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# MVSKOKE NEWS

PRODUCED BY MVSKOKEMEDIA



ABOVE: A group photo of some of the graduates at CMN on May 1st. LEFT: CMN graduate Royce Grammar-Billy and her mother. BELOW: Instructors Irene Culley and Rosemary Maxey with a CMN graduate. (All Photos: ShaylnProctor/MM)



## CMN- MVSKOKE ETVLWV NAKCOKV MVHAKV SVHVLWECVT GRADUATING CLASS OF 2026

### THE COLLEGE CELEBRATES ITS 17TH COMMENCEMENT WITH 59 GRADUATING STUDENTS THIS YEAR

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

OKMULGEE - The College of the Muscogee Nation- Mvskoke Etlvhw Nakkokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt held its 17th annual commencement for the graduating class of 2026 on May 1 at the Mvskoke Dome. This year, 59 graduates received associate degrees and certificates. CMN has experienced considerable growth of the college campus, student enrollment, and graduates, which honors our ancestors' legacy and provides a path for future generations of Mvskoke people to follow," stated CMN President Dr. Monte Randall (Mvskoke). "CMN graduates have much to be proud of; many find great success starting a new career or continuing to earn bachelor's and graduate degrees." This year's commencement speaker was the President and CEO of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Ahniwake Rose (Cherokee/

Mvskoke descent), and this year's CMN student respondent was Nicholas Buller. During the ceremony, the Este Cate Hoktvke Suletawv - Mvskoke Nation Honor Guard presented the colors, and the National Anthem was sung by CMN Data and Assessment Analyst Greg Palma. The Invocation was presented by CMN students Breana Hill and Michael

CMN  
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## NATIONAL COUNCIL REBUKES HIGH COURT, CITES "BY BLOOD" RULING IN NO- CONFIDENCE VOTE

COUNCIL RESOLUTION DECLARES COURT  
OVERSTEPS WITH VOID AB INITIO  
OPINION

BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE - The Muscogee (Creek) National Council adopted NCR 26-002 on Saturday, April 25, during the Quarterly Session. The resolution called for a vote of no confidence in Chief Justice Andrew Adams, Vice-Chief Justice Richard Lerbance, Justice Montie Deer, Justice Kathleen Supernaw, and Justice George Thompson. The five justices are named in the resolution for handing down a decision in case SC 2023-10, Citizenship Board of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation vs. Rhonda K. Grayson and Jeffrey D. Kennedy. Their ruling declared the phrase "by blood" unlawful and void ab initio, meaning it has no legal binding power from the beginning.

The legislation states that the five justices "violated their Oath of Office by independently amending the 1979 Constitution by striking "BY BLOOD" without an affirmative vote of the people." It further claims the will of the citizens will be silenced if the court "knowingly disregards the Constitution and Code of Laws and takes actions outside of their constitutionally granted authority, directly affecting the welfare and sovereignty of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation over its reservation lands."

The resolution was sponsored by Representative Lucian Tiger. It was cosponsored by Representatives Mary Crawford, Sandra Golden, William Lowe, Anna Marshall, and Darrell Proctor. It was adopted into law by a vote of 13-1-1. Representative Dode Barnett voted no on the legislation. Representative Robyn Whitecloud abstained from voting.

During the discussion, Rep. Tiger quoted the MCN Constitution, which states that the constitution can only be amended by the MCNNC with an affirmative vote of 2/3. The amend-

VOTE  
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## MCN ATTORNEY GENERAL WILL REMAIN ON WHITECLOUD CASE

MOTION TO DISQUALIFY THE MCN  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE DENIED

BY JERRAD MOORE

OKMULGEE - Muscogee Creek Nation National Council Representative Robyn Whitecloud appeared in the MCN District Court on Monday, May 4. Whitecloud was charged with four felony counts of preventing or attempting to prevent performance of official acts on Jan 16.

As previously reported, attorney Ryan Connonie, representing Whitecloud, filed two motions in the MCN District court on March 2. Judge Nalani Ching heard oral arguments on the motions at the May 4 hearing.

Connonie had filed a motion to disqualify the MCN Attorney General's Office and to appoint a special prosecutor in the case, as well as a motion to quash the search warrant used in the case. Quash is a legal term meaning to suppress, nullify, or set aside. This motion asserts that the search warrant issued to confiscate Whitecloud's cell phone was overly broad and thus violated constitutional protections against "general warrants."

Connonie withdrew the motion to quash the search warrant, stating that the MCN Attorney General's office had returned Whitecloud's cell phone, so the motion was unnecessary. After hearing oral arguments on the motion to disqualify the MCN Attorney General's office, Judge Ching did not grant the motion.

Whitecloud is scheduled to appear in court again on June 1. Mvskoke Media will have ongoing coverage of this story.

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Knight Jr.

Many graduates earned their Associate of Science degrees in Criminal Justice, General Studies, Natural Resources, Tribal Services, and Native American Studies. Certificates were achieved in Mvskoke Language Studies, Mvskoke Language Teaching, and Tribal Leadership.

Many held honors that were on the Vrakkuetv Etokvktv (Honor Roll), Nakokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt Ohhecvt Vrakkuetv Etokvktv (President's Honor Roll), and Tvstynke Akvwpkat (Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society-Rising Warrior).

For more information about the College of the Muscogee Nation, visit their website at cmn.edu. To keep up to date with college events, you can follow their Facebook page at College of the Muscogee Nation.



Students, faculty, and staff from CMN celebrate after the commencement with families and friends. (All Photos: Shayln Proctor/MM)

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# MUSCOGEE MUSINGS

BY PRINCIPAL CHIEF HILL

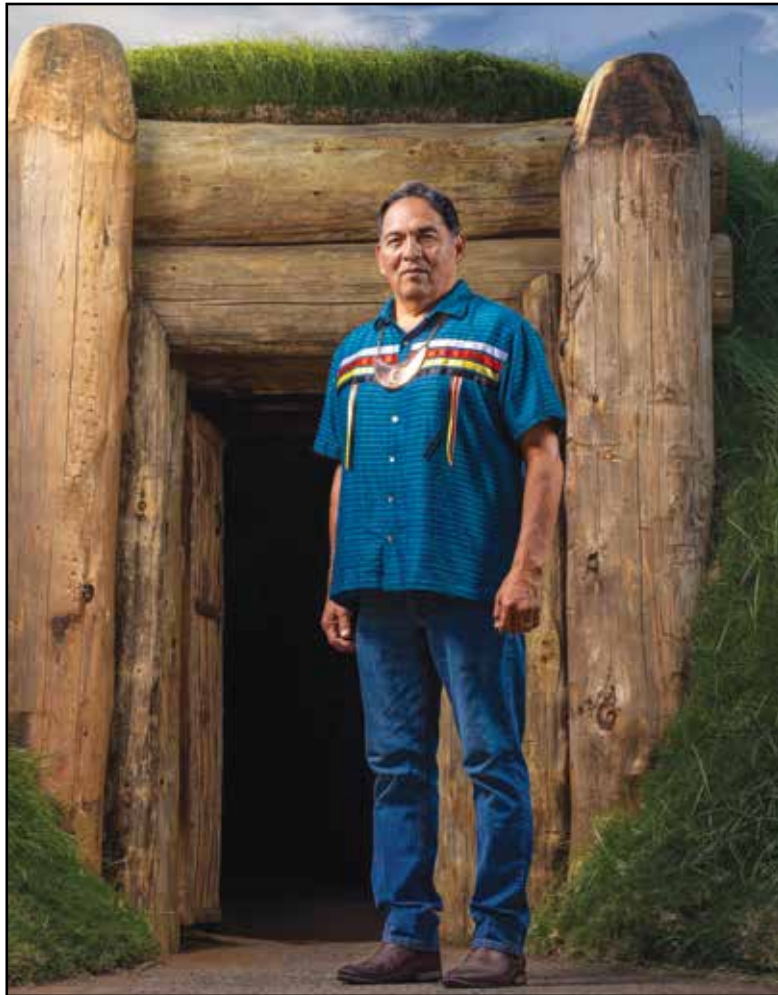
Hesci! Stonkon follakcv? I hope everyone isn't too full from the wild onion dinners!

It's good to address you all this month as we head for summer with lots going on here at the Muscogee Nation.

We can't talk about summer and leave out the biggest party of the summer, the 50th Annual Muscogee Nation Festival! It's hard to believe that our premiere event of the year is turning 50. This all started as just a rodeo, and look at it now, nearly a whole month of fun, fellowship, and Muscogee culture on full display. I'm biased, but my favorite events are the downtown parade and the meet-and-greet. This gives us a chance to see citizens and guests in person and to meet families and loved ones from all over. It's great hearing from them directly and getting a chance to visit on a personal level. I hope everyone's ready!

We're also getting closer to opening up the all-new 4-story Muscogee Nation Citizen Services Building here on campus. This building is a dream come true and a giant step forward for the culmination of a master plan for tribal headquarters that has been a vision for many years. Visits to do business at the Nation for citizens will now be much more centralized and cohesive, making trips to the tribe much more accessible and hopefully less stressful. We're very proud to see the finishing touches going up on the building, and we can't wait to move in and get started. Looks like next month!

Recently, I had the



opportunity to accompany tribal officials to the community of Dewar, where we installed a new water pump station. Together with state and federal partners, this is part of the \$100 million investment in infrastructure that we are making across our Reservation. The 36 projects have been a wonderful addition, both presently and for the future, in these cities and towns. It's why we say we are "For Our Communities."

