We have worked closely with the contractor to ensure the project went smoothly and with as few delays as possible. Construction was fully completed by the end of August, and the City of Longview building inspector recently gave their approval to allow us to occupy the space!





## COWLITZ GARDEN CONTINUES TO GROW

Tessa Halloran, Education and Outreach Coordinator,  
CIT Community Wellness Garden

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Community Wellness Garden, located at Cowlitz Tribal Housing in Toledo, is finishing its fourth year!

Established in 2019 under the Wellness & Diabetes Program, the Community Wellness Garden began as a way to provide fresh produce to tribal Elders and the Senior Nutrition Program. When Cowlitz Elders were asked how the garden program has impacted them, one responded: "Oh I've loved the garden from the very beginning...because when you do that kind of stuff all your life it's a part of you...even though I can't do that anymore, I love to see it and be out there and harvest."

In addition to native Elders, the program also serves all Cowlitz tribal members and any members of the Native community experiencing food insecurity. There are now eight distribution sites in addition to the produce being used by the Senior Nutrition Program. One Cowlitz tribal member remarked, "the garden gives us beautiful fresh produce. It brings Mother Earth back to where we live." The garden has served as a safe, outdoor gathering place during the difficult past few years, promoting social wellness in a time when many felt isolated and disconnected.

With the support of our community, we have been able to grow even more. Over the last year, the program has added a third garden plot, community garden opportunities in Longview and Vancouver, and a 700-foot-long native plant walk in collaboration with the Natural Resources Department. In addition to offering annual events, like Doorstep Gardens, Harvest Fest and a youth internship, the garden is also continuing to expand its educational programming and partnerships with other CIT programs.

If you are interested in receiving produce or in our other offerings, reach out to [garden@cowlitz.org](mailto:garden@cowlitz.org).



Fire Engine Donated by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe

## FIREFIGHTER



Cowlitz Indian Tribe member Michael Reid, son of William Reid and grandson of Arthur Reid, serves the community as an emergency medical technician, also known as EMT.

Michael got into this line of work after witnessing, at the age of 20, an elderly woman get hit by a car in a downpour, and he provided first aid at the scene until first responders arrived. It was pouring down rain and first responders placed him in the paramedic unit and eventually had a conversation with him about his natural ability to jump in and help.

At that time, Michael was playing semi-pro baseball in an independent league and worked for his dad during the off-season. When he came home one night, his parents had made a career choice for him to go to college and forego the family business. He attended Central Washington University, where he joined the EMT/Paramedic Program, on the advice of the first responders he met at the scene of the accident.

Michael's first placement was in the mid-1990s as a resident firefighter, where one lived in the fire station. When a resident is not working as a firefighter, they are going to school. Essentially, it was room and board in exchange for being a firefighter at night.

This is an excellent career choice for those wishing to spend their time helping people and who, like Michael, thrive on being outdoors. Michael knew early on that he did not have the attention span to sit at a desk for work, so this was a great career move for him.

He added that this is a very good career — financially, physically and emotionally — noting that there has been a tough guy mentality to keep emotions bundled up; that part has been a struggle, but the stigma around addressing the health of all types is changing. He encourages tribal members, including his children, to seek a career in this field, adding that his son is interested in becoming a firefighter.





# CLARK-COWLITZ FIRE RESCUE (CCFR)

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe has had a long-term relationship with Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue and has provided them with a fire truck through a grant. Recently, the Emergency Medical Services Levy passed, allowing for CCFR to hire up to 25 new emergency responders which will allow for 1 one paramedic and two EMTs on every response apparatus. CCFR covers 125 square miles including the Cowlitz Indian Tribe reservation and the cities of La Center, Ridgefield and Woodland.



New firefighters must attend a 12-week Basic Fire Academy, after which they are transferred to fire stations to begin work. Firefighters work with people from many backgrounds and must have strong social skills and the ability to think and communicate clearly in very stressful situations. CCFR has multiple areas where firefighters can learn other skills and participate in responses, such as technical rescue, marine/boat response, rescue swimming, fire prevention, public education and community paramedicine.



Firefighters and EMTs earn \$78,674 in their first year of employment with an annual increase that tops out at \$104,907 after five years. More information regarding incentives, special assignments, benefits and overtime pay can be requested directly from CCFR Fire Chief John Nohr at [john.nohr@clarkfr.org](mailto:john.nohr@clarkfr.org) or (360) 887-4609.

# COWLITZ TRIBAL GAMING AGENCY - REGULATORY UNIT

BY: SUMMER PETTY, REGULATORY UNIT MANAGER

The Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Agency (TGA) is the staff arm of the Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Commission (CTGC). CTGC is an independent agency of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe with comprehensive gaming regulatory responsibilities. CTGC is the five-person panel appointed by Tribal Council to regulate gambling activities on the reservation. We are sometimes confused with the Cowlitz Tribal Gaming Authority (CTGA), a totally different entity whose function is to oversee the business management of Ilani. CTGA manages the business of the casino; TGA and CTGC make sure it is following all applicable gambling laws and rules.

