



# Nashauonk Mittark™



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DRUM BEAT

DEPARTMENTS

ELECTION

OUR STORY

PROGRAMS



## Word from the Chairman

*Wuneekeesuq Nutuwam* ( Hello My Tribal Community);

As you know, there will be a tribal special election on Sunday December 13th to fill a vacancy on the Tribal Council. I want to take this opportunity to ask you, no matter who you support, to please come out to vote.

Our tribe has worked hard to put processes into place to ensure that every enrolled tribal member has a vote and a voice. All tribal enrolled members may run for office, attend Tribal Council Meetings, participate in monthly General Body Meetings, serve on committees, and vote for our elected officials.

While our government and our cultural core will always be in Mashpee, and we continue to encourage everyone to get involved in activities and meetings in Mashpee, I understand that we have large numbers of tribal members who live in other communities. To encourage increased participation among these tribal members, I plan to hold a series of informal "town hall" meetings where we bring tribal government to areas outside of Mashpee, making it easier for the members who live off-Cape to participate. If you would like to help organize one of these meetings, please contact me at the tribal office.

Our tribe is strongest when all members take advantage of these

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## Cromwell Testifies at State Gaming Hearing

On October 29th, Chairman Cedric Cromwell testified before the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Economic Development & Emerging Technologies, which is considering expanded gaming in Massachusetts. The testimony in its entirety is below:

*Wuneekeesuq Neetopak. Good day and thank you Chairwoman Spilka, Chairman Dempsey and Committee Members. I am Cedric Cromwell, the Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. I sit here as a direct descendant of Massasoit, a great Wampanoag sachem, who greeted the Pilgrims, and whose image appears on the seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The people of my tribe, in addition to being members of our sovereign nation, are good citizens of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

*After inhabiting present-day Massachusetts for thousands of years, our ancestors greeted explorers from Europe, resulting in the decimation of our people by foreign disease. Despite this, our ancestors assisted the Pilgrims to survive their first harsh winters here. We treated them with respect and human dignity and expected the same in return.*

*In the years after 1620, our land was stripped away from us while a series of governments: colonial, state, and federal, presided over attempts to not only take our land, but remove any trace of us from this part of the country. We refused to do that. Through perseverance, we stayed in our homeland, a strong tribal community, increasingly surrounded by other peoples. We were reaffirmed by the Department of Interior in 2007 as what we have always been - a sovereign Indian tribe that has earned the respect of others.*

*The toll on our people, however, has been great. Today, many members of our tribe are unable to find housing in our ancestral lands - one of the most expensive*

(Continued on page 3)

## Election News

In addition to the special election on December 13th, in February 2010, there will be four Council seats up for re-election. The four-year terms for Council members Yvonne Avant, Cheryl Frye-Cromwell, and Martin "Bruzzy" Hendricks all expire in February. Edwina Johnson, who was elected to serve the remainder of Aaron Tobey's Council seat as he was elected to the Vice Chairman position, will also be up for re-election.

If these Council members wish to continue to serve they will need to request nomination papers from the Election Committee and collect the requisite 25 signatures of eligible Tribal voters.

Tribal members who have attended at least six meetings, either General Body meetings or Council meetings or a combination of each, within the 12 months preceding the Tribal general election may also run for a Council seat.

Tribal members interested in running for an elected office should contact the Election Committee to request a nomination form.

## Meeting with President Obama Highlights DC Trip

Chairman Cedric Cromwell, along with other tribal leaders from across the country, met with President Obama on November 5th as part of the largest meeting of tribal leaders in US history in Washington, DC. The President pledged that there will be a new relationship between tribes

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December

- 5 Elders Council Meeting, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Headquarters, 11 a.m.
- 6 Falmouth Christmas Parade – Look for the tribal float!
- 7 Wampanoag Women’s Support Group, A-7 Madaket Place, Mashpee, 10 a.m.
- 8 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 13 **Special Election**, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Headquarters, Great Neck Road, 2 p.m., Elders Vote 1 p.m.
- 14 Wampanoag Women’s Support Group, A-7 Madaket Place, Mashpee, 10 a.m.
- 14 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 21 Wampanoag Women’s Support Group, A-7 Madaket Place, Mashpee, 10 a.m.
- 21 Food Pantry, Wampanoag Tribal Office, 10 a.m - 3 p.m.
- 21 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 23 Food Pantry, Wampanoag Tribal Office, 10 a.m - 3 p.m.
- 28 Wampanoag Women’s Support Group, A-7 Madaket Place, Mashpee, 10 a.m.
- 28 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

