

Two Spirit & L.G.B.T. Justice in NW Tribal Communities

Readiness to Implement the Tribal Equity Toolkit

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History & Background

Tribal Community Training:

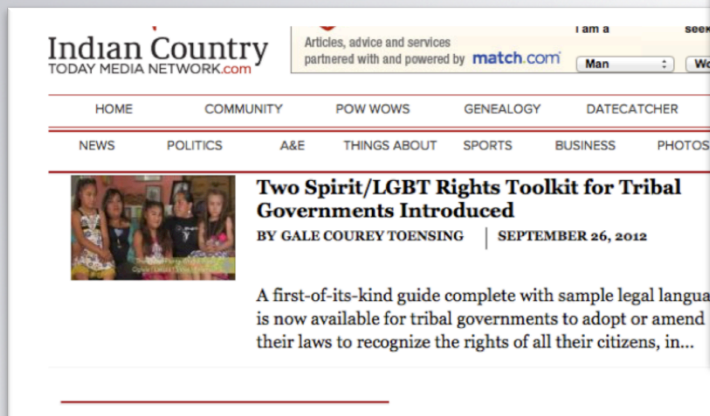
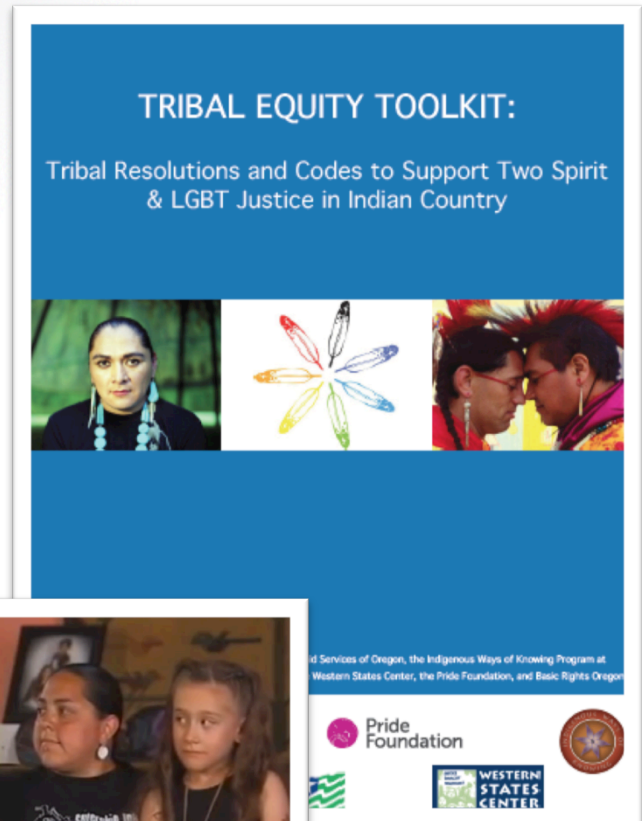
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz, April 2011
- Native American Rehabilitation Association Inc., Feb. 2012



- *What we Learned: Tribes and Tribal People view this issue within the essential frames of sovereignty, self-determination with their foundations in unique tribal culture(s), respect for all and equality.*

History & Background

- Announced Tribal Equity Toolkit publication at ATNI, Sep. 26, 2013
- Published Tribal Equity Toolkit, Nov. 1, 2013
- Produced Our Families: Two Spirit with Basic Rights Oregon, Nov. 12, 2013



