

# LLBO Education Division



October 23, 2015 Volume 1

## Leech Lake Early Childhood Development News by Tamie Finn

### Early Childhood Teachers Work Toward a Bachelor's Degree



The Leech Lake Early Childhood Development Program has partnered with the Leech Lake Tribal College and Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) to provide an opportunity for their employees to receive an online Bachelor's Degree. In the fall of 2014, the Tribal College entered into an articulation agreement that allows for transfer of their Early Childhood Associate credits to the Educational Studies Bachelor Program at SMSU.

Three Leech Lake Early Childhood Development Team Leaders enrolled in the SMSU Program

immediately in the fall of 2014. LaShelle Masten, Rachel Forga, and Cheryl Masten have been participating for one year now making their lives at work and home extremely busy. The three have established a meeting time to support each other and work together. Another team leader, Janel O'Brien, joined the group when she enrolled in the SMSU classes the fall of 2015.

Tamie Finn, Professional Development Coordinator, has provided support through a mentorship program. Tamie serves as the liaison between the Early Childhood Development Program, Leech Lake Tribal College, and SMSU. In addition, the Early Childhood Development program has become a sponsoring site for the T.E.A.C.H. program through Child Care Aware of America. Each of the SMSU students has been awarded a scholarship where T.E.A.C.H. will cover 85% of the cost of tuition and fees. The students cover 10% and the ECD program covers 5%. This is a win-win situation for the energetic women who work hard to improve learning for the children attending the Early Childhood Development Program.

## Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)



Early Childhood Family Education works as a support and resource for families to help strengthen their ability to provide the best possible environment for their children across all areas of development. The ECFE program is based upon the premise that parents are the first AND MOST IMPORTANT teachers of their children! Parents and children participate in engaging activities that are educational in nature. They interact together thus strengthening the bond between parents and child. At times, there are break out sessions for parents to discuss topics of concern or shared interest. Typical topics could include sleep routines, nutrition, dealing with temper tantrums or a host of any topic that is related to the developing child. Parental input

is encouraged. The ECFE Program is under the direction of Michelle Traeger-Nelson. She has an office at the Cass Lake Early Childhood Center just east of the Facility Center.

### November/December Events

**Positive Indian Parenting** will be held on November 18 & 25 and December 2, 9, & 16.

**Pregnant Mom's Socialization** is scheduled for December 16.

**Scholastic Book Fair** is scheduled for December 7 - 11. (Please see article on pg. 4 about reading.)

### January/February Events

Please watch for the upcoming events scheduled that include a Movie Night, Media & Technology, Read 'n Feed, Book Bingo, Extending Our Families Through Unity, and another Pregnant Mom's Socialization. For more information on these events and others please contact Michelle Traeger-Nelson by calling 218-335-8205 or check out the website at [www.llboearlychildhood.com](http://www.llboearlychildhood.com).

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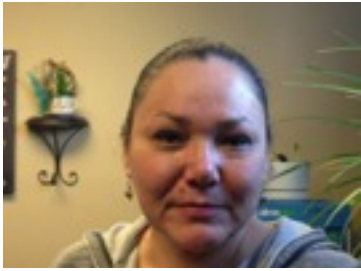
## ECFE In Action - What Does It Look Like?

It involves parents and children interacting together to build a strong bond.

There are three central aspects of the ECFE program. (1) **Parent Discussion Time** is facilitated by a licensed parent educator. This is a time for parents to discuss and support each other by sharing questions and/or successes; (2) **Children's Activity Time** where children learn and play together; and (3) **Parent-Child Interaction** where parents & children engage in meaningful activities together.

## Who Is Eligible To Participate?

These classes are available to all community members with children ages Birth to 5 years old. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming scheduled events and the classes that we currently offer.



## LIC/Youth Division Meetings

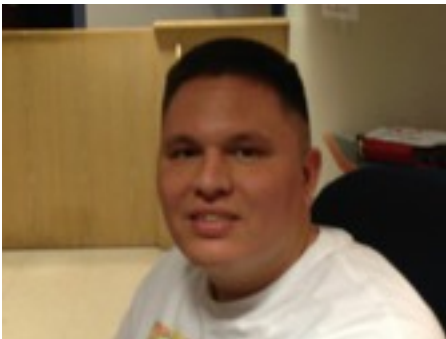
The Youth Program within the Education Division is committed to working with our

reservation communities to improve our delivery of program services to our youth ages 8-18. LLBO, spearheaded by Pete White, the Executive Director, has requested time on the LIC agendas in order to

obtain input from the community regarding the issues/concerns and hopes for the future as we work to implement improved services.

