



# The Seminole Tribune

Voice of the Unconquered

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## Tribe plays big role at FSU homecoming

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**TALLAHASSEE** — Florida State University homecoming's 75th anniversary was a tribute not just to the university, but also to the school's long-standing relationship with the Seminole Tribe.

Tribal leaders and princesses represented the tribe at events Oct. 20 and Oct. 21. The culmination came at the school's football game against Duke University. It marked the first "Seminole Heritage" football game that featured FSU coaches and fans sporting turquoise hats and shirts as a tribute to the tribe.

On Oct. 20, fans lined the streets on campus for the annual homecoming parade. Connie Gowan, Bobbi Billie and Daija Baxley set up shop on the parade route and sold beadwork, carvings and patchwork vests and shirts to a steady stream of customers. Their beadwork included garnet and gold single and multiple strand necklaces as well as other necklaces, bracelets, rings, pins and key chains.

Before the big game Oct. 21, which FSU won 38-20 to remain undefeated, President Holly Tiger was interviewed live outside Doak Campbell Stadium on the Seminole Sports Network's tailgate show.

President Tiger said she wants every student to learn about Seminole history. She explained her role in tribal leadership and talked about the various departments within the tribe that serve tribal members.

"I'm proud to be Seminole," President Tiger said on the broadcast. "Every day I wake up and I know who I am. The elders teach us to go out into the world and learn, and then come back and help our people."



Beverly Bidney

After planting the flaming spear at midfield, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. raises his arms in front of more than 79,000 fans at Doak Campbell Stadium.

♦ See HOMECOMING on page 4A



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Tahnia Billie, left, and Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie wave to the crowd at halftime of Florida State's homecoming football game against Duke on Oct. 21. The princesses made their way across the field to crown FSU's homecoming court winners.

## Hard Rock launches Lionel Messi-themed kids' menu

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — Seminole Tribe and Hard Rock International officials joined excited fans at DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale on Oct. 2 for the launch of a new Lionel Messi-themed kids' menu available at Hard Rock Cafe locations. Messi is an international soccer star with the Inter Miami CF soccer team. He has been a brand ambassador for Hard Rock since 2021.

"Just through who he is and what he represents, and I think it's something pretty special, we're very proud to be in this relationship with him," Jim Allen, chairman of Hard Rock International and CEO of Seminole Gaming, said at the event. "But it isn't just about the celebrity; it's the person, the integrity [and] the long-term commitment that we're really excited about."

Seminole Tribe Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. recalled coming to the soccer stadium as a kid when the Fort Lauderdale Strikers played in the late 1970s and early 80s in what was then Lockhart Stadium.

"This stadium has come a long way and has a lot of history and it's making more with this gentlemen that we're going to introduce

here in a minute," Chairman Osceola said, referring to Messi. "It's awesome that we have the relationship with him. What he's doing for the kids is truly amazing and we're happy to be a part of that. It's an awesome partnership for the tribe."

Hard Rock officials said Messi, a father of three, was involved with the development of the menu. It features 10 items: the Messi's X Burger, Messi Golden Chicken Sandwich, bacon cheeseburger, chicken tenders, mac & cheese, twisted n' tasty cavatappi pasta, hot dog, grilled chicken breast, and grilled chicken house salad.

Dozens of kids were in attendance with their families to usher in the menu. There were several tribal kids at the event as well, including 15 that traveled to Fort Lauderdale with the Big Cypress Recreation Department. The kids also had the chance to take to the soccer field to practice their skills with Inter Miami coaches as Messi looked on.

The newly named Hard Rock Terrace at DRV PNK Stadium was also unveiled at the event. Hard Rock officials said the company recently entered into a partnership with the Inter Miami CF organization.

♦ See MESSI on page 7A



AJ Shorter/Hard Rock International

From left to right are Bill Osceola, Mayan Macias, Lionel Messi, Cali Osceola and Allie Billie.

## Seminole exhibition opens in Fort Lauderdale

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — The new art exhibition "Chehantamo: How are you?" opened Oct. 22 in Fort Lauderdale with an appearance by Tia Blais-Billie, one of 15 Seminole artists whose work is on display through Jan. 6, 2024.

It's the 10th annual Native American heritage exhibition at History Fort Lauderdale. The show features a room filled with more than two-dozen contemporary

pieces spanning generations of Seminole artists, including the late Elizabeth Buster. Another room has eight large panels provided by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum that describe the history of the Seminole Wars.

"I think something that's been developed through the years of doing this show has been new forms of media and a wider age range," Blais-Billie said. "I think it's really important and very representative of the tribe today."

Blais-Billie has assisted with the shows over the years alongside History Fort Lauderdale curator Tara Chadwick. Her work on display this year is "Yaala," which she said is a slang term for "come along."

Blais-Billie created it in a graphic abstract style that combines the work of four other Seminole artists — sister Durante Blais-Billie, Samuel Tommie, Gordon "Ollie" Wareham and Corrine Zepeda — to form the shape of a hand.

The annual exhibition has evolved and expanded over the years. It first began when Elgin Jumper and Wareham did a one-hour pop-up-style event on the museum's veranda. The next year it was extended to a week, and the following year to a month. The late Jimmy Osceola soon joined Jumper and Wareham in assisting with the show.

♦ See ART on page 5A



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# Editorial

## Killers of the Flower Moon: Does it do right by Native Americans?

• Kate Nelson

As a Native American woman, I admit I was both excited and apprehensive to see *Killers of the Flower Moon*, Martin Scorsese’s new film about the brutal 1920s murders of the Osage people over their oil-rich Oklahoma reservation lands. I’m not Osage, but I’m also no stranger to the atrocities that Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island have endured, including attempted eradication, forced assimilation, and the purposeful decimation of our traditional ways of life. Even today, the lingering effects of colonialism plague our communities. We die younger, experience inordinate violence, and suffer disproportionate rates of poverty, disease, addiction, and suicide.

Adding insult to injury, we’re rarely authentically represented in media. That is, when Native characters are shown at all, which is less than 1% of the time in US TV and film, according to recent studies.

As writer and actor Franklin Sioux Bob, a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe, told me about his experience of depictions of South Dakota’s destitute Pine Ridge Reservation, “Most white directors just want to show the poverty porn.” (His recent film, *War Pony*, which he co-wrote with fellow tribal member Bill Reddy and directors Riley Keough and Gina Gammell, was a corrective to that.) Put another way, our stories have been told about us rather than by us, often resulting in problematic portrayals that feed into stereotypes and paint us as relics of the past. For months, *Killers of the Flower Moon* has been heralded as the movie that would change all of that – the first feature film to honestly depict Indigenous genocide. Scorsese has been commended for earning the trust of Osage tribal leaders and engaging them to shepherd their horrific history onto the silver screen. As I settled into my cinema seat to take in the three-and-a-half-hour epic, I couldn’t help but wonder: did Scorsese get it right?

### A mixed bag

The answer to that is complicated. First, it’s an undeniable accomplishment that this movie was made by a major studio with a major player like Scorsese. So too is the fact that the famed filmmaker had the wherewithal to rework the script from its source material, David Grann’s bestselling book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, to focus less on the FBI investigation and more on the Osage plight. And I can’t overstate how absolutely thrilling it is to see so many Native talents on the big screen, including Lily Gladstone – winning acclaim for her portrayal of Osage survivor Mollie Burkhart, whose family was targeted – but also Tantoo Cardinal, Cara Jade Myers, JaNae Collins, Jillian Dion, Tatanka Means, and many others.

But doing the story justice in its fullest, richest form would mean centring the Indigenous experience, which the film fails to do. I was relieved to hear Osage language consultant Christopher Cote, who worked on the movie, express this exact sentiment at the Los Angeles premiere. “I really wanted this to be from the perspective of Mollie and what her family experienced, but I think it would take an Osage to do that,” he said. Herein lies the paradox: Native Americans can both be elated that our stories are finally being told yet still wish they were told from our perspective.

Instead of shining the spotlight on Gladstone’s Mollie, the film focuses on her husband (Leonardo DiCaprio) as he schemes alongside his uncle (Robert De Niro) to steal her family’s oil riches. On the face of it, this is

not a wholly wrong or unexpected approach, especially considering Scorsese’s back catalogue, with its focus on corrupt men. But it does position the white perpetrators as the protagonists of the plotline while pushing the Osage people to the periphery. The movie also noticeably neglects to mention the harmful federal policies that have oppressed and exploited Indigenous communities, such as the acts that exiled the Osage to Oklahoma in the first place.

Here’s where it gets even more complicated. One could argue that the only way to accurately tell Native stories is to have Native creators tell them. After all, the acclaimed TV series *Reservation Dogs*, which recently finished its third and final season, proved how powerful that approach can be, with its all-Indigenous team of writers, directors, and regular actors.

But I’m not naïve to the fact that there’s a sizeable segment of society that’s far more likely to watch *Killers of the Flower Moon* or even *Yellowstone* than they are to tune into *Rez Dogs*. Or the reality that white male directors and showrunners like Scorsese and *Yellowstone*’s Taylor Sheridan have access to opportunities and resources that many Native creatives sadly don’t. Which leads us to this question: is it better to have Americans – who have largely remained ignorant to Indigenous injustices – see some authentic Native representation, even from a white gaze, rather than none at all?

### The progress needed

However, Gladstone herself has debunked this false dichotomy. “There’s that double-edged sword,” she told *Vulture*. “You want to have more Natives writing Native stories; you also want the masters to pay attention to what’s going on. American history is not history without Native history.”

Wrestling with my thoughts about the film, I sought counsel from trailblazing playwright Larissa FastHorse, a member of the Sicangu Lakota tribe and the first Native woman to produce a play on Broadway. “I believe non-Indigenous creators can help tell Native stories as long as they’re uplifting tribal communities and giving them voice in the process,” she explained to me.

Despite my disappointment about the disproportionate screen time DiCaprio and De Niro receive relative to Gladstone and her Native co-stars, it’s irrefutable that Scorsese has achieved that. “The film lays bare the truth and injustices done to us, while challenging history not to be repeated,” Osage Principal Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear said in a statement. “We honour our ancestors who endured this time by continuing to survive and ensuring our future.”

In the end, righting all of Hollywood’s historical wrongs is a heavy lift, even for a heavy hitter like Scorsese. And that’s not what he set out to do here, even if it’s the unrealistic expectation many people have unwittingly mapped onto this movie.

So when it comes to Native representation, is *Killers of the Flower Moon* perfect? No. Is it progress? Yes. The film meaningfully moves the entertainment industry forward, making a strong statement that it’s no longer acceptable to extract valuable assets from Indigenous communities – whether that be our stories or our natural resources – without our consent and input. Let’s hope this is the first of many feature films produced by and with Indigenous peoples that tell our stories in all their uncensored, uncomfortable, and undeniably complex beauty.

*Kate Nelson (Tlingit) is an editor and writer. This article was published on BBC.com.*

## Protection of tribal intellectual property to be addressed

### STAFF REPORT

A series of webinars have been scheduled to discuss the protection of a variety of tribal identity and intellectual property issues.

On Oct. 24, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), which is a part of the Department of Commerce, announced a formal tribal consultation opportunity to discuss issues involving genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. USPTO said these issues – and protection of them – are being considered by a World Intellectual Property Organization committee.

The announcement of the webinars was applauded by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native

American Rights Fund.

“The United States federal government needs to ensure free, prior, and informed consent from tribal nations as it develops positions to be taken in these international negotiations around genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and cultural expressions,” Larry Wright Jr., NCAI executive director, said in a statement. “Tribal nations have sovereign rights and authority as the holders and guardians of these aspects of our cultures that must be respected by the United States. The upcoming consultations are a necessary step to ensure that these legal and moral requirements are met.”

♦ See **INTELLECTUAL** on page 3A

# Visitor center is next focus at Fort King

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Progress continues on the implementation of a 15-year, \$14.7 million master plan approved in 2020 for new projects at the 42-acre Fort King National Historic Landmark in Ocala. The Seminole Tribe has been a partner in its development with the Fort King Heritage Foundation since 2015, and has been a fixture at the site for many years through weapons demonstrations and the reenactments of events that sparked the Second Seminole War.

The past few years have seen three projects completed: construction of an education chickee, working blacksmith shop, and new restroom facilities. Officials said a \$5.5 million, 16,000-square-foot visitor center, which would highlight the tribe, is the next project it wants to accomplish. However, a considerable amount of funds still need to be raised before construction would begin.

Fort King was considered the most important interior U.S. Army fort of its time in the first half of the 19th century. It is unique among other sites in Florida and the U.S. because it not only represents the period associated with the Indian Removal Act, but also the resistance to it.

Led by Osceola, the Seminoles ambushed a detachment of soldiers near Tampa where Osceola killed Gen. Wiley Thompson, the U.S. agent to the Indians. The Seminoles then moved on to Ocala and waged another attack, burning down the fort.

The events are considered to be the spark that ignited the Second Seminole War.

### ‘Created a friendship’

Bill Rodriguez-Cayro, who manages Fort King as the city of Ocala’s parks division head for the past seven years, said he and his staff keep in close communication with the tribe. He is also the city representative on the Fort King Heritage Foundation board, while Quenton Cypress, from the Big Cypress Reservation, represents the tribe on the board. The foundation serves as the main fundraising arm for projects in the master plan.

Rodriguez-Cayro took members of the board to Big Cypress in September to tour the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Major Billy L. Cypress building to spark ideas for how parts of the visitor center might be designed. The Major Billy L. Cypress building houses the programs that fall under the tribe’s Heritage and Environment Resources Office – the museum, Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Environmental Resource Management Department and the To-Pee-Kee-Ke Yak-Ne Community Center.

“As we plan to build the visitor center, we wanted [the board] to see what [facilities] of that caliber looked like,” Rodriguez-Cayro said. “It’s great to design things on paper, but until you see it, it doesn’t hit home. They had great reactions. They didn’t realize how big the museum was, and to see exactly what they’re displaying was a big eye opener.”

Like the museum, the visitor center would incorporate elements of modern Seminole life and Seminole history in consultation with the tribe. The center would also include a library, lecture room, media room and storage space.

“It’s not our job to tell their story; we want them to tell it, and give them a place to do that,” Rodriguez-Cayro said. “We’ve had a great relationship. It’s not just about work, we’ve created a friendship.”

The foundation board will seek an allocation from the state for \$750,000 during



Courtesy photo

Gil Yzaguirre of the Immokalee Reservation oversaw the chickee’s construction.

next year’s Legislative session for the design-build of the visitor center. Rodriguez-Cayro said if the funds are approved, it’s possible the center could break ground in 2025. He added that the board’s private fundraising efforts are ongoing. It was \$174,000 in donations, for example, that funded the blacksmith shop, which offers homesteading classes.

Meanwhile, Fort King’s annual festival takes place Dec. 2-3. The tribe’s Osceola Warrior Legacy group is expected to take part in the reenactment events and Rodriguez-Cayro said Daniel Tommie will talk about the tribe and its history at the education chickee.

More is at [fortkingocala.com](http://fortkingocala.com).



Courtesy photo

Alyssa Osceola, Tribal Historic Preservation Office monitor, and Bill Rodriguez-Cayro, from the city of Ocala’s parks division, recently toured the museum with members of the Fort King Heritage Foundation.



Courtesy photo

The education chickee features a sign with information about its uses in Seminole history.

## Cherokee woman nominated for federal judge

### STAFF REPORT

Sara Hill (Cherokee) is the first Native American woman to be nominated to serve as a federal judge in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

In a joint statement, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) applauded the announcement of the nomination from the White House on Oct. 18.

“Sara Hill has a strong history of public service and possesses excellent qualifications to be a federal judge. We applaud the Biden Administration’s selection of this historic nominee and urge her confirmation. She will be a strong addition to the federal judiciary in Oklahoma,” said John Echohawk, executive director of NARF.

“Sara Hill will bring unparalleled experience in law and policy to our justice system. NCAI urges the swift confirmation of Ms. Hill as the nomination moves before the U.S. Senate,” said Larry Wright Jr., executive director of NCAI.

If confirmed, Hill will be the first Native American woman to serve as a federal judge in Oklahoma.

Hill’s background includes serving as the attorney general and the secretary of Natural Resources for the Cherokee Nation. She was also a special assistant U.S. attorney in Oklahoma. She currently is a lawyer in private practice.

Hill earned a law degree. from the University of Tulsa in 2003.



University of Tulsa

Sara Hill

## Seminole Winterfest Boat Parade to host family fun day

### FROM PRESS RELEASE

**FORT LAUDERDALE** — The Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade’s family fun day will be held Nov. 19 at Esplanade Park in Fort Lauderdale.

The free event will feature activities geared for families, including photos with Santa, train rides, polar bear express super slide, face painting, balloon art, interactive games, free bicycle helmets from the Epilepsy Alliance, pet rescue row, SOS Conservation Village, food trucks and

live entertainment. Also featured will be activities from Broadway Across America and Museum of Discovery and Science.

The park is located at 400 SW 2nd St. For more information go to [winterfestparade.com](http://winterfestparade.com).

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# Community



## John Osceola joins Hollywood Culture leadership

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — John Osceola grew up in the Trail community – “the camps” as he describes it – and said it was a life steeped in hard work and Native culture. He’s now taking decades of personal and professional experience into the role of assistant manager of the Hollywood Community Culture Center. His first day on the job was Sept. 26.

The center on the Hollywood Reservation serves as a home base for a variety of classes and events where tribal members can learn the Elaponke language, beadwork, patchwork, traditional cooking, woodcarving and more. It’s part of the Seminole Tribe’s mission to preserve its language and cultural traditions, especially for younger generations.

Osceola said he was motivated at an early age from one of his clan elders (a medicine man who leads corn dances) to find a balance between a traditional and modern Native life. He convinced Osceola to stay in school instead of dropping out to solely work for his father.

“My grandpa always said we were country boys with street smarts because we grew up right in the swamps but the nearest town was Miami,” Osceola said.

He went to middle and high school in Miami, which was about 40 miles from home.

“It was rough out there and rough out here (in Trail),” he said. “But I loved it. I loved every single minute of it.”