We can help >

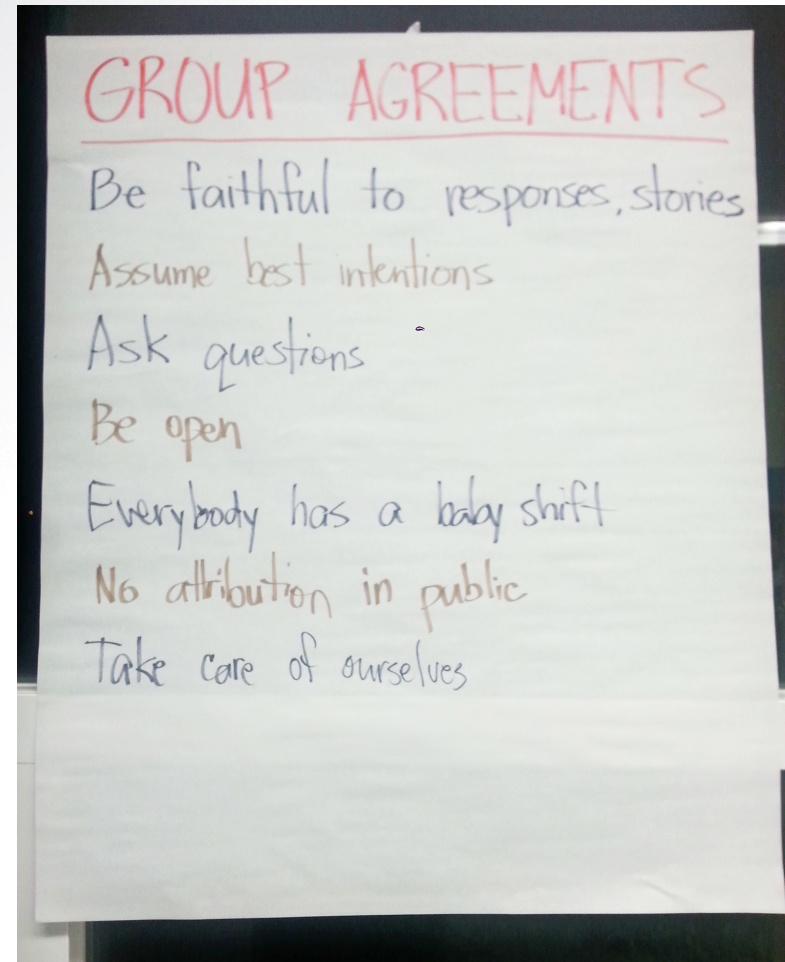
Marriage Equality in Indian Country

- Outreach to Tribes in WA 2012
- Last 10 years:
 - Coquille
 - Suquamish
 - Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
 - Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
 - Lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel
 - Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation



Tribal Community Scan 2013

Goal: To assess the climate of Indian Country in the NW in its readiness to implement the *Tribal Equity Toolkit: Tribal Resolutions & Codes to Support Two Spirit & LGBT Justice in Indian Country*



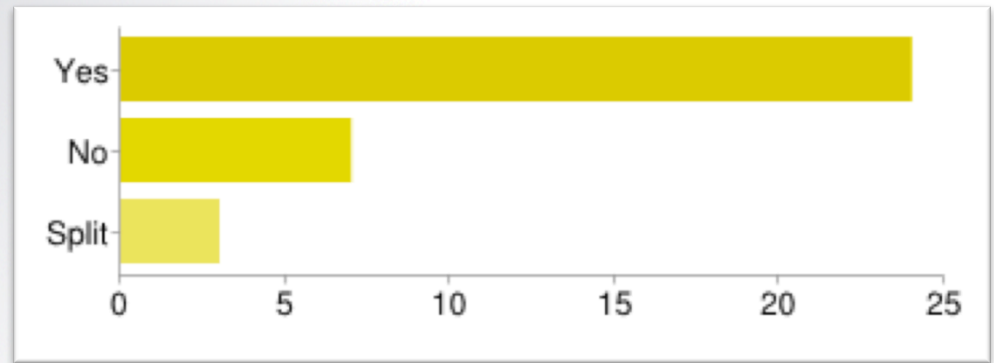
Tribal Community Scan 2013



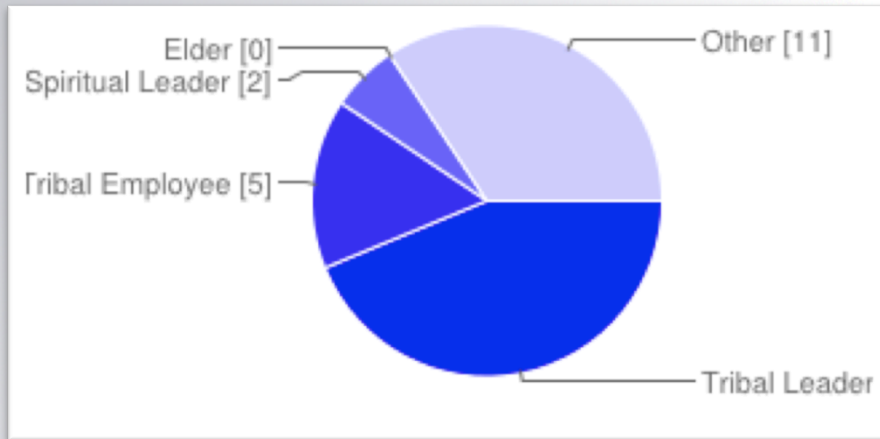
- Interviewed 31 Tribal Leaders, Executive Tribal Employees and Cultural Leaders/ Elders
- Questions addressed:
 - Personal Connection & Understanding of Two Spirit/ LGBT Native Issues
 - Tribal Historical Perspectives
 - Policy Initiatives
- Over 40 hours of interviews transcribed
- Analysis of themes, needs and challenges led by a team of 9 individuals over 30 hours.