It's graduation season, and I want to say congratulations to all our citizens out there who are graduating and wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors. It's a special time for these graduates and families, and I'm so proud of each of you. It was great to see another graduation cer-

emony at the College of the Muscogee Nation, as our institution continues to grow and advance. Drive by CMN sometime and just look at all the progress, it's amazing. I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

Speaking of graduations, I have been given the honor of delivering the Commencement Address for Northeastern State University and receiving an honorary doctorate on May 11 in Tulsa. I'm excited to address this class and am humbled by the distinction.

We have a great summer in store!

Until next time, take care of yourselves and each other.

MVTO,  
Chief Hill

## OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES UNVEILS NEW SHREDDING TRUCK AT THEIR ANNUAL RECYCLING EVENT

THE DEPARTMENT NOW PROVIDES IN-HOUSE SHREDDING SERVICES TO DEPARTMENTS AND CITIZENS



The MCN Office of Environmental Services in front of their new shredding truck. (Braden Harper/MM)

BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE - This year's recycling day was again punctuated by the sharp sounds of paper shredding. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Environmental Services' new shredding truck made its debut performance at the Recycle Collection Event on Friday, April 24. The event, held annually during Earth Week, previously outsourced shredding services to a third party, but now they can shred sensitive documents for MCN departments and citizens at events like this. The new \$250,000 shredding truck was purchased with a \$1 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. The grant also provided the department with a new baler.

MCN Office of Environmental Services Director James Williams said the shredding truck will soon make stops at Tribal government offices, saving hundreds of dollars in third-party shredding costs. According to Williams, third-party shredding

trucks in the past have cost \$300 per hour.

The department has held the annual recycling event since

*"We celebrate Earth Day every day here because that's what we do. It's good to see people come out and say, 'Yeah, it's Earth Week, we need to do something good, we need to plant something, we need to get rid of something.'"*

2010. Williams' favorite part about recycling events is seeing the community come together to make the environment shine a little brighter. Events like these

keep community members informed about common household appliances and materials that no longer serve a purpose.

"A lot of people don't always know what to do with that stuff," Williams said. "There's so much e-waste that will go in a landfill forever; it doesn't degrade. This way we can take it and take it to a certified recycler."

Williams remarked that items such as working television monitors are dropped off at collection events. If the monitor and its remote controller are in working condition, Williams said they are donated to nursing homes for their residents. According to Williams, past collection events have donated 10-20 working, second-hand televisions.

The Recycle Collection Event does not take in hazardous materials; those should be saved for the department's annual Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Events. The last HHW event hosted by the department took place on Friday, March 27.

Williams said his department's recycling services are open to the community on the Muskoke Reservation. Even if someone has never recycled in their lifetime, Williams believes it is never too late to start.

"We want the Nation to get excited. We want the community involved. The entire reservation is welcome. If you have something that's going on in town, we're available to put bins out," Williams said.

VOTE

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ment will then be put on the ballot of a special election and must receive 2/3 of the vote to be ratified. Rep. Tiger asserted that it is the only way the government can add or remove language from the Constitution.

Tiger argued that the justices violated their oath of office by removing the language "BY BLOOD" from the Constitution.

"Five individuals can not move or add language to our constitution," Rep. Tiger said. "This (no-confidence vote) is something that could be done sooner, but it was not."

Rep. Barnett noted that two of the five justices listed in the resolution, Justice Supernaw and Justice Deer, are now both retired. Rep. Barnett, the only representative to vote no, shared that it is not her place to question the Supreme Court's decision.

"We couldn't make the case in our own court system," Barnett said. "The justices make the best decision they can with the information they are presented with."

"This really isn't a punishment; it's more of an impotent gesture because it does not change anything. Justice Thompson has given his life to the service of our people. I don't think I have a right to question his motives or his decision."

Rep. Golden's opinion on the issue concurred with Rep. Tiger's, stating that the five justices broke their oath. She further stated that they do not have constitutional authority to reach the decision they reached in SC 2023-10.

"I support this because it says people that made this decision, we entrusted them," Rep. Golden said. "They can not overstep their authority, and they did. It says in our constitution they can not do what they did. Simple as that."

Muskoke Media reached out to the MCN Supreme Court for a statement on NCR 26-002. The MCN Supreme Court responded that it has no comment on NCR 26-002 or on any recent actions taken by the National Council.

The implementation of the MCN Supreme Court's decision in SC 2023-10 is currently ongoing. On Monday, April 20, MCN Principal Chief David Hill issued Executive Order 26-02 establishing the Muskoke Citizenship Integrity Protection Commission. The commission will be composed of various MCN Tribal leaders and Tribal government department employees appointed by Principal Chief Hill, with him serving as the chairperson. The EO states that the commission is to complete a final preliminary report 60 days after its first meeting.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

A brief letter to remind you and citizens of an important special election on May 30, 2026, an election to amend the constitution, per NCA 25-109.

Simply, our present pronunciation of Muskoke does not change. Only the spelling from Muscogee to the traditional spelling, Muskoke. This will conform to the adopted alphabet of 1853 and with the National Council, per NCA 97-27, dated March 31, 1997.

Further, the amendment deletes the word "Creek." Early explorers could not pronounce the names of many tribal towns; thus, they used "Creek" for settlements along creeks and rivers.

Today, our language and alphabet are primarily used in the present-day hymnal, "Nak-cokv Esvvhiketv" and by the Muskoke Ceremonial Grounds in conferring warrior names and essential songs, and by the Muskoke Language program. Also, it is used in numerous facilities and programs within the Nation.

On August 12, 2025, language speakers unanimously consented to the spelling of "Muskoke," stating, "The Muskoke word is powerful and meaningful."

Mvto editor for this opportunity to remind you and our citizen readers of this important Special Election. Most importantly, let's vote on May 30, 2026, and express our sovereignty to vote. VOTE YES FOR THIS AMENDMENT.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thomas Yahola

## OP-ED

IMHO—In My Humble Opinion

Tobacco and Muscogee (Creek) Nation Healthcare

In view of the fact that tobacco use (in particular cigarette smoking) is the number one cause of preventable illness and premature death in this country, I find the recent MCN Tax Commission decision to postpone the MCN Tribal tax on tobacco products disappointing.

Studies have shown that increasing cigarette prices is one of the major things that prevents young people from starting this unhealthy habit. If a person makes it to 25 years of age without smoking, more likely than not, they will never start. We should do all we can to discourage this unhealthy habit.

In fact, it may be time for the MCN to rethink its entire tobacco policy. What type of sense does it make for the MCN to have a \$532 million Health Dept budget (FY '26) to be involved in selling cheap cigarettes? It doesn't make any sense at all.

While I commend the MCN for its tobacco cessation programs on one hand, why are we selling low-cost cigarettes on the other? It's like the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. A tribe that operates a world-class hospital and clinic network to help patients with heart disease, lung disease, strokes, and cancer should not be involved in any shape or form in the tobacco business, which is a major contributor to all of the above illnesses. In the long run, health care savings from having a healthier tribal population due to lower tobacco use will more than offset the short-term loss of revenue from getting out of the tobacco business.

Oklahomans can take pride in the Wyandotte Tribe for their decision not to be involved in the tobacco industry. It is time for the MCN to follow their lead.

Doug Cox, M.D.

# WHAT WERE YOU WEARING?



A public display shows replicated clothing that the victims wore during the time they were sexually assaulted. (ShaylnProctor/MM)

## MCN CVS BROUGHT AWARENESS FOR APRIL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Center for Victim Services hosted a two-day event on April 14 at the College of the Muscogee Nation and on April 29 at the Creek Nation Council House to raise public understanding of sexual assault. Using a display of clothes and first-hand accounts retelling assault experiences, the outdoor exhibit aimed to debunk the myths that place blame on survivors.

“What were you wearing?” is a question asked of survivors of sexual assault with troubling frequency. “A question filled with victim-blaming and an illusion that the survivor could have prevented their assault if they had worn something less revealing,” MCN CVS stated. “This exhibit asks participants to understand that sexual assault can happen to anyone, wearing anything.”

MCN CVS Outreach Coordinator MaCaylin Autaubo (Wichita) spoke about raising community awareness of myths that blame victims for what they wear rather than placing the blame on perpetrators.

The program hung up clothing displays, which were testimonies that they received from the Dove Center. Autaubo said they took those testimonies and replicated the outfits their staff donated for this event. They also included a sharing board for citizens to write on after viewing the displays.

“The exhibit itself can be very emotional, and then also kind of be a trigger for survivors to go through and view. So that board was placed there so they could either write encouraging letters to survivors or just kind of express how they were feeling after witnessing that exhibit. Just so they could leave, putting that off their chest and making sure that they were able to kind of talk about it in a safe space with us,” Autaubo said.

By hosting events like this, their program strives to spark conversation within the community and encourage people to talk about it.

“Only 5-10 percent of sexual assault survivors will report the crime, and 43 percent never tell anyone. Why? Survivors often say or think: ‘This whole thing is my fault,’ ‘No one will believe me,’ or ‘I’m so ashamed,’” MCN CVS explained. “No one wants to believe that someone they know could sexually assault another person. It’s natural to want to believe and support your friends. REMEMBER, you don’t know what really happened; only the people who were there do.”



The Sharing Board allowed visitors to write thoughts, feelings, and reflections after viewing the different displays during the CVS event on April 29. (ShaylnProctor/MM)

“It seems like sometimes, sexual assault is not something that people want to talk about. So, just trying to encourage people to speak out and to always stand with survivors. Be supportive of just believing them, their stories, and hoping that we can spark the conversation within the commu-

infection and exposure.

In 2025, 43 SANE exams were completed in the MCN Reservation. Separated by age group, the reports showed 0-12 year-olds with 11 exams, 13-17 year-olds with 11 exams, and 18+ year-olds with 21 exams, for a total of 43.