Osceola recalls chatting with his schoolmates about summer and winter break plans.

“They’d say ‘Oh I’m gonna visit my family in Iceland; I’m gonna go fishing with my family in Sydney, Australia; I’m gonna go visit my family in Venezuela. What are you gonna do John?’ I’d say: ‘Go to the swamps and work for my dad.’”

Osceola built chickees with his father starting at age 10; cutting logs, cutting firewood and taking care of camp. He said Saturday mornings weren’t spent eating cereal and watching cartoons.

His father is John “Bear” Osceola (Seminole) and his mother is Judy Osceola (Miccosukee). The family is related to former Seminole Tribe President Mitchell

Cypress through the Otter Clan.

### ‘All I know’

Osceola succeeds Michael Cantu, the center’s former assistant manager. Francine Osceola, who was formerly manager, is now the language program director.

“What [the center wants] me to teach and help out with is how I grew up,” Osceola, who is fluent in Mikasuki, said. “My grandpa was carving wood, my grandmas and aunts were doing beadwork and patchwork and cooking traditional food. Both sides are very immersed in that. That’s all I knew; that’s all I know. I know culturally and traditionally what you’re supposed to do and what you’re not supposed to do.”

Osceola even learned how to wrestle alligators at the urging of an uncle who was a former Miccosukee councilman.

“I learned it from the other elders who had retired, but they showed me how to do it,” he said.

Osceola did daily alligator wrestling demonstrations at the Miccosukee Indian Village, where he’d work as a janitor, tour guide and eventually manager. He also worked as an assistant to the Miccosukee Tribe’s director of marketing, and was a supervisor in the elderly care program.

“I always looked up to my grandpas, but especially my grandma and all the female elders,” he said. “The elder men did a lot, but the elder women like my grandma held it down. They went through a lot. Whatever I go through – they did it with no money, with many kids, and they still had to provide clothes and food every day. If I’m having a bad day I think about them and say: ‘I can handle today.’”

Assistant manager of the center is



Damon Scott

John Osceola stands outside the Hollywood Community Culture Center on Oct. 17.

Osceola’s first job with the Seminole Tribe. Samantha Hisler, a language program teacher and multimedia support specialist, is Osceola’s wife. They have two children together and 12 overall, ranging in age from 6-to-24 years old. The couple lives in Plantation and are due to be grandparents in January 2024. Osceola’s parents and a grandmother still live in Trail.

He said getting to know the Hollywood community better is one of his short-term goals.

“That’s the part I like, making connections. By the end of the year I’ll know everybody,” Osceola said.

## Supreme Court lifts temporary hold on Florida online sports betting

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

Soon after the Seminole Tribe signed a historic gaming compact with the state in 2021 for control of online sports betting in Florida, the issue has been on a rollercoaster ride through the courts. The ride’s latest loop in October involved the U.S. Supreme Court.

On Oct. 25 the Supreme Court decided to lift a temporary stay that had been granted on a federal appeals-court ruling. The hold had been placed by Chief Justice John Roberts on Oct. 12.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia on Sept. 11 had denied a request from pari-mutuels West Flagler Associates and Fort Myers Corp. (a corporation doing business as Bonita Springs Poker Room) to reconsider a ruling by a three-judge panel that found the tribe’s control over mobile sports betting did not violate the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

The three-judge panel on June 30 had unanimously reversed a November 2021 decision by a federal judge that halted the provisions of the 30-year gaming compact, which had been signed just months earlier on April 23, 2021. The compact’s opponents had challenged the June 30 decision and

asked the full appeals court for a rehearing, known as an “en banc” hearing, but the court rejected the request.

The pari-mutuels then asked the Supreme Court on Oct. 6 for a stay while it prepared to file a petition seeking review of the appeals-court ruling. Roberts issued the order that put the ruling on hold, but justices later vacated Roberts’ order and denied the requested stay, according to a court docket that did not include an explanation.

“The denial of the stay by the U.S. Supreme Court is very good news,” tribal spokesperson Gary Bitner, said in a written statement Oct. 25. “The Seminole Tribe of Florida is heartened by this decision.”

Bitner didn’t comment on whether the development means mobile sports betting would now move forward through the tribe’s app called Hard Rock Bet, which was in operation briefly in 2021. (The Seminole Tribe is the parent entity of Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming).

Meanwhile, the pari-mutuels also filed a lawsuit at the Florida Supreme Court, arguing that the sports-betting plan violates a 2018 state constitutional amendment that requires voter approval of gambling expansion. That case was still pending at press time.

### ◆ INTELLECTUAL From page 2A

The webinar for federally recognized tribal nations and their proxies will be held Jan. 16-17, 2024. The webinar for state recognized tribes and other tribal members, Native Hawaiians and their representatives, and intertribal organizations is open only to these entities and communities.

The webinars are closed to the press. Written comments can be sent to TribalConsultWIPOIGC2023@uspto.gov. They must be received by Feb. 23, 2024.

Written comments can also be sent to Susan Anthony, Tribal Affairs Liaison, Mail Stop OPIA, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22314-1450.



Damon Scott

Bob Fulp is director of SMP.

## Q&A with Bob Fulp: Director of Seminole Media Productions

BY DAMON SCOTT  
Staff Reporter

**HOLLYWOOD** — Bob Fulp was promoted Sept. 4 to director of Seminole Media Productions (SMP) and its 45 employees. He’d been the operations manager since 2018. Fulp previously worked as a special projects coordinator and video production manager in the department. In all, he’s been at SMP for more than a decade.

The Tribune asked Fulp about some of the facets of the department and a little bit about his background. Answers have been edited for length and clarity.

**Tribune:** How is your new position different than the previous one?

**Fulp:** My new role continues to provide leadership to seven divisions under the SMP umbrella – Florida Seminole Tourism; graphic/web design; hotel audio/visual at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood; live event production; the Seminole Tribune; video production; and the tribe’s WTIR-FM radio station on the Brighton Reservation.

**Tribune:** When the community sees SMP employees out in the field

with video cameras, what service are they providing for the tribe?

**Fulp:** SMP’s video production division records and archives community events, including historic, cultural and traditional affairs, to preserve for the Seminole Tribe. We use the latest digital media technology with high-resolution cameras to showcase the tribe’s storytelling traditions currently and for the future. In addition, we produce social media and training and promotional videos for Hard Rock Hollywood, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa, Hard Rock Support Services and other Seminole Gaming properties.

**Tribune:** The video production and live event production jobs often involve long hours, correct?

**Fulp:** It’s not your typical 9-to-5 job – they work early, late, on weekends and holidays. These teams work diligently to get the job done for all our clients. We look for individuals who have the experiences needed, but also someone who understands the brand and integrity of the Seminole Tribe and Hard Rock.

**Tribune:** For those who may not be familiar with the Florida Seminole Tourism office, tell us more about it.

**Fulp:** Florida Seminole Tourism oversees marketing and advertising efforts to support the tribe, with a focus on cultural and tourism enterprises. Examples of upcoming events include the Indigenous Arts and Music Festival, the Seminole Tribal Fair and Pow Wow, and Brighton Field Day Festival. The department maintains social media accounts and a blog showcasing the tribe’s rich tourism endeavors, both past and present.

**Tribune:** Tell us a little bit about your personal life?

**Fulp:** I’m from a small town south of Indianapolis called Greenwood. I moved to Florida after graduating high school; I’d had enough of the cold winters. I went to the [former] Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale and received a degree in photography. I worked at multiple TV stations, national cable networks and independent video production companies.

I was married in 1991 and widowed in 2021. I’ve got two children, a daughter, 32, a son, 28, and a dog. I enjoy the beach, the Florida Keys, exercising, biking and golf – although my game is terrible.

## SEMINOLE CREDIT & FINANCE

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♦ **HOMECOMING**  
From page 1A

Asked about the meaning of the patchwork on the football uniforms, President Tiger said it was born out of necessity.

“We had to make clothes from small pieces of fabric put together,” she said. “Seamstresses took inspiration from things around them including a man on horse, fire and arrow, which are on the uniforms.”

When asked about the princesses and the pageant, President Tiger said they represent what is traditional to them and demonstrate that they know their culture. As Miss Florida Seminole in 1992, President Tiger attended homecoming events and crowned the chief and princess on the field.

When asked about the tribe’s relationship with FSU, President Tiger said all the tribe’s relationships are important.

“But this one is very special,” she said. “It brings us together and creates an opportunity for people to know we are here and thriving.”

Before the game began, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., President Tiger, Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola and FSU alumnus Kyle Doney were on the field to serve as honorary captains for the coin toss.

FSU’s pregame presentation of its Renegade-Osceola tradition – a horse and its rider portraying the great Seminole warrior from the 1800s

– stormed onto the field with a flaming spear as they normally do at home games. However, instead of the rider planting the spear at midfield, it was Chairman Osceola who emphatically impaled it into the ground, firing up the already energized 79,560 fans.

“This was an awesome testament to an incredibly special partnership between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and Florida State University,” Jimmy Cole, FSU assistant vice president for University Relations, wrote on social media. “Chairman Osceola planting the spear instantly became one of the top moments in FSU history.”

During halftime, Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie and Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Tahnia Billie crowned the 2023 FSU homecoming chief and princess. The princesses also attended the alumni awards breakfast and participated in the parade.

The sidelines on the football field was another homecoming of sorts as several tribal members gathered prior to the festivities, including former FSU wide receiver Justin Motlow and his parents Clarence and Lisa; Brighton Board Rep. and FSU alumnus Bryan Arledge and his family; Marilyn Doney; Sally Tommie; siblings Greg and Willow James; and Justin Gopher and his children, to name a few.



Beverly Bidney

Tribal leaders were honored during a pregame ceremony. From left to right are Hollywood Councilman Chris Osceola, President Holly Tiger, FSU President Richard McCullough, Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr., Brighton Councilman Larry Howard, FSU trustee Vivian de las Cuevas-Diaz and FSU graduate Kyle Doney.



Beverly Bidney

Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. plants the burning spear into the ground at midfield during the pregame ceremony.



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Tahnia Billie, left, and Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie crown FSU's homecoming court winners.



Beverly Bidney

Brighton Board Rep. and FSU alumnus Bryan Arledge and his son, Draco, enjoy their time on the field at the homecoming game.



Beverly Bidney

Jr. Miss Florida Seminole Tahnia Billie waves to the crowd during the homecoming parade.



Beverly Bidney

From left to right are Clarence Motlow, President Holly Tiger and Justin Motlow, the first Seminole to play football for FSU.



Beverly Bidney

FSU head coach Mike Norvell is interviewed by an ESPN reporter. Norvell and his coaching staff wore turquoise clothing as part of the "Seminole Heritage" game.



Beverly Bidney

Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie waves to the crowd in the homecoming parade.



Beverly Bidney

Bobbi Billie displays her items for sale during the homecoming parade.



Beverly Bidney

Thomlynn Billie, second from left, and Tahnia Billie, second from right, with FSU's "Grads Made Good" honorees NBC10 Boston meteorologist Tevin Wooten, left, and Navy Capt. Julie Kim Moss at FSU's alumni breakfast.



# Advocacy and Guardianship participates in awareness month

STAFF REPORT

The Seminole Tribe’s Advocacy and Guardianship Department (AGD) held a handful of activities in October in recognition of National Guardianship Awareness Month. AGD put together an awareness week full of activities such as “wear your favorite sneakers” and “dress orange from head to toe.” The color orange was used to represent awareness.

AGD also organized a bingo event for elders. AGD staff met with the elders to educate them on what the department does for the tribe and how it could benefit them or family members.

“The goal of Guardianship Awareness

Week was to spread awareness of the Guardianship program, the services – (support and advocacy) available to tribal members to improve the lives of individuals who may be unable to make decisions for themselves and to raise awareness about the role of the guardian in protecting the rights and interests of vulnerable tribal members who may be their loved ones,” Trecia McCleese, AGD assistant director, said in an email to the Tribune.

Other tribal departments assisted, including the Center for Behavioral Health, Elder Services, Tribal Court and Council offices. Organizers said community participation was a success in helping promote awareness.



Courtesy photo

Advocacy and Guardianship Department staff wear orange as part of its Guardianship Awareness Week.

## Moody Blues star, Ashanti to play in Immokalee

FROM PRESS RELEASE

**IMMOKALEE** — Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee recently announced two upcoming shows in 2024.

John Lodge, bass guitarist, vocalist and songwriter from The Moody Blues, will perform Feb.25 at 8 p.m.

He is the songwriter of many Moody Blues mega hits such as “Ride My See-Saw,” “I’m Just A Singer (In A Rock and

Roll Band),” and “Isn’t Life Strange.” The Moody Blues were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2018.

Grammy Award-winning singer and songwriter Ashanti will take the stage in Immokalee on March 2 at 8 p.m.

Ashanti’s debut album “Ashanti” landed the No. 1 spot on both the Billboard Top 200 and R&B album charts.

Go to [moreinparadise.com](https://moreinparadise.com) or [ticketmaster.com](https://ticketmaster.com) for tickets.

## ART From page 1A

Today it’s a multi-month, multi-artist event that continues to grow in scope and in diversity of art and artist.

In addition to Blais-Billie, Buster, Tommie, Wareham and Zepeda, the other Seminole artists in “Chehantamo” are Wilson Bowers, Nicholas DiCarlo, Jumper, Danielle Nelson, Alyssa J. Osceola, Jacqueline Osceola, Tina Osceola, Victoria Osceola, Daniel Tommie and Shonayeh Shawnie Tommie.

“Part of this show is really to remind us about the importance of understanding history so we can chart a course for the future,” Chadwick said. “But for me, it’s to create space for Seminoles.”

Last year’s exhibit, “Chono Thlee:

Sparkling a new era in Seminole art,” featured 60 pieces by 20 Seminole artists. Seminole artists have also been featured outside of History Fort Lauderdale. The recently ended “Reclaiming Home: Contemporary Seminole Art” exhibition featured the work of seven Seminole artists at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, which was a first.

History Fort Lauderdale, which also has Seminole-related content in its permanent exhibitions, consists of three museums – the History Museum of Fort Lauderdale inside the 1905-built New River Inn, the 1907-built Pioneer House Museum and the 1899-built Ivy Cromartie Schoolhouse Museum. “Chehantamo” is in the History Museum.

History Fort Lauderdale is located at 231 SW Second Ave. in Fort Lauderdale. For more information, go to [historyfortlauderdale.org](https://historyfortlauderdale.org) or call (954) 463-4431.



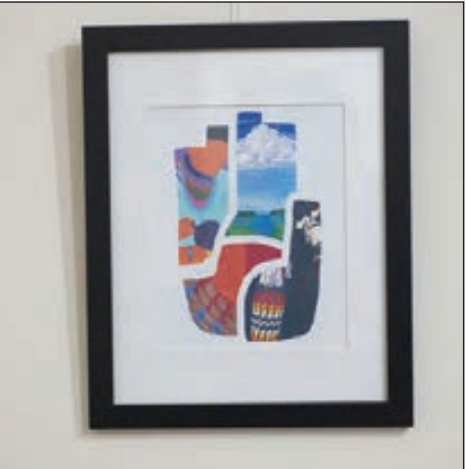
Damon Scott

Danielle Nelson’s “Skirt and Cape” is one of the featured pieces.



Damon Scott

Tia Blais-Billie attends the opening of the exhibit.



Damon Scott

Tia Blais-Billie created “Yaala” in the shape of a hand. She said “Yaala” is a slang term for “come along.”



Damon Scott

Wilson Bowers created this mixed media “Chehantamo” sign, the name of the exhibit.

# Tribe, 7 counties join forces for 4-H showcase

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — 4-H kids from seven counties partnered with the Seminole Tribe 4-H program on the Big Cypress Reservation as they hosted a multicounty showcase to highlight the organizations’ youth programs Sept. 30. The event served as a kick-off to National 4-H Week from Oct. 1 to Oct. 7 and its theme “I Love 4-H.”

The showcase was a first for the tribe’s 4-H club. Held at the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena, the event featured several demonstrations including robotics, livestock judging, water conservation, archery, pollination, animal byproducts, cooking and beading. The participating counties were Broward, Collier, DeSoto, Hendry, Lee, Martin and Palm Beach.

“This helps every county’s 4-H, not just us,” said Kimberly Clement, the tribe’s 4-H special projects coordinator. “It helps to get ideas to build our programs.”

For example, Clement would like to have an archery program but doesn’t have a certified instructor; Broward 4-H brought one, and its archery range had lines of kids eager to shoot.

4-H has 96 curriculum options statewide that any club can use or modify to make it its own.

“They have things from living a healthy lifestyle to public speaking to animals and much more,” Clement said. “There is a world of opportunity there.”

Everyone on the floor of the arena was directed to the bleachers to watch an alligator wrestling demonstration. The tribe’s Milo Osceola Jr., 12, has been wrestling alligators with his father, Milo, for two years. The seventh grader at Pemaeytv Emahakv Charter School held the audience’s attention as he expertly subdued the large animal that was plucked from a local canal just before the demonstration. Afterward, the alligator was to be returned to the canal.

Other activities for the 4-H’ers included a water conservation relay race, watermelon seed spitting contest, roping and cow whip contest. The final event was a color run around the rodeo grounds. White shirts worn by participants at the start of the run turned into a colorful collage as they were doused with dyed cornstarch during the fun event.

Tribal vendors offered plenty of food as well as arts and crafts.

The next big event for the Seminole Tribe 4-H is the livestock show and sale, along with a country fair March 6-8, 2024.



Beverly Bidney

Milo Osceola Jr., 12, controls an alligator who doesn’t seem interested in being wrestled at the 4-H showcase Sept. 30 in Big Cypress.



Beverly Bidney

With her parents Daniel Tommie and Melissa Sherman watching, Shonayeh Tommie powers a blender with her legs as she bicycles her way to a tasty smoothie at Palm Beach County’s 4-H booth.



Beverly Bidney

Stanlo Jackson gives President Holly Tiger a 4-H pencil as Seminole 4-H special projects coordinator Kimberly Clement looks on.



