

NISQUALLY ABSCH News



Nisqually Tribal News

4820 She-Nah-Num Dr. SE Olympia, WA 98513

Phone # 360-456-5221

Volume 15, Issue 11

www.nisqually-nsn.gov

November 2025

Nisqually Youth at the Rutledge Farm

By Jack George, Nisqually Tribe Communications and Media Services

The Nisqually Tribe Youth and Tribal Council sponsored attendance for tribal members to a night at Rutledge Farm with activities for the whole family.



Mariners Spirit

It wasn't the outcome we had dreamed of for decades, but it was sure fun rooting for the Mariners this year. This is a small representation of all the folks who were wearing Mariners gear around campus on playoff game days, in particular.



Nisqually Tribal Office Holiday Closures

Please mark them on your calendars!

Tuesday, November 11 - Veteran's Day

Thursday, November 27 - Thanksgiving

Friday, November 28 - National Native American Heritage Day

Thursday, December 25 - Christmas

Friday, December 26 - Admin./Christmas

How to Contact Us

Tribal Center 360-456-5221
Health Clinic 360-459-5312
Law Enforcement 360-413-3019
Youth Center 360-455-5213
Natural Resources 360-438-8687

Nisqually Tribal News

4820 She-Nah-Num Dr. SE
Olympia, WA 98513
360-456-5221

Leslee Youckton
youckton.leslee@nisqually-nsn.gov
ext. 1252

The deadline for the newsletter is the second Monday of every month.

Nisqually Tribal Council

Chair, Ken Choke
Vice Chair, Cheebo Frazier
Secretary, Jackie Whittington
Treasurer, Norine Wells
5th Council, Chris Olin
6th Council, Guido Levy Jr.
7th Council, Leighanna Scott

Where to Find Information:

Squalli Absch Newsletter

- Mailed, on website

Street Buzz

- Mailout, on She Nah Num

Facebook and website

Nisqually Indian Tribe Facebook

- geared toward educating the public

She Nah Num

- Private Facebook page

Website - www.nisqually-nsn.gov

In this issue:

Garden Harvest	pg. 4
Tile Creations	pg. 5
Public Safety Training	pg. 6
Huckleberry Harvest Report	pg. 8
We Wear Orange	pg. 10
#ChooseWater	pg. 11
Patients Portal	pg. 12
Adrianna Villegas	pg. 14
Announcements	pg. 15



Health and Wellness Dinner

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The Nisqually Tribal Health and Wellness Center Dental Department held an information dinner in October, including discussions of new services being offered, such as laser that is especially helpful with folks with sensitive teeth and efficient at treating certain issues easily.

Kids and adults could paint pumpkins and the tables were popular with the kids young and old.





SEAHAWKS TAILGATES are upon us!

NOVEMBER TAILGATES: @NYCC

9TH SUNDAY, KICK OFF 1:05 PM DOORS AT 11:30 AM
16TH SUNDAY, KICK OFF 1:05 PM DOORS AT 11:30 AM
23RD SUNDAY, KICK OFF 10 AM DOORS AT 9 AM
30TH SUNDAY, KICK OFF 1:05 PM DOORS AT 11:30 AM

**POTLUCK STYLE, RAFFLE, GOOD COMPANY AND AS ALWAYS
SOBER & CLEAN EVENT!**

**TRIBAL, REZ-IDENTS & NIT EMPLOYEES
JOIN THE
NISQUALLY ADULT WELLNESS PROGRAM**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: FARRON McCloud AT 360-456-5221 EXT. 2168





Harvest Garden Stand/Pumpkin Distribution

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

Nisqually's Medicine Creek Garden crew hosted the Harvest Garden Stand on a brisk fall Saturday where the rain held off just long enough to permit a dry visit by all who came for the bounty distributed.

There were the beautiful vegetables, the salves, hot and cold cider pressed on the spot as well as the Nisqually Food Truck with sandwiches and hot soup.