January

- 2 Elders Council Meeting, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Headquarters, 11 a.m.
- 4 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 10 General Body Meeting
- 11 Food Pantry, Wampanoag Tribal Office, 10 a.m - 3 p.m.
- 11 Youth Cultural Night, Mashpee Rod and Gun Club, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 25 Food Pantry, Wampanoag Tribal Office, 10 a.m - 3 p.m.

Editorial Staff

Leslie Jonas  
 Selena Jonas  
 Paula Peters

- Condolences to the family of Lawrence E. “Larry” Hendricks III. Larry passed away at the age of 55 on November 16 after a long illness, leaving three sons and a daughter. He was a grandfather of 11 and also survived by his mother Frances and sister Wanda Andrews and many nieces and nephews and cousins. A funeral was held at the John Lawrence Funeral Home on November 20 before Larry was laid to rest in the Old Indian Cemetery in Mashpee.
- Three employees in the main Tribal Council office on Great Neck Road in Mashpee hold the title of Notary Public and will provide notary services free to all tribal members. Please contact Nancy Martin at the tribal office for more information.
- Congratulations to Ann Marie Peters Askew on her engagement to Fitzgerald James Allen on Sept 27, 2009. The happy couple, who have been dating for five years, celebrated with family and friends on Sept 29, 2009 at the Boston Police Post. A date for the wedding has not been announced.
- Tribal member Martha Pearson is proud of her grandson, Lester Pearson, who is on the National Honor Society at Franklin High in Seattle Washington where he is a rising senior. Lester, who has dreams of becoming a professional baseball player, has applied to colleges here in the Northeast including Bowdoin, Bates, Colby, Wheaton, and Providence College as well as Brown University. Good luck Lester.
- A Women’s Support Group for Mashpee Wampanoag women and children has been established to provide a healthy and supportive environment for families. The support group sessions will meet Mondays, December 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the tribal office at A-7 Madaket Place on Route 28 in Mashpee. Also, confidential sessions conducted by a qualified, licensed counselor are available upon request. For more information call 508-419-6017, ext. 607.
- Women concerned about domestic violence are invited to participate in Talking Circles for Native Women hosted by the Rhode Island Indian Council’s Domestic Violence Prevention Program. Native American women are invited to the circles each Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Domestic Violence Prevention Office at the Rhode Island Indian Council, 807 Broad Street, Providence, RI. For more information contact: Daejah M. Hankinson, Director, at 401.781.1098 Extension 29, or Email: daejahhankinson@yahoo.com
- The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is developing a **Cultural Resource Speakers and Performers Bureau** in order to respond to requests from outside groups including schools, clubs and other organizations to have speakers knowledgeable about our history and current events and cultural performers. Interested tribal members must have previous experience and be able to demonstrate an ability to present historically and culturally accurate lectures and/or performances. The tribe is also seeking tribal members interested in sitting on a three-member review board for the Cultural Resource Speakers and Performers Bureau. Anyone interested in either being listed on the Cultural Resource Speakers and Performers Bureau or sitting on the review board should contact Council member Cheryl Frye-Cromwell.

*Tribal members who would like to submit items of interest for On The Drum Beat, Our Story or news for Naushauonk Mittark should send their information to SJonas@mwtribe.com. The deadline to submit all edited copy is the first Friday of each month.*

*(Word from the Chairman, continued from page 1)*

opportunities and bring their ideas to the table. Let me be clear: whether you agree or disagree, have praise or criticism, your opinion is welcome and important to the health of this tribe.