Beverly Bidney

Wyatt Bruised Head makes his way through the color run at the 4-H multicounty showcase.



Beverly Bidney

Equoni Cypress practices his roping skills at the 4-H multicounty showcase.



# Immokalee breast cancer survivors emphasize early detection

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**IMMOKALEE** — The Immokalee Reservation gymnasium was decorated in pink Oct. 24 for a dinner honoring breast cancer survivors Becky Martinez, Lorraine Posada and Gale Boone.

Martinez and Posada have survived breast cancer while Boone is currently in treatment for the disease.

The event was one of many that took place triballywide during Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, which included several pink-themed photo opportunities, mobile mammogram screenings, bingo, games and awareness walks.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for Native women, according to the American Indian Cancer Foundation. Early detection is crucial to surviving breast cancer and the foundation recommends annual mammograms begin between the ages of 40 to 44 and should be done until age 54 and every two years thereafter.

Martinez found her cancer during a self-exam in March 2022. Doctors told her it was stage 2 and prescribed a 30-day course of radiation but no chemotherapy.

“It was hard at first; you think it could never happen to you,” Martinez said. “I’m just praying that it won’t come back.”

Over the years, Martinez didn’t get regular mammograms and would miss a year or two between them, but she always did self-exams. She has some simple advice for women.

“Check yourself and don’t get scared if you find something,” she said. “I had a friend who was afraid of what she might find and died from it. The sooner you take care of it, the better off you will be.”

Martinez wants to help others. She encourages those who are fighting the



Beverly Bidney

Fellow cancer survivors, from left to right, Becky Martinez, Gale Boone and Lorraine Posada attend the Immokalee breast cancer awareness dinner Oct. 24. Martinez and Posada have beat the disease while Boone is in the midst of her battle.

disease to reach out to women who have been there to know they aren’t alone. During her treatment, Martinez found solace in her faith and in a book a friend gave her.

“God carried me through it,” she said. “I didn’t feel scared or depressed because I knew God was beside me all the way. I knew I would get through this and I did.”

Boone found her cancer during a self-exam this summer and was diagnosed with

stage 2 breast cancer, which spread to her lymph nodes. Like Martinez, she didn’t get regular mammograms, but plans to going forward.

Boone’s oncologist came up with a plan very quickly, which included six chemotherapy sessions three weeks apart. The first session took about eight hours; since then, the others have lasted about four hours each. Her last one is scheduled in

November.

“Chemo is tough,” Boone said. “I get numbness in my fingertips and toes. I lost about 35 pounds and can’t eat much since everything tastes like metal. I can’t wait until I can taste food again.”

She is grateful to her husband Johnny Boone, the community and her church for their support, love and prayers. Boone admits it isn’t easy to slow down because

she loves being around her family and six grandchildren.

“Those kids keep me alive,” she said. “It’s worth the fight.”

Boone’s advice for everyone is to live a healthy lifestyle and pay attention to self-care.

“When life happens, be supportive of your family and friends,” she said. “Words of encouragement are great.”

Andrea Kuzbyt, Immokalee’s Integrative Health operations supervisor, was diagnosed at age 32.

“I can’t explain how important self-exams are,” Kuzbyt said. “Even just look at your body in the mirror, we know our bodies better than anyone else. The sooner you find it, the more options you have to get rid of it sooner.”

Posada had been going for annual mammograms since 2011 after a benign mass was found in her armpit. She thought a mammogram in 2020 would be routine, but was surprised to learn she had breast cancer.

“The important thing is that I caught it early because I went for annual mammograms,” Posada said. “It was stage 0, or pre-cancer. I can’t stress how important it is to catch it early.”

Stage 0 cancer only occurs in the ducts and lobules of the breast and hasn’t spread to surrounding tissue, according to the American College of Surgeons. Stage 2 is invasive and has spread to one to three lymph nodes.

Posada had a lot of options, but chose the most aggressive one – a double mastectomy and no radiation or chemotherapy. The doctor told her she was lucky to find it so early.

“I really feel the love here today,” she said. “That support really means a lot. I’m very open about my story. Please spread the awareness of breast cancer. We all matter and are loved by our families so please take care of yourselves.”

## Immokalee turns out for breast cancer walk

STAFF REPORT

**IMMOKALEE** — The Immokalee Reservation came together Oct. 24 to raise awareness for breast cancer prevention and support cancer survivors. The Immokalee Recreation Department, Integrative Health, and the office of Immokalee Council Liaison Jaime Yzaguirre organized a breakfast and community walk to observe National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which takes place each October.

Organizers marked off a residential block in the neighborhood adjacent to the Immokalee Recreation Center for participants to walk around eight times – signifying the statistic that one in eight women will get breast cancer in their lifetime, according to the American Indian Cancer Foundation.

According to AICF materials that were distributed at the event, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for Native American women. It usually has no symptoms when the tumor is small and most treatable. The AICF recommends an optional clinical breast exam for those 40-44; an



Damon Scott

Tribal members, employees and others met Oct. 24 in Immokalee for a walk to observe National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

annual mammogram screening for those 45-54; and a mammogram screening every two years, with an option to screen annually, for those 55 and over.

More is at [americanindiancancer.org](http://americanindiancancer.org).



Damon Scott

The walk began outside of the Immokalee Recreation Center.



Damon Scott

From left to right are Sheila Aguilar, Rhonda Nunez, Gale Boone and Michelle Ford.



Damon Scott

From left to right are Immokalee Recreation program director Ruby Anzualda, Integrative Health operations supervisor Andrea Kuzbyt, and Immokalee Recreation fitness specialist Liz Epps.



Damon Scott

From left to right are Lorraine Posada, Lauren Posada and Mario Posada.



★ **MESSI**  
From page 1A

The Seminole Tribe is the parent entity of Hard Rock International. Hard Rock

operates venues in more than 70 countries with 290 locations that include owned, licensed or managed hotels, casinos, retail shops, live performance venues and cafes. More is at [hardrock.com](http://hardrock.com).



Damon Scott

Soccer superstar Lionel Messi, center, is joined on the field by Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. and Big Cypress Councilwoman Mariann Billie.



Courtesy photo

Tribal kids attend the Messi event. Big Cypress Recreation brought about 15 kids to the event.



Damon Scott

Lionel Messi (center, front) joins an excited group of kids on the DRV PNK Stadium field.



Damon Scott

The event took place at the newly named Hard Rock Terrace at DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

# Tribe spreads word about TCD at G2E

BY **DAMON SCOTT**  
Staff Reporter

The Seminole Tribe's Tribal Career Development (TCD) program was the focus of a panel session at the G2E Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas in early October. The gambling industry tradeshow attracts thousands of attendees that work in tribal and nontribal gaming enterprises.

TCD has been a tribal program for 20 years. It was designed to give tribal members a path into management and executive positions at Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming properties based on specific interests. For example, one of the tribe's most successful TCD graduates is Edward Aguilar. He graduated from the program in 2015 and eventually became general manager of the Seminole Classic Casino in Hollywood, a position he still holds.

Three tribal members currently in the program – Jailyn Mowatt, Garrett Thomas and Rhett A. Tiger – shared their experiences in Las Vegas with almost 200 people who attended the "Tribal Leadership Development Programs: Building on Greatness" panel. The three also discussed the structure and success of the program for those across Indian Country who might wish to start or fine-tune similar initiatives in their own communities.

"The crowd in the ballroom was captivated by the experiences and motivations of the tribal team members in exploring and continuing to develop within the Tribal Career Development program," Kyla Whitlow (Mohawk), the TCD director and panel moderator, said in an email to the Tribune after the event. "The passion and vulnerability of the stories shared was incredibly impactful and each person during the Q&A complimented [them] on their ability to connect and share."

More than 100 tribal members have enrolled in TCD since it's inception, and Whitlow said interest is on the rise. She said there are 20 tribal members currently in the program and five more who are being enrolled. Whitlow, who has been director since May, said TCD became more



Courtesy photo

From left to right are Garrett Thomas, Rhett A. Tiger, Jailyn Mowatt and Kyla Whitlow (Mohawk). The four led a panel session about the Tribal Career Development program at the G2E Global Gaming Expo.

customizable two years ago to make it more accessible.

The program is divided into three tracks – emerging leaders (for those who ultimately want an executive position), career (for those who know what department they want to be a part of), and expert (for those seeking middle management positions in any department). Each track has prerequisites.

"The vein that runs through all [the tracks] is it's all about leadership, leaders of self, leaders of others and leaders of leaders," Whitlow said. "The really great thing about this program is that it's unique to the gaming community and the tribal gaming community."

### 'Big picture'

Thomas, who is in the emerging leaders track, said the program showed him how the different gaming departments work together. He's been part of the program for four years and has helped open Hard Rock properties in Indiana, Ohio and New York City.

"At every property I had different

roles," Thomas, who is from the Brighton Reservation, said prior to the conference. "It doesn't matter if you're on gaming, food and beverage, hotel-resort – you get to learn the experience and see the big picture."

Tiger, from the Hollywood Reservation, joined the program in July 2023 and is also in the emerging leaders track. He said TCD has given him a foothold toward his goal of being president of a gaming property.

"The program has been fantastic so far, I would recommend it," he said prior to the conference. "It's given me a new excitement that I've never really had for working."

Mowatt, also from Hollywood, has been in the program for about a year in the career track, with an interest in special events. She learned promotions, advertising and marketing at the Seminole Classic Casino and now works at Hard Rock Live in Hollywood.

G2E ran from Oct. 9 to Oct. 12 at the Venetian Convention & Expo Center. The TCD panel took place Oct. 11. More is available at [globalgamingexpo.com](http://globalgamingexpo.com).



Courtesy photo

From left to right are TCD participants Chloe Smith, Michael Cantu, Stephen Tiger, Kashane Tiger, Garrett Thomas, Rhett A. Tiger, Jailyn Mowatt, Kyla Whitlow, Aaron Tommie and Joseph Hughes. Whitlow (Mohawk) is the TCD director.

## Tampa to host benefit country concert

### FROM PRESS RELEASE

**TAMPA** — Hard Rock Event Center in Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa will host the US 103.5 Jingle Y'all Concert, benefiting St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, on Dec. 5 at 8 p.m.

For tickets visit [seminolehardrocktampa.com](http://seminolehardrocktampa.com).

and Ticketmaster.

Jingle Y'all will feature six of country music's newest and biggest stars including Jake Owen, Chris Janson, Elle King, Corey Kent, Kassi Ashton, and Neon Union.

Owen has 10 No. 1 songs and well-known hits including "Barefoot Blue Jean Night," "Made For You," "Anywhere With

You," "Beachin'" and more. The frequently barefoot-beach-loving Owen grew up in Vero Beach and currently resides in Nashville.



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The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisement. Castillo worked as a Public Defender in Broward County from 1990-1996 and has been in private practice since 1996. In 1995, he was voted the Trial Attorney of the year. He graduated from Capital University in 1989 and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1990, Federal Bar in 1992, and the Federal Trial Bar in 1994.

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# New acquisitions come to the museum

BY LAURA DELLO RUSSO  
Registrar

**BIG CYPRESS** — At the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, there is a committee which meets quarterly to vote upon which objects will be acquired for the museum’s permanent collection. The acquisitions committee, consisting of both tribal and non-tribal employees, reviews each potential object to determine its cultural or historical significance, as well as any budget or resource requirements the object may bring. The objects presented in the committee meetings come from an array of sources, including Seminole artists, community members, other museums, auction houses and individual donors. Many times the museum is contacted by someone wanting to loan the patchwork skirts, dolls, or postcards their grandparents picked up on a trip to Florida decades ago.

The committee most recently met in September, which was the last meeting of the 2023 fiscal year. Items to be reviewed in this meeting included patchwork textiles, paintings, dolls, and baskets, as well as a variety of other items. One item of clothing that stood out was a patchwork dress offered by Jacqueline Berg of New York. According to Berg, her aunt had the dress custom

made by a member of the Seminole community during one of her trips to Florida in the 1950s or 60s. The dress’ unique knee-length style, as well as its intricate hand-stitching and craftsmanship, made it an easy choice for addition to the museum’s already expansive patchwork collection.

Another object that generated much excitement amongst the committee is one that has already been at the museum for several months: a stunning sweetgrass basket made by Kiana Bell. The masterly woven basket, which features yellow and white beaded flowers climbing diagonally up the sweetgrass, was previously on loan for the museum’s “Art of Seminole Crafts” exhibit. Bell then offered to permanently sell the basket to the museum, and the committee eagerly accepted. The



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
Kiana Bell's beaded sweetgrass basket was recently purchased for the permanent collection.



Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum  
Members of the acquisitions committee examine the patchwork dress from Jacqueline Berg.

“Art of Seminole Crafts” exhibit also features 14 other baskets made by Bell, as well as baskets made by Linda Beletso, Lorraine Posada, and Donna Frank.

While infrequent, there are times when the committee rejects an item’s addition to the permanent collection. This mostly occurs when there are multiples of a similar object and the limited space within the vaults must be considered. In cases like this, where the object in question is still of cultural significance and in good condition, it will be accepted into the museum’s growing exhibits collection. The

objects in this collection are displayed around the different reservations or used for teaching purposes, whereas the permanent collection objects are preserved in the museum’s vaults and handled less. During this most recent meeting, the committee voted to accept several patchwork textiles and a doll into the exhibits collection. Another one of Bell’s beautiful, beaded baskets was also purchased for the exhibits division.

Other acquisitions to the permanent collection include a painting of the Fakahatchee Strand Village by Paul Arsenault, historic slides of Lucy Tiger donated by the DeVane family, and several articles of unique patchwork clothing. Would you like to be a member of the acquisitions committee? We are looking for voluntary members to attend our virtual quarterly meetings. New members are also invited to the museum for an orientation meeting where the committee and its duties are explained further.

After an object is accepted into the museum’s collection, it goes through a preservation process. After that, you may see it on exhibit in the museum galleries or at some other location around the reservations. If it’s not displayed, it will still be available for the Seminole community and the public to view through the museum’s website. Like the nearly 240,000 objects that came before them, these newest acquisitions will also soon be available to view online, where they can be admired and appreciated by all. If you are interested in this process or want to join the committee, call (863) 902-1113 and ask for the collections team.



UF Courtesy Photo

Elgin Jumper speaks at an event in his honor Oct. 18 at the John H. and Mary Lou Dasburg President’s House on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville.

# UF welcomes Seminole artist Elgin Jumper

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

The Seminole artist behind the painting “Seminole Starry Night” was the star of an event at the University of Florida.

Elgin Jumper was the guest of honor as the school hosted “Stories at the Dasburg House with Elgin Jumper” on Oct. 18.

The John H. and Mary Lou Dasburg President’s House is the residence of UF president Ben Sasse and his wife, Melissa. It’s also where the painting is on exhibit.

Jumper, who is nearing his 20th year as an artist, said he doesn’t like to travel anymore and was hesitant when he was first asked to go to Gainesville. However, after meeting the president and his wife, faculty, students and others, and discussing his work for more than an hour in a living room, Jumper said the visit proved to be enjoyable.

“It was well-organized. It was a packed room at Dasburg House. I was so glad that I agreed to do it,” Jumper said.

“Ben and I were honored to host Elgin in our home to highlight his work and story,” Melissa Sasse said. “His painting ‘Seminole Starry Nights’ is a favorite of mine — and we’re so glad to share it to the UF campus.”

Jumper said there were about 30 people in attendance. The program included a question and answer session.

“They asked some really good questions about my writing and how I go about making a painting,” he said.

The story behind the painting started about two years ago when Jumper was told there was one space left for a show in Fort Lauderdale. He said he had only one week to do a painting. His thought process brought him to the internet, where he searched “Seminole Tribe historic photos.”

An old photo caught his eye and wound up sparking Jumper’s creativity. The photo features what Jumper said is a Seminole or Miccosukee father teaching his son about alligator hide. The hide reminded Jumper of canvas.

The result is what Jumper describes as his “painting within a painting” with a tribal boy painting a scene of three figures in a canoe under a “starry night” as his father and three other boys are nearby.

“The idea for my painting was blending the scene from an old photo with a modern painting,” he said.

Soon after the Fort Lauderdale show, Jumper brought the painting and others to the Seminole Artist Experience art sale at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on the Big Cypress Reservation. Jumper said he sold about three or four paintings that day, including “Seminole Starry Night,” which was purchased by Jennifer Green, collections manager at the Florida Museum on the UF campus.

“It was good, like wow,” Jumper said about the sale. “I thought that was going to be the end of it. It turned out to be bigger than I thought. I had no idea there would be an event talking about the painting.”

Jumper said the UF event was made even more special because the university put one of his poems on cards that were given to attendees. He also received a framed photo of the photo he based his painting on.

Jumper said the purchase of “Seminole Starry Night” has become his most memorable sale. Its new home in the residence of the university’s president also has a special place in Jumper’s heart.

“This is the most prominent place I’ve ever had one,” he said.



UF Courtesy Photo

Melissa Sasse and Elgin Jumper stand in front of Jumper's "Seminole Starry Night" painting.

# Tribe receives UF’s recorded oral histories of tribal members

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**BIG CYPRESS** — Audio recordings of 300 tribal members from the Seminole Tribe are now on tribal land and in tribal possession.

Boxes of the recordings were delivered Oct. 4 to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum on the Big Cypress Reservation from the University of Florida.

The oral histories were recorded by UF’s libraries and the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program from 1969-1975 and again from 1998-2000. Some of the interviews were transcribed and were available on the university’s website until recently.

Tara Backhouse, collections manager at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, advocated for the repatriation of the oral histories, which she said was accomplished after two years of collaboration with UF

“At the end of the day, it’s the voices of those people who gave the oral histories that is most important,” Backhouse said. “Issues of access and ownership are also important. What did these people agree to when they gave their histories? There was no internet then.”

University staff brought 36 boxes of cassettes, reel to reel tape, transcripts and digital files on hard drives to the museum, where the items were put in plastic bags and quarantined for two weeks to protect the rest of the museum’s collections.