TGA is made up of four divisions, each performing a specific task. We previously talked about our Licensing Team. This article will highlight the functions of our Regulatory Unit.

The Regulatory Unit works closely with all TGA departments and Gaming Operations to carry out their duties. Their roles and duties ensure that patrons participate in fair gaming, and that violations, crimes and unusual activities are fully investigated. The department operates 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

Agents are authorized through the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Gaming Ordinance, National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), Minimum Internal Control Standards (MICS) and the Tribal-State Compact.

Tribal Gaming Agents regulate by being present for specific activities; investigating violations of procedures, regulations and laws; as well as performing inspections of regulated areas, gaming equipment, gaming operation employees and the gambling public to ensure compliance with tribal, federal, and, if applicable, state laws and regulations. Agents also provide liaison functions with federal and state agencies.

Disputes between the gaming public and Gaming Operations are investigated by the Regulatory Unit. We will investigate disputes when requested by operations, patrons or the Washington State Gambling Commission (WSGC). We gather all relevant information regarding the dispute to come to an unbiased conclusion based upon the facts available.

When violations are identified, we may take enforcement action under the CTGC Enforcement Regulation and/or the CTGC Barring Regulation.

Responsible gambling is of the utmost importance. Gambling should be like any other form of entertainment: budgeting how much time and money to spend. However, some individuals find themselves straining their finances and time (time away from family, friends, work or even sleep). Despite negative consequences, they continue. This may mean that gambling is becoming more than just entertainment. Regulatory agents assist those persons who are dealing with problems related to gambling by enrolling them into self-barring. This prohibits them from gambling and provides them helpful resources including referrals to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Health and Human Services Problem Gambling Program.

The Regulatory Unit consists of 23 staff members, including 20 agents, two supervisors and one manager. Of those staff members, 35% are Cowlitz tribal members, 48% are Native (Cowlitz and other tribes) and 22% are veterans.

For more information about the GTGC, TGA and various regulations, please visit our website: [cowlitz-tga.org](http://cowlitz-tga.org).

# ILANI REMAINS COMMITTED TO RECYCLING AND REDUCING WASTE

Guests of ilani will soon notice new receptacles across the property thanks to the team's continued commitment to recycling and reducing waste. The new receptacles were designed by the ilani team after gathering guest feedback. These newly designed receptacles use both words, icons and color coding to help assist guests and team members when disposing items by differentiating where each item will be collected. This helps the talented environmental services team in their efforts to expertly maintain ilani's award-winning appearance.

This effort is a great example of ilani's commitment to our environment to do our part to ensure a greater tomorrow for our guests and our community. By encouraging guests to responsibly recycle at ilani, we are hopeful that our commitment to recycling serves as an example to other businesses in our community to commit to a sustainable recycling program. These receptacles are just one example of ilani's efforts to help reduce, reuse and recycle.

The team at ilani is committed to our environment as well as striving to be fiscally responsible in supporting the company's recycling efforts. The cost of disposing of landfill items is currently greater than the cost to recycle. With this knowledge, ilani is saving operating costs by continually improving recycling efforts. Instead of incurring the cost to dispose of items in the landfill, ilani has negotiated reasonable costs to responsibly dispose of glass and co-mingle other recyclables and cardboard. Additionally, ilani receives a rebate on cardboard by the ton that is removed from the property.

A look in numbers at the impact ilani has made through the dedication toward recycling on property in 2021 is to the side. With such large numbers and powerful statistics, our company is optimistic about continued improvement in the recycling efforts at ilani and in the surrounding community. Recycling has proven environmental benefits by conserving natural resources, such as timber, water and minerals, and preventing pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials. The Cowlitz reservation is a beautiful place to work, and ilani is dedicated to keeping it that way for many years to come.



## 2021 ILANI RECYCLING MEASURES IMPACT

**354,120 lbs  
cardboard**

an estimated 600,000 boxes  
recycled

**320,310 lbs  
Glass bottles**

estimated at over 821,000  
beer bottles recycled

**874,125 lbs  
Organic food/  
trimmings**

turned into compost  
for Clark County

**29,120 lbs  
Co-mingled  
recycling**

mostly plastic (estimated at  
over 1 million water bottles)



COWLITZ INDIAN TRIBE  
1055 9th Ave Ste B  
Longview WA 98632-2661

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# another big win thanks to you!



Thank you so much for voting ilani Best Casino for the sixth consecutive year. It is truly an honor. Come celebrate this victory with us at your favorite gaming, dining, entertainment, and meeting destination.

[ilaniresort.com](http://ilaniresort.com) 1.877.60.ilani  
1 Cowlitz Way, Ridgefield, WA 98642  
LOCATED JUST OFF I-5 AT EXIT 16



 **ilani**  
sounds like fun