

- TRIBAL UPDATE -
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My Brother's Keeper Local Action Summit



Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit Haida Central Council) in collaboration with Sealaska, convened a local action summit Friday, November 7th in response to President Obama's White House initiative, "My Brother's Keeper" (MBK). The Tribe is one of only two tribes in Alaska and 15 tribes nationwide that have committed to the challenge.

The MBK initiative is a call to action to community members (mayors, tribal leaders, schools, agencies/organizations, etc.), who offer a program or service that provides a vital resource and is an integral component to improving the life outcome of young minority males. The initiative challenges communities to work together on developing a plan of action and safety net of resources to help young people reach their full potential.

Nearly 75 community leaders representing tribal, municipal, and state governments along with agencies/organizations participated in the summit. Andy Lee of Sitka facilitated the summit with

opening remarks provided by Sealaska President/CEO Anthony Mallott, Tlingit Haida Central Council President Richard Peterson (read by Melissa Kookesh), and Governmental Affairs Liaison Barbara Blake; keynote address provided by Youth Representative Brandon Mayer; and panel discussion with Joe Tompkins, Brandon Mayer, Josh Clark, and Shilo Valle. The afternoon breakout sessions focused on six areas of life that can be indicators of later success and also where interventions can have the greatest impact:

1. All children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally ready to learn.
2. All children read at grade level by third grade.
3. All youth graduate from high school.
4. All youth complete post-secondary education or training.
5. All youth out of school are employed.
6. All youth remain safe from violent crimes.

Data presented during the summit revealed Alaska Natives suffer from disproportionately high rates of mortality (suicide and homicide), exposure to violent crimes, substance abuse, and high school dropout. While the statistics presented were difficult to hear, it was necessary for participants to review in order for the group to move forward with purpose and have a deep understanding of the many barriers our young Alaska Native males face.

Based on the outcome of the summit, a policy review to form recommendations for action is scheduled to be held January 24, 2015 with a final plan of action to be completed no later than March 23, 2015. For MBK Local Action Summit statistical data and breakout session reports, please visit: www.cchita.org/info/events/MBKInitiative.html.

Tribe Welcomes the Return of a *Khaach.ádi* Clan Hat

On November 9, 2014, during the San Francisco Tlingit & Haida Community Council's Bi-Annual Culture Fair, the Oakland Museum of California returned a repatriated clan hat, *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* (Frog Hat). The clan hat is a sacred object and object of cultural patrimony of the *Khaach.ádi* clan of Wrangell. It is painted, overlaid with copper and abalone shell, and decorated on top with small woven rings and ermine skins.



As a sacred object, the clan hat is a treasured object necessary for ongoing clan ceremonies. It is also an object of cultural patrimony, owned by a group and not an individual, which means *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* is inalienable by an individual without proven group consent.

The documented history of *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* indicates it was "collected" in Wrangell by a local shop owner named Fred Carlyon and his sister Anna Vaughn. The clan hat was later donated to the Oakland Museum of California by the daughter of Mrs. Vaughn's daughter in 1959.

Historical photographs of *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* in use as well as the clan's oral history on the clan hat, provided the evidence necessary to petition for its return. Tlingit Haida Central Council submitted a

repatriation claim on behalf of the *Khaach.ádi* clan in 2008. The hat was approved for repatriation in 2013 and is the first repatriation from the Oakland Museum of California. Although the *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* had been turned over to Tlingit Haida Central Council, it had been on loan to the museum until arrangements could be made to retrieve it and has been displayed at the museum as part of an exhibit that explains the repatriation process.

Tlingit Haida Central Council's 1st Vice President William Micklin accepted *Khixhch'i S'aaxhw* from the Oakland Museum of California. The *Yaaw Tei Yi* dance group welcomed the hat's return with song and dance wearing repatriated Chilkat blankets of Chief Shakes of the *Naanya.aayí*, Herring Rock Robe of the *Kiks.ádi*, and the *Dakhl'aweidí* Killerwhale Hat.

The hat was wrapped in Chief Shakes' blanket for its journey home as well as the *Yanyeidí* Wolf Tunic with the repatriated *Dakhl'aweidí* hat alongside it. The *Khaach.ádi* clan will announce at a later date when the hat will be brought out in Wrangell.

"*Yeedát sá yéi át yatee, oo awdudlixhaaji xhooni kháa, heinaxh kháa géidei yaxh ghaagoot...*Life should be this way that a relative you've given up hope of ever seeing again and suddenly they come around the corner," said Cultural Resource Specialist Harold Jacobs during the repatriation ceremony.

Tribal Sovereignty Case Featured on Alaska Supreme Court LIVE

Tribal Attorney Jessie Archibald and Alaska Legal Services' Attorney Holly Handler, traveled to Ketchikan to participate in oral argument defending inherent tribal sovereignty in *State of Alaska v. Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*. Tlingit Haida Central Council's case was selected to be part of the Alaska Supreme Court LIVE program which was held at Ketchikan High School on November 19, 2014. Assistant Attorney General Mary Lunquist represented the State of Alaska, arguing that Alaska tribes do not have inherent authority to issue child support orders for tribal member children. Holly Handler, on behalf of the Tribe, argued Tlingit Haida Central Council does have inherent authority to issue support orders when the case involves a tribal member child.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) submitted an amicus brief on behalf of the Tribe and was granted permission to present oral argument supporting the Tribe's position. Stacy Stoller from the DOJ argued the federal government was concerned because of Alaska's "blanket refusal to enforce any and all of the tribes' child support orders..." and that this refusal "interferes directly with the effective administration of the federal child support enforcement laws." After oral arguments were presented, students were allowed to ask questions of the attorneys and the Alaska Supreme Court justices.

