



Washington State University

## Ke-Niah-Kiw "Kay Kay" Weso

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### Ke-Niah-Kiw "Kay Kay" Weso Helping Students Feel at Home at WSU

by Edmund "Frazer" Myer



*Ke-Niah-Kiw "Kay Kay" Weso*

Ke-Niah-Kiw Weso or "Kay Kay" has been working as the Native American Retention Specialist for the Native American Programs since August.

"This is my dream job," Weso said. "I can't believe how lucky I am right now."

Weso grew up in Wisconsin, and is an enrolled member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Indians and a descendant of the Menominee. She graduated from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado.

She has held numerous jobs which included working in retail as a manager of an independent record store, and teaching a Native American choir. She also worked as a student academic advisor for Native American students at Fort Lewis College. She said she's "always been interested in student services."

And as the Native American Retention Specialist, she is given the opportunity to be responsible for just that. Weso said in her role she "provides students with intellectual, academic, and social support."

Weso explained that the Native American Student Center is putting on workshops and events based on surveys from students, who informed the program that they have interest in cultural traditions, such as moccasin making, beadwork, and frybread making, as well as topics like how to find scholarships, the financial aid process, and landing jobs and internships.

As a resource for students, she said she wants "to provide them a home away from home."

Weso is working with current students to help them feel they're a part of the "WSU family." She said, to paraphrase Maya Angelou, "People won't always remember the things you say. They will remember how you made them feel."

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