Pat Wade, Program Manager of the Youth Division, has worked in her current position for the past three years. Pat has attended the LIC meetings scheduled thus far and reports, *“We will be working together to strengthen the bond between the Youth Programs and the Local Indian Councils to make the programs successful.”*

## Youth Build at LLBO



Youth Build was available in our area previously and we hope to bring it back! The LLBO is in the initial stages of planning and training that are required to implement the program. Lee Turney and Reuben St. Cyr are attending training in Montana sponsored by Youth Build USA - Rural and Native Initiatives. Reuben has attended a previous training session held in early June. Plans are underway to work with the Youth Build USA program to assist us as we move forward to regain our partnership in order to better serve the youth of Leech Lake. This program helps youth to gain carpentry and gaming skills while attending school.

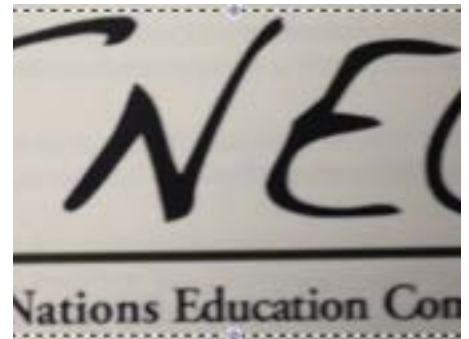
## MIEA Conference



The Minnesota Indian Education Association (MIEA) Conference will be held in Mahanomen, Minnesota, November 4-7. A new event is the MIEA Youth Day scheduled for Thursday, November 5, at the Circle of Life Academy. Activities include venison processing, walleye filleting, cultural teachings by elders, traditional hand games, stick games, lacrosse, and the 7 Grandfather teachings.

MIEA is also a time when educators and policymakers throughout the state come together to network and share ideas and concerns.

## TNEC Update



The Tribal Nations’ Education Committee was founded February 2007 by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and sanctioned by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. Committee membership is made up of representatives of the six Minnesota Chippewa Tribes, the Sioux communities, and the Red Lake Nation. All are endorsed by their respective Tribes. TNEC has been working on revising the Indian Education Act of 1988. A recent accomplishment has been the reinstatement of the Office of Indian Education. TNEC was written into state statute as follows: *the Commissioner shall seek consultation with TNEC on all issues related to AI education.*

## **BIE Blueprint for Reform**

The Bureau of Indian Education is undergoing a major reform plan called the Blueprint for Reform that is intended to provide a 'world class education' for Indian students. There are 5 Circles of Reform that make up the reform plan and they are: (1) Self-Determination for Tribal Nations, (2) Highly Effective Teachers and Principals, (3) Agile Organizational Environment, (4) Comprehensive Supports through Partnerships, and (5) Budget that Supports Capacity Building. In September 2013, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, convened an American Indian Education Study Group to diagnose the systemic challenges facing the BIE. They determined the need to develop a comprehensive plan that would be directed at developing a 'world-class education' for students attending BIE schools. A Secretarial Order #3334 signed on June 12, 2014, was the first step by the US Department of Interior to begin the process of reform implementation. A key aspect of the reform initiative is to assist Tribal Nations to gain greater control of the educational decisions that impact all Native children under their care.

The Education Division of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe has recently submitted a grant that would be used to assist us with

two projects. One project would be to write a Tribal Education Code (TEC) that would provide direction in the long-term planning within the Education Division. Many Nations have already undergone this process and have codes developed to assist them. The second project would be to develop a Comprehensive Education Plan for LLBO from birth on through the elderly population. The release of information for grant awardees will happen in early November.

### **Achievement Gap**

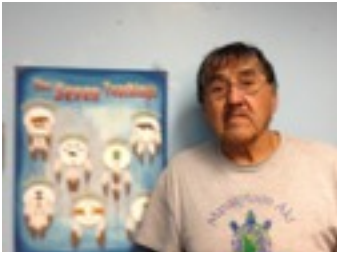
The 'achievement gap' has been written about for decades with very little headway made despite the strong focus within federal legislation and funding provided to address it. While the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was highly criticized for its punitive stance taken toward school districts not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), it did require a disaggregation of student scores across several lines including race. Typically, Minnesota's scores are among some of the highest in the nation, but the disaggregation of student scores highlighted the disparity that exists between white students and students of color within the state.

