

Arlene "Kay" O'Neal was born in Fort Worth, Texas. She is the daughter of Margaret Cross O'Neal and Ollie O'Neal. Both parents grew up in Oklahoma. Margaret was the daughter of Phillip Cross and Frances Elliot Cross. Margaret was from Colony. Where a good deal of the family still live.

Kay grew up in Fort Worth. She is the youngest of ten children. The family has spread coast to coast. With as many siblings, they have gone separate ways. But the love remains the same.

Kay has been involved in the Native culture since her youth. Often going to the Colony dance with her mother and dancing with her family there. She was an integral part of getting the Indian Education platform off the ground in the mid 70's in the Dallas Fort Worth area.

As a young adult she moved to the San Bernadino mountains in California. She lived there for almost twenty years. While raising her eldest daughter there; they enjoyed the beauty of the country. Gardening and hiking were amongst their favorite activities. Wanting to spend more time with her mother; Kay moved back to the DFW area in the 90's. There she raised her youngest two children. This gave the family the opportunity to be a part of the Caddo ways.

Kay and her children and grandchildren participated in Caddo Camp for fifteen years. She taught a variety of subjects. But pottery was where her heart was. This was what she taught for five years or more.

She has been in active ministry for over twenty years. Spending five years in Native American ministry. Then she was involved in ministry in the DFW area for eighteen years. Where she has had much opportunity to counsel as well as the practical application of being a servant as well as a leader.

Kay was once again actively involved with the Fort Worth Indian Education program. She was also involved on panels that made decisions that shaped and brought forth Native programs in the metroplex. During this time Kay took part as well as led many presentations at schools. These took place in private as well as public schools. The presentations and educational programs were presented from the grades of kindergarten through college.

She has also been involved in bringing awareness to the DFW area of cultural appropriation.

She went to school at Tarrant County College. Where she was working toward an Associates degree.

Kay has attended many Caddo dances and conferences and symposiums.

She was also in the tornado that other tribal members were in at Caddo Mounds in Alto, Texas. Being very grateful to make it through this disaster. Since she was in the eye of the storm and happened to be where the only exit through which our people could go. The impact of what had transpired and the affect that it had on the Caddo Nation was felt deep within. The responsibility to her tribe was personified as she watched her elders and other tribal members crawl out from under the debris. It was as if the Creation story was being retold. A new day. But not a day that we think more highly of ourselves in our own estimation. But a day that we were in unity. Going forward with one purpose. For

the good of our tribe and those who are with us.

Even before this she has worked with the Texas Historical Commission in partner with Caddo Mounds as a voice for our community. She still continues to work with others as a voice for our tribe.

As of March of 2020 Kay and her family have moved to the Fort Cobb area. Unfortunately, Covid had stymied any opportunities to do more with the tribe. But, everything has a season. For whatever purpose it may be. This season has given her time to prioritize and solidify what is in her heart and where to go from here.

Doing all things with honor and integrity, the Caddo way. It is her hope to bring strength and solidarity as we go forward as a Nation.