The event was hosted by Community Services, Community Garden, Daycare, General Assistance, Workforce Development and Vocation Rehabilitation. Snacks were distributed as well as a cookbook for "people who don't like vegetables." The recipes are yummy for all.

As part of the Harvest event, pumpkins were distributed to Nisqually tribal member kids and later, REZidents, behind the Nisqually Youth Center.





Tile Creations for Lakewood Park

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The Nisqually Tribe is working with the city of Lakewood Parks Department on a sign project for Ft. Steilacoom Park. These tile creations will be part of a short introduction to the Nisqually Tribe followed by more information along a trail within the park that has more than 1 million visits a year.

There is camas at the park and the tile project features designs by Nisqually artists that are now being made with the tile.



Wa He Lut School First Salmon Ceremony

Photos by Jack George, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services

The Wa He Lut Indian School held their First Salmon Ceremony on Wednesday, Oct. 1 with help from many tribal members in the region including Nisqually Culture and witnessed by members of Nisqually Tribal Council.





Public Safety Training

This September, the Public Safety team jumped into their annual Harassment and Positive Workplace Culture Training, an important HR compliance training led by Elizabeth Morris. But this wasn't just about checking boxes or following rules, we dug deeper, seeing how our everyday actions connect to the heart of Nisqually's values, sovereignty, and long-term strength.

Harassment prevention isn't just a legal requirement, it's fundamental to the Nisqually Indian Tribe. It reflects our core values of honesty, common sense, and fair play for every individual. Building a positive workplace culture is essential because it helps protect tribal sovereignty by ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and professionalism.

What We Covered

We talked about the policies everyone needs to know (confidentiality, safety, social media, and the different types of harassment. But even more than that, we explored the deeper cultural elements that make our workplace truly special. Some highlights:

- Keeping it respectful and professional every day.

- Spotting and standing up to all kinds of harassment, whether it's bullying, gossip, intimidation, or microaggressions.

- Understanding the tricky "grey areas", sometimes what we intend isn't how it lands, and that can break trust.

- Leading with inclusion, making sure everyone feels seen, heard, and part of the team.

Why It Matters:

We ended by reminding everyone that our workplace culture is a key part of our identity. A healthy environment respects Nisqually heritage and language, includes Tribal members, employees, and partners, and supports strong programs and a sustainable future. I asked the group: What's one small thing you can do tomorrow to improve your workplace? When we all commit to respect, honest communication, and integrity, we're not just coworkers, we're keeping the Nisqually spirit alive every day.

A big shout out to Jeff Smith for inviting me to spend three fun days with his team!





Arts.Wa Artist Roster-Kyle Sanchez

By Cynthia Iyall

Kyle is a young man who is known for his big smile and active family life in culture and art. Recently Kyle reached a new level of being a professional artist as he was added to the Arts.Wa Artist Roster. This is really exciting for him to be approved for this list along with other professional artists from all across the country. It opens up new opportunities for him to share his love of creation in carving and drawing that could be placed anywhere in



Washington.

He is currently in his Senior Year at Evergreen earning his Bachelors degree in Art. He is enjoying this time since he takes his kids to school then, he goes to school also. He consistently pushes his 7

kids in the direction of education to keep them moving toward their own opportunities in their future.

Kyle has worked on many art projects since being a youth carving model canoes about 6 to 8 inches long with his own knives. He actually started with a kitchen knife from home and then grew into purchasing and making his own knives for carving after selling his first model canoe at Neah Bay for \$50. That moment sparked a new fire for Kyle's artistic future.

He currently has 5 projects he rotates working on. He does sand and paint, but that's not really his favorite thing to do so rotating keeps him on his toes and engaged with all facets of his projects. His all-time favorite project was the 14.5-foot Welcome figure that greets all as you drive into the Youth Center.

Kyle has an exciting future with his artwork. You can find out more about his work at Sanchez Art Design on Facebook or on www.sanchezartdesign.com where he collaborates his work with his wife and her beautiful beadwork.

Billy Frank Jr. Statue Update

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The foundry that will create two bronze statues from the clay model created by artist Haiying Wu has been selected following an open bidding process. Classic Foundry in Seattle will create the two Billy Frank Jr. statues, one for Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. and one for the state Capitol in Olympia.