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program collected interviews with tribes from Florida and elsewhere in the Southeast beginning with the founding of the program in 1967. The tribes from outside Florida include the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Catawba, Lumbee, Mississippi Choctaw and Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

The university had consultations with the Seminoles and the other tribes, some of which don’t have the technology to keep the oral histories themselves and opted for co-curation of the histories and copies made



Beverly Bidney

The recordings of Seminole oral histories from the University of Florida were delivered to the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki-Museum by UF staff. From left to right are Anna Hamilton, Adolpho Romero and Deborah Hendrix, all from the UF Samuel Proctor Oral History Program; Ginessa Mahar, from George A. Smathers Libraries; and Tara Backhouse and Alex Banks, both from the museum.

available to them.

“The goal of the program has always been to get the histories back to the originating communities,” said Ginessa Mahar, anthropology librarian at the UF George A. Smathers Libraries. “The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation provided funding for the revitalization of the collection. The overwhelming need was preservation in the form of digitization.”

The university inventoried the tapes, which sometimes included more than one interview and not all the interviewees were identified. Some of the voices on the tapes include Betty Mae Jumper, Josie Billie and Jimmy Osceola.

“These folks at the museum will know the collection more intimately and can talk to the descendants,” Mahar said. “A wonderful reason for the histories to be here is that the museum knows the families. This project is what a real collaboration should be.”

The oral histories will be transcribed to a computer and made available only to tribal members, which was the primary reason the museum wanted them back. The collections will be made available on CDs or flash drives.

During the interviews, tribal members could talk about anything and were also prompted by questions from the interviewers. Subjects in the oral histories include residential schools, segregation, discrimination, family histories, memories of events, federal recognition, gender roles, hunting, fishing, crafts and toolmaking.

“This is a trend of seeing Indigenous People as the authors of their own stories,” Backhouse said. “That’s what’s driving us: to see universities decolonize history and let the Seminoles tell their own story.”

# Statewide student contests mark Native American Heritage Month

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The Florida Department of Education and Volunteer Florida are offering statewide Native American Heritage Month student contests with the theme “Highlighting Native American Heroes and Their Accomplishments.”

All Florida students are invited to participate in academic and creative contests based on this year’s theme. Students in grades K-3 are invited to participate in an art contest, while students in grades 4-12 are invited to participate in an essay contest. Additionally, students, parents, teachers, and principals are invited to nominate full-time educators of all student grades for the Native American Heritage Month Excellence in Education Award.

Gov. Ron DeSantis and First Lady Casey DeSantis’ Native American Heritage Month Art Contest is open to all kindergarten through third-grade students in Florida. Each student will submit original, two-dimensional artwork based on this year’s theme. Four statewide winners will be selected, and each winner will receive a \$100 gift card for school supplies and a 1-year pass to Florida State Parks.

The DeSantis’s Native American Heritage Month Essay Contest is open to all students attending any Florida school in grades 4-12. Six winners will be selected: two elementary school students (grades 4-5), two middle school students (grades 6-8), and two high school students (grades 9-12). Each

winner will receive a 2-year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation and a \$100 gift card for school supplies.

Contestants must be Florida residents, attend school in Florida in grades 4-12 (including public, charter, private, home or virtual) and able to provide a Social Security Number. Each student may enter only one essay, written in English, no longer than 500 words.

The essay should be about a Native American who has had an impactful effect and whose story should be shared. The subject of the essay should be a Floridian. Some examples are:

- Betty Mae Tiger Jumper – First woman elected as Chair of the Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Florida’s Timucuan Pocahontas
- Noah Billie – An acclaimed Seminole painter

The DeSantis’s Native American Heritage Month Excellence in Education Award Contest is open to all full-time educators in an elementary, middle, or high school in Florida. Four winners will be selected, and nominations may be submitted by a principal, teacher, parent/guardian, or student. Excellence in Education award winners will receive \$2,500 from Volunteer Florida.

For more information and entries go to FloridaNativeAmericanHeritage.com.

All entries must be received by 5 p.m. (ET) on Nov. 9.





## Big Cypress turns out for annual 'Pink Photo'



Tribal members and staff on the Big Cypress Reservation got together for the reservation's annual breast cancer awareness "Pink Photo" on Oct. 19, Indigenous Pink Day, in front of the Frank Billie Field Office. Participants were encouraged to wear pink to highlight Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Big Cypress Integrative Health team put together information for the community to learn about self-awareness and health concerns involving breast cancer.

Calvin Tiger

## Bill introduced to help IHS staffing issues

BY ELYSE WILD  
NativeNewsOnline.com

Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.) and Markwayne Mullin (R-Okla.) have introduced bipartisan legislation to bolster chronic staffing issues at the Indian Health Services (IHS).

The legislation, called the IHS Workforce Parity Act of 2023, amends the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to allow Indian Health Service scholarship and loan recipients to fulfill service obligations through half-time clinical practice, and for other purposes.

The IHS provides healthcare to more than 2 million American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal members. According to a policy brief published by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, the IHS has a 25% vacancy rate for providers. In some locations, the vacancy rate is nearly 50%, according to a brief sent from Cortez-Masto's office.

The bill would allow healthcare providers working part-time to access IHS scholarship and loan repayment programs, making employment at IHS facilities more attractive. The IHS loan repayment program offers to repay education loans up to \$50,000 in exchange for an initial two-year service commitment.

Currently, providers are required to work full-time to access these programs.

The Government Accountability Office has reported that the IHS is in need of over 1,300 clinical providers for doctors, nurses, and other clinical staff.

## Indigenous health summit debuts in Boston

FROM UNIVERSITY OF MASS.-BOSTON

Dozens of Tribal and Indigenous leaders, health advocates, and regional, state, and local representatives from across New England came together in late September at UMass Boston for the inaugural Massachusetts Tribal and Indigenous Health Summit.

Led by the Department of Public Health, the summit offered a critical opportunity to build stronger partnerships among the state and Tribal and Indigenous communities so they can work collaboratively to come up with real, innovative solutions to Native health issues.

Speakers covered many facets of health in Tribal and Indigenous communities—mental health, the COVID-19 response, public health data, substance abuse prevention, treatment, recovery and harm reduction. Attendees also learned about colonialism's devastating impact on Native health.

"Our strength, courage, and resiliency, we're here today to make positive changes in our Tribal communities' health. As we sit here today, we're at the beginning of a long road to heal," said keynote speaker Chairwoman Cheryl Andrew-Malta's of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head. "By working together, we can build a better healthcare system for our people."

"By listening to us and our traditional cultural knowledge and incorporating our traditional medicinal practices, we can develop effective means to have a better

healthcare outcomes for our peoples. By providing us with the resources that we need, we can show you how we can be healthy and self-sufficient once again."

Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco told attendees that while health has improved over the decades, as we've taken on infectious diseases, increased health care access, and managed chronic conditions across all racial groups—we still need to do better.

"By any measure, health care for Native American and Indigenous communities lags over other groups. Native American and Indigenous communities face inequities," Suárez-Orozco said. "We must consider health disparities as a wicked problem. We need to understand the science, we need to understand the social determinants, we need to understand the structural racism and inequities that now have invaded nearly every domain of the economy and society. In this country and in so many other places around the world, nobody knows better over the last 500 years than our Native and Indigenous communities what is at stake with these systems of inequality."

Department of Public Health Tribal Indigenous Health Equity Strategist Cheryl Cromwell, a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag, emceed the event. She called the summit "a new beginning of much needed partnerships" happening here in Massachusetts.

John Jim Peters, of the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs and Mashpee Wampanoag, spoke of how Native life expectancy, not long ago, was just 50 years of age; many Native people had to take on

domestic labor and construction jobs that offered no health benefits in order to support their families.

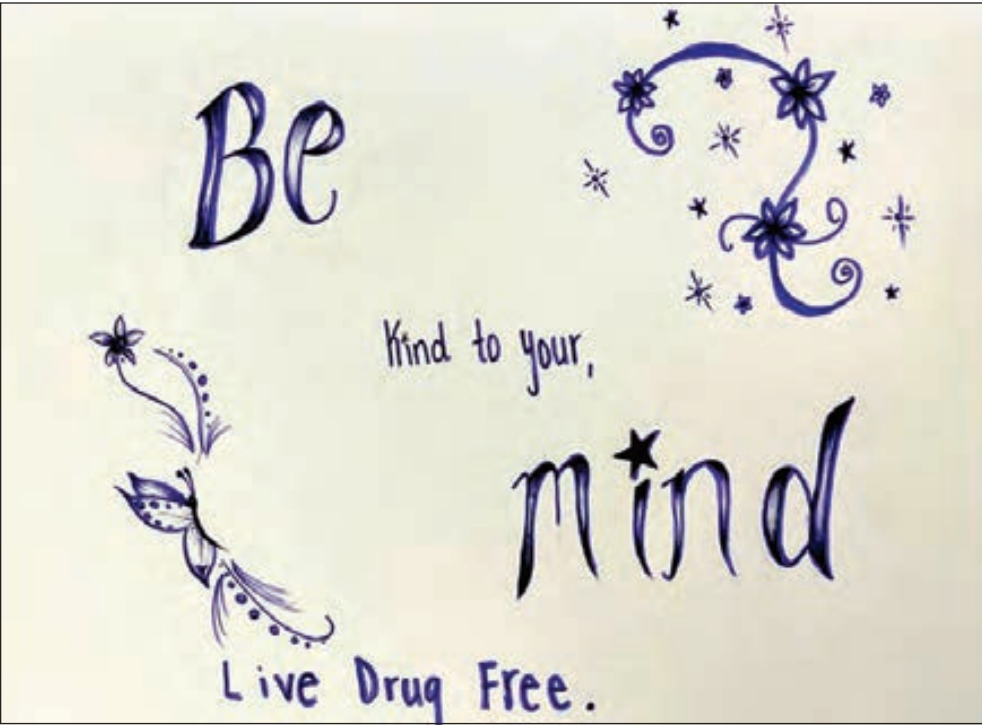
"It really struck me to think about that," he said. "I'm very thankful for these efforts of people coming together and starting to pay some attention to our health needs and doing something after so many years we were underrepresented."

Breakout sessions focused on how to appropriately collect, analyze, and disseminate tribal data back to the tribes and tribal public health authorities; mental health and behavioral health and identifying the impact of historical trauma on the generations past and present; and an overview of the many aspects of substance use in tribal and Indigenous communities, identifying challenges and highlights of prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts.

Tribal students pursuing their doctorate degrees at UMass Medical School spoke to participants about their pathways to deciding and becoming Tribal health professionals and what that will mean to the tribal and Indigenous communities they represent.

Attendees also heard from representatives from the Indian Health Service, Native American Lifelines Urban Health, and Tribal and Indigenous, People Serving Organizations. Dr. Jill Jim, who served on the National Indian Health Board and President Biden's Covid Task Force, spoke about the response to Covid-19 in Indian Country.

## Red Ribbon winning poster



Courtesy photo

Kateri Smith's poster won Brighton's Red Ribbon poster contest in October.

## Indigenous women's health meeting to be held in 2024

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The eighth International Indigenous Women's Health Meeting will be held March 13-15, 2024, at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Attendees will join colleagues to discuss and collaborate on ways to improve obstetric and gynecologic health care and health outcomes for Indigenous people.

For more information go to [aian.org](http://aian.org).

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# SEMINOLE SCENES



**VETERANS DAY:** The U.S. and Seminole Tribe of Florida flags are among the flags that surround names of veterans from the tribe on the wall at the Seminole Veterans Memorial Fitness Trail on the Big Cypress Reservation. A Veterans Day walk is scheduled to be held Nov. 8 at the park. Veterans Day celebrations are scheduled to be held Nov. 10 in BC and Nov. 9 on the Brighton Reservation.



**SEMINOLE SMILES:** With more than 79,000 fans in the background, Jr. Miss Florida Tahniah Billie, left, and Miss Florida Seminole Thomlynn Billie take a selfie during Florida State's homecoming football game against Duke on Oct. 21.



**SCARY SIGHT:** The east side of the Immokalee Recreation Center is adorned with jack-o'-lanterns, spiders, pumpkin-headed scarecrows and all manner of creepy, crawly Halloween decorations.



**ALL ABOARD:** As part of the tribe's Public Safety Explorer program, Seminole Fire Rescue recently visited the Lakeland Reservation with one of its fire trucks. Fire Rescue Lt. Nicholas Garcia and firefighter Franco Stefani gave 12 "Explorers" and their families an opportunity to learn more about the vehicle and its capabilities. "These presentations often leave everyone with a newfound appreciation for the critical work of Fire Rescue within the Seminole Tribe," Fire Chief Michael Mackey said.



**POST SUPPORT:** Among the banners at Moore Haven High School's Joe Brown Stadium is one from the Brighton Reservation's Seminole Trading Post, which shows its support for Terriers football.



**READY TO ASSIST:** Seminole Fire Rescue Battalion Commander Stephen Zitnick (white shirt) and Lt. David DeCardenas (dark blue shirt) recently conducted a CPR training at the Ahfachkee School on the Big Cypress Reservation for tribal members and tribal employees. Fire Rescue Chief Michael Mackey said the class, and similar courses across the reservations, are designed to engage the community and enhance its safety.



**TALENTED SISTERS:** Marley Jimmie, with flag above, and her younger sister Miley Jimmie, below at far right, perform in the Moore Haven High School Marching Band and Color Guard show at halftime of the school's football game Oct. 12. Marley and Miley are also players on the school's volleyball team.



# NATIONAL NATIVE NEWS

## Native American music can be heard around the world on Seattle’s Daybreak Star Radio

**SEATTLE**—Inside Seattle’s Discovery Park, voices that were once silenced are now being heard around the world.

“The goal of this station is to indigenize the airwaves. And we are Daybreak Star Radio,” said Sherry Steele, station manager for Daybreak Star Radio. “The station was created in the first place specifically to give a voice to Native American musical artists.”

Steele added, “People are often surprised by the different varieties and styles of Native American music. They’re surprised that for instance, Native Americans do metal. They’re also surprised that natives do Jazz. There’s a surprise that Natives do hip hop, which always surprises me because Hip Hop is storytelling and that’s what Native Americans do.”

One of the station’s on-air personalities is DJ Big Rez.

“I’ve been a DJ for years, kind of a mobile DJ doing gigs and concerts and basically almost anything when it comes to DJing really,” said Big Rez. “To have a chance to highlight indigenous people, you know that was one of the biggest things that I wanted to do or heard but I got I tried to do throughout my career being indigenous, pushing them into the radio stations and I worked out now just to have a whole radio station focused on it. It was it was a full like I just dove in cannonball into it.”

The feedback Big Rez gets about the station and the artist it plays is overwhelmingly positive.

“After a show, I’ve had so many people like ‘holy cow, who is that artist? Where’s that from?’ And you know, and it’s cool to be able to be on such a big platform now and being highlighted, you know, getting interviews, things like that to showcase what we can really do,” said Big Rez. “It’s just music, but it’s an art form. I’ve learned it’s an energy. It’s important to just highlight these people, you know, it’s their art, it’s their story.”

And with Daybreak Star Radio providing the platform for Native American music, those stories will continue to be heard.

“It’s emotional, you know? And it’s crazy to be here to show everyone, you know, we can do it we can get it,” said Big Rez. “I said I’m from Lummi nobody knows that, I do, I’m trying to show the world and this place gave it to me.”

You can listen to Daybreak Star Radio on their app and daybreakstarradio.com.

- KING 5 (Seattle, Wash.)

## Oregon utilities, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs get \$450M to improve electric grid

Two Oregon utilities and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs will receive nearly \$450 million from the federal government to modernize the region’s power grid and incorporate a growing amount of renewable energy.

The investment by the Biden administration will allow PacifiCorp, Portland General Electric, or PGE, and the tribe to boost transmission capacity and job training programs and fortify the electric grid from the growing threat of wildfires.

“This is a tremendous opportunity that will open the potential for renewable energy development on the Confederated Tribes of (the) Warm Springs Reservation to the economic benefit of the tribe and its membership,” Tribal Chairman Jonathan Smith said in a news release.

PacifiCorp will fully match the federal funds allocated for its projects, according to Rohit Nair, the company’s director of engineering standards and grid modernization

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to secure significant federal funding for programs that support our customers, especially those in historically underrepresented and marginalized communities,” he said in a statement.

The money is part of \$3.5 billion the Biden administration announced Oct. 18 for states to upgrade their electric grids to make them more resilient to climate disasters and to support clean energy development.

Portland General Electric and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs will use \$250 million to update a 60-year-old transmission line between the Pelton-Round Butte hydropower facility on the Deschutes River and PGE’s customers west of the Cascades. The new transmission line will carry more electricity from the dam and other renewable sources being developed on the tribe’s land to meet growing residential and commercial demand for electricity in western Oregon, where PGE serves about 900,000 customers.

PGE will get an additional \$50 million to help with the costs of new artificial intelligence software and smart meters that can connect small-scale energy sources and batteries — such as rooftop solar panels or electric vehicle batteries — to the larger electric grid. Such software can help balance energy across the grid, pulling it from homes with solar panels or plugged-in electric vehicles, and redistribute the energy back to the grid when needed. The software can also predict conditions that could cause power outages.

- Oregona Capital Chronicle

## Report shows Native Americans are still underrepresented in STEM fields

Native American students continue to

face systemic exclusion in computer science education in high school and beyond. That’s according to a new report that shows the inequality continues when choosing careers based in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Native Americans are often underrepresented in high-paying tech jobs. According to the report, “The State of Diversity: The Native Tech Ecosystem” only 59% of Indigenous students attend schools that offer computer science. And only 20% of high schools on reservations offer the subject.

Salina Riley is a third-year biochemistry student at the University of New Mexico. She’s from Laguna and Acoma Pueblos and wants to become a pediatric surgeon. But she says there have been times where she wasn’t sure she belonged in a STEM career.

“It’s like, ‘well, if there’s no one else like me here, I shouldn’t be here,’ she said. “But it’s also like, it works both ways to me, because then I feel like, oh, there’s no one here but I could be that someone and then I can be that someone where someone says, ‘Oh, she’s Native American, she’s a woman and she’s in this field.’”