A child's replicated clothing of what was worn during her assault, "a pink nightgown." "It was like Cinderella's before the fairy changes it, in the Disney movie. I still had it on when I said to him that I needed help to work the shower knobs in my new house. I needed help and he raped me," stated the victim. (ShaylnProctor/MM)

nity to where they're able to feel comfortable with speaking about sexual assault," Autaubo said.

She is glad that their program can provide this information to the public and inform them about available resources.

MCN CVS had several sheets to hand out to citizens, including information from the Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau. According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway provided by the bureau, parenting a child who has experienced trauma can be complicated without understanding triggers, how to listen, be patient, and be emotionally and physically available.

“Parenting a child or youth who has experienced trauma can be difficult. Families can sometimes feel isolated, as if no one else understands what they are going through. This can put a strain not only on your relationship with your child, but with other family members, as well (including your spouse or partner),” explains the gateway.

The event also gave an opportunity for education on the Sexual Assault Nurse Exam (SANE), which is a forensic examination where evidence can be collected for potential criminal prosecution. This exam is a comprehensive medical evaluation that addresses trauma, treatment for possible sexually transmitted

“We want the community to be able to report these crimes, seek justice, and we're just happy to be able to bring comfort and that safe space for them,” said Autaubo. “We have really great advocates that are able to walk through that process with survivors, whether that be attending court with them, attending SANE or DVNE (Domestic Violence Nurse Exam) exams, or just really being a support for them if they don't choose to take their crimes to law enforcement, and just providing that support with counseling services and our women's support group.”

Autaubo emphasized confidentiality- anything that victims report will always be confidential. Advocates are also available 24/7 to speak with survivors.

“We also do have SANE nurses who are available, and these are our sexual assault and nurse examiners. They are certified to assess injuries of sexual assault and domestic violence assaults. So we're able to provide those exams, which are free and confidential to all survivors; they'll never receive a medical bill or anything like that,” Autaubo said.

Autaubo wants survivors to feel as comfortable as possible, and their program is never to contact law enforcement unless the survivor requests it.

For information about resources or questions, contact MCN CVS at 918-732-7979.

# DEEP FORK NURSING HONOR GUARD GIVES FINAL SALUTE AT SERVICES

THE GROUP WELCOMES ACTIVE AND RETIRED NURSES



MCN Public Health RN Talia King (in cape) and her fellow MCN Public Health Nurses helped King for their co-worker's funeral in October. (Photo Courtesy: Talia King)

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

MVSKOKE RESERVATION – The Deep Fork Nursing Honor Guard of Oklahoma is a nonprofit group of retired and currently working nurses who volunteer their time to honor nurses who have passed away. The volunteers pay tribute at funeral or memorial services, at no charge to families. They do service areas around certain locations.

The National Nurse Honor Guard Coalition was founded in 2011 by Julia Murray. Murray also designed the capes used during the tributes.

“The purpose of our honor guard is to recognize and honor nurses at their funeral or memorial service with a meaningful ‘final call to duty.’ This tribute acknowledges the compassion, dedication, and lifelong service nurses give to others,” stated the Muscogee Nation Department of Health Public Health Registered Nurse (RN) Talia King (Mvskoke).

To join this chapter, you have to be an active or retired Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), RN, or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP). The Deep Fork Chapter primarily covers Okfuskee, Okmulgee, Creek, Hughes, and McIntosh counties, but they assist in surrounding areas when available.

King said that there are other chapters throughout Oklahoma and the United States, but some areas are still developing.

“Our goal is to eventually have chapters statewide, so every nurse has access to this honor in Oklahoma. If a nurse lives in an area without a chapter, we can help connect them with resources to get one started,” King said.

The volunteers will need to be available to assist during tributes. King mentioned that they understand not everyone can attend every funeral and that being in the chapter is for volunteers. However, that is why it is important to have members from all areas, so that at least one nurse is present when needed.

For the services, there will be a Nightingale Tribute. This tribute includes the Honor Guard, a reading of the nurse’s career, a presentation of a white rose, a Nightingale Lamp tribute, and a final call to duty.

“During the ceremony, the tribute begins with a brief introduction about the nurse, followed by the reading of the Nightingale Tribute, which formally releases the nurse from their duties. We also light a lamp that remains lit until the final call. A rose is presented to the nurse or their family members as a symbol of honor and service along with the lamp following the tribute,” King said.

Their standard attire is white scrubs, white shoes, and a white nurse cap. King says that blue capes will be available for purchase, but they do not want the cost to be a barrier to participation. She says those can be purchased later.

Currently, King is a Public Health Nurse; her duties include caring for individuals and families throughout their lifespans. In her 21 years of nursing, she has worked in a wide range of areas, including long-term care, clinical settings, the emergency room, labor and delivery, and home health.

“Nursing, to me, is more than just a profession- it’s a calling. It’s about compassion, advocacy, and being there for people during some of the most important moments of their lives. It means showing up, making a difference, and caring for others with dignity and respect,” King said.

King has seen the duties and responsibilities nurses face, which they carry throughout their careers, physically, emotionally, and mentally.

“Whenever I saw my first nurse tribute, it really stood out to me how meaningful it was for both the family and the nursing community. Nurses dedicate their lives to caring for others, and I felt there should be something in place in our area to recognize that service at the end of life. That experience helped me realize the importance of bringing a Nursing Honor Guard to our area,” King said.

King feels it is an honor to bring this to the nursing community.

“Being able to give back to nurses in this way is very meaningful. Seeing families appreciate the tribute and knowing we are recognizing a nurse’s lifelong dedication is something that makes all the effort worth it. It brings a strong sense of pride and unity to the nursing community,” King said.

King hopes to continue growing and welcoming any nurse interested in being part of the Honor Guard. Their goal is to ensure that every nurse has the opportunity to be honored for their service, no matter where they are. She says this is about respecting, recognizing, and honoring their legacy.

The Deep Fork Nursing Honor Guard of Oklahoma is also accepting donations for purchasing items that are needed for the tributes. Donations will specifically go towards lamps, flowers, ribbons, and any other items used during the tribute because they do these tributes at no cost to the families.

For information about the Deep Fork Nursing Honor Guard of Oklahoma, email them at [deepforknursehonorguard@gmail.com](mailto:deepforknursehonorguard@gmail.com)

# STUDENTS VS. STAFF

## EUFAULA DORMITORY STUDENTS TAKE ON STAFF IN BASKETBALL SHOWDOWN

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

EUFAULA – On April 29, a students vs. staff basketball game took place at the Eufaula Dormitory. The eighth through twelfth-grade students battled the staff, who took home the trophy. The event featured activities, a concession stand, a traveling trophy, various prizes, resource booths, and halftime contests.

MCN Youth Wellness Program Project Director James “Major” McHenry (Mvskoke) spoke about the launch of activities at the Eufaula Dormitory, the competitions, and what it means for his program to host these games for students.

Participants included the MCN Behavioral Health Staff, MCN Youth Wellness Program, MCN Tobacco Prevention, MCN Suicide Prevention, and MCN Press Secretary Jason Salsman, as well as Eufaula Dormitory students.

The different resource booths were the Mvskoke Nation Youth Services, MCN Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, College of the Muscogee Nation, Youth Wellness Program, and Native Youth Community Project.

McHenry spoke about how this event has grown over the last three years: they have added a concession stand, an announcer, scoreboard keeping, music, and a traveling trophy that reads “Students vs. Staff Champs.”

“We’ve purchased jerseys, and now everyone has a jersey that they wear.

So it’s just really growing, and the students get really excited about the game each year,” McHenry said.

McHenry frequently hears the students’ excitement for the game- they like playing against staff. McHenry knows that the students always want to win and look forward to the game, preparing themselves with practice.

McHenry’s department is a prevention program that focuses on both mental and physical health. Activities like these help the department interact with students and, in turn, help students become familiar with their staff and learn about the department’s offerings.

“We started out just doing it toward the end of the school year a couple years ago, and then they had some of the students say we need to play again or play more than once. So we played this past December right before Christmas break, and then this game now at the end of the school year is the rematch,” McHenry said.

McHenry is happy when he sees the students get excited and glad that their program helped bring everyone together.

He can connect with students because he was a dorm student himself at Sequoyah High School in Tahlequah. When McHenry was a student, he remembers playing basketball and volleyball against the staff.

“That just brought back memories of how much it was fun. It did get me familiar with those guys

who worked in the dorms and who worked at the school. Even to this day, I have relationships with them. I think it’s just good for everything, for us to get familiar with these students, who they are and as they grow. Maybe they’ll remember us in some way so that we can be a positive influence in their life,” McHenry said.

During the games at the Eufaula Dormitory, he mentions that MCN Representative Galen Cloud has always come around to play in different activities with the students. “It’s just a good fun time, we have a good time down there with those students,” McHenry said.

McHenry goes down every Wednesday as part of his program to play moshball with the students, and they also play volleyball.

McHenry says the Tobacco Program Manager, Sprint Williams, has gone down there to lift weights and play basketball with students. Williams partners with McHenry’s program to host various events for students at the Eufaula Dormitory as well.

“That’s really what it’s about is being a positive influence in these children and youth, the student’s life. Just knowing that someone’s there for them, that somebody cares, that they want to interact with them and that they want to be there for them,” McHenry said.

McHenry is thankful that this event is starting to grow, and he hopes it will continue to grow each year.



UPPER: Eufaula dorm students and MCN staff at the 2026 basket ball game. group photo. ABOVE: Miss Indian Oklahoma, Kyla Tsoodle (Kiowa) with the MCN staff. Staff took home the winning trophy. (All Photos: MCN Department of Health)

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BY BRADEN HARPER

OKMULGEE – The Muscogee (Creek) National Council held a quarterly session via teleconference and in person at the Mound Building on Saturday, April 25.