There are many important issues facing our tribe, from land into trust, to economic development, to programs that affect health care, education, and housing for tribal members. Please make your voice heard as we make these critical decisions that will shape our collective future. I hope to see you on December 13th. Come out and vote!  
 Kataputumuw;  
 Qaqemasq (Running Bear)

**Tribal Spouses are Welcome at Tribal Meetings**

As a matter of clarification, the Council would like it to be known and understood that the spouses of enrolled tribal members are welcome to attend any tribal meetings accompanied by their tribal spouse.



## WIA Workshop

The Workforce Investment Act Department, WIA, will present a workshop on Small Business Administration (SBA) Services on December 3, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Tribal Offices on Great Neck Road in Mashpee. Learn how to be successful in obtaining small business loans including Patriot and SBA loans as well as other government contracting opportunities including HUB Zones and State Office of Minority and Women Business Assistance (SOMWBA) Planning and Development. For more information contact WIA Director Angela Shwom at ashwom@mwtribe.com.

## Tribal Court Announces New Hire

After interviewing seven candidates, Chief Supreme Court Judge Henry Sockbeson has named tribal member Marita Scott to the part-time position of Tribal Court Clerk. Judge Sockbeson said while the choice was difficult, Marita rose to the top of a pool of excellent candidates with her strong organizational and administrative experience and skills. Marita had strong recommendations from previous employers including the Town of Mashpee. Not only was she well qualified, she showed particular strength in developing and maintaining a detailed administrative process that will be necessary to conduct the court's business efficiently. Marita started work on November 18 and will be responsible for the preparation and maintenance of all case files.



Marita Scott

## Housing Department Updates:

- The Wampanoag Housing Department has suspended taking names for the Rehab and Weatherization Wait list until further notice.
- The Wampanoag Housing Department will now resume accepting applications for rental assistance for first, last and security deposits. For more information contact the Housing Advocate, Winona Hendricks.
- The Wampanoag Housing Department is still in search of a tribal member who has experience and would like to give us a price to design and construct an outdoor sign for our upcoming housing development. For more information contact the Housing Director, Alice Lopez.
- The Wampanoag Housing Department would like to welcome a new Rehab and Weatherization Specialist Valerie Molowku. Valerie's hours are Monday through Friday 10:00 to 12:30.

*(Cromwell Testifies at State Gaming Hearing, continued from page 1)*

markets in the country. Unemployment is high. We struggle with the many health issues that go along with high rates of poverty - heart disease, asthma, diabetes, cancer, teenage pregnancy, and substance abuse. Many of our tribal members rely on state assistance - through unemployment insurance, transitional assistance, Mass Health, and other programs - just to survive.

As the leader of a sovereign nation, I would like to share our plans to provide the economic opportunities that our tribal members need to break the cycle of poverty. As part of a larger economic development strategy, our tribe intends to build and operate a resort-style gaming facility in the town of Middleboro, providing good jobs to tribal members as well as our neighbors in Middleboro and Southeastern Massachusetts. And the profits will stay right here in Massachusetts - providing for housing, education, and health care for our people as well as the diversification of our economic development strategy so that we may better provide for our people. Therefore, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe supports expanded gaming in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and specifically the construction of three resort casinos.

Presently, our tribe has an application before the Bureau of Indian Affairs to take 140 acres in Mashpee and 539 acres of land in Middleboro into trust as an initial reservation. Once the land is placed into trust, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe will have certain gaming rights as provided by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or IGRA. According to IGRA, federally recognized tribes "have the exclusive right to regulate gaming activity on Indian lands."

In 2007, the town of Middleboro approved our proposed resort facility. Since then, we have worked with the town as our partner. We continue to build on this partnership for the benefit of our tribe, the town of Middleboro, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are confident that our land will be placed into trust in the near future. In February, the Supreme Court decision on *Carcieri v. Salazar* caused uncertainty as to the federal government's ability to take land into trust for certain tribes. Since then, we, along with hundreds of other tribes from across the country, have been working with the Obama Administration and Congress to end this uncertainty. We are very encouraged by legislation introduced in both the US Senate and House to resolve this situation and potential opportunities to fix this administratively.

Additionally, along with other tribal leaders, I will be meeting with President Obama next week.

In the meantime, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has directed us to continue with our application, and I am fully confident that it will be approved.

We look forward to working with the Commonwealth as it considers expanded gaming and as we move forward with our project. On behalf of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, I thank you for the opportunity to speak with you here today, and look forward to a close working relationship moving forward.