Riley said the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) has given her crucial support to stick with it. AISES is a nonprofit organization focused on advancing Indigenous peoples in STEM fields and careers and it produced the report in partnership with the Kapor Foundation.

Tiffany Smith (Cherokee and Muskogee) is director of research and career support for AISES. She said there are many reasons why there are fewer Indigenous people in STEM fields but one is a history of mistrust.

“What it comes down to is to take a step back and think about the disparities discussed in the report, as symptoms of settler colonialism and its lasting impact on the United States, from way back when in 1492,” she said.

Smith said this legacy has severely impacted educational outcomes because it led to the suppression of Native American languages, traditions and cultures. Boarding schools severed childrens’ connections to their communities as well.

“But we’re still here, you know, and even despite all of that, and with intergenerational trauma, that’s led to that distrust for our American educational system,” she said. “And so really, what we’re looking at is that disconnect in our knowledge systems, and not even recognizing Indigenous Knowledges as being legitimate within these academic spaces. And so that has really led to a lot of the issues that we see and the challenges for our Indigenous students, really, the system has failed us,” she said.

Frieda McAlear (Inupiaq), director of seeding innovation at Kapor Foundation, said Native students aren’t even being exposed to Indigenous histories in educational institutions.

“Our students, our young people may never hear about or learn about the Pueblo Revolt, you know, in their traditional classes,” she said. “And we want to incorporate more of these types of concepts, even just the history, but Indigenous concepts and languages, and our actual shared history, in what’s being taught in CS classes and what’s being taught in STEM classes as well.”

CS stands for computer science. Smith adds that Indigenous cultures approach STEM in a very holistic way.

“We centered our origin stories, right, our creation stories, and talked about how we really as Indigenous peoples are the first scientists and engineers. And we did that from the start. And that’s how we connected with the land and the cosmos. And so that aspect of relationality is really a major piece and reciprocity that we bring to the STEM fields,” she said.

McAlear adds that we also need to debunk the idea that STEM is a man’s world.

“There are Native women who’ve been part of creating the modern computing field that, again, aren’t really highlighted in these classes,” she said.

Biochemistry student Salina Riley said AISES has been a big support for her.

“By giving me a support group of friends, making me feel welcomed, making me feel like there were others, like me. A field where you don’t see many Native American students,” she said.

Smith said a lot of these Native students need that support as they grow from students into their professions.

“We get our students graduated, then what?,” she said. “Then they go into the workforce, and they’re not very well supported there. They’re not advancing in their careers necessarily, because there’s not those very integral components of providing space, and mentorship within these areas.”

But McAlear said there is more work that needs to be done. That means more Native instructors teaching computing and using traditional languages and knowledge. It also means showing students there are Native people in these fields.

“That there’s a future for us, we have a place where we can thrive together and support our people, and revitalize our languages and cultures,” she said.

Smith said tribal colleges and universities should lead the way on integrating both STEM education and Indigenous knowledge. She adds students are often driven to get this education so they can give back.

“Oh, 100% I think we see a lot of our students that that’s the driving force from start to finish of why they go into these fields; they see that connection to how they can serve their communities, right, and go back to their nations and really pour into them,” she said.

- KUNM (Albuquerque, New Mexico)

## Indigenous Peoples Day rally urges Maine voters to restore tribal treaties to printed constitution

Several hundred people rallied on the state’s fifth Indigenous Peoples Day in support of a statewide vote requiring tribal treaties to be restored to printed versions of the Maine Constitution.

The march and rally outside the State House on Oct. 9 came as Native Americans seek to require portions of the original Maine Constitution that detail tribal treaties and other obligations to be included for the sake of transparency and to honor tribal history.

“They have been removed from the printed history, and we want to put them back. And it really is that simple. There’s no hidden agenda. There’s no, you know, secrets here. It’s just about transparency, truth and restoration of our history,” Maulian Bryant, Penobscot Nation ambassador and president of the Wabanaki Alliance, told the group.

The group gathered for music and to listen to speakers before marching to the front of the State House to encourage support for the amendment, which is on the Nov. 7 ballot.

Maine inherited the treaties from Massachusetts when it became its own state in 1820. The language still applies even though references were later removed from the printed constitution.

“To have a constitution in the state of Maine that has a whole section about the tribes being struck out, for absolutely no good reason, is unconscionable,” said Democratic Senate President Troy Jackson.

Jackson said people often “wrap themselves in the Constitution” during political debates. “We should wrap ourselves with the whole Constitution,” he said.

Maine voters will have a busy ballot despite it being an off-year election.

There are four statewide ballot initiatives including a proposal to break up the state’s largest investor-owned electric utilities and replace them with the nonprofit Pine Tree Power and an elected board. The proposal to restore tribal treaty language is one of four constitutional amendments on the ballot.

The tribal treaty vote comes as Native Americans in Maine are seeking greater autonomy. In recent years, lawmakers have expanded tribal policing authority, returned some land and allowed the Passamaquoddy Tribe to work with the federal government to clean up water, among other things.

In January, state lawmakers will once again take up a proposal to expand sovereignty of Native Americans in Maine by changing the 1980 Maine Indian Land Claims Act to allow the tribes to be treated like the nation’s other federally recognized tribes.

The settlement for the Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Maliseet, along with a 1991 agreement for the Mi’kmaq, stipulates they’re bound by state law and treated like municipalities in many cases.

- WBUR (Boston, Mass.)

## Lawmakers reject gaming compacts for two small Oklahoma tribes

**OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.** — Saying there were “significant fatal flaws,” Oklahoma lawmakers on Oct. 25 unanimously rejected a pair of compacts that would have allowed two tribes to offer gaming outside of their traditional boundaries.

Leaders with the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians and the Kialegee Tribal Town said after the vote that they were disappointed lawmakers did not give them a chance to speak during the hour-long hearing. They wanted to tell lawmakers how members of their small and economically disadvantaged tribes would benefit from building new casinos in eastern Oklahoma County and in Guthrie.

“Today’s defeat, it hurt,” said Joe Bunch, chief of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians.

But supporters said if the tribes prevail in an ongoing federal lawsuit, they could still move forward with both casinos despite the committee’s vote. Both compacts have already received the necessary federal approval from the U.S. Department of the Interior, but were invalidated by the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Supporters said receiving approval from the Legislature’s 10-member Joint Committee on State-Tribal Relations would have helped end a federal lawsuit in Washington D.C. filed by other Oklahoma tribes who are challenging the compacts.

The joint committee is designed to serve as a legislative check on executive powers by reviewing proposed intergovernmental compacts, including those negotiated by the Governor’s Office. The joint committee typically approves compacts before they’re submitted to the Department of the Interior.

But members of the committee instead voted to reject both as tribal members sat by silently and watched.

Members of the committee expressed concerns that allowing the tribes to build outside their boundaries could set an unwanted precedent moving forward. They also worried about increasing the number of casinos in the state.

Legal advice from the state attorney general also weighed on lawmakers’ minds.

In an Oct. 23 letter to sent committee members, Attorney General Gentner Drummond said “proper respect for the law compels the conclusion that the Joint Committee lacks the authority to make valid that which the Oklahoma Supreme Court earlier declared to be invalid.”

Stitt’s office contended Drummond’s interpretation was incorrect.

Still, as he moved to reject them, Sen. Greg McCortney, R-Ada, said there were

“significant fatal flaws” in the compact’s construction regarding the lands granted. He said his opinion won’t change.

Majority Floor Leader Jon Echols, R-Oklahoma City, said he’ll always continue to defend tribes’ ability to offer gaming on their lands. But his Oklahoma County constituents don’t want more casinos.

“I have extreme concerns with carte blanche expansion into Oklahoma County,” Echols said, adding that he is “very nervous.”

The agreements, first signed in 2020, came as Stitt feuded with leaders of other federally recognized tribes over the exclusivity fee rates that the state receives in exchange for allowing them the sole right to operate casinos.

The state’s compact with the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians would allow the tribe to build a casino in Logan County, roughly 150 miles away from their Tahlequah headquarters. Kialegee Tribal Town’s casino would have been about 80 miles away from their Wetumka headquarters.

Jeff Wacoche, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians assistant chief, said the tribe already obtained support from Guthrie officials and had been pressing forward with opening a casino there.

“This compact is, or was, a win-win for the state of Oklahoma and the UKB,” he said. “This would benefit all communities.”

Stitt said after the vote that there are already 130 casinos in Oklahoma. He questioned why those two tribes would be barred from operating casinos. He said the state would have received increased gaming revenue, and both compacts would have been best for all 4 million Oklahomans.

Gina Powell, Kialegee Tribal Town second warrior, said the compacts would have benefited their tribal members.

“We are kind of disappointed that we weren’t able to speak at that table and give our side of the story,” she said.

- Norman Transcript (Norman, Okla.)

## Wab Kinew officially sworn in as Manitoba’s 1st First Nations premier

Wab Kinew has officially become Manitoba’s 25th premier, and the first First Nations premier of a Canadian province, following a colourful and tradition-filled swearing-in ceremony that Kinew said marked the dawn of a new day for the province.

Kinew took his oath of office, which was administered by Manitoba Lt.-Gov. Anita Neville, while wearing a ceremonial First Nations headdress in a ceremony at The Leaf in Winnipeg’s Assiniboine Park.

After taking his oath, Kinew greeted the crowd in the languages of seven different Manitoba Indigenous nations, and said Oct. 18 was the start of a new era.

“Today is a new day in our province. Today, a new era begins and today we get to work for you, the people of Manitoba,” he said.

“We’re committed to putting the people of Manitoba first, and we will devote every single day of the next four years to serving you and the future generations that will some day walk these lands.”

During his first speech as premier, Kinew stressed that fixing health care remains his government’s top priority.

He called on health-care workers to be patient and stick around to help make the changes that are necessary.

“Help is coming. We need you to stay on the front lines.”

The ceremony was steeped in Indigenous culture to mark the historic moment.

It began with the lighting of the quilliq, a traditional Inuit oil lamp, and later featured traditional drumming and singing by Sioux Valley’s Dakota Hotain Singers and the Red River jig performed by Norman Chief Memorial Dancers, a Métis music and dance group.

It also includes remarks from First Nations leaders such as Murray Sinclair, a former judge and senator who chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Kinew’s election as premier is Manitoba’s “true act of reconciliation,” said Sinclair.

“I want you to think of it that way. I want you to think of the fact that we are now entering a new phase,” he said to loud applause.

For the first time, Manitoba’s cabinet includes First Nations women: Nahanni Fontaine, who is the new families minister and will serve as minister responsible for gender equity and accessibility, and Bernadette Smith, the new minister of housing, addictions and homelessness.

- CBC (Canada)

## Michigan governor signs bills allowing tribal-state marijuana pacts

Michigan’s governor signed two bills into law that will allow Native American tribes and the state to form compacts to regulate and tax marijuana.

The legislation also permits tribal- and state-licensed operators to sell cannabis to one another.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed Senate Bill 179 and SB 180 into law Oct. 19, according to Michigan legislature records.

In addition to permitting cannabis agreements between the state and tribes, the bipartisan laws:

- Will exempt marijuana sales by tribal operators on tribal lands from Michigan’s 10% excise tax.
- Allow the transport of marijuana between tribal operators and state-licensed operators, while requiring the tribal businesses to pay the same taxes as regulated companies.

- Allocate a portion of the Marihuana Regulation Fund to tribes for tribal cannabis operator sales.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians and the Bay Mills Indian Community have participated in the state’s adult-use cannabis market since 2021.

According to Crain’s Grand Rapids Business, Whitney Gravelle, president of the Bay Mills Indian Community, testified that the agreements “would finally allow tribally owned businesses access to the state recreational marijuana economy and access to the Marijuana Enforcement Tracking and Compliance system, both of which tribal nations have been unable to participate in since marijuana was first legalized in the state of Michigan.”

- MJBizdaily.com (Michigan)

## Arizona tribe protests lack of charges for border agents who killed Raymond Mattia

Native American tribal leaders in Arizona are protesting a US attorney’s decision not to prosecute federal border agents who shot dead an unarmed tribe member on their reservation in May.

Raymond Mattia was killed when the agents responded to a call for help by tribal police of the Tohono O’odham Nation after they received reports of shots fired in the Menagers Dam community near the US-Mexico border.

Three agents of the US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) fired at the 58-year-old outside a residence, and later claimed they believed he had thrown something at an officer and was brandishing a gun.

Bodycam footage released in June showed Mattia had no firearm. The Pima county medical examiner determined he received nine gunshot wounds, while an accompanying toxicology report showed Mattia had a high blood alcohol level and drugs in his system, including amphetamine and oxycodone.

On Oct. 13, the tribe’s chair Verlon Jose, and vice-chair Carla Johnson, released a statement saying they might request a congressional inquiry into the decision by the Arizona state attorney’s office not to bring charges.

“There are countless questions left unanswered by this decision. As a result, we cannot and will not accept the US attorney’s decision,” the statement said, adding that tribal leaders believed it was “a travesty of justice.”

In its own statement, the US attorney’s office said it met Mattia’s family last month to explain the decision.

“The agents’ use of force under the facts and circumstances presented in this case does not rise to the level of a federal criminal civil rights violation or a criminal violation assimilated under Arizona law,” it said.

“We stand by our conclusion, and we hear the chairman’s frustration.”

The Guardian was unable to reach CBP for comment. The agency’s office of professional responsibility is investigating the shooting but has so far not released any findings. Bodycam video was recorded by all three agents who fired their weapons, and by at least seven others who were present.

- The Guardian

## California State Parks, Miwok tribe agree to pact that preserves parks on ancestral lands

A new pact between California State Parks and the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians is being touted as a plan to ensure parks on the band’s ancestral lands are preserved and protected. State Parks and Miwok leaders signed the five-year agreement Oct. 16 in West Sacramento, at what will soon be the state’s California Indian Center.

With the signing, California State Parks and the Shingle Springs band formalized how the two will work together to protect, preserve and interpret parks on ancestral Miwok homelands.

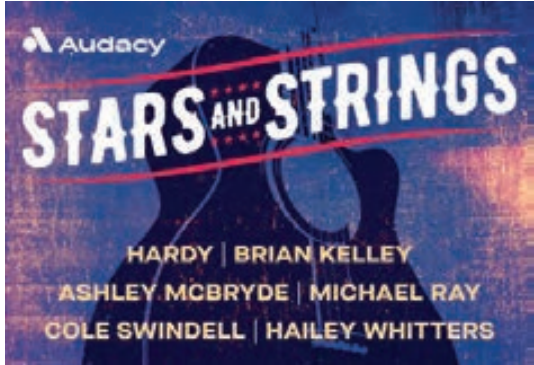
“Our story is like many here in California,” said Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians Chairwoman Regina Cuellar, in a statement announcing the accord. “It makes the importance of the (agreement) we are signing here today all the more critical to not only securing the future well-being of the ancestral lands we are engaged in stewarding and the revitalization of sacred practices, but to us as a people and our identity as a tribe.” Among other things, that means applying traditional methods of native plant landscaping into its land management practices, said California State Parks director Armando Quintero, in a way that “illuminates the past as present and reveals California as a world of many rich cultures.”

The pact also commits the two to blend traditional ecological knowledge into efforts to protect cultural and natural resources; work together on art projects; and monitor and protect cultural resources. The new pact is the latest in a growing list of collaborations between the state agency and tribe, including the new Sutter’s Fort interpretation master plan and Folsom Auburn Road Bridge Mural Project.

- Sacramento (Calif.) Bee



# SOUTH FLORIDA'S ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION



**NOV 1**  
**STARS AND STRINGS**



**NOV 4**  
**DANE COOK**



**NOV 9**  
**BILL BURR**



**NOV 10**  
**GEORGE LOPEZ**



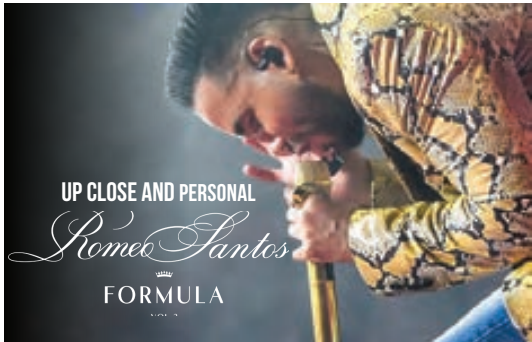
**NOV 11**  
**CUBATONAZO**



**NOV 12**  
**JASON BONHAM'S LED ZEPPELIN EVENING**



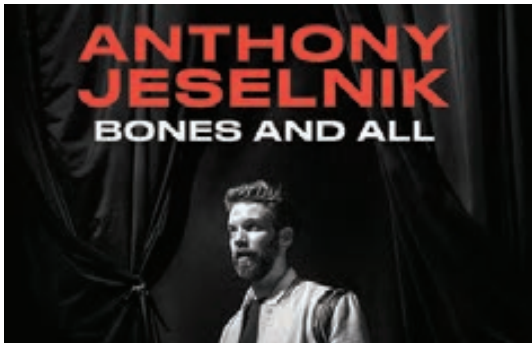
**NOV 15**  
**JIMMY CARR**



**NOV 16 & 19**  
**ROMEO SANTOS**



**NOV 17**  
**FREESTYLE FREE FOR ALL**



**NOV 18**  
**ANTHONY JESELNICK**



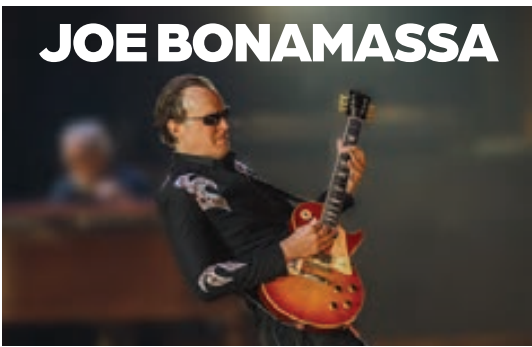
**NOV 25**  
**VICTOR MANUELLE**



**NOV 26**  
**NE-YO & ROBIN THICKE**



**NOV 30**  
**WILLIE COLÓN**



**DEC 2**  
**JOE BONAMASSA**



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# Education



## High school students attend Orlando college fair with Education Department

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

After a day of riding the roller coasters and exploring Universal's Islands of Adventure in Orlando, 22 high school students from the Seminole Tribe attended a college fair in Orlando with the tribe's Education Department staff Oct. 22.