The MCNC addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

**NCR 26-002** A resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) National Council declaring a vote of no confidence in certain justices of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Supreme Court. Representative Lucian Tiger sponsored the bill. It was cosponsored by Representatives Mary Crawford, Sandra Golden, William Lowe, Anna Marshall, and Darrell Proctor. The bill was adopted into law by a vote of 13-1-1. Representative Dode Barnett voted no; Representative Robyn Whitecloud abstained.

The resolution states that Chief Justice Andrew Adams, Vice-Chief Justice Richard Lerblance, Justice Montie Deer, Justice Kathleen Supernaw, and Justice George Thompson Jr. violated their oath of office by “independently amending the 1979 Constitution by striking ‘BY

BLOOD’ without an affirmative vote of the people.”

For in-depth coverage, see page 1.

**TR 26-021** A tribal Resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Cecilia Wittman to serve on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizenship Board. Rep. Proctor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, Wittman’s term will expire on Saturday, May 31, 2031. There was no discussion.

**TR 26-022** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a terms of service agreement with Winegard Company for Starlink equipment and services. Rep. Proctor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the contract allows MCN Emergency Management to use its products and services at the Horseshoe Bend event. There was no discussion on this law.

**TR 26-023** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a memorandum of agreement with the United States Army

Corps of Engineers, Oklahoma Archaeological Survey, and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office for the removal of the bridge on Oak Drive over Freed Creek, Tulsa County, Oklahoma. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, Riverline in South Tulsa contains a bridge that needs to be removed; it is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. A memorandum of agreement will be required to remove the bridge in compliance with federal law. There was no discussion.

**TR 26-024** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation confirming the nomination of Christopher Combs to serve on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Public Gaming Commission. Rep. Hufft sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, Combs’ term will expire on Sunday, June 30, 2030. There was no discussion on this law.

**TR 26-025** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a real estate contract for the pur-

## COUNCIL DECLARES A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN CERTAIN SUPREME COURT JUSTICES, MOU FOR BRIDGE TEAR DOWN BEGINS WORK AT TULSA RIVERLINE DISTRICT

### CEREMONIAL GROUND AND CHURCH GRANT AMENDMENT FAILS AFTER TWO VOTES

chase of property in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the property is located at 4201 N. Wood Dr. There was no discussion on this law.

**TR 26-026** A tribal resolution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation authorizing litigation to be brought on behalf of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing to remove a fence encroaching on real property owned by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Housing in Wagoner County, Oklahoma. Rep. Factor sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, a neighbor to the resident installed a privacy fence on the property. After a boundary survey was conducted, it was found that the fence was encroaching on the Nation’s property approximately 12 feet by 70 feet. The law also references a chain link fence on the property that may be encroaching on the Nation’s land. The property is located within the exterior boundaries of the Cherokee Nation. A lawsuit will be necessary

and will be filed in the Tribal Court of the Cherokee Nation or in the appropriate Oklahoma court. There was no discussion.

**NCA 26-058** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation appropriating funds to be used toward the purchase of property located in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Rep. Whitecloud sponsored the bill, which was adopted into law by a vote of 15-0.

According to the law, the property will cost \$475,000 to cover title insurance, title opinions, surveys, environmental studies, and applicable taxes. There was no discussion.

**NCA 26-059** A law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation amending MCNCA Title 5, § 2-115 entitled “Funding”. Rep. Cloud sponsored the bill, failed to become law by a vote of 3-12. Reps. Cloud, Osborn, and Whitecloud voted in favor of the bill.

Rep. Barnett made a motion to reconsider the bill. She explained that the grounds and churches have immediate financial needs that need to be addressed. The vote to reconsider failed to be adopted into law, 7-8.

To view the full agenda, visit [mcnc.com](http://mcnc.com).

## JUDGE GREG BIGLER HONORED AT TULSA COUNTY LIBRARY

### AMERICAN INDIAN CIRCLE OF HONOR AWARD PRESENTED AT CONNERS COVE THEATER AT THE HARDESTY REGIONAL LIBRARY

BY JERRAD MOORE

TULSA - Judge Greg Bigler was presented with the American Indian Circle of Honor award on March 7. The ceremony was held at the Hardesty Regional Library in Connor’s Cove Theater. The award is presented to Native Americans whose contributions to society and culture throughout their lifetimes have enhanced the lives of others in meaningful ways.

The award is presented in even-numbered years by the Tulsa City County Library American Indian Resource Center and is funded by the Maxine and Jack Zarrow Foundation. In addition to community recognition, the inductee also receives a \$15,000 cash prize.

The Circle of Honor Award was inaugurated in 2004, and in 2016, Mvskoke citizen Sam Proctor was also recognized with the award.

Prior to the ceremony,

Bigler was interviewed on News Channel 8, the ABC affiliate station in Tulsa.

“It’s a great honor to be there, with all the wonderful inductees that have been there before, I know some of them and they have just done amazing things,” Bigler said. “So it’s a blessing to have that and I really appreciate the honor out of the blue for that.”

Bigler was asked about his book “Rabbit Decolonizes the Forest: Stories From the Euchee Reservation.”

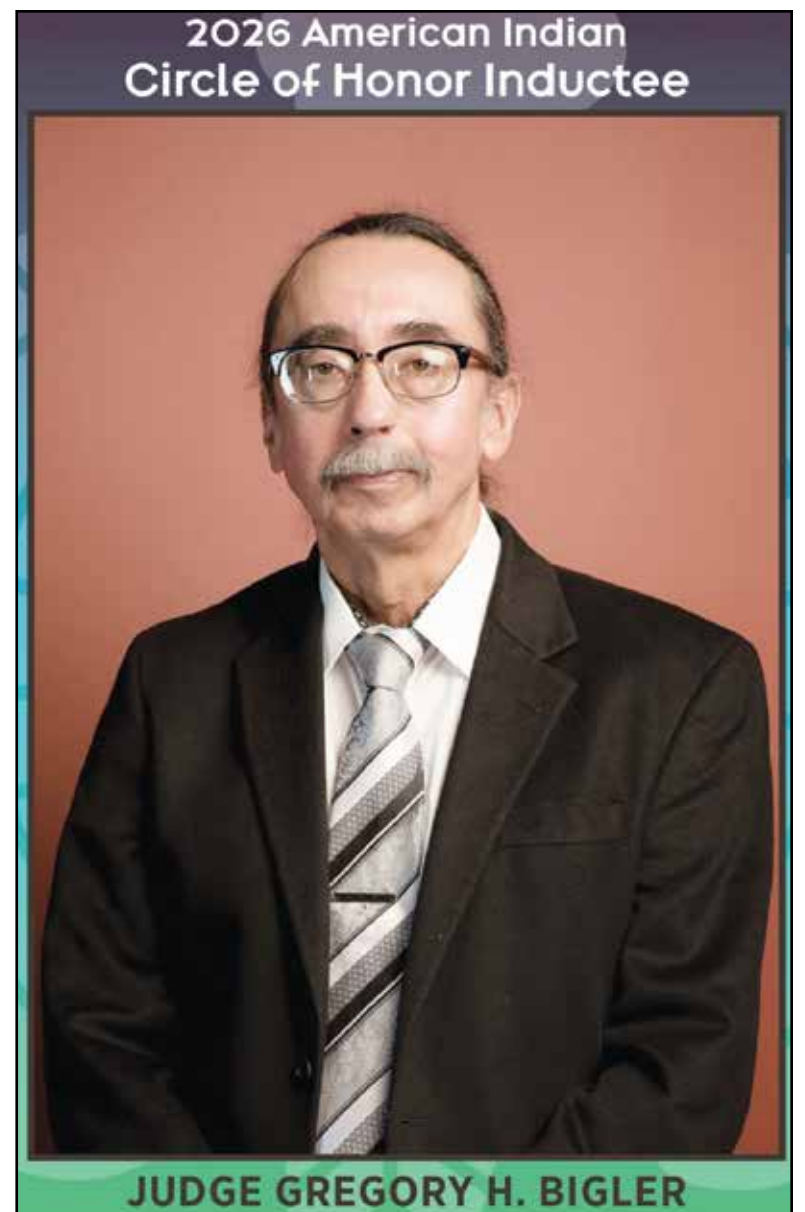
“It grew out of just trying to hold a conversation that you might hear with friends and relations in our community, and then of course in the editing process they said maybe you need to explain a few things, articulate it so that those that are outside also understand it,” Bigler shared.

“So it’s just a little bit of an insight. It has both a little bit of memoir to it, some of the old traditional stories. Some

of the updated stories, like Wolf learns to eat tofu, obviously, we didn’t have tofu in the old days. But that type of thing and then so much are just short stories.”

Judge Bigler is a Mvskoke citizen who is an active member of the Polecat Euchee Ceremonial Grounds. He is currently the Chief District Judge for the Sac and Fox Nation Tribal Court, District Judge at the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Appellate Judge at the Mashantucket Pequot Nation, and Chief Judge for the Court of Appeals for the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas. He also serves as a Supreme Court Justice for the Quapaw Nation and the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma.