About our respondents...

Live on Reservation

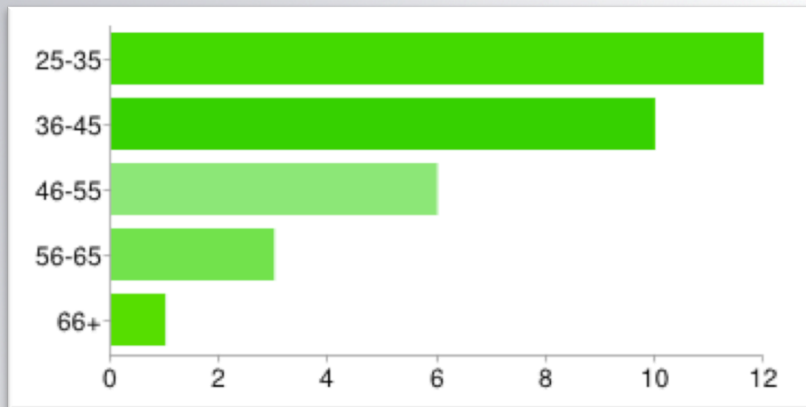
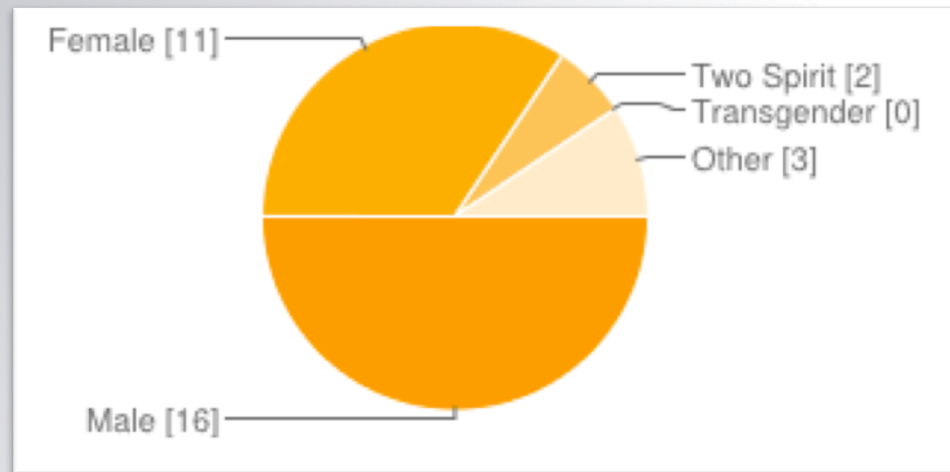


Role in Tribal Community

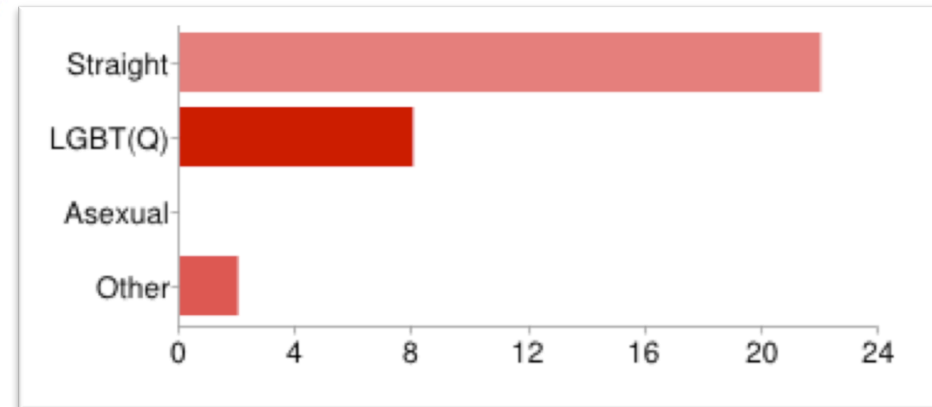


More about our respondents...

