
KITSAYU CHRONICLE

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The Road to Federal Recognition

The Impact of Cultural Assimilation

Rieka L. Rain Tree

Seeds of Sovereignty

In its application for federal recognition guidelines, the Office of Federal Recognition addresses the question, “What is the impact of cultural assimilation” (when it comes to recognition)?

What is cultural assimilation?

Cultural assimilation is the process in which a minority group or culture comes to resemble a dominant group. Many tribes have found cultural assimilation inevitable due to colonization. This poses a potential problem with their tribe’s application for federal recognition.

If there is continuous tribal existence, assimilation will not be a hindrance. If there are not regular tribal gatherings or even a minute amount of cultural preservation, a tribe’s application for recognition could ultimately be denied.

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Student Spotlight

Highlighting Student Achievements

Matsowaaki Motokis

January 10, 2020

The New Year brings about the second academic semester for Central Valley youths. January is the halfway mark for the school year. Students learn the result of their hard work from the second semester and are able to make plans to improve for the second semester to finish the academic year strong.

Xavier Rain Tree held the honor as the only Native American 8th grade student at his school to achieve a 4.0 GPA for the 1st semester. Xavier’s achievements were so great he became the inspiration for creating a Student Spotlight component of the Kitsayu Chronicle.



Xavier Rain Tree, 8th grade honor student

Xavier comes from a modern, Central Valley Indian family. His father is a Fresno native from the Dunlap Band of Mono, Choinumni and Wukchumni tribes. His mother is a Fresno transplant from the East Bay Area of Northern California. She comes from a Siksika and Mississippi Chahta family. Both were also honor students.

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Continuous Existence

There are many ways to demonstrate a continuous tribal existence. One of the most common is regular tribal meetings. Some tribes have regular meetings to discuss everything from recognition to social issues that affect the tribe. Unfortunately, member attendance can make regular meetings impossible. Some members have moved too far away to attend. Other members may have bad blood with others and may refuse to attend. In situations where tribal meetings are not a regular occurrence, consider maintaining cultural preservation.

Ways to Preserve Tribal Culture

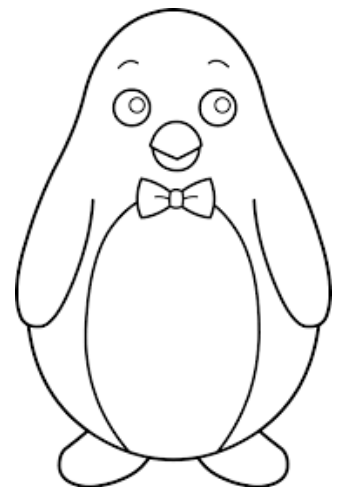
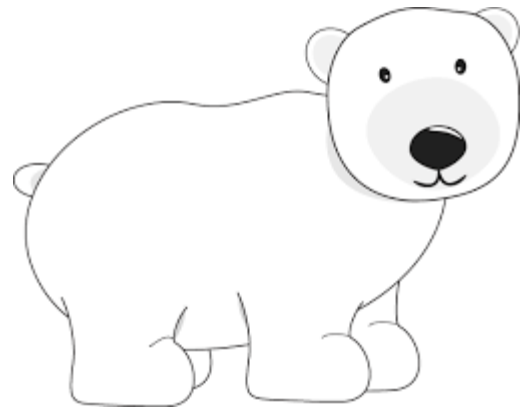
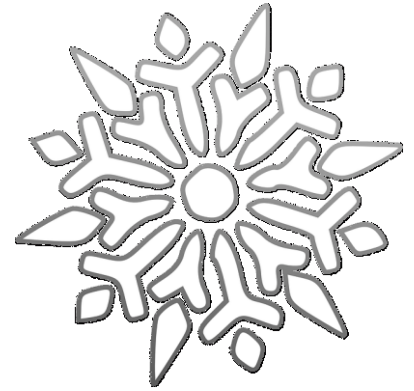
Language preservation is one of the best ways to preserve a tribal culture whenever possible. Language holds records of hidden or lost traditions. The origin and use of certain words or phrases can explain ceremonial practices. Even folk tales that have been passed down through the generations contain vital information about a tribe's origin. Dialects can be the identifying factor between tribes, bands or clans. This will help prove a continuous existence of a tribe, a factor that is required for federal recognition. If your tribe has lost part or all of its language, it is crucial that your tribe continue moving forward. Don't be discouraged. Either pick up with what still exists or begin anew.

Another way to preserve tribal culture is to maintain ceremonies. As with language preservation, it may be necessary to reinvent tribal traditions in order to demonstrate a continuous tribal existence. Tribal ceremonies and gatherings can be formal and traditional such as bear dances and sweats, but they can also be something as simple as regular holiday potlucks. Some tribes invest in youth sports and gather around their tournaments or championships to support them. This would meet the requirement of a tribal gathering. Since cultural assimilation is not a disqualifying factor, ceremonies and gatherings can be modern or traditional.