The design was changed to reflect concerns about the fish that was originally sticking out and "might have been a safety concern." The salmon is now flush on the statue. The clay piece was moved to Classic's shop in Seattle the week of Oct. 13.

The two statues will be finished in May of 2026, as per the contract. The installation and attending ceremony must be coordinated with the Speaker of the House office as well as the Architect of the Capitol to remove the old statue and install Billy Frank Jr. The current hope is to aim for a time in Sept. 2026, but it could be later depending on the availability of dates.





2025 Huckleberry Harvest Report

By George Walter

The U.S. Forest Service banned the commercial harvest of huckleberries this year in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF) in southwestern Washington. While a small number of unofficial commercial harvesters were encountered, tribal harvesters reported few difficulties with those interactions.

Using primarily the traditional harvest areas above Packwood and Randle, Nisqually tribal members had a very successful harvest season. According to Joyce McCloud, the Director of the Nisqually Cultural Department, most pickers came back each day with several gallons of fresh huckleberries.

Several years ago, harvesters from the Yakama Tribe, using their traditional harvest sites in the Sawtooth berry fields southwest of Mount Adams, began noticing that some of the huckleberries had little larvae, “worms” that spoiled the berries. The tribe asked the U.S. Forest Service to investigate and learned that the culprit was an invasive fruit fly from Southeast Asia, the spotted wing drosophila. Most fruit flies lay eggs on rotting fruit, but this invasive species lays eggs in the developing fruit, thus causing it to soften and rot.

Although the Forest Service was aware of potential problems that could develop from the spread of this invasive pest, it lacked any funding to do even the most basic research. To date, most research has been oriented around agricultural impacts because the spotted wing poses a risk to Oregon’s lucrative blueberry industry.

Folks from Yakama were disappointed with the absence of research about impacts and risks to treaty

right harvests. They contacted the Center for Indigenous Health, Culture and the Environment at Heritage University, a private school on the Yakama Reservation, and the Northwest Indian College, and got research assistance.



This past summer, a small research team of five students initiated the first phase of a huckleberry and fruit fly research project. They placed fruit fly traps at locations in the Sawtooth berry fields and the nearby Yakama Indian Reservation; they also interviewed tribal harvesters. They encountered modest numbers of spotted wing flies in their traps, both in the Forest Service lands and on the reservation, and plan further research next year

To date the invasive flies seem to be limited to the southern Cascades berry fields and to Oregon. No fly larvae infestations have been reported further north, including traditional Nisqually harvest areas. However, monitoring will continue in future years, and we will continue to watch for this invasive species entering Nisqually areas.

Because this invasive species poses a significant threat to commercial blueberry harvests, Oregon State University researchers are investigating techniques that could be used to control the fly. If successful, the next question will be whether these techniques are viable to protect treaty right huckleberry areas.

*Includes summary of *High Country News* article on fruit fly and the ban on commercial huckleberry harvest



Nisqually Watershed Festival

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The 36th Nisqually Watershed Festival was a hit with all ages, as usual, with salmon from the Nisqually Tribe on tap, Nisqually Culture talking about the tribe and singing and dancing and many partners in the watershed presenting fun activities and information to all those who attended.

Congratulations to all those who have made this happen for more than three decades!!

Spongebob Scalepants, the tortoise, who is 43 years old, enjoys some fresh grass before being part of a presentation by the Reptile Lady. Youth from the Nisqually Culture group enjoyed the up close and personal visit.