*Kutuputumuw Neetopak (Thank you my friends)*

## Special Election Candidates

During the General Body meeting of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe held on Sunday, November 8, the tribal members profiled on this page were successfully nominated to fill the Council seat vacated by Richard Oakley.

A special election, in accordance with the Tribe's constitutional ordinance, will be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, December 13 at the Tribal Headquarters. Elders will be allowed to vote beginning at 1 p.m. The candidate receiving the most votes in that special election will serve the remainder of Richard's term, which will expire in February of 2011.



**Joan Tavares Avant,  
69, Mashpee Native**

Retired Mashpee Educator

Joan has earned her Masters Degree in Education from Cambridge College, Cambridge, MA 1995 and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Services from the University of Massachusetts Boston MA 1993

Joan has worked professionally in the "Mashpee Wampanoag Community" "On the Job Training" and "Educational Studies."

As an elder my work has encompassed more than three decades of contemporary, journalistic, academic, with historical focus on the Mashpee Wampanoag.

My Associations: Native American Journalists Association, The Hoop-Honoring Our Own Power, the National League of American Pen Women and editor of their newsletter,

The University of Massachusetts Amherst (Native Program), the NAACP, the US Dept of Health & Human Services, 4C's, is only a few of the many entities who have formally recognized my work with awards.

I served three terms as president and four as the historian of our Tribe as well as

Director of Indian Education for 26 years mentoring Wampanoag families for as long as I can remember.

I am offering to provide my experience and patience as a Council member; I do this simply because it is my forever passion to see our tribe move ahead through listening and respectful dialog. Not only to preserve our history and culture but also with a sharp eye towards the future. "Wise decisions are made from those who are willing to listen and compromise for the greater good." This is my motto, Bird!!!! I will be honored to serve as a Mashpee Wampanoag Council member.



**Carlton Hendricks Jr.,  
39, Mashpee**

Educational Background: GED

Professional Experience: Trucking Business Owner for 5 yrs. along with paving company, recently employed with the Tribe for security and maintenance.

It would be my greatest honor to represent our Tribe on the Council. I am proud to be born and raised in Mashpee with a traditional upbringing. I am married to a tribal member and a father of 6 wonderful children who will be raised in Mashpee. I believe we our

obligated to give back to our community. That is why the Creator put us here. We have to make a better life for our children, it is the only way to deliver the promise for the future.

While employed by the Tribe, working on the museum was one of the projects I was most proud to be a part of since it is such a big part of our history and who we are as a people. I will strive to reopen the museum with the involvement of our Elders. I was able to work alongside my grandmother Ellen Hendricks, a dedicated tribal elder, who helped me connect to our history which I will pass on to my children. I feel we must respect our elders who have brought us this far realizing they are the center of our community, so we understand how the past influences the future.

I have served on the community building project and would like to see that to completion. Our youth need our involvement in both education and cultural activities. I have been hosting youth basketball tournaments the past few years with over 200 in attendance through fundraising. I am seeking council to let Mashpee voices be heard.





**Patricia "Trish" Keliinui,  
42, Mashpee**

Education: Mashpee and Falmouth Public Schools, Graduate, UMass Dartmouth

Trish has worked in sales, promotion & communication; community relations.

I am an extremely proud product of Mashpee. As a child during the 1970's era of the Land Claims suit, I watched my family members alongside our many Tribal relations work together for the greater good of our people and community. While there were differing opinions on occasion, ultimately the goal never wavered. Our elders worked tirelessly to make sure our future was sustainable and all opportunities would be available to us, from hunting and fishing rights to federal recognition....they did it for us!

Thirty years later and as a mother of a teenage son, I feel it vital to bringing back the sentiments from a generation ago by working side-by-side fellow Tribal members for the betterment of our entire community. For my part, I've served on several Tribal committees including the Election Committee, Nashauonk Mittark newsletter, Mashpee Wampanoag Ball, Clara Louise Keliinui Memorial Golf Classic, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Scholarship and one term on the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, Inc., Board of Directors from 1999-2001.