Courtesy photo

From left to right, Armani Torres, Ty Martinez and Kenna Martinez were among the tribal students who visited a college fair in Orlando and Universal's Islands of Adventure.

Students learned about various schools and what their futures could hold at the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) fair. Representatives from 180 colleges and universities were on hand to explain what their schools had to offer and answer students' questions about higher education.

Caidence Guzman Billie, a senior at the Sagmont School in Weston, wanted to see different schools in Florida. She is most interested in culinary programs and said Keiser University in West Palm Beach and Florida International University in Miami stood out the most because of their world renowned reputations in the field. Guzman Billie said she sees herself going to college and will likely attend one of those schools.

Jaylee Jimmie, a senior at the Ahfachkee School in Big Cypress, was glad to learn about all of the opportunities, the size of the schools, acceptance rates and campus life.

"There were a few art colleges that caught my interest, including SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design), Full Sail and Salem State University in Massachusetts," Jimmie said. "I also

talked to someone about international programs. The major I'm interested in is fine arts, game art and illustration."

Students also attended a college readiness and student success workshop moderated by Austin McDonald, program director at the Florida State University's Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement (CARE), which helps students acclimate to campus life. Its mission is to contribute to the successful retention and graduation of students who have been traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

"The workshop was very informative and encouraging about going to college," Jimmie said. "The presenter was very interactive with the crowd. Everyone listened and paid attention."

Kenna Martinez also said the CARE presentation was helpful.

"The speaker was really good and told us some basic advice," said Martinez, a senior at Bishop Verot Catholic High School in Fort Myers. "He told us to have a plan, make sure we know who we are and what we are good at, and be confident in your plan."

Martinez has attended other college fairs with her high school, but learned more from this one. She was also glad so many colleges from all over the country were represented.

"I explored colleges I never heard of. It opened my options," she said. "Now I'm looking at Texas Tech University. I'm interested in engineering and they mentioned that they require abroad study and I want to travel. I'm also looking at FSU."

The leisure portion of the trip saw the students split into small groups with a chaperone for the day at Islands of Adventure on Oct. 21.

"I enjoyed the chaperones and staff. They made it a lot of fun and I think everyone had a good time," Martinez said.



Courtesy photo

Students attend FSU's college readiness and student success workshop at the NACAC College Fair.



Courtesy photo

From left to right, Joelle John-Carney, Carson John-Carney, Jason Billie and Reginal Belizaire have a discussion at the college fair.

## Middle, high school students visit Florida Gulf Coast University

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

**FORT MYERS** — With the possibility of attending college on their minds, 78 Seminole students from Big Cypress, Brighton and Immokalee toured Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers on Oct. 6.

The day began with a welcome from FGCU president Aysegul Timur, who told the students that she was a first generation college graduate.

"Everything I am doing is because of my education," Timur said. "Education is an investment in yourself, a golden bracelet that no one can take away from you. FGCU is a door for opportunities."

"A successful life isn't something you stumble into," said Lee Zepeda, the tribe's executive director of Administration. "You

have to work at it."

The Seminole visitation day at FGCU started about 10 years ago, but this was the first time it has been held since 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I want the students to know this is an incredible opportunity because they get support from the university and the tribe," said FGCU alumnus Lewis Gopher Jr. "This university is dedicated to environmental preservation, which is how we live. As an alum, I always say that the Seminole students' experience here should be a top priority of the school."

Students had different schedules for the campus tours based on whether they were in middle school or high school.

Before heading out to academic activities, high school students learned about the university's admission policies. Lisa Johnson, FGCU associate vice president

of enrollment management, advised the students to take the college entrance tests multiple times and apply early.

At the criminal justice program's forensics lab, the high school students learned about crime scenes by taking fingerprints and making plaster casts of footprints that could be used as evidence. They also visited the school's entrepreneurship incubator and learned what it takes to create a new product and get it to market.

Ahfachkee senior Jaylee Jimmie is considering a few colleges for fine arts. She said she was glad to visit FGCU.

"This has been a really great experience," Jimmie said. "It gave me a lot of insight. There's a major here – entrepreneurship – that is interesting because if I was to own my own business it would be really helpful."

♦ See FGCU on page 2B



Beverly Bidney

Ahfachkee students gather in front of Florida Gulf Coast University's Alico Arena in Fort Myers before their tour began.

## Meet seven new employees in the Education Department



Jan Bishop



Leslie Brown



Chris Paul Etienne

### STAFF REPORT

**HOLLYWOOD** — The Seminole Tribe's Education Department has hired seven new employees over the past several months. Some of the positions are tribalwide while others are specific to particular reservations.

The Tribune asked each new employee to answer a few questions as a way of introduction to the tribal community. Answers have been edited for length and clarity.

#### Jan Bishop – tribalwide tutoring supervisor

First day on the job: May 22

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

This is my first opportunity with the tribe.

**What is your job experience?**

I was a student adviser at a post-secondary school for eight years.

**Describe what you do.**

I am dedicated to ensuring that students achieve positive enrichment outcomes. I achieve this by meticulously addressing the unique needs of each reservation and collaborating with multiple team members to proactively address and resolve any challenges they may encounter.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I'm a native of Long Beach, California. I find immense joy not only in my professional commitments, but also in the cherished moments spent with my husband and children. Exploring the natural splendors of California is a source of endless inspiration. I eagerly anticipate the privilege

of wholeheartedly serving the students of the Seminole Tribe of Florida as I embark on this new chapter.

#### Leslie Brown – tribalwide higher education academic and career adviser

First day on the job: July 31

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

No, this is my first position with the tribe and I love it.

**What is your job experience?**

I have seven years of experience in post-secondary education. I have a background in college advising and adult education with GED certificate students and English as a second language (ESL) students.

**Describe what you do.**

I assist students and adult learners with their post-secondary educational needs, whether it is a state college, university, certificate or technical program.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I grew up outside of Memphis, Tennessee, and I moved to Florida when I was 22. I have a degree in information technology and cybersecurity, but prefer working with people to working with computers. Helping people is my superpower.

#### Chris Paul Etienne – tribalwide student success specialist

First day on the job: Early September

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

♦ See EDUCATION on page 2B



♦ **EDUCATION**  
From page 1B

I worked for the Boys & Girls Club in Hollywood for seven and a half years as a counselor. People ask me, ‘Chris why do all the kids know you?’ It’s because I know them. I know their names and I always say hi first.

**What is your job experience?**

Prior to the Boys & Girls Club I worked at the Everglades Re-Entry Center in Miami. (Editor’s note: The facility provides educational and vocational programs for eligible inmates, including GED, substance abuse and institutional betterment programs). It was for those who had three years or less on their sentence and good behavior. We were trying to reenter them into the world again.

**Describe what you do.**

I’m working with any tribal student who is in school – whoever needs help. I see some of the same kids I knew in the Boys & Girls Club, but now they’re older. I give them the same attention, as well as to their parents. It’s hard work but I like it.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

Growing up I had a lot of grownups on my team that never let me go – no matter what I did or what I said. So as I got older, I had to give back – and for me to give back I wanted to work with kids.

**Jeri Joiner – Big Cypress K-12 adviser**

First day on the job: March 13

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

This is my first time working for the tribe directly.

**What is your job experience?**

I have worked in the education field since 2004. I am certified to teach math, social studies, and science. I started off as a teacher and then I transitioned to an instructional coach. I was also a curriculum support specialist for Miami-Dade County Public Schools and a school assessment coordinator.

**Describe what you do.**

I am here to service all tribal families with their student’s educational needs, to ensure that they are receiving the best education possible. I provide guidance to our students to help them plan for future endeavors. My goal is to ensure that all my students earn their high school diploma. I believe that education is the key to success and I believe this role allows me to help students achieve this success.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I am a native of Florida from Daytona Beach. I moved to South Florida in 2004. I am the youngest child of three. I am a recent newlywed; I got married on July 21. I attended Florida State University where I earned a degree in political science and a master’s degree in public administration. I also have a master’s degree in education from the University of Phoenix, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction. I am a proud parent of a wonderful daughter who is a senior in high school.

**Cyntheria Jones – Hollywood K-12 adviser**

First day on the job: Sept. 18

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

No.

**What is your job experience?**

I worked for Broward County Public Schools for 32 years. I started as a copy clerk and worked my way up through many different positions and departments including my last position as principal of Broward Estates Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale.

**Describe what you do.**

I wanted to come back into education because I have a passion for helping others. I still have a lot to offer our scholars. An education is the passport to everything.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I spend a lot of my personal time as a ‘Glam-Ma’ (glamorous grandmother).

**Maggie Leon – Big Cypress K-12 adviser assistant**

First day on the job: June 20

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

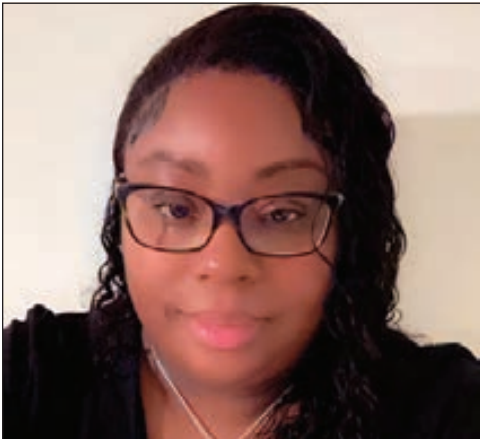
Yes, I worked at Ahfachkee School from June 2022 to June 2023 as a secretary in the front office.

**What is your job experience?**

Since high school, I’ve been working in Broward County Public Schools as an aftercare counselor and a teacher assistant. My interest in working with children with impairments evolved over time. I had the pleasure of working at JAFCO Children’s Ability Center for approximately four years and at the YMCA of South Florida with children with disabilities for five years.

**Describe what you do.**

I provide services to the families as a second voice in the schools. I also pay



Jeri Joiner



Cyntheria Jones



Maggie Leon



Luis Viveros

invoices, set up events and order supplies. I assist parents with any problems they may have and renew scholarship applications.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I was born and raised in South Florida, although my family is originally from Colombia.

I graduated from Monarch High School and attended the Art Institute of Florida for web design. At Broward College I earned a [workforce degree] in early childhood education. I’m now at Florida Gulf Coast University pursuing a degree in communications with a focus on public relations.

**Luis Viveros – tribalwide ESE (exceptional student education) case manager**

First day on the job: Sept. 5

**Have you previously worked for the tribe?**

I was a K-5 adviser from 2021 to 2022.

**What is your job experience?**

I have experience at St. Colman Catholic School in Pompano Beach as an ESE case manager. I’ve also worked in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho (New Mexico) as a lead teacher for behavior, socio-emotional and academic programs for students who are being reintegrated into classrooms – teaching skills and strategies for them to get back on track.

**Describe what you do.**

When a student identifies as having a learning disability, whether cognitive or physical, I help design an individual education plan. I provide assistance to the family and identify the proper school that will address their needs. I’ll also go with the parent to the school to get their input and see if it’s a fit.

**Tell us about your personal background.**

I’m from Miami and my wife is tribal member Davina Motlow. She’s the sister of Tomasina Chupco.

♦ **FGCU**  
From page 1B

Middle school students went to the executive kitchen where they made gnocchi from scratch with Chef James Fraser, an instructor in the school of resort and hospitality management. They also created pinch pots in the ceramics studio with Jessica Osceola, a tribal member and FGCU adjunct professor at the Bower School of Music and the Arts. Osceola, FGCU’s first Indigenous professor, earned her bachelor’s degree at FGCU and master’s degree at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. She teaches introduction to ceramics.

“Pinch pots were the first pots made in history, in the Neolithic age,” Osceola said in her introduction. “They were vessels used to store food, water, seeds and money. If we can store seeds, we don’t have to be so nomadic. It was early technology that allowed us to stay in one place longer.”

Daniel Rottig, professor of international business and global strategic management, gave a presentation about the university’s international student program which focuses on business and culture. FGCU has semester and two-week programs. He explained the Japanese-Okinawan philosophy of ikigai, the reason for being or purpose in life, as a method of finding a career.

“Okinawans have the secret to a long and happy life,” Rottig said. “Ikigai is made up of four things; what do you love, what are you good at, what does the world need and what can you be paid for? Combine those things and you can find your purpose in life.”

Tribal member Jim Osceola, director of hospitality for Seminole Gaming, attended the Rottig’s presentation.

“We have properties all over the world,” Osceola said. “We are trying to get students interested in going abroad.”

As the students absorbed the real flavor of campus life by having lunch in one of the dining halls, they reflected on the day and their futures.

“This was my second college tour,” said Ahfachkee senior Ronnie Jimmie, who is also considering the Ringling College of Art and Design. “I love it so far. The campus is nice and they are very welcoming to us.”

“They have some good opportunities here, like entrepreneurship,” said Ahfachkee 10th grader Curtis Smith. “I want to go to college, but I don’t know where yet.”

Kadin Tommie sees college in his future.

“I’ll probably go for business management,” said Tommie, an Ahfachkee senior. “I want to open a restaurant so I’ll need to learn management or resort hospitality.”

Ahfachkee 10th grader Zechariah Stockton would like to study marine biology or information technology. He said the campus seemed really big to him. FGCU has about 16,000 students.

“FGCU seems good,” said Ahfachkee senior Thomas Tigertail. “I like the environment; it looks like Big Cypress.”

After touring the dorms and student bookstore, the students had a pizza party and watched the FGCU volleyball team defeat Stetson, 3-0, at Alico Arena.



Beverly Bidney

**PEGS students Liam Barry and J-wayco Billie peel potatoes in the FGCU executive kitchen as they learn to make gnocchi.**



Beverly Bidney

**Students learn to make gnocchi in the kitchen of the executive dining room. They removed the cooked gnocchi from boiling water.**



Beverly Bidney

**Chef James Fraser, right, teaches students how to use a ricer on the potatoes that will be used to make the gnocchi.**



Beverly Bidney

**Lee Zepeda, the tribe's executive director of Administration, and FGCU president Dr. Aysegul Timur both spoke at the student tour of Florida Gulf Coast University on Oct. 6.**



Beverly Bidney

**Ringo Billie concentrates as he makes a pinch pot in the ceramics class led by Jessica Osceola.**

## Funds to help Native language preservation, teachers

**STAFF REPORT**

The U.S. Department of Education announced Oct. 17 more than \$11 million in funding for three Native American programs.

The money will go to the new Native American Language Resource Centers (NALRC) program, the first-ever Native American Teacher Retention Initiative (NATRI) program, and the State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) program.

According to a news release, the awards

“seek to strengthen the vitality of Native American languages in schools, support Native American teachers, and ensure tribal educational agencies can coordinate grant resources alongside state and local partners.”

“These grant funds will provide Native American students with greater opportunities to learn in inclusive environments that uplift their cultures, revitalize their languages, and ultimately, promote their academic success and wellbeing,” Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona said in the release.

The NALRC program would support the preservation and use of Native American languages in classrooms. The funding is earmarked for centers in three regions — Central, Northwest, and West — and a national center to provide support to all states and regional center grantees.

According to the release, the centers will provide technical assistance for resource development, dissemination of research, leadership development, capacity-building services, and immersive, interactive learning

experiences.

NATRI is a new program focused on addressing the shortage and retention of Native American educators and creating opportunities for Native American teachers to serve in leadership roles in their schools.

The STEP program was awarded \$1.6 million to “support projects that strengthen tribal self-determination and promote coordination and collaboration among tribal, state, and local educational agencies to meet the unique needs of Native students.” Cross-

agency data sharing agreements, college readiness and workforce development are among the areas addressed in the funding.

The NALRC grantees are Little Priest Tribal College, University of Oregon, University of Arizona and the University of Hawaii.



# Thanks to newfound Seminole status, Tim Jones earns master’s degrees

BY BEVERLY BIDNEY  
Staff Reporter

When Tim Jones was 31, in 2017, he met his father David Billy for the first time. It was also when Jones found out that he and his dad are members of the Seminole Tribe. Because of that meeting, Jones was able to continue his education and he recently earned two Master of Arts degrees.

“It was overwhelming,” Jones said. “I just wanted to know if he was alive and had any family. I wasn’t looking to disturb whoever he was.”

Billy served in the U.S. Air Force at Mather Air Force Base near Sacramento, California, from 1982 to 1988. In 1985, Billy met Cathleen Jones. After his service was complete, Billy came home to Florida and resumed civilian life.

When Cathleen Jones learned she was pregnant, she moved to Arizona where she had family. Tim was born on Jan. 1, 1986. He always knew his father’s name, but never asked any questions about him. Jones grew up in a large multi-generational family in Arizona and felt he had enough family.

But when the Dakota Access Pipeline protests on the Standing Rock Reservation began in 2016, Jones said he wanted to know more about his Native American heritage.

He sent his DNA to the 23andMe ancestry service and was matched with someone that he reached out to. That person, a cousin of Billy, reached out to Marcus



Tim Jones with his Wilkes University mentor Bonnie Culver at graduation this summer.



Tim Jones with his Master of Fine Arts in creative writing diploma from Wilkes University.

fulfilled the language requirement at San Diego City College and graduated with a degree in theater design and production from UCLA.

Then the pandemic hit. Jones realized he had time to dedicate to graduate school and searched for an online option. He chose Wilkes University in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania.

“I needed to get better at my craft and the Wilkes program included a mentorship for the master’s thesis,” Jones said. “My mentor, Bonnie Culver, was a cofounder of the faculty for the writing program.”

In June 2022, Jones earned a master’s degree in playwriting, and in June 2023 he earned a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing. For his master’s thesis, he wrote a play called “Patchworked,” which tells the story of three generations of Seminole men with varying degrees of a relationship to the tribe. A recently deceased grandfather, his estranged son and his curious grandson travel to the afterlife where spirits teach them the culture by recreating Native legends.