*Editor’s note: this article appeared incomplete on page 8 of the April 1 edition of the Mvskoke News. It is being re-printed in its original, complete form.*



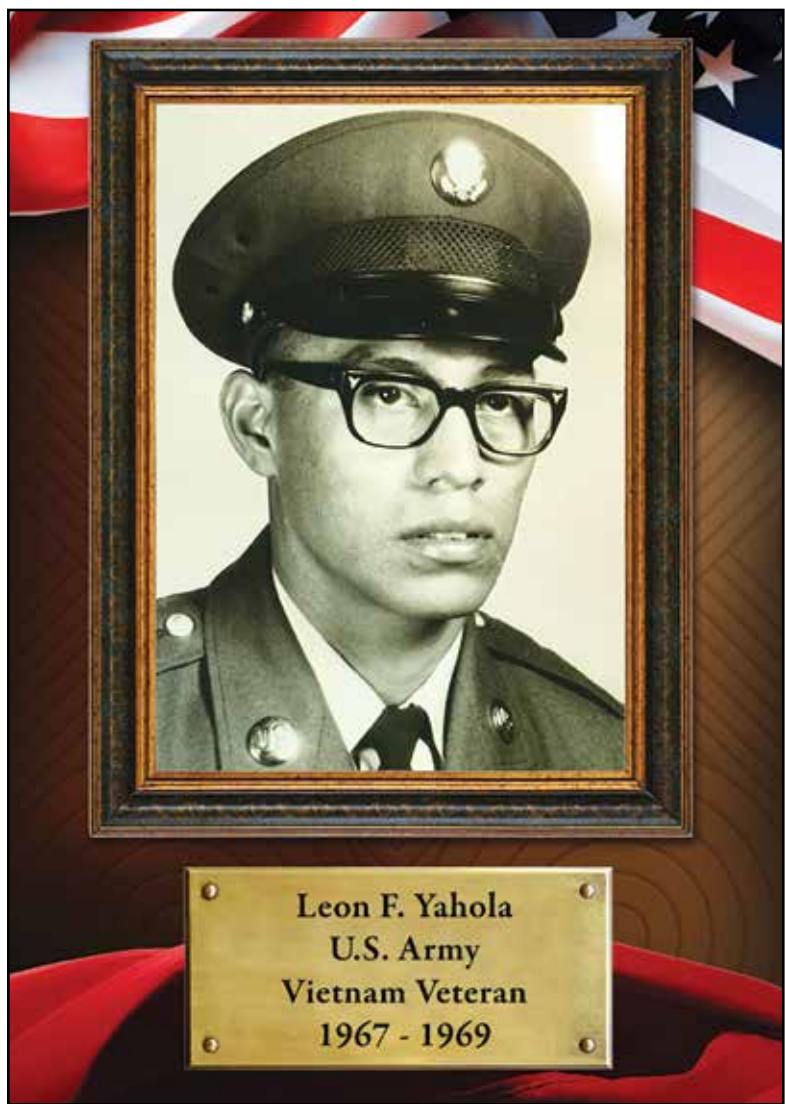
(Image: TCCL)

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**VETERANS SPOTLIGHT**



The Muscogee Nation Veterans Affairs Services Office is proud to honor Leon F. Yahola for his dedicated service to the Muscogee Nation, U.S. Army and the United States. Leon honorably served 2 years and is a recipient of several honors: Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Sharpshooter M-14 Badge, Sharpshooter M-16 Badge.

Mvto Mr. Yahola for your selfless service to your country and your community.

**MVTO FOR YOUR SELFLESS SERVICE!**

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**Mvskoke Matriarchy Exhibit**  
Mvskoke Waters Gallery  
Curated by Carly Treece and Shelley Patrick  
Tuesday, April 7 thru Saturday, Aug. 1  
500 Riverwalk Terrace, Suite 115, Jenks

**Gospel Singing**  
Yeager Mission UMC  
Saturday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.  
1112 S. Woody Guthrie, Okemah  
This event is open to the public

**Senior Games**  
MCN Health Department  
Thursday, May 21, 9 a.m.  
Mvskoke Dome  
On-site registration begins at 8 a.m. Games include softball throwing, free throw, golf putting, jacks, cornhole, fitness walk, and dance. Lunch is provided.  
2950 Warrior Rd, Okmulgee, OK 74447

**Wahoo Tournament & Food Sale**  
Okemah Indian Community  
Sunday, May 24, 4:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
1112 S Woody Guthrie St., Okemah  
\$10 entry fee, winner receives a board and half of entry. Individual awards for most knockouts, sixes and skips. Boards and marbles provided. Event will also include a food sale, silent auction and cake walk. Meat pies, beans, frybread and concessions will be available. All proceeds go to developing a memorial scholarship in honor of Sutv Harjo

**Vacation Bible School**  
Snake Creek #2 Baptist Church  
Monday, May 25 - Friday, May 29  
Supper begins at 4:30 p.m. Friday Night Guest Speaker is Pastor John Moppin. For a ride, contact Reverend Bill at 405-584-9279, or Deacon

Richard at 405-584-1100. Location is 3 miles East of Little, ½ miles South, white church located on the left side

**Special Election**  
MCN Election Board  
Saturday, May 30, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
For questions on voting precincts, call 918-732-7631

**Elder's Meeting**  
Okmulgee Elder Nutrition Center  
Wednesday, June 3, 9:30 a.m.  
1021 N Seminole Ave, Okmulgee

**Coffee and Donuts**  
Veteran Affairs Services Office  
Thursday, June 11, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
1006 Bear Lane, Okmulgee

**2026 Mvskoke Language Camp**  
June 8-12  
Camp Applications by May 1, 5 p.m.  
Questions, 918-304-3362  
www.mvskokeopunvkv.com

**New Day Discovery Bibles**  
Native New Day Bible Studies  
30-lesson series done by correspondence. Illustrated guides, written for Native people, by Native people.  
Discover Bible School  
P.O. Box 14208 Tulsa, OK. 74159-1208.

**Health Shelf Donation Drive**  
College of Muscogee Nation Health & Wellness seeks hygiene products, laundry detergent, and gently used blankets and pillows for students in need. Every five items donated will enter donors into a drawing. Donations can be dropped off at 2170 Raven Circle, Okmulgee  
For more information, contact 918-549-2800

**IN MEMORIAM**

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Betty Lou Sunny Woodfield on Thursday, April 16, 2026, at her home peacefully in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Betty was born September 19, 1934, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, to Walter Sunny and Ellen Barnett Sunny.

Betty attended Rocky Hill and Nuyaka Schools and graduated from Nuyaka High School in 1954. Her parents passed away very early in her life, and her eldest brother, Eugene Sunny, and her eldest sister, Josephine (JoJo) Sunny, raised her. She has always been very grateful and honored by their sacrifice to do that for her. She grew up walking to Honey Creek Methodist Church with her siblings every Wednesday evening and all day Sunday Services. She dedicated her life very early to the Lord. Along with



Betty Lou Woodfield

the love of her church, she also enjoyed listening to and traveling to see the "King of Western Swing," Bob Wills, at Cain's Academy Ballroom. She also loved attending the games, listening to, or watching her Oklahoma Sooners on TV.

She worked at Ball Brothers

Glass plant briefly and the Muscogee Creek Nation in the Departments of Higher Education, Community Health Representative, Home and Family Aid Services, and the Creek Elderly Housing for 28 years.

In addition to her parents and all of her siblings, she was preceded in death by her husband, Robert "Bob" Woodfield, and her oldest son, Steven Woodfield. Betty is survived by her youngest son, Samuel Woodfield; three granddaughters; eight great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandson; and several nephews, nieces, and cousins. She was a devoted wife, mother, sister, and friend, always thinking of others before herself. "To know her was to love her." Betty Lou Sunny Woodfield's selflessness, warmth, and generous spirit will be remembered forever.

**Muscogee Nation Human Services**

# TRIBAL ENERGY PROGRAM

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**Southern Regional Office**  
333 S. Washita, Wetumka, OK 74883

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801 Kingsberry Road, Holdenville, OK 74848

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CALLING FOR

# GRADUATE PROFILES

The Mvskoke News is highlighting the 2026 Muscogee (Creek) Nation graduates in the June 15 edition. Graduates eligible to be featured must be Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens and graduating from a high school, college, or technical school.

Provide a digital photo, the graduate's full name, program, and a 150-word (limit) bio to [info@mvskokemedia.com](mailto:info@mvskokemedia.com). Graduate profile submissions will be accepted until Thursday, May 30, at 5:00 p.m. (CST). If you do not receive a confirmation email, please call 918-732-7720 to verify that your profile has been received.

**LATE PROFILES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

*Profiles will be edited for Associated Press style, structure, grammar, spelling, length and punctuation.*

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# TAKLIKE, CUSTAKE, AND TAFVMPUCE CONNECT CITIZENS TO LOCAL FOOD PRODUCERS AND EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

## CMN EXTENSION PROGRAM AND NATIVE FARMING SOLUTIONS PARTNER TO STRENGTHEN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND FOOD SECURITY



BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

*Editor's note: This story is the first in a series by the Mvskoke News team focusing on climate solutions on the Mvskoke Reservation. This year, Mvskoke Media has been part of the Climate Beacon Newsroom Initiative, a collaboration between the Indigenous Journalists Association and the Solutions Journalism Network. Solutions journalism rigorously examines evidence-based individual, group, and community responses to social problems.*

OKMULGEE – Citizens interested in local food production and increasing their community's access to food had the opportunity to participate in an inaugural local market hosted by the College of the Muscogee Nation Extension Program. Partnering with Native Farming Solutions, the Taklike, Custake, Tavfmpuce (Bread, Eggs, Wild Onions) Community Market at the Okmulgee Indian Community Center was created to support Tribal food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture in the Mvskoke Reservation, a founding goal of the CMN Extension Program.

"One of CMN Extension's main goals is to play a part in establishing food sovereignty across the Mvskoke reservation. Right now, the majority of the food we provide to citizens is outsourced and shipped in on trucks from far away. We aim to empower Native agriculture producers, connect citizens with locally produced foods, and encourage Mvskoke citizens to produce their own food at home. Whether that be via animals, gardening, preserving, or cooking. Everyone has skills and a part they can play," stated CMN Extension Coordinator, Courtney Natseway (Mvskoke/Yakama/Laguna Pueblo).