Our future holds so many opportunities and it will be my humble honor to serve on the Tribal Council and be a part of critical decisions in all aspects of our collective longevity. I vow my due diligence on all Council motions and votes as well as great consideration to how my position will affect Tribal members at large. I will carry myself as nothing short of an ambassador and represent my family and Tribe with every ounce of respect...as we reflect each other. Thank you for your consideration.



**Willard F. Pocknett,  
60, Mashpee**

Education: Mashpee and Falmouth Public Schools

Bill Pocknett is the son of Fred Pocknett and namesake of his grandfather Willard Pocknett. He has been married to Donnella Pocknett for more than 40 years, raised daughters Melissa and Wendy, and enjoys his 4 grandchildren.

Bill has been employed by Simon Properties for 8 years and is currently Maintenance Director at the Cape Cod Mall, overseeing, with the Director of Operations, a crew of 14. He was recently recognized by Simon Corporate headquarters for his outstanding service and innovative projects resulting in more efficient productivity at the mall. He was also the recipient of the Wampanoag Business Leadership Award.

Bill worked with the Mashpee Youth Pop Warner football program as a coach for 5 years, and has worked on past grant projects with his Uncle Vernon Pocknett at Popponeset Bay. He is also Chairman of the Elders Committee.

Bill is eager to help his tribe if elected to the Board of Directors by using his management qualities, people skills, and his practice of fairness and common sense. He brings his fond memories of past Powwows, the excitement of the young men getting ready for Fireball, the images of the girls braiding their hair and hearing the announcer getting the crowd ready to watch Tez's famous hoop dance, and "the preservation and continuation of our colorful heritage."

*(Meeting with President Obama Highlights DC Trip, continued from page 1)*

and the federal government, signing a memorandum directing all federal agencies to submit recommendations within 90 days on how to improve tribal participation in government policy decisions. Emphasizing his commitment to Indian Country, the President stated, "You will not be forgotten as long as I am in this White House."

The Tribal Summit also offered the opportunity for Chairman Cromwell and other leaders to meet with Cabinet Secretaries, including Secretary Ken Salazar of the Department of the Interior, who Cromwell pressed on support for indigenous hunting and fishing rights as well as a speedy fix to the uncertainty surrounding land into trust applications. In addition, Cromwell had the opportunity to speak with Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs, who pledged to travel to Mashpee to meet with the tribe. During the trip, Chairman Cromwell and Vice Chairman Tobey participated in the opening of the Embassy of Tribal Nations, and met with federal agencies and several members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to discuss land for an initial reservation as well as funding for fiscal year 2011 programs for the tribe. They succeeded in securing a commitment from Senator Kerry, Senator Kirk and Congressman Delahunt to work with Secretary Salazar toward a resolution of the tribe's land into trust application. Cromwell and Tobey also discussed the importance of preserving Nantucket Sound as a Traditional Cultural Property. Additionally, they met with Appropriations sub-committee Chairman John Olver of Massachusetts, who pledged to assist the tribe in receiving adequate financing for tribal needs.



*Contributed by Joan Tavares Avant*

Ruth Hammond Sigler, a teacher who taught 5th and 6th grades for eight and half years in the Samuel G. Davis School (now Mashpee Town Hall) expressed her gratitude to the Mashpee Wampanoag by writing about Mashpee and the children she taught. In Ruth's introduction she writes about how she became acquainted with the Wampanoag women and children in 1950, after a Wampanoag woman came to help when her mother was stricken with cancer.

Ruth listened to the stories of Wampanoag women, taught their children, cherished Mashpee and, thus, became compelled to write about Mashpee.

"I remember so vividly; it was Glenna Coombs that put out her little hand to welcome me on my first day of teaching in your village of Mashpee..."

What follows is a guided Tour of Mashpee "As It Once Was," written by Ruth Hammond Sigler, an Irish woman who commuted from Pocasset to the Davis School.

"It is September, 1961, and we shall reach Mashpee by traveling south on 151, the Nathan Ellis Highway which runs into 28, the route to Hyannis where the Mashpees shop. We'd like to look more closely, but the traffic is still too heavy for a close look at the roadside where the land glows with goldenrod and with the blue-purple asters giving their complement of color. Of course we see the scrub-oaks and the pitch-pine trees that are tough enough to endure the storms of the season.