The State and Tribe have been locked in this legal battle for more than four years, as the State of Alaska has refused to recognize both the Tribe's child support program and its Tribal Court. At the lower court level, the Tribe received a powerful victory and injunction requiring State recognition from Superior Court Judge Phillip Pallenberg, but because of the State's appeal to the Supreme Court, the Tribe has been forced to defend the inherent tribal sovereignty to handle the full range of family law issues affecting our people. Chief Justice Dana Fabe said that the Court is expected to issue a decision within a year. To view the proceedings, visit: www.360north.org/2014/11/14/state-alaska-v-central-council-tingit-haida-indian-tribes.

Native American Heritage Month Dinner

Tlingit Haida Central Council was pleased to host a special community dinner on November 20th in recognition of Native American Heritage month. A strong turnout of tribal citizens, leaders, and community members filled the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall where the event was held.

President Richard Peterson welcomed guests and provided opening remarks on the historic passage of House Bill 216 recognizing 20 Alaska Native languages as official languages of the State of Alaska and House Bill 217 establishing November 14th of each year as Walter Soboleff Day. The event featured Master of Ceremony Lance (*Xh'unei*) Twitchell, Keynote Speaker Elizabeth (*Laa.guen.gei, Kaa Tsáas*) Medicine Crow, and included comments from co-sponsors Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council, Alaska Native Brotherhood/Sisterhood, Sealaska Corporation, and SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.

Tlingit Haida Central Council would like to express a deep thank you to all co-sponsors and the Alaska Native Brotherhood Camp # 70 for providing catering services for the event. For those who were unable to attend the dinner, a recording can be viewed at: new.livestream.com/accounts/507620.

President Peterson Appointed to Native American Rights Fund Board

President Richard Peterson was recently selected to serve on the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) Board of Directors. Founded in 1970, NARF is a non-profit organization and national Indian legal defense fund that focuses on the preservation and protection of Indian rights and resources through applying existing laws and treaties.



NARF is governed by a volunteer board of directors composed of thirteen American Indian/Alaska Native leaders across the country. Board members serve a two-year term and are chosen based on their involvement and knowledge of Indian issues and affairs, as well as their tribal affiliation to ensure a comprehensive geographical representation. The board meets three times a year and is responsible for approving the annual budget, providing direction on the type and number of cases to undertake, and serves as ambassadors for NARF throughout Indian country.

“I am very excited at the opportunity to serve on the NARF Board of Directors,” said President Peterson. “There are many challenges facing our tribes and tribal citizens in Indian Country and NARF is a tremendous tool to continue the battles started by our forefathers on behalf of our children.”

President Peterson joins the following NARF board members:

- Tex Hall, Board Treasurer
- Gerald Danforth, Board Chairman
- Natasha V. Singh, Board Vice Chair
- Buford L. Rolin
- Peter Pino
- Moses Haia, Board Executive Committee
- Julie Roberts-Hyslop
- Virginia Cross
- Mark Macarro
- Barbara Smith
- Gary Hayes
- Stephen Lewis, Board Executive Committee
- Larry Olinger

Walker/Mallott Transition Team

President Peterson was pleased to participate in the historic Walker/Mallott transition conference that was held at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) campus November 21 – 23, 2014.

As a part of the team, President Peterson participated on a subcommittee group where he helped to identify priority issues, areas of agreement, and areas of unresolved issues with the goal of creating a comprehensive map of issues, challenges and opportunities that reflect a broad cross section of Alaskans.



“It is an honor to have been selected to be a part of the Walker/Mallott Transition Team,” said President Peterson. “This team is a true reflection of ‘Unity’. I was pleased to see the diversity across the many groups and that Alaska’s first people were strongly represented.”

Save the Date – Native Artist Market

In association with Juneau’s Public Market, Tlingit Haida Central Council’s Business & Economic Development Department will be hosting a Native Artist Market at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall over Thanksgiving weekend. Handmade products such as sea otter apparel, jewelry, textile weaving, woodwork, Devil’s Club salve and other Native goods will be available. Please join us in supporting our Native artists!

Event: Native Artist Market
Date: November 28 - 30, 2014
Time: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (free admission)
Location: Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall
320 W Willoughby Avenue - Juneau AK

Save the Date – Juneau Holiday Information Fair

Tlingit Haida Central Council is pleased to join other Native entities in co-sponsoring Sealaska’s annual shareholder holiday fair. The event will include Alaska Native artists tables, children’s activities, photos with Santa, dance performances, and information tables from event sponsors/partners and local service agencies. Tlingit Haida Central Council will have staff on site to provide information on the following programs: Adult Vocational Training, Elderly Services, Enrollment, Environmental Services, Higher Education, and Temporary Assistance for Native Families (TANF).

Event: Juneau Holiday Information Fair
Date: December 5, 2014
Time: 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Location: Centennial Hall - Juneau AK

In the spirit of collaboration to better serve our tribal citizens, we look forward to providing information on Tlingit Haida Central Council’s programs and services!