The March 6 market hosted vendors, cooking demonstrations, and educational workshops about community farming and food sources. Lectures and workshops focused on seasonal and traditional food, Tribal health and wellness, and local food systems.

Natseway said the turnout was great, especially during lunch hour, and saw many elders attend. During that time, organizers held a bean cook-off between CMN, Native Farming Solutions, and the OKC Food Hub, with CMN taking first place. OKC Food Hub also donated all the food for the event.

Owner of Native Farming Solutions, Travis Andrews (Navajo/Canadian Cree), has organized community markets in Oklahoma City and, through previous work with the CMN Extension Program, helped to bring that format to the Mvskoke Reservation. Andrews focuses on seasonal foods; for the market, they focused on bread, eggs, and wild onions.

Throughout the day, Andrews spoke about gardening and how to get started, how to start seeds, how to fertilize, and how to prepare land. Other speakers touched on a variety of topics, including soil building and fungi, pepper harvesting, and plant medicine.

A cooking demonstration was taught by Nico Williams (Cherokee), the Founder and Executive Director of Burning Cedar Sovereign Wellness. Williams made tafvmpuce (wild onions) with custake (eggs) and wild onion fritters.

### Community markets can connect

Natseway spoke about food sources and the disconnect people have with where their food comes from.

"I think community markets like these are effective in connecting consumers to local food sources. The community markets differ from farmers' markets because there is also an educational and cultural component," said Natseway.

"Not only do they connect people to local food, but they also inform people on how to prepare or preserve these local foods, and then we share a meal created with these local foods."

Natseway made the point that people tend to buy a gallon of wild onions from their aunt's friend, yet don't know where the wild onions were harvested. Natseway loves connecting people to the source.

"I think traditionally we kind of just ate what

was in season. I feel like that's the most nutritious, like that's where your body's absorbing the most nutrients. We had local egg producers there, like ladies who have chickens that have eggs and who make jams and jellies. We had sprouts there," Natseway said.

### Local farm to local consumer

Communities

across the Mvskoke Reservation can benefit from supporting sustainable local food production from farm to consumer.

"When food is produced locally, it is easier to get information about production practices and determine their impacts on climate change. 'Farms' can include larger-scale commercial producers as well as garden-to-market, smaller-scale growers. All can contribute to the local food system and its resilience to climate change," from the University of Wisconsin-Madison site about Climate-and-Farm-Friendly Food Systems.

When climate changes occur, they can affect these different links within the food system. According to the National Center for Atmospheric Research, "Adaptation to climate change is changing the way you do things in order to lessen the impacts of climate change. For example, farmers can change the way they manage their crops."

When speaking about participating in the market and spreading knowledge to the Mvskoke community, Natseway had a fun time. "It was fun to connect people to where their food comes from, so it's fun to kind of bridge that gap," said Natseway.

She also enjoyed eating lunch with everybody, socializing, and looking at the different vendors that came.

"I feel like these are things that we did, we ate wild onions for Easter every year growing up, but it's fun to connect people that have never tasted or done that. It's fun to create that safe space for them to try all of this new cultural stuff or to ask questions about all of this culture without them feeling scared," Natseway said.

"So it's fun being able to facilitate spaces like that. It's really rewarding."

### Meeting the needs of the community

The CMN Extension Program is looking at the Native Farming Solutions example and planning seasonal community markets for the Reservation.

Native Farming Solutions was created to cultivate traditional foods and medicines for the local



UPPER: Participants visit during the community market. RIGHT: Travis Andrews speaks with participants. ABOVE: Courtney Natseway speaks about organizing the market. (All Photos: Jerrad Moore/MM)

ceremonial community, serve as a resource for cultural preservation and enrichment, and support the wellness of Native youth and communities.

"The markets serve as community markets vs farmers' markets. Today, farmers' markets are really vendor markets. There's not much money to be made in growing food for your community. Many urban communities lack garden space to cultivate for commercial purposes, and most people would rather have different hobbies besides gardening for wellness," Andrews said.

"The community market concept differs from farmers' markets because it's designed to meet the immediate needs of the local community. Community markets strategize their product sourcing and pricing to be realistic and reasonable while

creating a local economy for producers, processors, and distributors," Andrews said.

Native Farming Solutions grows foods like collards, dino kale, mustards, eggplants, cucumbers, and beets.

"What we're hosting are pilot markets that emphasize local foods, arts, and music. Our version is designed by local natives for local natives. The market serves as the access point for products and education centered around local native talent," Andrews said.

When speaking about what works in community markets, Andrews stated that networking works best for them when it is between organizations, as it helps connect with larger audiences.

"What is challenging is keeping up with is marketing and branding as a non-profit grassroots organization," Andrews said.

"As far as being effective, the markets are still new but are receiving great feedback. We've been told, 'this is a vibe we didn't know we needed...' It serves as a great networking event between our local food supply chain community and also in bridging gaps between the local food supply chain, the general public, and the urban native community," Andrews said.

Andrews is also the Garden Program Manager at Skyline Resource Center, located in Oklahoma City. The center has one of the oldest food banks in the Oklahoma City metro area, having been in operation for 50 years.

Skyline is also a hybrid operation, with its community garden producing fresh produce that goes into its own food pantry. "This organization seeks to overcome barriers to get resources to the community," Andrews said. "Food banks are food security, but community gardens are food sovereignty. We practice both, and we're the only



places that do."

Andrews is big into landscaping and has presented on edible landscaping, which is when he realized he was speaking about permaculture and food forests. "To me, that's us coexisting with our environment and reshaping it to be beneficial for us, the bugs, and everyone else. That's what I want to get back into is Indigenous methods," Andrews said.

"This kind of ties into a concept that I like teaching about Indigenous farming, traditional ecological knowledge, and how, at one time, we were known for reshaping massive landscapes. That is what we were good at," Andrews said. "I always say, like simply walking around pockets full of wildflower seeds and throwing them in the right areas, we can still do it."

Andrews emphasizes that, in the long run, the bugs and worms are just as important as the people.

"I want there to be a whole bunch of fruit in the trees, native wild flowers like all over. If we can accomplish that, then we're practicing our ancestral ways. Rescuing our local landscape."

### Planning Mvskoke community markets

CMN's Extension not only wants to continue community markets but also, within their own college facility, develop a five-year plan that includes an eco-park and student farm, a food co-op, Mvskoke-made product marketing, and a food preservation building. The plans also include growing at scale to support the senior nutrients programs and the college's Core Values Cafe. A goal of the program has always been to emphasize Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Tribal Food Sovereignty and Security, and sustainable agriculture.

With more preparation, the Extension Program is hoping future markets will be bigger and better.

"I'm hoping to see friendships and relationships established between Mvskoke Ag producers and consumers," Natseway explained. "We planned this event in less than three weeks! We pulled it off, but I would like to start planning sooner next time. I would like to include more hands-on/interactive activities, including activities for children."

# MVSKOKE AND EUCHEE LANGUAGE STUDENTS PLACE AT LANGUAGE FAIR

STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE STATE PLACED IN MULTIPLE SOLO AND GROUP CATEGORIES AT THE 23RD ANNUAL OKLAHOMA NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH LANGUAGE FAIR

BY BRADEN HARPER

NORMAN – The distinct sounds of Native languages were heard through the Sam Noble Museum auditorium on Monday, April 6, and Tuesday, April 7. Youth in Tribal language programs from all over Oklahoma competed against each other at the 23rd Annual Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair. This year's theme was "My Language is My Home."

Students competed in group and individual categories and came from language and school programs, including the Euchee Language Program, the Moore Public Schools Native American Education program, Preston Public Schools, Oklahoma City Public Schools Native American Student Services, the Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School, and the School of Choctaw Language.

The Euchee Language Program saw many students place in individual solo performances. Every student in the Euchee Language Program, regardless of proficiency level, attended this year's language fair and competed in a solo event where they each performed a written piece. A total of 18 solo performances competed in the event by students in the Euchee Language Program. Students competed in spoken prayer, spoken language, and master performer. According to language teacher Tamara Wilson (Euchee/Mvskoke), the master performer category is new for seasoned learners who have a strong understanding of Euchee. The students competed as a whole group in a modern song category.

The students put in a lot of hard work studying for their performance. According to Wilson, students practice daily how to introduce themselves, identify their family, and perform simple tasks like eating or drinking. Younger students practice identifying their age and where they live. For the fair, one student wrote a poem, one wrote a biography, and another wrote a story about Bigfoot.

"This is an experience for them to understand what it means to go on stage by yourself with a microphone and face a room of people that they don't know," Wilson said. "They're learning how to speak confidently, poise, and how to conduct themselves on a stage in that manner."

Allowing students to write and speak about



ONAYLF1: First row seated: Alyssa Spencer, Jeanice Brown, Yoney Spencer, Madasyn Edwards, Tamara Wilson, Jayce Hill, Anthony Cargil On stage: Sin'E Cargil, Tahsa Cargil, Lvmhee Lawhead, Braden Lunsford, Salo Jones, Roxie Harjo, Moody Kalkbrenner, Samba Rolland, Tyfolope Cargil, Tvpsanv Cargil, Brianna Lunsford, Katawe Wilson, Coconut Jones, Jayleigh Harjo, Raelyn Lunsford, Kagowe Wilson, Kadane Cargil. (Euchee Language Program)

subjects they enjoy helps motivate them to practice at home, not just in the group. Students grow in their language skills and grow together as a community. Wilson explained that while it is rewarding to see students place and take home a trophy, it is more thrilling to see students grow as public speakers.