Remember that the goal of cultural preservation is to demonstrate a continuous existence of your tribe and to revitalize the tribal members of your community. There are many more factors to consider when determining if your tribe is likely to be successful in their application for federal recognition. Not all failures to meet a requirement will result in denial of federal recognition. Legal counsel can help your tribal government best assess their potential for federal recognition.

Beading Templates

Enlarge the templates below on a copy machine to the desired size and use them for beading templates.



ABOUT US

Kitsayu Chronicle is a free, tribal community newsletter created and maintained by Native American community leaders and volunteers. Our mission is to revitalize the community, restore pride and to focus on academic achievements, community concerns and cultural preservation. We seek to reunite local community members with each other along with those who have left the community and want to remain connected. If you would like to contribute to our newsletter or podcast please contact at: KitsayuChronicle@yahoo.com or on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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Xavier, although very proud of his achievements, admits that the road to success wasn't easy.

"I had to work really hard. I learned not to do my homework or study at the last minute."

Xavier's parents helped accelerate his success. With no Title VII tutor available, his parents had to take over. His father helped with math and his mother helped with language arts. She proofread his assignments and had him rewrite graded essays she felt the teacher graded too lightly.

"I learned during my son's 7th grade year that his teachers were grading him based off of the quality of work they thought he was capable of and not off of the standard of work he should have been doing. He wasn't being challenged to do better so he wasn't."

As it turns out, Challenging Xavier resulted in higher grades and more academic attention from his teachers. They increased his workload, called on him more in class and were quicker to respond to his requests for more assistance.

With the increased workload Xavier found he needed to make some drastic changes. Cross country was no longer a priority. If he needed to study, he missed practice and would make up for it at the gym on the weekends. His parents turned on parental controls on his phone. Unfortunately, Xavier also had to make some changes in his friendships. Friends who weren't focused on academics saw less of him until ultimately, the friendships ended. But he gained new friends that were focused on the same goals. Currently, all of Xavier's friends made honor roll. Together, they're helping the next generation of students.

"My sister isn't making the same grades and her Title VII tutor hasn't been helping her. So I and my friends have study sessions with all our little brothers and sisters so they can win too."

"I had to work really hard. I learned not to do my homework or study at the last minute."



KITSAYU WORD OF THE MONTH

TOO-WANO

The Kitsayu word for "winter".

PRONUNCIATION

The first part of the word "Too" is pronounced the same in Kitsayu as it is in English. The hyphen is an indication of a stop and the preceding syllable being the emphasis. For example "TOO-wano".

SPREAD THE KNOWLEDGE

Have a word you would like to share? Do we need to make a correction in our pronunciation or definition? Contact us at KitsayuChronicle@yahoo.com.

Are You Fighting to Win or to Reach a Resolution?

Building Healthy Relationships

Couples don't always get along. Even in fairytales, couples have conflicts. It is unrealistic to expect to never have an argument. It is however necessary to do so without destroying the very relationship you are attempting to build. We do this when we don't set limits for ourselves when we argue with our partner. Remember, the goal of the argument is to reach an agreement, understanding or resolution.

When you find yourself being cruel or spiteful, the argument has already gone too far. Don't focus on having the last word. Walk away and take a break. Revisit the topic when

Do your best to speak without offending and listen without defending.

both parties are calm and receptive. Do your best to speak without offending and listen without defending. It is not about winning, it's about communication. Effective communication leads to strong, healthy relationships. ❖

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What can I do to help my child in school? The Title VII tutor at CUSD still hasn't shown up. The school year is halfway over and my Child's grades are not improving.

A: If your Title VII tutor has not shown up yet, you are not alone. The funds for Title VII Indian Education are pooled together in a program called Supplemental Services. This means Native American students are counted in the budget writing process, but due to the low number of Title VII Indian Education enrollments,

most of those funds are allocated to ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Low registration can be due to the requirement to prove your child is Native American whereas an ESL student only has to indicate at the time of registration that English is their second language.

What this means for your Native American child is that there aren't enough funds available to hire qualified tutors for the Native American students who helped to procure the funding for Supplemental Services. So there may be no tutors or your child's tutor may arrive almost at the end of the year. In this case, immediately speak to the school administrator who coordinates the

tutors. This person will pressure the department on your behalf to provide the services to which your child is entitled. Next go to the head of Supplemental Services. Explain in writing how their lack of tutors is hindering your child's education. Lastly, contact your Area Superintendent and make them aware of the situation. This will result in better service from Title VII Indian Education. Failure to provide your child with a tutor when needed could result in disciplinary action.

Under extreme circumstances, community programs off campus can help with tutoring. But remember, your child is entitled to tutoring services through CUSD Title VII.