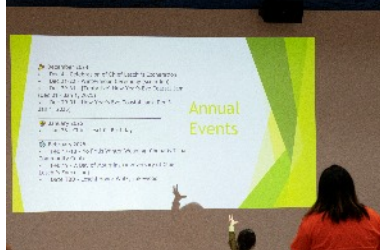
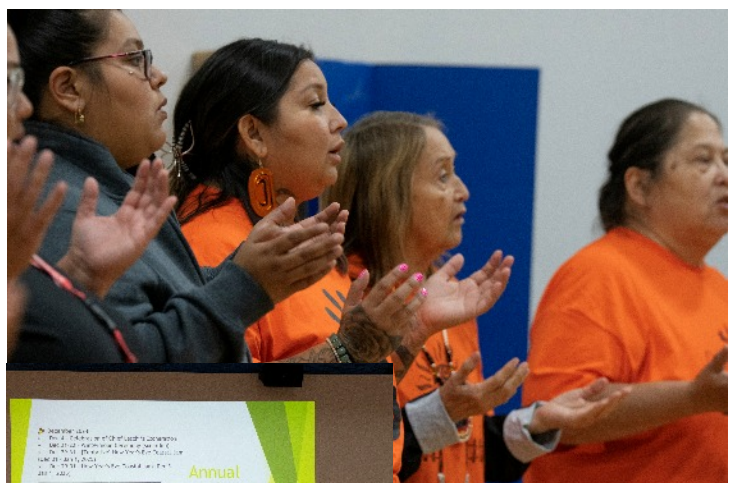


Nisqually Culture Department Informational Dinner

By Debbie Preston, Nisqually Indian Tribe Communications and Media Services Director

The Nisqually Culture Department gave an informational dinner on Sept. 30, highlighting some of the history, events coming up and the beginning of Culture Nights, 4 to 7 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday at the Spirit House, behind the Nisqually Youth Center.

Additionally, there will be singing and dancing practice on Thursday evenings beginning at 6 p.m. in the Nisqually Youth Center.





No Annoying Noises!

Tips from the IT-WebDev Department

Despicable Me, the movie, may have coined that phrase but it's something we might be faced with on a daily basis. It's the subject of annoying, unsolicited phone calls and/or texts to our mobile devices.



The constant "ding" or ring noise everytime a text message, alert or phone call/voice mail comes through. Let's go

over a few tips to help lessen the possible irritation of unwanted call notifications.

There are numerous privacy, sound and notification settings within our smart mobile devices and they will vary per manufacturer, e.g. iPhone or Android device. Here are a few;

How to activate Silence Unknown Callers on an iPhone:

- Navigate to Settings > Apps > Phone.
- Scroll down to "Calls".
- Select "Silence Unknown Callers".
- Tap to enable the feature.

How to Block Unknown callers on an Android phone:

Using Google Phone App

- Open the "Phone by Google" app.
- Tap the three-dot menu icon in the top-right corner.
- Select "Settings" from the menu.
- Select "Blocked Numbers".
- Toggle the switch for "Unknown" to "On".

Disclaimer: Nisqually Indian Tribe does not endorse, promote, review, or warrant the accuracy of the services, products or links provided.

We Wear Orange

In honor of those who survived the trauma of boarding schools and those who never returned, the Nisqually Head Start students and staff walked or were in their big stroller with their memorial shirts to the Nisqually Tribal Health and Wellness Center where staff greeted them in their orange shirts.





#ChooseWater

Choose Water for Healthy Hydration

Water is the best drink choice for kids—it's super healthy with **zero sugar or calories**, supports strong teeth and joints, keeps blood moving, and even helps kids stay focused in school and play. Choosing water instead of sugary drinks builds lifelong healthy habits and keeps growing bodies and minds at their best.

Want more tips for healthy hydration? Contact the Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center at 360-459-3512.

Why Kids Should #ChooseWater

Water is more than just a refreshing drink; it's the healthiest choice we can give our children every day. Unlike sugary drinks, water has **zero calories and no added sugar**, making it the best option to keep kids strong, focused, and thriving.

- **It's good for the body.** Drinking water helps keep joints healthy, supports strong bones and teeth, and keeps blood flowing. It also helps maintain a healthy weight by replacing sugary beverages that add unnecessary calories.
- **It's good for the mind.** Staying hydrated improves mood, attention, and memory. Children who drink enough water are better able to concentrate in school and have the energy for play, learning, and growth.
- **It's good for the wallet.** Water costs less than sugary drinks and may even be free!