The Leech Lake Education Division is committed to working hard to address the achievement gap that exists within our population of students at the BIE school and all public schools that

serve our students. Please read the following article on reading.

### **Read/Rich Language Experiences**

There are two simple things that parents, grandparents, and all family members can do to improve the likelihood that their children will enter school with the necessary skills to be successful in their literate lives. (1) Read, read, read to your children and DISCUSS the events in the books. Ask questions that will engage the child to think beyond the actual words on the page. For example, ask the child, "Did that ever happen to you?" Let your child explain and engage him/her further into a conversation. Read at different times throughout the day - not just at bedtime. Carry books in the car. Start a quiet reading time at home where everyone in the family reads something. Model this for your child and demonstrate the importance of reading. (2) Develop their vocabulary. Talk to your child often about many things. Going shopping, riding in the car, doing laundry at home are all areas where you can engage your child in some rich language. Conversing with your child is free of charge, but there will be huge payoffs in their future. Board books for young children cost about \$7.00 on average. Your child should have a library of books at home including nursery rhymes, ABC books, fiction, and non-fiction. READ & TALK PLEASE.



## Herschel Ogema Basketball Tournament

The Cass Lake Youth Division and the Cass Lake Boys and Girls Club co-sponsored a basketball

tournament on October 17 & 18 for youth boys ages 14-18. More than 100 boys participated in the event playing on 12 teams. When asked about the tournament Herschel stated, “Truly, what an honor to

have this tournament in my name. How appropriate that on October 15 I start my chemo, but the show must go on. On the 16th I am there officiating and sharing great times with everyone.”

Thanks go to Gil Zamora and Claire Tsuji for co-sponsoring the tournament. Herschel received a beautiful watch that will ensure he is never late! Thanks also are extended to Curtis Brown and Byron Wilson for being there both days to run the clock and keep score. There is Open Gym at the Facility Center and the B & G Club on Mondays from 6:00-8:00.

### District i



On September 27, 2015, District I Cultural Retreat took place in S. Lake. Twice a year the S. Lake community conducts a Water Raft Ceremony to honor the water and all living things. The youth that participated learned how to gather and prepare materials for building the water rafts that were used in the ceremony. This included knowing the kind of wood needed, cutting it to size and painting them two colors (blue and red). Also, tobacco ties were used for the making of these ceremonial rafts. Our elder, Mr. Smith, conducted the ceremony in Anishinaabemowin with an English translation. Mr. Northbird provided the drum and songs.

### District II



October has been a busy month for our youth in District II. There are 14 girls who participate in our ‘Daughters of Tradition’ class and they are doing a great job. They have already completed their pre-tests which are used as a tool in our evaluation of the program. We do ‘Talking Circles.’ They learn about the reasons for doing a smudge and use the Eagle Feather. As we attempt to help develop the whole child we also learn about the importance of manners and walking a good path in life. We have been spending time at the park in Federal Dam. There is a new park there that we can utilize as we get exercise and take in the fresh air that is good for the Soul.

### District III



The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, District III area has a ‘Daughters of Tradition’ Program for young girls ages 8-18 in the following three communities: Onigum with Teresa Jordan, Mission Community with Monica Brown, and Cass Lake with Yvonne Hardy. This program is designed to provide cultural teachings to our youth. In one project, the girls along with Yvonne Hardy made a star quilt for a young boy who had recently passed away in our community. The star quilt was made by the loving hands of the girls and Yvonne and presented to the boy’s mother during his wake at the Veteran’s Memorial Building.

# Youth Division Highlights

Fall has been a busy season despite the start up of the new school year. Students are eager to join in the many after-school and weekend activities sponsored by the area youth coordinators. Meet three of the Youth Area Coordinators.

## **Natalie Lovelace (Cass Lake Area)**



An All District Halloween Youth Dance was held on October 17 with close to 150 youth attending. There were games to play including musical chairs, limbo, potato dance, and several dance contests. Winners of the dance contests received \$20 Walmart or McDonald's gift cards. This incentive helped our older youth to participate. At the end of the event there were Night Scream tickets given to all youth participants. It was great to see so many young people enjoying themselves in a positive way. There was positive interaction between our older youth and the younger ones who tend to look up to them.