Gender Identity



Age



Sexual Identity

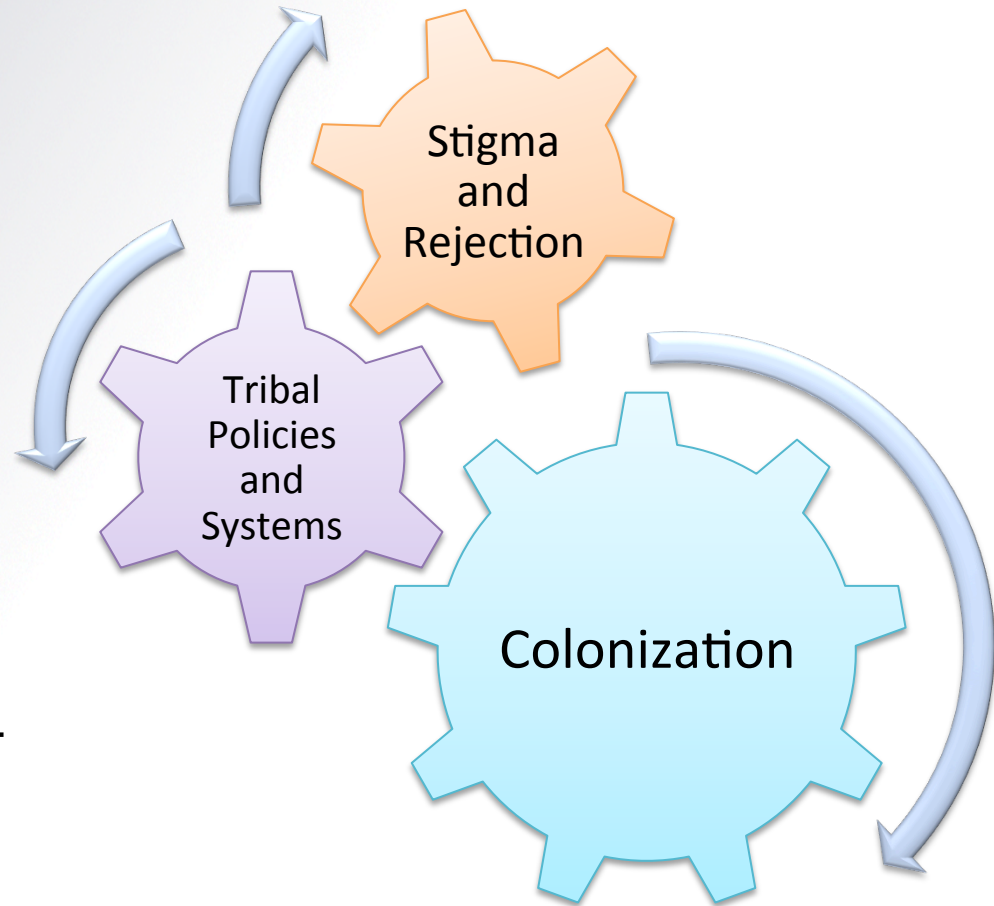
Tribes

- Blackfeet, Suquamish
- Cayuse
- Chautomish, Chocktaw, Oklahoma, Yakama
- Coeur d'Alene, Walla Walla
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (2)
- Cayuse, Walla Walla
- Hoh Tribe
- Nez Perce (7)
- Nez Perce, Cayuse
- Nez Perce – Mother of descendants (White)
- Makah
- Ojibwa, Oglala Lakota
- Suquamish
- Umatilla (5)
- Wahpeton
- Wasco, Navajo, Hopi
- Wasco, Paiute, Warm Springs, Nez Perce

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Colonization

- Individual and interpersonal experiences are influenced by cultural narratives and institutional policies.
- Cultural narratives and Institutional policies of Tribal Governments have been heavily impacted by colonization which reinforced stigma, scapegoating and rejection of Two Spirit & LGBT Tribal People.



Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Colonization

“Colonization has eliminated our ability to assume the roles that once existed: hunter, healer, warrior. What's left? Bodies. All those pieces were important in a spiritual sense, and left hollow people. The government filled that with alcohol and other things. We're in this time where we really need to start healing.”

-Respondent 1

“...unfortunately for my cousin who died...it seemed like his life wasn't supported and we weren't allowed to talk about it. And then he died, silently. He never ever admitted to anybody that he had AIDS, and wouldn't talk about it and so it was a lonely death.”

-Respondent

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Tribal Institutional Policy Change

- Marriage, Domestic Partnership or Civil Union is the issue most Tribes have confronted, if they have confronted an issue.
- For 2S respondents, definition and protection of family and health services are paramount (all 2S respondents identified basic needs as an issue).
- Institutionalized policies have profound effect on the quality of life and lived experience of 2S Tribal Citizens.

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Tribal Institutional Policy Change

“We have our own community, but we’re not a community, we are a community within a community that nobody talks about, nobody knows about and nobody cares about...I was brought up with a mom and dad and older brothers, and people that supported me, not everybody has that though.”

-Respondent 11

“...you, as a nation, can say a whole lot just by passing one resolution supporting this movement.”

-Respondent 21

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Tribal Institutional Policy Change

“What creates some anxiety in a supportive or conditionally supportive community is the fact that the LGBT community may feel that a sense of radicalism is necessary to get their needs met. That creates some anxiety, politically for a community that’s trying to become supportive. I’m willing to make this decision to be supportive, but I don’t want to feel like I was forced into it because I think I needed to be forced into it. I think there are times when radicalism is necessary, but you need to be really strategic about it because it can have backlash. It’s very complicated and difficult for both communities.”

-Respondent 14

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Individual & Interpersonal

- The experience of our Tribal Citizens for whom this is their lived experience face issues of acceptance with those close to them as well as with those in their community.
- Individually:
 - Depression & Anxiety
 - Alcohol & Drug Abuse (8/10 reported)
 - Suicide (1 reported)
 - Interpersonally:
 - Bullying & Teasing
 - Physical Violence & Threat of Violence
 - Homicide (1 reported)

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Individual & Interpersonal

Significant Issues Facing 2S people:

“Visibility in terms of Native peoples in general--just being noticed and acknowledged and given that respect has always been lacking. But visibility can also be damaging in terms of being faced with other kinds of violence, whether it's physical violence, or some sort of verbal violence, or some sort of structural violence.

Visibility plays two ends, good and bad depending on the scenario. Safety in all kinds of areas. On issues related to just general safety, physical safety, emotional safety, spiritual safety, and the safety of communities.”