How much water do kids need?

- Ages 1–3: about 4 cups of water or milk daily
- Ages 4–8: about 5 cups daily
- Older children and teens: 7–8 cups or more, depending on activity and weather

Tips to make water fun:

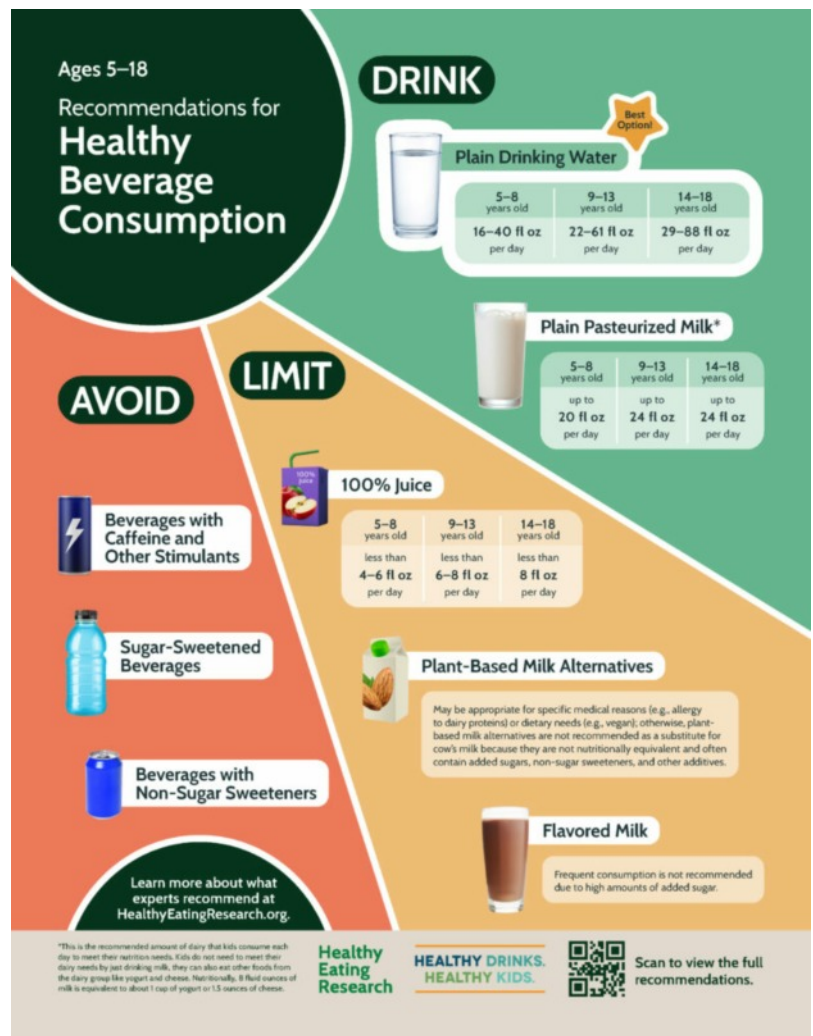
- Add slices of oranges, cucumber, or berries for natural flavor
- Freeze fruit into ice cubes to brighten up a glass of water
- Keep fresh, water-rich foods like watermelon, cucumbers, and strawberries on hand
- Let kids pick their own fun cup or reusable water bottle

When to be careful. Limit or avoid sugary drinks like soda, flavored waters, sports drinks, and even 100% fruit juice, which can have as much sugar as soda. Watch for signs of dehydration, such as dry lips, dark urine, irritability, or fatigue; these may mean a child needs more fluids.

By encouraging children to #ChooseWater, families can nurture lifelong healthy habits that strengthen both body and spirit. Water supports balance, focus, and vitality, helping our kids grow into their brightest, healthiest selves.

For more tips on healthy hydration and nutrition, contact the Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center at **360-459-3512**.

Learn More: This information is adapted from the American Academy of Pediatrics' *Choose Water for Healthy Hydration* article on [HealthyChildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org).