Jones researched legends and read numerous books, including Betty Mae Jumper’s “Legends of the Seminoles.” He listened to recordings of tribal storytellers and read the work of anthropologists and Patsy West, who has written extensively about the tribe.

“I wanted to give back to the tribe and honor the legends of the tribe,” Jones said. “I’m very happy with what I created. The grandfather spent his life on the reservation, his son understood the culture but left the reservation and his grandson is new to the culture and wants to learn. He serves as our guide. I wanted to honor the tribe in the best way I could.”

“Patchworked” had a table reading with 12 actors and a Native American director in New York City, but has not yet been produced.

Meanwhile, Jones and Billy have a strong relationship and keep in touch regularly.

“It’s great. We talk, we laugh, we joke,” Billy said. “We went to see a football game in Las Vegas and spent time together and saw some shows. We are in touch all the time.”

Jones said he and Billy grew up very differently; Billy on the Big Cypress Reservation and Jones in Arizona.

“I’m still someone who is trying to identify as a Native person, there is still a learning curve,” Jones said. “My dad worked with the Seminole Police Department and has a wealth of knowledge of the history. He has his toes in both worlds, Native and non-Native. We get along great and I just love him to death. He brought my siblings into my life, Ian, Kaitlyn and Joey. I’m just trying to take a page from his book that you can be in both realms and still be Native.”

# Tribe brings its culture to FAU campus

Kevin Johnson

The Seminole Tribe was well represented at Florida Atlantic University on Oct. 9, Indigenous Peoples Day. Seminoles set up displays under tents on the school’s main campus in Boca Raton. They explained the history of what they were showing to students and others.

At right, Gordon Wareham, director of the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, plays a traditional flute as students walk by.



Kevin Johnson

Daniel Tommie explains to students and faculty how he makes dugout canoes and their history.



Kevin Johnson

Anthony Gentry works on making a shaker out of a coconut.



Kevin Johnson

Carla Cypress works on patchwork clothing.

## FUNDING From page 2B

The NATRI grantees are Stone Child

College, National Indian Education Association, Goldbelt Heritage Foundation, Little Wound School Board, American Indian Resource Center, Sitting Bull College, Arlee Joint School District,

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle School Board of Education, Cherokee Nation, Lac

Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University, Yukon-Koyukuk School District and Osage County Interlocal Cooperative.

The STEP grantees include Nez Perce Tribe, Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma,

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and Chugachmiut.

## ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH November 2023

Most of us are familiar with the Three R’s—reduce, reuse, and recycle. These three methods are the most common ways we can lessen the waste we produce. The concept of minimizing waste and conserving resources is nothing new; rather, it is one that can be seen all throughout the archaeological record. This month’s artifact is an excellent example of this concept being put into practice by past peoples. For the month of November, we are highlighting a glass scraper from our collection.

Scrapers are one of the oldest tools created by humans, dating back tens of thousands of years. These tools served a multitude of functions, including food preparation and crafting other tools. Scrapers could be made of different materials, such as bone and shell; however, the kind of scrapers most commonly recovered from archaeological contexts are those made of stone due to their durable composition (Murphy & Murphy, 2013). This makes it all the more exciting that our artifact is a scraper made of glass!



SunCatcher Studio.com



THPO

There are many cultures that did not produce their own glass. These cultures were able to access glass when they came into contact with those that did produce glass. Oftentimes, glass and other such materials were then modified from their original forms and repurposed into other forms that better met the needs of the respective cultures (Porter, 2015; Simmons 2014). That is why this artifact perfectly illustrates that practicing the Three R’s extends back throughout human history, and like those that came before us, we should also continue to be mindful of how we can efficiently use resources in the modern day.

November 15 is America Recycles Day, or National Recycling Day. On this day, we are all encouraged to do our parts by educating ourselves on how to be more ecofriendly in our day to day lives, starting with reducing waste by implementing the Three R’s.

To learn more about all the incredible artifacts within our collection, please visit the THPO website at [www.stofthpo.com](http://www.stofthpo.com).



## SEMINOLE HISTORY STORIES - NOVEMBER 2023

### BROWN’S TRADING POST

William Henry Brown was not born in Florida, in America, or even born William Henry Brown; but near the end of the 19th century he and his family were invited by the Seminole people to live within the Seminole community and operate a Trading Post. Brown’s Trading Post started as a useful local place to buy and sell goods, but would become a hub of the community, a welcome gathering point, a place for travelers to camp, and a site for celebrations.

The future William Brown was born in England in 1856 as Joseph Goodhind. At a young age he joined an English ship as either a deckhand or cabin boy, but jumped ship in Cuba and made his way to Florida. There he worked in the town of Arcadia before making his way to Fort Myers. In 1879 he and Jane Jernigan married, and the couple would go on to have ten children over two decades.

Brown began working with the Seminole people around Immokalee, and by 1885 was making trips out to Big Cypress to trade. By the mid-1890s, he was allowed to move out to the Big Cypress community, building a trading post and home on the western edge of the Everglades, the first such establishment allowed in Seminole territory. Brown’s family, and particularly his children, became part of the local community. Frank Brown became a close friend of Josie Billie, and he and his sister Rose learned the Miccosukee language from Billie Conapatchee. Rose credited Doctor Tommie with saving her finger after an accident, using traditional medicine.

The Trading post lasted until 1908, when Brown decided to move back to Immokalee. Briefly the location became home to a chapel and hospital, but the buildings were demolished in 1910 by a hurricane. Now, the location sits near Josie Billie Highway, marked only by a Tribal Register plaque to honor this place of community.

## TO LEARN MORE

Visit the Tribal Historic Preservation Office website at [stofthpo.com](http://stofthpo.com) or use the QR code For more Seminole history resources





# Big Cypress gets into festive mood at Fall Festival



Kevin Johnson

Amasiah Billie, left, and Zhane Carter enjoy an amusement ride on a long, green alligator Oct. 27 at the Big Cypress Fall Festival on the grounds of the Junior Cypress Rodeo Arena. The festival featured a handful of carnival rides, Halloween costume contests, food, goodie bags and tribal department booths.



Kevin Johnson

Madasyn Osceola tips her hat to the audience after being announced as the winner of the prettiest costume in her age category.



Kevin Johnson

Gherri Osceola (No. 65) impressed the judges and won the most original costume in her age category against Dorothy, Darth Vader and others.



Kevin Johnson

Seminole Fire Rescue hands out candy and hosts games for young trick-or-treaters.



Kevin Johnson

Marlin Miller, aka Olivia Newton-John, won first place in the most original costume contest. The contests were done by age categories and also featured scariest and prettiest costumes.



Kevin Johnson

Sisters Vivi Osceola, left, and Athena Osceola show their costumes.



Kevin Johnson

Willow Cypress used an umbrella to make an out-of-this-world costume.



Kevin Johnson

The pumpkin decorating contest drew dozens of entries that were displayed in the middle of the field.



Kevin Johnson

Ada Bruised Head brought Jagger, her 4-H project, with her to the festival. She is raising the steer in preparation for 4-H's show and sale.



# Immokalee hosts Halloween fun



Immokalee Board liaison Rafael Sanchez gives away fistfuls of candy to this little princess with her trick-or-treat bag open wide during the Immokalee Reservation's Halloween festival Oct. 28.



Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa has the same smile as Lory Ozuna, who wears a replica of the famous painting as a Halloween costume.



Adrian Garcia holds his daughter Alani Garcia, 8 months, at the Immokalee Reservation Halloween celebration.



At left, Leatrice Cummings watches as her children, from left to right, Marzh Edwards, Kenai Micco, Mae'lee Ashman, play a game at the Seminole Police Department booth while her husband Caesar Carillo looks on.



Nancy Motlow sports a 1970s-era crushed velvet suit and hat complete with some bling around the neck.



Immokalee Council liaison Jaime Yzaguirre consults with the three Fire Rescue employees who served as judges of the costume contest at the Immokalee Reservation's Halloween festival Oct. 28.

## How the Osage Nation helped Martin Scorsese make 'Killers of the Flower Moon' more authentic

BY HARMEET KAUR  
CNN

From the White savior narrative at the heart of "Dances With Wolves" to the Indigenous stereotypes in "The Last of the Mohicans," Hollywood doesn't exactly have the best track record when it comes to portrayals of Native Americans.

So when it was announced that Martin Scorsese would be directing "Killers of the Flower Moon," a story about the 1920s Osage murders based on David Grann's best-selling book of the same name, plenty of Osage people were skeptical.

"Killers of the Flower Moon" recounts a dark and painful chapter of Osage history. After the Osage were forced from their homelands and relocated to a reservation in present-day Oklahoma, they eventually discovered vast oil deposits beneath their new land. Those oil deposits made the Osage extraordinarily wealthy — and also made them the targets of a sinister murder plot.

"I was worried we were going to get exploited again — not so much in losing resources and our land, but in the telling of the story of how we lost our resources and land," former Osage Nation Chief Jim Gray told CNN.

Before production of "Killers of the Flower Moon" began, the Osage Nation expressed their concerns and signaled that they wanted to be involved in bringing their history to the big screen. Scorsese and his team met with members of the tribe on multiple occasions, and ultimately worked with them to ensure that the depictions of Osage people and culture felt as true to life as possible.

Now that they've seen "Killers of the Flower Moon," Gray and other Osages say the film is all the better for the collaboration.

### Scorsese met with descendants of Osage murder victims

In 2019, Scorsese and his team met with Osage Nation Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear to discuss "Killers of the Flower Moon." Chief Standing Bear offered up resources such as the tribe's language department that could assist in the film's production, the Osage News reported at the time.

That same year, Scorsese met with residents of Oklahoma's Gray Horse community, many of whom are descendants of the Osage victims who were killed in the 1920s. Jim Gray was among those in attendance.

Gray is the great-grandson of Henry Roan, an Osage man whose killing ultimately clued federal investigators into the culprit behind the murder scheme. In the meeting

with Scorsese, Gray said he encouraged the director to explore more deeply who these Osage victims were.

"Be the director to make a film that this industry hasn't seen. The one that they're going to look at and say, 'That's the one we got right,'" Gray said he conveyed to Scorsese at the time.

Gray said he can't be sure what kind of impact his words ultimately had on Scorsese. But as the director has said in interviews, the original script was significantly overhauled. Like Grann's 2017 book, the film was initially going to focus on special agent Tom White and how his investigation led to the birth of the FBI, with Leonardo DiCaprio set to play White.

"After a certain point, I realized I was making a movie about all the White guys," Scorsese said in an interview with Time. "Meaning I was taking the approach from the outside in, which concerned me."

Scorsese and DiCaprio eventually decided that the heart of the film was instead the relationship between Mollie and Ernest Burkhart — the Osage woman whose family members were mysteriously dying off and her White settler husband. DiCaprio was recast as Ernest Burkhart, while Jesse Plemons was brought in to play the FBI agent.

"Killers of the Flower Moon" still centers largely on a White man — a point that some Osages have criticized.

"As an Osage, I really wanted this to be from the perspective of Mollie and what her family experienced," Christopher Côté, an Osage language consultant on the film, told The Hollywood Reporter at the Los Angeles premiere this week. "But I think it would take an Osage to do that."

Côté, who acknowledged that Scorsese "did a great job representing our people," also criticized the portrayal of Mollie and Burkhart's marriage.

"This history is being told almost from the perspective of Ernest Burkhart and they kind of give him this conscience and kind of depict that there's love," Côté added. "But when somebody conspires to murder your entire family, that's not love. That's not love, that's just beyond abuse."

(Scorsese said in an interview with The New Yorker that the descendants of Mollie and Ernest Burkhart told him that the couple was in love.)

### Osage consultants worked to make the story feel authentic

Countless Osage people worked on "Killers of the Flower Moon" and their mark is evident throughout, said Chad Renfro, the tribe's ambassador for the film and a consulting producer on the project.

The first frame of the film displays Osage orthography, Renfro said, and the language is spoken by Osage and non-Osage actors. The characters wear traditional clothing made by Osage artisans, and the scenery depicted is the Osage reservation.

"It's not every day that a small Native nation gets this platform," Renfro said. "This is a horrific story, and it is something that is really hard for us to watch. But it is thrilling to say the least to see it come to life in such a way."

Hearing the Osage Nation language spoken by A-list actors like Robert De Niro was especially powerful, Gray said. It's a testament to efforts of Osage language consultants and coaches, as well as the resources the tribe has invested in revitalizing its language.

"When (De Niro) starts talking Osage, my spine stiffened up in the movie theater," Gray said. "He was convincing. As an Osage, watching him pull that off — knowing he would never have been able to do that had there not been an Osage assigned to him teaching him how to speak Osage ... that was impressive."

Osage consultants weighed in on a myriad of details, from wardrobe to traditional customs, resulting in a level of authenticity that Gray said he hasn't seen in a mainstream Hollywood project about Native people. "The clothing, the designs, the fabrics, the way the Osage woman wore her blanket. Little things that most everyone is going to just ignore," Gray added. "But if you're an Osage sitting in the audience, you're gonna

catch things. A lot of little things."

"Killers of the Flower Moon" might have looked different had an Osage filmmaker been at the helm. But for the moment, Gray said he's focusing on how all the time and effort that the Osage Nation poured into the film helped strengthen it. And he and Renfro are hopeful it will set a new industry standard.

"It is setting the bar really high for things like this going forward," Renfro added. "I hope that it will encourage Hollywood and anybody who's considering making films about other cultures, period, to do the same."

## NCAI convention to be held Nov. 12-17

FROM PRESS RELEASE

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will host its 80th annual Convention and Marketplace from Nov. 12-17 in New Orleans.

Attendees will have the opportunity to work collaboratively to protect and advance tribal sovereignty. Tribal leaders, NCAI members, Native youth, and partners from across Indian Country will gather in-person to discuss critical issues, develop strategy, and to embark upon a new era of Nation-to-Nation engagement. Additionally, attendees and the general public will be able to browse the marketplace, which features a variety of booths ranging from artists to federal job recruiters.

In addition to the typical business of the Congress—including elections of NCAI leadership—the convention will include a vote on proposed changes to the NCAI Constitution.

For more information go to [ncai.org](http://ncai.org).

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# Sports



American Heritage cornerback Greg “Zae” Thomas gets ready to face Naples on Oct. 20 in Plantation.

Kevin Johnson

## Greg ‘Zae’ Thomas seizes opportunity to shine for Heritage

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**PLANTATION** — American Heritage (Plantation) football coach Mike Smith doesn’t mind getting pleasant surprises, and the play of cornerback Greg “Zae” Thomas this season definitely falls into that category.

Last season Thomas played sparingly as a backup in a loaded secondary that included Damari Brown (University of Miami) and Shamar McNeil (University of Missouri). The graduation of those players opened an opportunity for Thomas to step in as he entered his junior year. He’s done more than just fill a hole; he has blossomed into a prospect who is garnering attention and offers from major college programs.

“He’s been exceptional this year,” Smith said. “He stepped into a starter role this year. Last year he was in a reserve role. When you’re in a reserve role, it’s tough because you’re just waiting for that opportunity. We thought he was going to be a pretty good player, but he’s actually exceeded our expectations. He’s done an unbelievable job...His work ethic has super increased... He’s turned himself into a really good football player.”

Thomas is the only player from the Seminole Tribe on this season’s team. He entered the offseason as somewhat of an unknown because of his lack of game experience. The summer between sophomore and junior years for high school players with college aspirations is critical and Thomas used his time wisely. He got his 6-foot-2, 188-pound frame into better shape and he excelled at camps and in 7-on-7s, so much that offers from programs such as Miami and Florida State began to arrive.

“We went to a camp – 7-on-7 at Miami this summer. He made a play and Miami was like, ‘Who is that?’ He got the offer there,” Smith said.

FSU’s offer also came during the summer. Thomas attended a camp in Tallahassee and met FSU coach Mike Norvell.

“He said it was special to have a guy that they could offer that is part of the tribe, and that they see really good potential and that they want me on campus,” Thomas said. “It was a special offer being that it’s the Seminoles. Half of my family loves that team.”

Thomas has attended two games at FSU and two at Miami this season. He was among several tribal members on the field Oct. 21 for FSU’s pregame ceremony that recognized the tribal council and featured



Kevin Johnson

Greg “Zae” Thomas, left, lines up in American Heritage’s 38-17 win against Naples.

Seminole Chairman Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. planting a spear at midfield.

Other schools that have made offers include Duke, Purdue and Texas A&M.

“I have about seven offers and I’m talking to about five more. I’m open to everything,” Thomas said Oct. 25 after practice.

Smith said he expects Thomas to receive more offers as the college football season winds down.

“He’s still a little early in the process. People are starting to discover who he is, but it’s really going to pick up for him,” Smith said.

Regardless of the attention he’s attracted, Thomas said his main focus is helping American Heritage win a state championship, something the program has done five times, but came up short last year in a 38-31 loss to Miami Central in a South Florida powerhouse showdown for the Class 2M title. He said he’s taking the season on a week-by-week approach while he grows as a starter.

“It’s definitely way different from last year. It’s a lot more responsibility; I have to lock in more,” he said.

Through seven games, Thomas has 14 tackles and two interceptions. The first interception came in week 3 against Chaminade-Madonna from Hollywood in a battle between two of the top high school programs in the nation.

“I had a feeling it was coming because I knew the receivers and I knew the quarterback. The opportunity was coming; I just had to capitalize,” Thomas said.

Chaminade handed Heritage its only loss of the season, 28-16.

Two weeks later Thomas picked off another pass in a win against Western. Smith said the interception was a good example of how Thomas reacted to adversity. Smith said Thomas got beat earlier in the game.

“You can go in the tank and the rest of the game you’re still thinking about that or you turn around and you make a play, and he turned around and came up with a big interception. That shows the growth and maturity that he has,” Smith said.

Smith said Thomas’s mindset has improved along with the rest of his game.

“He’s done a really good job of focusing, of really focusing on being deliberate in practice, practicing with a purpose, and it’s showing up on Friday nights,” he said.