-Respondent 10

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Individual & Interpersonal

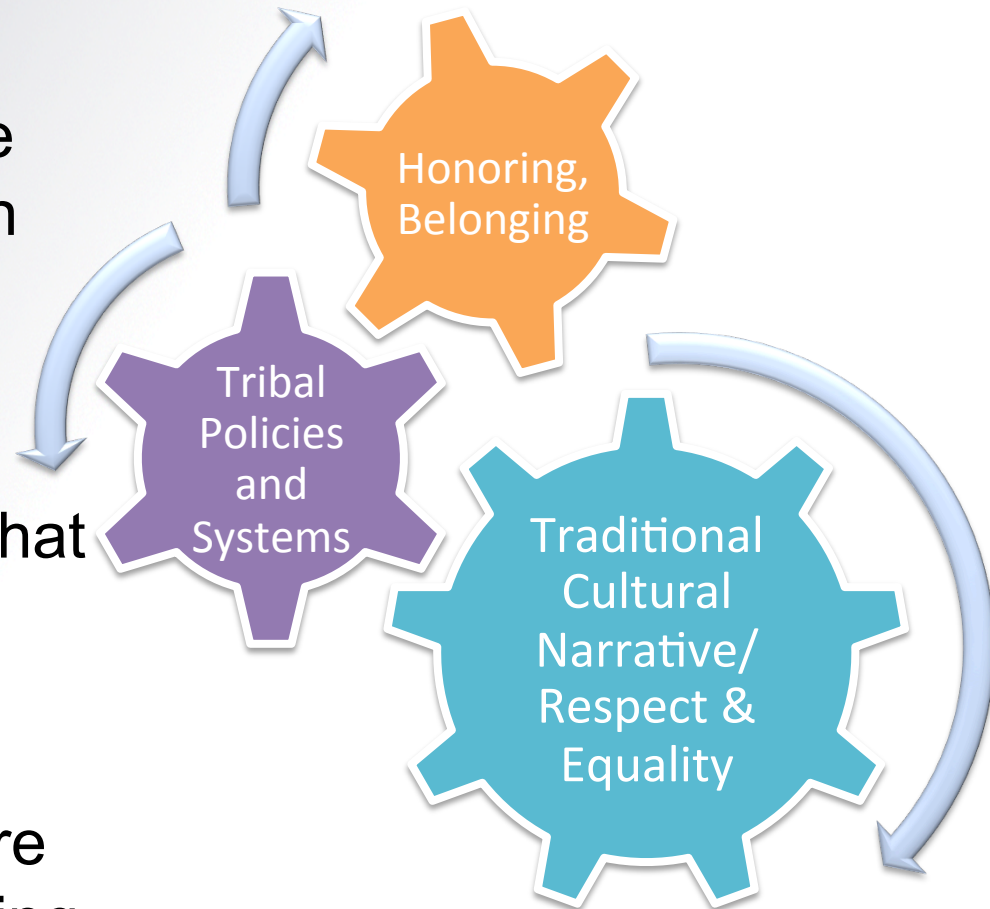
Significant Issues Facing 2S people: “One is, especially with the U.N. proclamation...and something that's not talked about, at least at the institutional level that that violence also occurs disproportionately for indigenous two-spirited people, too. That goes for youth, for young people, for elders: we're just uniquely vulnerable to violence. So I think that institutional silence or invisibility are one of the primary issues, because we're disproportionately vulnerable to those kinds of things: violence, STIs, health problems, and also that general acceptance in your community.”

-Respondent 13

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Cultural Narrative

- Words and stories are powerful.
- Our stories communicate messages to our children and families about our beliefs.
- Growing shift toward systems and narratives that reflect traditional cultural principles of respect and equality will result in communities where all are honored and feel belonging.



Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Cultural Narrative

“I do have two of my children...one Two Spirit and one LGBT. That's the road they've chose, the way they connect themselves, which is fine because they haven't lost their own personal connections. As long as people remain true to themselves...You want your voice to be considered with everyone else. Because they're living life how they want--it's up to them how they want to contribute, when they want to contribute, to whom they want to contribute. That's acceptance. So, we accept that. It's like anything else, as long as you don't promote or try to press the issues on someone...it's parallel with our traditions...”

-Respondent 26

Tribal Community Scan 2013:

Hopes & Aspirations

"...accepting those folks and ensuring they have the same rights as everyone else on the reservation. Quality access to health care, job opportunities, no discrimination based on any kind of on sexual orientation." -Respondent 4

"I feel that the struggle for LGBT rights is interlocked and interwoven with tribal rights and tribal sovereignty. And what we want as tribal peoples. For me, I think all that goes hand in hand: our liberations are interlocked."
-Respondent 13

Participants: THANK YOU!

Brenda Bremner
Leonard Forsman
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Shawna Gavin
Cammie Goldhammer
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Fred Hill, Sr.
Aaron Hines
Shannon Jackson
Tyson Johnston
Robert Kentta
Bud Lane
Maria Lopez
Alyssa Macy
Micah McCarty
Jon McConville

Shelly Means
Chris Mercier
Rebecca Miles
Armand Minthorn
Bobby Mitchell
Joel Moffett
Arthur Moody
Terri Parr
Angela Porter
Gysai Ross
Chuck Sams
Cor Sams
Matthew Town
Silas Whitman
Denise Wickert

Get Involved

- 1) TAKE A FREE COPY HOME TO YOUR TRIBE
- 2) Download your FREE copy today, and let us know how you would like to stay in touch regarding this important work!
- 3) Sign on to our mailing list, show your support publically.
- 4) Fill out the Tribal Leaders Survey.

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indigenous_ways_of_knowing/tribal_equity_toolkit/](https://graduate.lclark.edu/programs/indigenous_ways_of_knowing/tribal_equity_toolkit/)