NTHWC Patient Portal:

Your health & wellness connection

The NTHWC Patient Portal is a secure website where you can see your health information, send messages, and stay connected with your care team. It is free for all patients of the Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center.

Why Use the Patient Portal?

- Communicate directly with your care team in a safe, private way.
- See your test results, medications, and immunizations to stay balanced and informed.
- Request prescription refills easily and securely.
- Share your health information when you choose, helping your loved ones understand your care.
- Save paper and trips to the clinic by using online tools.

Through the Patient Portal, you can:

- View lab results, medications, and immunizations
- Send secure messages to your providers
- Request or check your appointments
- Request prescription refills
- Update your contact or insurance information
- Download or share your health records when needed
- Fill out forms before you arrive. Either print to bring in, or complete in the portal to send directly to your care team.

Getting Started

1. Sign Up: Ask our front desk staff to help you register, or request that we email you a registration link.
2. Log In: Go to myhealthrecord.com from any device with internet access, including mobile.
3. Explore: Once logged in, you'll see your personal health information and available tools.

Tips for Success

- Keep your login safe. Protect your username and password.
- *Need help?* Staff can guide you through setting up during your next visit.
- *No internet at home?* Ask about ways we can assist with your access.
- Prefer in person? – The portal is an *option*, not a requirement. We will always honor face-to-face conversations. We honor your privacy.

The portal is secure, HIPAA-compliant, and designed to protect your information. Your health journey is yours; the patient portal is here to make it easier.

5210

5210 Healthy Choices Count!, a simple yet effective approach to help raise healthy children.

5

**OR MORE
FRUITS &
VEGETABLES**



5 - Encourage 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily to fuel their growing bodies and provide essential nutrients.

2

**HOURS OR LESS
RECREATIONAL
SCREEN TIME**



2 - Limit screen time to no more than 2 hours per day, ensuring a healthy balance between technology and active play.

1

**HOUR OR MORE
PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY**



1 - Engage in at least 1 hour of physical activity every day, keeping their bodies strong, hearts pumping, and minds sharp.

0

**SUGARY DRINKS,
MORE WATER &
LOW FAT MILK**



0 - Say no to sugary drinks and opt for water or low-fat milk instead, promoting healthy hydration and strong bones.

By following the 5210 initiative, we can instill lifelong healthy habits in our children, setting them up for a bright and vibrant future.





Honoring Your Health: Diabetes Awareness Month

November is Diabetes Awareness Month, Let's Talk About It, Together

By Dr. Sataur

For many Indigenous and Native American families, diabetes is more than just a diagnosis — it's something that has touched generations. But this month, and every month, we honor your strength, traditions, and the healing power of knowledge.

What Is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition that affects how your body uses blood sugar (glucose). There are different types:

Type 2 Diabetes (most common): The body doesn't use insulin well.

Type 1 Diabetes: The body doesn't make insulin.

Gestational Diabetes: Occurs during pregnancy.

When diabetes isn't managed, it can lead to serious health issues like heart problems, kidney disease, vision loss, and more.

Why It Matters

Indigenous and Native American people are **more likely to develop type 2 diabetes** than any other racial or ethnic group in the U.S. This is due to a mix of:

- Historical trauma and loss of traditional food systems
- Barriers to healthy foods and healthcare
- Lifestyle and economic challenges
- Genetics

But people are not defined by statistics. You are resilient. You are strong. We are taking action.

Tradition Is Medicine

Many traditional foods and ways of life can help protect individuals from diabetes or manage it better:

- **3 Sisters - Corn, beans, squash** – high in fiber, slow to raise blood sugar
- **Wild berries** – rich in antioxidants
- **Fish and wild game** – lean, healthy protein
- **Movement** – walking, dancing, working on the land are all good for blood sugar

Going back to traditional roots can support healing.

What You Can Do

If you or a loved one has diabetes, here are some powerful steps to take:

Get screened – Early detection saves lives

Eat more fiber and less sugar – small changes make a big difference

Move daily – even a short walk helps

Take your meds if prescribed – they help keep you strong

Visit your clinic regularly – even if you feel fine

Healing is stronger in community. Talk to your family, elders, and health providers. Ask about diabetes prevention programs, fitness groups, healthy cooking classes, and support circles that understand your journey.