"We do catch a glimpse of the waters of John's Pond where there are homes that are continually being built to house families from other towns. Now as our eyes travel to the right we see the Lakeside Trailer Park, where many children live whose fathers are employed by the United States Government at Otis Air Force Base. As we travel we see neglected cranberry bogs where lovely wildflowers are blooming. Then too we see the Coonamessett River that flows under the highway through two 6ft. concrete ducts. This is the river where the deer come to feed on the watercress, and so it is well to keep a close look-out for deer that may cross the road.

"Over the rolling hill and you are at Popponeset Rotary, where there is a package store, Trout Pond Restaurant with its sign, Cabins for Rent, and then there is



a gift shop that features Cape Cod Candles, some being made from the bayberry wax. Also on the left, there is the Tisit, garage and store.

"By taking a sharp right at the circle, we travel for five miles through a heavily wooded section to the Popponeset Bay, where the Popponeset Corporation has built beautiful homes, attractive homes for summer rental. Here too, is the Popponeset Inn famous for its cuisine and also for the entertainment. It is at this Inn that Wampanoag mothers work; for these women...truly enjoy cooking good food.

*"...the land glows with goldenrod and with the blue-purple asters giving their complement of color."*

"Then too, we must take Falmouth Road at the Popponeset Rotary. We will bear left on to Seconssett, and Monomoscoy. We don't see many Wampanoag here and the new settlers would like Popponeset, Seconssett, and Monomoscoy to be formed into a town that is to secede from Mashpee. But the land belongs to Mashpee "Land of the Wampanoags" and Mashpee is subject to the guardianship that was established when Mashpee was incorporated as a town.

"Yes all this shore land is fast becoming another Venice with its man-made land, canals and gardens; but it isn't Mashpee. To see Mashpee we must travel in a northerly direction from the Popponeset Rotary. Now in Mashpee we

notice the purple asters, and the young locust trees, the locust to be the lovely trees that bear some pink, white, or yellow flowers, all sweet-scented, that bloom in early June. That's only if they are left alone.

"Here growing along the roadside is the Chinese Bamboo, called Old Man's Beard because of the festooning of its many white flowers. It's refreshing to see all these flowers growing along Mashpee's Main Street. And with the flowers you see the Wampanoag children, children who are pleased to smile, to wave their hand in greeting. Even the dogs seem satisfied to walk leisurely along where the children are.

"Here on Main Street, as we look to the right, we see Quashnet road where the tall pitch - pines grow, the same trees that were growing when the Wampanoags were lords of the forest. Close by we see cranberry bogs and the Mashpee River that is flowing through the bog-lands.

"On the left side of Main Street is the Wigwam, which is both a motel and hotel. It is at this modern hotel that the children congregate, as after graduation, the Wigwam is very cheerful with children and grown-ups enjoying a sundae or an ice cream soda. It's so nice to see folks, who find joy in simple things.

"Close on the left, is Meeting House Road where many Wampanoags live, where little children can play in the bordering fields..."

*Editor's note: The author refers to Great Neck Road as an extension of Main Street. It is in fact a separate road.*

## Tribal Health Department Wins \$100,000 for Phase 2 of Health Services Registration Program

*Submitted by Leslie Jonas, Communications Strategist for Health Services Registration.*

Great news continues on the tribal healthcare front. In August, the tribal health department won phase 2 of a 3-year federal tribal management grant. Rita Pocknett, Tribal Health Director, Healthcare Advocate and RN, led a meeting to kick-off phase 2 of the health services registration program in October. This national grant program assists federally recognized tribes and tribally sanctioned tribal organizations in assuming all or part of existing Indian Health Service programs, services, functions, and activities.

We are utilizing the health management structure of the tribal management grant to benefit the health status of our tribe. This year, one of our most important objectives in our tribal health services registration program is to increase our tribal user population based on health service needs. We want all tribal members who have a health service need to register with the health department. The tribal health professionals will register the tribal member, confirm and/or assist in the application of health insurance, assess the health service need or needs and make referrals.