"It's so exciting to know that maybe outside the center, they don't like speaking that much, or they are more of a quiet person. To see that quiet person stand on the stage in front of a lot of people, to feel the fear and do it anyway, it's so rewarding to watch them do that," Wilson said.

The Euchee Language Program is open to all school-aged Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens and area Euchee descendants. After school classes are offered Monday through Friday. For more information, contact 918-247-6130.

A full list of the 2026 Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair Pre-K to 5th-grade winners can be accessed here. A full list of the 6th to 12th-grade winners can be accessed here.



From Left: Braden Lunsford and Samba Rolland. (Euchee Language Program)

## Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair Awards

### Pre-K - 2nd Grade Books

1st Place h yUsA Brown, by sht st  Tabbytite, and nahala Turning Heart hE'n  s'@chE kaala (When the Earth was First Made) Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### Pre-K - 2nd Grade Comics and Cartoons

2nd Place Ozzy Bryan Don't Steal the Pokemon Ball, Mvskoke, Moore Public Schools Native American Education Moore

### Pre-K - 2nd Grade Individual Mobile Video

1st Place by sht  ag  Williams dEg ha dOde (I Brush My Teeth) Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### Pre-K - 2nd Grade Individual Spoken Language Group A

2nd Place s'@nt'A Bearpaw gOjEthl@ wat'A hAg@ Yuchi Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### PreK-2nd Grade Individual Spoken Language Group B

1st Place zOda Bearpaw bOshE nanda chish s'E wAk'@ bE Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

2nd Place sEodalA Turning Heart shadranE wAch@'@ dA'ELA Yuchi Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

3rd Place Braden Lunsford Introduction Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### PreK-2nd Grade Individual Spoken Prayer Group A

1st Place zOda Bearpaw Language & Home Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### PreK-2nd Grade Individual Spoken Prayer Group B

2nd Place by sht st  Tabbytite n zAt   ayOchEy  Yuchi Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

Honorable MentionKatawe Wilson Mention Summertime Prayer Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### PreK-2nd Grade Individual Master Performer

1st Place nahala Turning Heart yUdjEhalA dA'ELA Euchee (Yuchi) Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### PreK - 2nd Grade Individual Modern Song

3rd Place sAwE Smith gOthl@nE wAtsa Yuchi, Yuchi Immersion School - Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### PreK - 2nd Grade Individual Modern Song

3rd Place sAwE Smith gOthl@nE wAtsa Yuchi, Yuchi

Immersion School - Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### Pre-K - 2nd Grade Small Group (6-11) Modern Song

3rd Place PreK Class k'ala wAn  yagOkw@nE Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### 3rd - 5th Grade Book

3rd Place h w nE Grippando wAdAsta Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

Honorable Mention ashtalA Turning Heart Mention wAdAsta Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### 3rd - 5th Grade Comic and Cartoon (Individual)

1st Place Enzlee Cassil Hvcce-nettv Vcokvkv! Happy Birthday Mvskoke Moore Public Schools Native American Education Moore

### 3rd - 5th Grade Film and Video

3rd Place ky@hanE Deere gOb@^d@^ wAk'@z@^ gO'n sh chE asOTa! Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### 3rd-5th Grade Poster Art

1st Place Emmari Francois Opvknkv-haco Mvskoke Moore Public Schools Native American Education Moore, OK

Honorable Mention Elana Thompson Butterfly Creation Mvskoke Moore Public Schools Native American Education Moore

### 3rd - 5th Grade Individual Master Performer

1st Place AshtalA Turning Heart yUdjEhalA dA'ELA Yuchi Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### 3rd - 5th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group A

2nd Place Maleah Lunsford Sprinkles Euchee Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa, OK

3rd Place Salo Jones Introduction Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### 3rd - 5th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group B

1st Place TagOfanE Bearpaw shUshU dA'ELA Yuchi Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool, OK

2nd Place Raelyn Lunsford Let's go! Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### 3rd-5th Grade Small Group (4-5) Traditional Song

2nd Place Preston Elementary Untitled Mvskoke Preston Public Schools Preston

### 3rd - 5th Grade Large Group (35) Traditional Song

2nd Place Yuchi Immersion School yUdjEha aKAY ya (If You are Yuchi Here) Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### 6th - 8th Grade Book

1st Place gOdAanE Decker wAdAsta Yuchi, Yuchi Language Project Glenpool

### 6th - 8th Grade Individual Master Performer

1st Place Tyfolope Cargil Fam Euchee Euchee Language Learning Center Glenpool

2nd Place Sin'E Cargil Ribbon Dress Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Kellyville

### 6th - 8th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group A

1st Place Roxie Harjo Creation Story Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Glenpool

### 6th - 8th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group B

1st Place Brianna Lunsford Euchee Presentation Euchee Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

2nd Place gOdAanE Decker kasA gOthl@^ dA'ELA Yuchi Language Project - Yuchi Immersion School Glenpool

### 6th - 8th Grade Individual Spoken Poetry

1st Place Moody Mangrum Haiku Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

3rd Place Kadance Cargil Untitled Euchee Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### 6th - 8th Grade Individual Spoken Prayer (Group A)

1st Place Brianna Lunsford Euchee Prayer Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

6th - 8th Grade Individual Spoken Prayer (Group B)

2nd Place Kagowe Wilson Pre-Game Prayer Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

3rd Place Coconut Jones Blessings All Around Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### 9th - 12th Grade Poster Art

2nd Prize Vcenv Marks My Language, My Home Mvskoke School of Choctaw Language Hartshorne

### 9th - 12th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group A

2nd Place Sarv Wolf Stonko!! Mvskoke OKCPS NAAS Oklahoma City

### 9th - 12th Grade Individual Spoken Language Group B

2nd Place Jayleigh Harjo Earth Creation Story Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Glenpool

### 9th - 12th Grade Large Group Modern Song

1st Place Euchee Language Learning Center Students Lean On Me Euchee, Euchee Language Learning Center Sapulpa

### 9th - 12th Grade Individual Traditional Song Group B

3rd Place Vcenv Marks Hvthvatken Mvskoke School of Choctaw Language Hartshorne

# MENTOR-APPRENTICE PROGRAM WILL CREATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF MVSKOKE OPUNVKV SPEAKERS

## THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM IS THE CULMINATION OF YEARS OF WORK

BY SHAYLN PROCTOR

OKMULGEE – The Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke (Mvskoke Language Liaison Program) has created the Mvskoke Opunvkv Mentor-Apprentice Program (MOMAP) to help revitalize the Mvskoke language and increase the number of Second-Language Mvskoke language speakers. The program aims to carry the language forward into the next generation and provide more Mvskoke speakers to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's departments/programs. This is a full-time, paid, two-year position.

“Heyv, Mvskoke Opunvkv akerrake fullakat, eme mahusat, emetat opunvkv kerraket elicvkepat emetat vlkusekot opunvkv mowakat omekos, mv enhvteceskv homv mahat awvte mvn asvpykaket owes, mowis puhomv awvtetat estofvnken hecacekos.

Es-punhonnetvt sulketos momen mv pun opunvkv cawepet asehvlattet vrepetv vrakkueckv ocet, vrepetv heretos momis yekce mahet es-punhonnet owe tos, mvn vkerricvkat oketv nettv hvnken pume vtekuset puhoskvhanat onton kerre ton towes,” Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke Fyativ (Director) Jay Fife (Mvskoke) stated and translated in Mvskoke language by Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke.

“That’s what we’re hoping that these apprentices will also realize, too, is that they’re not creating their own legacy, they’re joining the legacy of those that come before us and those that we will never see. That’s a lot of burden, and it’s also an honor to carry the language, but it is a burden because we know that one day we are all that’s left,” Fife stated, and English was translated by Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke.

This program will soon be seeking four determined apprentices, who will be taught by the First-Language Mvskoke Opunvkv Speakers/mentors at the Mvskoke Language Liaison Program, where each mentor will be assigned two apprentices. The program staff will use various second-language learning strategies to enhance the Mvskoke Opunvkv communication skills of the apprentices.

“The Mvskoke Opunvkv Mentor-Apprentice Program (MOMAP) is dedicated to creating second-language Mvskoke Opunvkv speakers, through the second-language acquisition methods and strategies supported through the development of intergenerational relationships with First-Language Mvskoke Opunvkv Speakers to perpetuate the Mvskoke Opunvkv and Mvskoke cultural knowledge,” stated the Mvskoke Language Liaison Program.

Creating this program can eventually help regain more Mvskoke Opunvkv speakers, who could one day hold more language speaker positions within tribal departments and programs, to help ensure the language speakers’ presence in all governance aspects, as stated in Executive Order 25-07.

The Mvskoke Language Liaison Program staff spoke with Mvskoke Media about their goals, the differentiation of this apprentice program from others, and the rationale for creating MOMAP.

### A distinct initiative

MOMAP has been in the works for some time, and recently, their apprentice program received support from the MCN Department of Culture and Humanities, which later led to the introduction of legislation requesting funding to create the program.

Fife said that the apprentice position won’t function like institutional education programs, there are no classes or grading. The position is a full-time employment opportunity.

“The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN) has a similar structure, but this program, being under the Department of Culture and Humanities, will have a similar goal but a different strategy of implementation,” stated Fife.

For this program, the staff has created a structure to use the language, which Fife stated hasn’t been done before. He explained that if they can get a cohort of four apprentices through, they’ll have knowledge you won’t get at any university.

“You won’t get a certificate for it, but lived experiences are re-validated by positions being created specifically for the knowledge that they hold,” Fife said.

The program consists of two years of formal training and may later be absorbed into the MCN Department of Culture and Humanities or into other positions at the Nation that require language services for their job responsibilities.

