



**CENTRAL COUNCIL**  
*Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Tribe Adjourns 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Tribal Assembly**



**Juneau, AK** (April 22, 2017) – Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) adjourned its 82nd Annual Tribal Assembly on April 21, 2017 at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall in Juneau, Alaska. Attending this year’s assembly were 99 of 107 Delegates who traveled in from Southeast Alaska, Anchorage, San Francisco, Seattle, and beyond to conduct the business of the Tribe.

“Looking to Our Past, Living for Our Future” was the theme selected for this year’s Tribal Assembly which was also declared a

Constitutional Convention. The Tribal Assembly opened with the Posting of the Colors and a Grand Entrance led by the *Has Du Eetéex' X'aakeidíx Haa Sitee* dance group. Tribal Host Lowell Halverson of Washington and Tribal Hostess Ethel Lund of Juneau were introduced and presented with cedar hats. Ethel, who is one of the founding members of the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) took the stage opportunity to present President Richard Peterson with a framed photo of her with a little boy and shared a heartwarming story of how she first met President Peterson in Kasaan over 30 years ago.

Special welcomes were given by Governor Bill Walker, Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott, City and Borough of Juneau Mayor Ken Koelsch, Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council President Janice Hotch and Alaska Native Brotherhood/Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANB/ANS) Grand Camp Presidents Sasha Soboleff and Cecilia Tavoliero.

“The effort that President Peterson has embarked upon to bring tribes together across the state to represent their interest is critical to our future,” said Lt. Governor Mallott.

President Peterson’s State of the Tribe Address emphasized the business and economic development endeavors of the Tribe, efforts to expand Tribal Court and new opportunities to compact directly with the State of Alaska and City and Borough of Juneau. Reports from Tlingit Haida Tribal Business Corporation CEO Richard Rinehart and KIRA President Carlos Garcia underscored the great steps taken to reduce the Tribe’s reliance on federal and state funding through strategic business acquisitions and government contracting. A Keynote Address from Lance Morgan, President of Ho-Chunk Tribal

Business Corporation, promoted and paved a vision for a thriving future for Tlingit & Haida by sharing the success story of Ho-Chunk nation which has become one of the more prosperous tribes in the United States.

“The important take away from this year’s Tribal Assembly is that there are so many great things happening within the Tribe and among our youth and people,” said President Peterson. “We are focusing the Tribe’s efforts on economic development and increasing our self-governance because we want to ensure a bright future for our children and generations to come. This Tribal Assembly was one of the best. You can really get a sense for just how strong our Tribe really is and we’re going to come back even stronger next year.”

Reports were also heard on Washington DC from Holland & Knight attorney Phil Baker-Shenk; National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) from Executive Director Jacqueline Pata; Transboundary Mining, US Census, RurAL CAP, SEARHC, and from Tlingit & Haida’s Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Tribal Court, Emerging Leader and standing committees (Audit, Judiciary and Enrollment).

For the first time in the history of Tribal Assembly, Delegates were addressed by British Columbia (BC) Assembly of First Nations (AFN). Regional Chief Maureen Chapman who is a Skawahlook First Nation Chief reaffirmed that Tlingit & Haida has a partner in BC AFN. President Peterson reached out to the BC AFN last year with an appeal for partnership regarding the great potential for impact especially on the issue of transboundary mining.

“We are here to formally commit to further engagement and partnership regarding the areas where cooperation will only strengthen our mutual nationhood,” said Regional Chief Chapman. “When we discuss transboundary issues we acknowledge what we share - the future is ours, the past is ours and the borders that separate us, which were imposed on us, do not preclude us from cooperation and partnership as we move forward in preparing our people for a prosperous future.”



A moving speech from outgoing Emerging Leader Miciana Hutcherson reflected on her experiences and opportunities over the last year serving as the Emerging Leader and all the great work young tribal leaders are already accomplishing across our communities.

“From our children in foster care to our youth on the rolls in the Higher Ed scholarship program, every single one has the potential to be sitting in this room one day,” said Miciana. “We have young carvers, artists,

actors, writers, activists, politicians, scientists, hunters, fishermen, carpenters, police officers, historians, vloggers – our children are infinite. If our future doesn't measure up to their infinite possibilities then we only have ourselves to blame." Miciansa's full report is available on Tlingit & Haida's ***Tribal Assembly Event page***.

During the Tribal Assembly, elections were also held for Tribal Court Judge, Emerging Leader, and Delegate/Citizen of the Year – ***Aurora (Kawaanyaa) Lehr*** was unanimously re-elected to another two-year term as Tribal Court Judge, ***Keenan Sanderson*** of Ketchikan was elected as the 2017-2018 Emerging Leader and ***James Price*** of Washington was elected as Delegate/Citizen of the Year.

A total of 22 resolutions were brought forth by Delegates and Tlingit & Haida community councils – 10 were adopted, 2 were adopted as amended, 3 failed, 1 was deferred to committee, and 6 were deferred to the Executive Council. Once adopted, resolutions are the policy of the Tribe for the next two years.

Key resolutions adopted by the Tribal Assembly gave direction to: recommend that guideline harvest level for the herring sac roe fishery in certain areas be established using a maximum harvest rate of 10 percent of the spawning biomass (TA 17-01); request the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site include Elizabeth Peratrovich in the Civil Rights Walk of Fame (TA 17-02), oppose the State National Forest Management Act (HR 232) and the transfer of federally managed public lands to the State of Alaska (TA 17-03); support the Congressional Delegation's request for the federal government to become involved in the transboundary region (TA 17-04); support the candidacy of Alyssa London in the Miss USA pageant (TA 17-05); develop a tribal code entitled enactment, revision or repeal of tribal codes (TA 17-06); appoint a committee to develop a plan for clear separation of powers between legislative, executive and judicial branches of Tlingit & Haida (TA 17-07); support the placement of the ANSEP Accelerated School in Wrangell (TA 17-10); and not engage or finance activities that undermine or damage the sovereignty and well-being of Indian tribes and their citizens (17-11). A full listing of all resolutions will be made available on Tlingit & Haida's ***website***.

As the final action of the day, Delegates reviewed proposed amendments to the Constitution. Due to limited time, only a portion of the proposed amendments to the Constitution were heard and acted on – the remainder of the proposed amendments were deferred to the 83rd Annual Tribal Assembly along with amendments to the Tribe's other governing documents (Standing Rules of Order, Rules of Election and Statute Title One). A special committee will be formed to review the proposed amendments and report at the next Tribal Assembly.

Other highlights of the Tribal Assembly included the announcement of San Francisco Tlingit & Haida Community Council as the Small Community Council of the Year (no nominations received for Large Community Council of the Year, a powerful exit dance performance by *Woosh.ji.een*, and Welcome Banquet. The Welcome Banquet held at the Juneau Arts & Culture Center included a President's Award Ceremony and special performance by *Ldakát Naax sati' Yatx'I* (All Nations Children) dance group. Haida master weaver Delores Churchill was presented with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award by President Peterson which designated April 19, 2017 as Delores Churchill Day. Seven President's Every Day Hero awards were also presented – Della Cheney (Culture Bearer), James Hart (Emerging Leader), Cindy Mills (Hold Each Other Up), Heather Powell (Inspiring Educator), Alfie Price (Language Warrior), Holly Handler (Tribal Ally) and John Smith III (Youth Mentor).

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