At the Sunday, Nov 8th tribal body meeting, Robyn Tobey-Stamps presented the tribal Contract Health Services Program that is now offered by the health department. If a tribal member did not attend the meeting, you may call the health department at 508-477-0209 and speak to a member of the program staff regarding detailed information and registration.

## “Your Health Is Our Priority”

### Tribal Teens Voice Concerns About Substance Abuse

*By Gail A. Hill, Director Juvenile Justice Program*

Thursday evening, November 5, 2009, Wampanoag Tribal Youth Council Members were among other Cape-wide teens at Sandwich High School to express their concerns at the Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Forum. Speakers from community action groups presented data that supported the fact that there is an increasing problem of illegal substance use and suicide attempts by teens on Cape Cod. Several of our Tribal Youth led group discussions on the topics and made presentations in front of approximately 100 who listened attentively at possible solutions to these problems. It was quite evident that our Wampanoag Tribal Youth are becoming the “Youth Voice” on Cape Cod! Tribal Youth in attendance were: Ebony Gunn, Chelsie Miranda, Brian Weeden, Annawon Weeden, Jr., Mariah Hendricks, Mariah Gunn, Kiona Anderson, Taryn Medina, Michael Edwards and Karryssa Dickerson. A special thanks to Kim Frye, Laura Miranda, Vera Edwards and Winona Hendricks for accompanying us as parent volunteers.



Mariah Hendricks (l) and Kim Frye (r)



from left: Noni Hendricks, Gail Hill, Taryn Medina and Ebony Gunn

## My Latest Deployment: By Nelson Andrews Jr.



*Nelson Andrews in Yukon Tanana, Alaska.*

I recently returned from a four month deployment in Alaska. I have been a logistics specialist for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), for the past four years. On my latest deployment, I was the support branch director, responsible for the entire logistics support function of the operation.

When the yearly Alaska Yukon river ice breakup happened this spring, it caused devastating flooding to the native villages that are along the Yukon. A large ice jam developed in the fast flowing Yukon River, in addition to the snowmelt from high temps, causing severe flooding to the native towns and villages.

FEMA went into each of the damaged villages and rendered assistance, along with the help of voluntary agencies. The damaged homes and infrastructure were rebuilt and repaired. I had the opportunity to visit a native village by the name of Tanana, located in central Alaska. I flew in on a small ten-seater plane only a couple thousand feet above Mt. McKinley, the highest mountain in the US. The only way in and out of this village is by plane or boat. The majority of the tribal members of Tanana village live in rustic cabins, and their main mode of transportation are ATVs, because there are only dirt roads in the village.

It was an experience I will never forget, we take so much for granted over here: The way we live, the opportunities we have and the different resources we have available. This small tribe has a much harder life then we are used to, but they have something that our generation has never really felt, they have real freedom: freedom to fish and hunt as they please and freedom to live as Natives by their tribe’s own laws without the burdens of modern civilization.

I am very appreciative to have a job that gives me the opportunity to help people all around the US, and I will keep everyone updated on any new work experiences.

## Congratulations Jamaal!

*You don't get married so you can live with some one; you get married because you can't live without them.*

So that is exactly what our own Jamaal Branch and Melanie Cruz of the Bronx, NY did this past November 14th in Orlando, Florida where the bride is attending law school at Barry University.

According to Jamaal's mother, Sherry Pocknett, who could not be prouder, "they are just meant for each other. They are best friends."

The wedding took place in an Orlando park with about 40 guests attending including Sherry, her two daughters Jade and Cheyenne who were bridesmaids, and mother Bernadine. Sherry performed a traditional Wampanoag ceremony for the couple.

Jamaal and Melanie met while attending Colgate University in Hamilton, NY where Jamaal won the Walter Payton Award for his outstanding ability on the football team. After graduating in 2004 Jamaal enjoyed a brief career in professional football when he was signed by the New Orleans Saints but suffered an injury in the following season. Jamaal is now working on earning a masters degree in business.

The happy couple will honeymoon in May when they have plans to go hiking in Europe.



*Pinch me! Did all my dreams just come true?*



*Sherry Pocknett and daughter, Cheyenne couldn't be prouder of the happy couple!*

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