“We also recognize that there should be language speakers at health, there should be language speakers in the legislative and judicial branches, all across the Nation. That’s what we’re affirming by saying, it not only impacts our sovereignty and how we perceive ourselves and all these other things, it’s so much



(Image Courtesy: MOMAP)

more. It’s just recreating infrastructure that supports the language,” Fife said.

“We hope what we’re creating will permeate into other language programs to say, ‘Hey, we can do that too, we don’t have the right answers, but we have strategies that are based upon first language speaker support.’ We have to recognize that our language speakers are the reason that we still have a language. So for us youngings trying to figure out ‘how do we become like them, it’s hard, it’s not easy, otherwise our language would be spoken all the time,” Fife stated.

“But when you have a structure that supports language learning, and it’s conducive to immersive environments, then I think we’ll get a success, I think that’s what we’re hoping to do with MOMAP.”

Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke Nak ‘Stowetv Svhecv (Project Coordinator) Paskova Deere (Mvskoke) noted that a major difference between this program and others is that it pays well. Apprentices will be able to take care of their own families and needs without struggling.

“The benefit of this program that we’re initiating is that it’s going to be a full-time job and it’s going to be the first time the Nation has ever done that, a full-time job to learn the language to where you can provide for your family,” Deere said.

“That to me is one of the main benefits that separates us from people or the college or wherever.”

Employment and family obligations can leave little time for learning the Mvskoke language. Deere explained that when people want to learn the language, and they have a full-time job elsewhere, it can be hard. This position solves that issue.

“This is their job to learn Mvskoke and for the first time ever like it was said, the Nation is investing back into Mvskoke citizens, Mvskoke people, so they can reclaim their identity, reclaim their language and the hope is that whatever age range of people apply for it, if they’re in their 20s, 30s, however old they are, then if they can learn and become proficient, they can have a working professional knowledge of the Mvskoke language,” stated Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke Kvpetvne (Manager), Darrell (Mahe) Proctor II.

“The language is going to live on for another 50 years, and four more individuals’ lives. That’s the huge benefit, it’s more and more people that are saving it, and hopefully it’ll expand eventually.”

### Looking into the future

Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke Opunanyv Avhuerv (Field Specialist) Jason Tiger (Mvskoke) hopes that meetings will one day be in the Mvskoke language.

“The way they should be, in the way they always should have been, but of course we know what all happened. So just trying to help bring it back and hopefully, all of the Nations meetings will be in the language one day, hopefully our grandkids or kids may see,” stated Tiger.

“Another thing was with McGirt we regained a lot of sovereignty back, but what for, if we had no language, and so it only helps strengthen our sovereignty, I believe.”

Mvskoke Opunvkv Asohyekcivlke Opunanyv Avhuerv (Field Specialist) Talia Buckley (Mvskoke) has also agreed that seeing the creation of MOMAP and helping to create more

speakers will benefit future generations.

Fife explained that having MOMAP will create an intergenerational relationship that sustains a Mvskoke Opunvkv immersive environment.

“What that means is that as long as they are making an effort to speak the language and exchange knowledge, then the classroom becomes everyday life. So it’s no longer limited or contained to a classroom, but rather it’s making the language exist where it needs to be,” Fife said. “It’s also kind of solidifying that this is a valid form of communication that we as employees can make an effort to save and be engaged with.”

Proctor said he grew up not hearing the language spoken to him directly, but heard it around him, only knowing random phrases. Proctor said that having a career in the Mvskoke language, where he can hear and speak it every day, is a blessing.

Proctor hopes that four more people can have the opportunity, but that they won’t take as long as he did to learn the language. It took Proctor 10 years to get conversational, and he hopes it will take six months to one year to achieve that in their intensive program.

“We just want someone else to have that opportunity and to really invest in their identity. That’s why I’m proud of that, that we all have the same vision. We have eight staff members, two of them are first-language speakers, and the rest of us are second-language speakers. We can all converse in the language, and if we can just add that number more and more... our sovereignty grows or our strength as Mvskoke people grows, and everything benefits from it, I’m proud of that, I’m thankful,” Proctor said.

Language revitalization, to Deere, is a group effort, with no individual taking credit. “So, to have a certain feeling about revitalizing the language, I don’t think it falls on just one individual person. It falls on all of us,” Deere said.

For Fife, the feeling is indescribably heavy. “Our abilities to speak the language is from the support of our first language speakers that we have encountered, so everything that we know comes from somebody else, which is why we hope to do that for someone else,” Fife said. “When you’re trying to get into a community where knowledge is so sacred and also very easily lost, there’s a sense of accountability, there’s a sense of dread, there’s a sense of pride, and when you combine those three, everybody responds differently depending on the context and the situation,” Fife said.

“Here within the program, we are blessed to have support as a Nation. This is our career, it’s not a job, it’s a career that we can expand and bring other people into this field.”

Fife explains that there are no wrong ways-only many right ways. “There’s so many right ways that you can do to get there, and you see that when you look at us, we’re all products of different strategies and practices,” Fife said.

“So at the end of the day, we have one vision, but it’s because of the support that we’ve gotten from people that aren’t our kinfolks, that are just community members, ground members, church members, you name it. They don’t have to create time for us, but it’s because of that Vnoeckv (love) that we’re able to spread it and hope that other people will say, ‘You know what, I’ll help y’all.’”

For more information, visit the MCN careers website to find the application, or call Fife at 918-752-8321 or Proctor at 539-286-4853.

LEGALS

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION  
OKMULGEE DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF )  
L.L.F., dob 08-06-2011, ) Case No. GD-2026-35  
MINOR CHILD. ) Judge Masters

**NOTICE OF HEARING PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN**

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION, TO: *Emmett J. Farve and All Persons Interested In The Person and Estate Of L.L.F., minor child.*

Take Notice that, a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of the Person and Estate of L.L.F., minor child was filed in this Court by, *Charlie Christine Denny-Harjo*, seeking this Court to issue a *General Decree of Guardianship with regards to the minor child, L.L.F., born 08-06-2011.*

A hearing on said Petition is set for the *23* day of *June*, 2026, at the hour of *10:00* o'clock, *A.M.* in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court, Okmulgee Oklahoma, before the Honorable Judge Masters.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE COURT WILL HEAR EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF AND IN OPPOSITION TO THE GRANTING OF THE PETITION FOR GUARDIANSHIP AT THE TIME AND PLACE ABOVE SHOWN WHERE YOU WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT AND HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD AT SAID TIME AND PLACE INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO OBJECT TO THE REQUEST AND RELIEF SOUGHT; HOWEVER, YOUR FAILURE TO APPEAR AT SAID HEARING SHALL CONSTITUTE DENIAL OF YOUR INTEREST IN THE MINOR CHILD'S WELFARE, WHICH DENIAL MAY RESULT, WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE OF THIS PROCEEDING OR ANY

SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, IN SAID PETITION BEING GRANTED AND ORDERED WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT AS WELL AS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE MINOR CHILD AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION.

Signed and Ordered this *5* day of *May*, 2026.

*[Signature]*  
JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

Prepared by:  
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Attorney for Plaintiff Charlie Christine Denny-Harjo

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP OF )  
A.D.D., )  
A Minor Child. )

**ORDER AND NOTICE OF SHOW CAUSE HEARING ON EMERGENCY APPLICATION**

Notice is hereby given that PATRICIA DAVIS AKERS has previously been appointed as the temporary guardian of the minor child and that a show cause hearing is set on such Emergency Application as to the person and property of A.D.D., date of birth February 23, 2026.

And that the *19<sup>th</sup>* day of *May* 2026 at the hour of *9:00* o'clock *A.M.*, in courtroom of the Muscogee Creek Nation District Court has been appointed as the time and place for hearing the application, when and where any persons interested may appear and show cause, if any they have, why such appointment should not be made.

DATED this *15<sup>th</sup>* day of *May*, 2026.

*[Signature]*  
JUDGE OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

IN THE MATTER OF )  
THE GUARDIANSHIP OF )  
C.G., ) Case No. GD-2026-30  
A Minor. )

**ORDER AND NOTICE OF HEARING PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL CO-GUARDIANS**






Notice is hereby given that KOLBY CLARK AND AMBER CLARK have filed in the District Court of the Muscogee Creek Nation, a petition requesting the appointment of a guardian of the person and property of C.G., date of birth January 3, 2010.

And that the 20th day of May 2026 at the hour of 9:00 o'clock, a.m., in courtroom of the Muscogee Creek Nation District Court has been appointed as the time and place for hearing the petition, when and where any persons interested may appear and show cause, if any they have, why such appointment should not be made.



DATED this *16<sup>th</sup>* day of *May*, 2026.

*[Signature]*  
JUDGE OF THE MUSCOGEE CREEK NATION

# PREVENT the SPREAD of RESPIRATORY VIRUSES

-  **COVER YOUR COUGHS & SNEEZES**
-  **WASH HANDS OFTEN**  
*For at least 20 seconds*
-  **STAY HOME WHEN SICK**  
*including having a runny nose, sore throat, and/or cough*
-  **KEEP AIR CIRCULATING & VENTILATED**
-  **STAY UP TO DATE**  
*with your vaccinations, including Flu, RSV & COVID-19*

## MCNHealth EXPRESS CARE CLINICS

-  **COUNCIL OAK**  
10109 E. 79TH ST.  
TULSA, OK 74133  
918.233.9550
-  **OKMULGEE**  
1400 S. WOOD DRIVE  
OKMULGEE, OK 74447  
918.591.5733

**HOURS OF OPERATION:**  
MON-FRI (7AM-7PM)  
SAT-SUN (9AM-5PM)

**WALK-INS WELCOME**  
+  
**NO APPOINTMENTS NECESSARY**

SERVING CITIZENS OF  
FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES

[creekhealth.org](http://creekhealth.org)