## **Tracy Gale (Onigum Area)**

A District II Culture Camp was held on October 18 from 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. This is always a highlight of our activities. John Atkinson, an elder in our community, served as the spiritual advisor for us. He often assists us in prayer, but also with our 'Life Skills' class and the 'Talking Circle.' For our arts and crafts portion of the camp, Ruth White, taught our youth how to make 'god's eyes.' Several of the youth enjoyed the activity so much they made more than one. Our Ojibwe language instructor, Paris Nicazio from Bemidji State University, was with us. She has wonderful rapport with the youth and manages to build in fun into all of the activities she brings. Watch for our upcoming camps that are held quarterly in different locations.



## **Liz Aitken (All Districts)**

The 1st Annual Healing Walk took place on October 15, 2015, at the Facility Center gym from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. This event was prompted by the 10th Anniversary of the death of Warren Tibbetts, husband of Nancy Kingbird. In pouring out her heart at a support group, Nancy talked about the healing needs of our Nation as a whole. This is in line with the loss and grief we share over the violence, suicide, and other deaths that we all experience. There were nearly 50 people who participated in the walk as they remembered a loved one. There were three Police Officers who supported us and carried a banner for this event. A dinner was served following the walk. It was co-sponsored by MDH, LL Tribal Health, and Leech Lake Youth Chemical Dependency Prevention Programs.



# TRACEY BENJAMIN - EDUCATION DIVISION RECEPTIONIST



## Post-Secondary Scholarships



This program is designed to provide post-secondary grants to enrolled Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe members who plan to attend a higher education

institute. This includes out-of-state institutes as well as those in Minnesota. Those interested in full-time, part-time, graduate study, or short-term training are encouraged to apply. One requirement is that students must apply for all other sources of financial aid and should apply when taxes are done.

## WIOA



The Workforce Initiative and Opportunity Act is a federal program to assist with short-term employment and training assistance for adults. The new federal regulations of WIOA now require that 65% of the funding be used towards classroom training to assist clients toward a career path. The remaining funds are to be used for direct work experiences including internships. Norma Jackson is the Program Manager and can be reached at 335-8391.

## **Grand Rapids Holds First Ever Indigenous Day Celebration!**



The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe took part in a historical event on October 12, 2015, in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Previously, on December 15, 2014, the Grand Rapids City Council passed a resolution (No. 14-126) recognizing Indigenous People's Day the second Monday of October beginning in 2015. The Leech Lake Youth Division (Tobacco Prevention Program) had the honors of assisting on this day. Gary Charwood, Tobacco Prevention Program Coordinator, was the MC for this historic event. There were over 600 youth in attendance representing schools from Northland Community School, Deer River, Cass Lake-Bena, and the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School. The Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School brought dancers and singers, along with

the Big Red singing group. Schools outside of the Leech Lake area in attendance included Grand Rapids School District, Floodwood Schools, and Hill City. LLBO is pleased to share this day with our neighbors to the east.

## **Leech Lake Education Division Participates**

Several people from the Leech Lake Education Division participated in the Indigenous Day Celebration held in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Gary Charwood, Tobacco Prevention Program Coordinator, served as the MC for the day. Dorothy Robinson, Scholarship Grants Officer, was also in attendance to represent the Education Division.

## **Area Schools Attend the Celebration**

Many schools in the Leech Lake area sent a contingent of people including youth to participate in the event. Students and faculty from the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School, Deer River, Remer, and Grand Rapids Public Schools were in attendance. LLBO extends congratulations to the school leaders who supported the event. It is an opportune time to teach about the accurate history of the Native Americans locally and nation-wide.

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## **Getting History Correct!**

### **Indigenous Day Celebration In Grand Rapids Is a Start Locally**



A growing number of cities are working to abolish the traditional Columbus Day holiday and replace it with an acknowledgement that is more in line with the fact that millions of people were already living here when Christopher Columbus arrived. According to the Associated Press, Albuquerque, Anadarko, Portland, St. Paul, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Olympia are some of the major cities that have taken steps to recast the holiday as Indigenous Peoples Day. Kudos to Grand Rapids for joining them!

## **Thanks To The Teachers Who Follow Up in Classrooms**

Social studies teachers throughout the world are helping students to better understand the accurate history of the United States and this celebration affords them an excellent opportunity to do so.