This Month, We Celebrate You

This Diabetes Awareness Month, we honor every person living with diabetes. You carry strength in your bloodline. You walk with your ancestors. And every step you take toward better health is a step toward healing for the next generations.

Need Support?

- [Special Diabetes Program for Indians \(SDPI\)](#)
- [Indian Health Service \(IHS\) – Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention](#)
- [Native Diabetes Wellness Program \(CDC / IHS collaboration\)](#)
- [NPAIHB / Diabetes ECHO](#)
- [Western Tribal Diabetes Project \(WTDP\)](#)



Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center Traditional Healing

Adrianna Villegas

We are proud to recognize our Traditional Medicine Coordinator, as October's Team Member of the Month. Adrianna's work reflects the heart of our values:

- Respect
- Cultural Heritage
- Humility
- Generosity
- Unity
- Spiritual Wellness
- Nourishment
- Courage
- Honor

Drawing from teachings passed down through her elders and community, Adrianna helps preserve and share knowledge of traditional plant medicines and their cultural significance. She plays an important role in supporting our Traditional Healing program, offering encouragement, cultural connection, and a grounding presence for community members. Her work extends beyond preparing medicines — Adrianna helps create a welcoming environment where individuals feel supported and connected to cultural practices that strengthen both spirit and community. Through her patience and dedication, she helps ensure our traditions continue to thrive for future generations. Adrianna's commitment to service, generosity of spirit, and dedication to our community make her an invaluable member of our team. We are honored to celebrate her this month for the many ways she strengthens our community.



Team
Member
of the
Month

**Traditional Medicine
Coordinator**

tixixtubut.
Take care of yourself.

CULTURE WEEK

Culture Week celebrates Native American Heritage Month, by honoring our heritage and unity through daily expressions of identity, artistry, and tradition.



November 17-21

#CultureWeek

MONDAY BEADED BLING

Showcase your unique beadwork pieces, honoring the artistry and skill passed down through generations.

11/17

TUESDAY ROCK YOUR SCARF

Wear a scarf with pride, symbolizing resilience and personal connection to our cultural roots

11/18

WEDNESDAY DRESS TO IMPRESS #ROCKYOURMOCS

Dress to impress, step out in your moccasins to celebrate the journey of our ancestors.

11/19

THURSDAY T-SHIRT TIME

Wear a Native-designed or Native-owned T-shirt that speaks to our shared culture.

11/20

FRIDAY TRADITIONAL DRESS

Show your cultural pride by wearing traditional dress that celebrates Native heritage and identity.

11/21



Announcements

**SAVE THE DATE NTHWC
Traditional Healing
Fall Dinner**

JOIN US!

**Thursday, November 6th
5:30 - 7 PM
Billy Frank Jr. Gym**




Join our staff and providers for a time of connection, learning, and community. We'll share a meal, introduce the services we offer, and have raffle prizes to enjoy. All are welcome, bring your family and friends!

QUESTIONS? 360-459-5312

Tribal Estate and Will Planning

Tribal Estate Planning Services provided by Emily Penoyar-Rambo

Services offered:

- Last will and testament
- Durable power of attorney
- Healthcare directive
- Tangible personal property bequest
- Funeral/burial instructions

Zoom meetings will be set up for the first and third Thursday of each month. Available appointment times are 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Please call Lori Lehman at 360-456-5221 to set up an appointment.



FREE Rides

Monday through Friday

Transit available

6:00 a.m. to 6 :00 p.m.

Open to all tribal, community and tribal employees. We offer rides from 6:15 a.m. to last off rez ride at 5:15 p.m.

**Contact Cecile Hemphill,
Motor Pool Coordinator/Dispatch**

At 360-456-5236

Nisqually Indian Tribe
4820 She-Nah-Num Dr. SE
Olympia, WA 98513