Both Smith and Thomas said there is no timetable for when Thomas will make a decision about college. He still has plenty of football left in his high school career.

“The crazy thing about him is that as good as he’s been this year, he’s still got a lot of room to grow,” Smith said. “I didn’t know he would be there this quick – he’s playing at a high level right now – but I believe he’s got an elite level that he can still get to.”



Kevin Johnson

Greg “Zae” Thomas tackles a Naples player in the first quarter.

## Annika Anderson wins state championship with Newton County

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

The Newton County High School girls volleyball team, which includes the Seminole Tribe’s Annika Anderson, wrapped up an impressive season Oct. 20 by winning the Mississippi Class 4A state championship with a 3-0 win against Purvis High School. It was the first volleyball state championship for the school located in Decatur in the middle of the state.

Anderson, a senior outside hitter, said the team knew before the season started that it should be a strong contender.



Chassidy Gates/Facebook

Annika Anderson delivers a serve.



Courtesy photo

Annika Anderson holds Mississippi’s Class 4A state championship trophy after the Newton County High School girls volleyball team won the title.

tough, but we got through,” Anderson said. “Our coach talked to us during the timeouts and in between the sets. He motivated us with the speeches he gave us. All we had to do was keep their best player in the back row. She was a good volleyball player. She was the best one out of all the players we’ve played against. After the Tishomingo game, we knew we could make it to state.”

The two dropped sets proved to be the last time any team won a set against Newton, which went on to sweep Caledonia, Northeast Lauderdale and Purvis.

The championship match marked the final high school game for Anderson, who played two seasons on varsity and one on junior varsity.

Anderson is the only Seminole on the team, which also has players from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. She is the daughter of Peter Storm (Seminole Tribe) and Monica Solomon (Choctaw).

She plans to attend East Central Community College in Decatur, but won’t soon forget the championship year.

“It was a lot of fun this season,” she said.



Chassidy Gates/Facebook

Newton County High, including Annika Anderson (20), celebrates winning the state title.

## Roger “Fresh” Walters hauls in first collegiate catch

STAFF REPORT

Charlotte wide receiver Roger “Fresh” Walters caught his first collegiate pass in the team’s 38-16 loss against Florida Atlantic University on Oct. 27 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Walters’ 7-yard reception came on a 4th down and 3 with less than 15 seconds left in the game.

Walters appeared in his third game. He made his first appearance Sept. 30 in a 34-16 loss at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He also appeared in a 14-0 loss against Navy on Oct. 14.

Charlotte is 2-6. The 49ers have four regular season games left, including Nov. 25 at South Florida in Tampa.

Walters, a Seminole descendant, is a redshirt freshman.



# Moore Haven Middle School football finishes strong season

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**LABELLE** — The Moore Haven Middle School football team made sure it ended the season on a winning note.

The Terriers thumped LaBelle Middle School, 55-14, on Oct. 24 and finished with a 3-3-1 record.

The team was comprised of students in grades six, seven and eight. The roster included two students from Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School – Koty Gopher-Turtle and Gus Jumper – and one former PECS student – Khoal Cochran, who attends Moore Haven Middle School.

The two schools have separate sports teams, but for football, PECS players are allowed to join Moore Haven because the charter school doesn't have a team.

"It's very important because it gives them another option – being that [PECS] doesn't have that sport – and it gives us more kids. It lets the kids mingle with [Moore Haven] kids and they become friends," Moore Haven coach Nate Kelly said before the game against LaBelle.

Kelly said the relationship has worked out well with the team welcoming the students from PECS.

"They've been real good. They listen, they pay attention. I'm glad they like the game," he said. "They're eager to come to practice; they're eager to learn. They practice hard."

Gopher-Turtle and Cochran are wide receivers who also play on special teams. Jumper is an offensive lineman who helped pave the way for a big night of production against LaBelle. He blocked on the line when Jakevius Bradford scored on a 30-yard run for the game's first points.

Moore Haven generated big plays throughout the first half on both sides of the ball.

Kevin Bryant snagged an interception and returned it 80-yards for a pick six. As quarterback, Bryant also scored on a 25-yard run and threw a 45-yard touchdown pass to Tureal Anderson. On defense, Richard Coleman made a solo sack early in the game that set the tone on that side of the ball.

The victory was Moore Haven's second against LaBelle. The Terriers also beat First Baptist and tied Gateway Charter's JV team.

For any PECS students interested in playing football next season, Kelly said all the student has to do is show up on the first day of practice. There are no tryouts.

"As long as they show up, they are on the team," Kelly said.



Kevin Johnson

This year's Moore Haven Middle School football team included, from left to right, Koty Gopher-Turtle, Gus Jumper and Khoal Cochran.



Kevin Johnson

Gus Jumper (45) and the rest of the Moore Haven Middle School team enter the stadium in LaBelle.



Kevin Johnson

Koty Golpher-Turtle does a warm-up drill.



Kevin Johnson

Khoal Cochran sprints down the field on kickoff coverage.



Kevin Johnson

Gus Jumper (45) provides blocking on Moore Haven's offensive line.

# Seminoles gaining experience on Moore Haven varsity

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**MOORE HAVEN** — Two of the biggest players on the Moore Haven High School varsity football team are Seminole.

Waylon Yates is listed on the Terriers roster as a 6-foot-5, 279-pound sophomore; Greg James is listed as a 6-foot-3, 255-pound freshman.

Their size is part of the reasons both players have a chance to catch the attention of colleges, according to Terriers coach Jack Garrett.

Yates has seen action on the offensive line.

"He's been doing very well. He's started a lot of games. He's got a chance to be very good," Garrett said.

James has also played on the OL. He missed a couple games due to an injury.

"He's going to be a good football player. He's young. He's been inconsistent, but he's done well. He started game one at left tackle," Garrett said.

It's been a rollercoaster season for the Terriers, whose six wins have mostly been lopsided, but so to have their three losses.

One of the Terriers most impressive wins came Oct. 5, a 22-20 win at Fort Pierce's Westwood, but the team's worst loss came the following week, a 37-0 setback against Evangelical Christian, of Fort Myers.

Moore Haven has one game remaining in the regular season, Nov. 2 at home against Inlet Grove. Ranked No. 8 in Class 1S, the Terriers are in position to make the playoffs.

In the offseason, Moore Haven briefly



Kevin Johnson

Waylon Yates



Kevin Johnson

Greg James

had one of the top ranked quarterbacks in the country, but he didn't stick around for the season. Pahokee transfer Austin Simmons left to join Ole Miss.



Kevin Johnson

Greg James (52), in middle, provides protection on the offensive line in Moore Haven's game Oct. 12.



Kevin Johnson

Waylon Yates (60) battles Evangelical Christian's defense.

## USA Lacrosse CEO highlights sport's Native American roots upon its Olympic return

CBS SPORTS

After 120 years, lacrosse will be making its return as a medal sport in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Lacrosse isn't exactly the most mainstream sport in the U.S. right now, but those in the community are excited for more people to learn about it.

This will be the sixth time lacrosse has been included in the Olympics, with the most recent being a demonstration in 1948 and the last medal competition taking place at the 1908 London Games.

USA Lacrosse CEO Marc Riccio said the process of bringing it back started about seven or eight years ago. He gave credit to his predecessor Steve Stenersen and World Lacrosse, the international governing body of the sport.

"The real process has just started. Now it's about how we turn this into an opportunity," Riccio told CBS Sports. "Even just the fact that we've been talking about lacrosse with people who otherwise we would not be talking to about lacrosse all over the U.S. and over the world."

Lacrosse was one of five sports recently approved in a proposal by the International Olympic Committee, along with baseball,

softball, cricket and squash. These sports represent different parts of American culture, with lacrosse originally being played by Indigenous tribes in North America centuries before the arrival of Europeans.

"It's a really compelling story. When you listen to stories told by elders, and those in the Native American community, the first game of lacrosse was between the land animals and the air animals," Riccio said. "The story shows that the game is for everyone. From the mouse, to the deer, to the sparrow, to the eagle. The game is about inclusivity, it's about positivity and friendship."

Lacrosse was played to help toughen up young warriors, but it was also played for recreation and religious reasons. One of its other names is the medicine game.

"Yes, the game was used to train warriors, but it was also used to settle disputes," Riccio said. "The game is called the medicine game because it is about healing, and medicine makes you feel better. When you play the game with a clear mind and a clear spirit, you feel better."

"Learning about it is important and it matters. It does make our game different. We are very fortunate that we have this and that Native Americans shared the game with us."





The undefeated champions celebrate with the Around the Lake championship trophy Oct. 19. In the front row, from left to right, are Daliyah Nunez, Dyani Kayda, Amalia Estrada, Melaine Bonilla and Jaelle Weimann. In the back row, from left to right, are assistant coach Suraiya Smith, Ciani Smith, Eleanor Osceola, Azariah Washington, Kulipa Julian, Jalene Smith and head coach Monica Koger.

# PECS volleyball dynasty continues with another undefeated championship season

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**BRIGHTON** — Daliyah Nunez summed it up best as she and the rest of the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School volleyball team celebrated its second straight undefeated season.

“I love not losing,” she said.

In fact, Nunez, Melaine Bonilla, Amalia Estrada, Kulipa Julian and Azariah Washington don’t know what it is like to lose. They were on the 2022 team that went 15-0 and this year’s squad that went 16-0.

A 31-0 record and two Around the Lake championships qualifies as a dynasty at the middle school level and just about anywhere else. The calendar has to be turned way back to find PECS’ last loss. It came in 2019. (The school did not have sports in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic).

PECS dropped only two sets this season; the rest of the games were shutouts, including the championship win Oct. 19

against Yearling Middle School. The scores were 25-12 and 25-18.

Washington stamped an exclamation point on the first set win by delivering a powerful ace – something she did often in the match – for the final point. PECS built an early comfortable lead in the second frame thanks to five service points from Bonilla to start the set.

PECS players who were on the bench in the first set played a good chunk of the second set and the team didn’t miss a beat.

“Just a great group of girls,” head coach Monica Koger said about her team.

By finishing undefeated, the team earned a banner on the wall of the gymnasium where only two other volleyball teams – the 2014 and 2022 squads – have banners.

There doesn’t appear to be anything that will slow down PECS. Several key players are in seventh grade, which means they’ll get a chance to keep the undefeated streak alive next season. Plus, the JV team also finished undefeated with a 14-0 record.

“We’re really excited about next year. The core of the team is in seventh grade. We’re excited and hopefully they can finish off their years here undefeated,” Koger said.

- 2023 PECS volleyball champions**
- 1 Amalia Estrada
  - 3 Dyani Kayda
  - 4 Kulipa Julian
  - 5 Jalene Smith
  - 8 Azariah Washington
  - 14 Jaelle Weimann
  - 15 Melaine Bonilla
  - 21 Eleanor Osceola
  - 25 Daliyah Nunez
  - 35 Ciani Smith
- Head coach: Monica Koger  
Assistant coach: Suraiya Smith



Azariah Washington goes airborne to deliver a powerful serve.



Daliyah Nunez keeps her eyes on the ball while serving.



Dyani Kayda keeps a point alive for Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School in the Around the Lake championship match.



PECS players supporting their teammates in the championship are, from left to right, Daliyah Nunez, Kulipa Julian, Amalia Estrada and Ciani Smith.



# With Seminoles on each squad, Okeechobee piles up wins

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**OKEECHOBEE** — Seminoles have played a big part in the success of the Okeechobee High School volleyball program this season, and there has been plenty of it.

The varsity’s season was still going strong as of press time. The Brahman, with a 17-8 record, finished runner-up in their district and won regional quarterfinal and semifinal matches. They were scheduled to meet rival Jensen Beach in a regional final Nov. 1.

The varsity squad features Lexi Thomas and Yani Smith.

Thomas and five of her teammates were honored with their families on senior night in October. Thomas is the team’s setter. She’s racked up a team-high 237 assists.

After losing to Jensen Beach in a district championship game, Okeechobee reeled off a 3-0 win against Hialeah and a 3-1 win against Archbishop McCarthy in the regional playoffs.

Okeechobee is led by head coach Jerry Veloz and assistant coach Amanda Julian.

**JV team wins 18 matches**

The JV team, which includes Alyssa Madrigal, also produced a solid season with an 18-5 record that included 15 straight wins to start the season.

Madrigal played a big role in the team’s accomplishments.

“She’s doing really good. She leads

the team in kills. She has a rapport with our setter and they’ve had a lot of success,” JV coach Kalani Karratti said after a game late in the season.

**Freshman team goes undefeated**

While the varsity and JV teams accumulated plenty of wins, the newly-formed freshman team generated its own memorable season.

A year ago, Joleyne Nunez, Tehya Nunez and Hannah Platt were standouts on an undefeated Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School team.

This year the trio duplicated that success by helping the freshman team to an undefeated season. Freshman coach Carrie Heineman said all three players had outstanding seasons.

“JoJo has a great serve,” she said. “I worked with her for a few years through club ball and now high school ball and she’s always been a very consistent server. She probably leads us in aces.

“Tehya wasn’t sure if she wanted to set. She stepped up for us this year and she’s done amazing. I love her as a player because she makes really good decisions. She has a high volleyball IQ.

“Hannah is a really good outside. She has a lot of athleticism. She scored a lot of points for us offensively at the net.”

With varsity losing six seniors, opportunities will be open for JV and freshman players to move up in the program next season.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee’s Lexi Thomas sets the ball for her teammates in a varsity match against Jensen Beach on Oct. 10 at Okeechobee High School.



Kevin Johnson

Okeechobee’s JV team reacts to winning a big point against Jensen Beach on Oct. 10.



Kevin Johnson

Alyssa Madrigal delivers a kill for the JV team against Jensen Beach.



Kevin Johnson

The undefeated freshman team huddles during a break.



Kevin Johnson

Joleyne Nunez delivers a big hit from the back row.



Kevin Johnson

From left to right, Tehya Nunez, Hannah Platt and Joleyne Nunez were teammates on an undefeated PECS team last year and they won all their matches again this year on Okeechobee’s freshman team.

Kevin Johnson  
Tehya Nunez sets the ball for her teammates.





# Hollywood Reservation provides boost for Hills

BY KEVIN JOHNSON  
Senior Editor

**SOUTHWEST RANCHES** — At the start of Hollywood Hills High School’s volleyball season, there was already a significant presence from the Hollywood Reservation with Jasmine Bernard Frank, Rae Gentry and Alyssa Ramalho on the team.

A few games into the season the team received another boost from the reservation with the addition of sisters Mary Sally Osceola and Xiya Osceola, who were standouts at NSU University School.

“After they came, we didn’t lose again. They added a different element that I haven’t had for a long time,” Hollywood Hills coach Catherine Kontsis said.

The sisters, who are both juniors, excel in pretty much every aspect, including serving, hitting, passing and defense.

“They’re talented and they work good together and they’re nice girls, too,” Kontsis said.

When their skills joined the talents of Gentry (blocking), Bernard Frank (hitting) and Ramalho (setting), Hollywood Hills proved to be tough to beat. The Spartans went 8-2 in their final 10 games and finished with a 10-5 record.

Their season ended with a 3-1 loss in a district semifinal against Pembroke Pines Charter on Oct. 17 at Archbishop McCarthy High School in Southwest Ranches.

Kontsis credited Ramalho with bringing the players together.

“She brought all the girls because she knows them from the reservation,” Kontsis said.

The players from the reservation led the team in every statistical category.

Ramalho, a senior and the team’s captain, led the squad in aces, assists and digs.

Gentry, a junior, was the leader in blocks and kills per set.

Mary Sally Osceola was No. 1 in hitting percentage and Xiya Osceola finished with the most receptions.

Bernard Frank, the youngest player in the group, was in the top three in nearly all categories. She was one of the team’s outstanding players in the match against Pembroke Pines Charter.

“Jasmine played well today, and she’s young. She’s only a sophomore. She did great,” Kontsis said.

Hollywood Hills looked like it was on the verge of being swept by Pembroke Pines Charter, but the Spartans battled back to win



Hollywood Hills’ Xiya Osceola (11) keeps the ball in play as Jasmine Bernard Frank (16), Mary Sally Osceola (3) and Alyssa Ramalho (2) look on during the team’s district playoff match against Pembroke Pines Charter on Oct. 17.

the third set before losing in the fourth.  
“I couldn’t have asked for anything more,” Kontsis said. “They fought.”



From left to right, Alyssa Ramalho, Xiya Osceola and Mary Sally Osceola get ready on defense.



Jasmine Bernard Frank delivers a kill for Hollywood Hills.



The Hollywood Hills volleyball team gets ready for what turned out to be its final match of the season.



The players huddle before the start of the match.



# BC, Immokalee partner for Rez to Rez

STAFF REPORT

**BIG CYPRESS** — The recreation departments from Big Cypress and Immokalee joined forces for Rez to Rez Day

that brought pre-Halloween fun to kids from both reservations in Big Cypress’s Herman L. Osceola Gymnasium on Oct. 14. Activities included a few warmup laps around the gym floor, including running, kicking, jumping

and skipping from one side to the other. Dodge ball, a rock paper scissors relay, art projects and pumpkin painting rounded out the day.



Beverly Bidney

Kids from Big Cypress and Immokalee take a break before they continue the day's fun.



Beverly Bidney

Reginald Ling, 2, is engrossed in painting his pumpkin.



Beverly Bidney

Gia Garcia prepares to throw the dodgeball at an opposing team.

Beverly Bidney

Jezabel Yzaguirre takes aim before trying to hit someone on the other side.



Beverly Bidney  
Allie Billie, left, and Harvey Bowers concentrate on creating the most festive Halloween pumpkins.



Beverly Bidney

In a girls versus boys tug of war, these girls give it their all, but alas, came up short this time.

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A84012	2013	FORD SUV	ESCAPE (FWD)	105,498	Poor	\$6,748.00
B35434	2017	FORD PICKUP TRUCK	F-150 XL (4WD)	290,528	Poor	\$8,739.00
D32343	2011	FORD SUV	FLEX (AWD)	102,428	Poor	\$4,785.00
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