



## Washington State University Colville Internship

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### Native Programs Staff Teach Summer Internship Course for the Colville Tribe

by Kay Kay Weso

Ken Lokensgard and KE-Niah-Kiw "Kay Kay" Weso are teaching for their second summer in collaboration with the Colville Higher Education Department. Over the course of the summer, they meet with thirty student interns to teach employability skills, professional development, and ways to successfully interview and work for their tribe after graduation. Also within the program will be teaching of the understanding of tribal governments and their functions.

This opportunity for enrolled Colville tribal members allows students to earn two Anthropology 300, Field Methods credits from Washington State University, in addition to summer employment in various departments within the tribe. Colville's Higher Education Department works to place students in their interested field of study with supervising "mentors." The mentors work with the students over the course of the summer to develop their professionalism skills while helping them develop the necessary work experience in their fields that will be valuable to them in their future career.

Each summer course includes a module of orientation, tribal history, resume and cover letter composition, scholarship application tips, language classes that are available in three dialects (nxaʔamx̌ín, nimipu, or nselxcin), a mock job interview, and a final presentation to the group regarding resources available within the tribal government. It is the intent of the course to provide opportunities for students to become well-rounded individuals that understand the importance of professional behaviors and tribal sovereignty.

Michael Joseph, Career Counselor for the Higher Education Department has praised the program by saying, "The summer internship helps to offset some of our students' costs for college; it helps to boost their GPA's. Many of our current tribal workforce at one time or another were summer interns for the tribe. Supporting our future leaders of the Colville Confederated Tribes, through the Summer Internship Program creates a "Win Win" situation for the tribe."

Gloria Atkins, Colville's Higher Education Program Manager, and Barbara Aston, WSU's Tribal Liaison and Director of Native American Programs developed the current version of the Colville Summer Internship. The collaboration to train and teach students between Washington State University and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation has been in existence since the 1990s. This program has boosted student engagement during the school year for Colville students in the Native American Student Center at Washington State University. Finally, after the course that concluded in 2015, the Colville Tribe hired fifteen interns' for full-time positions!

We are excited to be working together with The Colville Confederated Tribes and anticipate a great summer.



*WSU Native Programs staff will be spending lots of time this summer on the Colville Reservation teaching a summer internship course. This photo is of a statue outside the tribal headquarters. (photo by Ken Lokensgard)*

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