

The Washington County Consortium

NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by Sarah Woog, Executive Director of the Washington County Consortium (WCC)

July 8, 2019

Happy Summer! I hope you are enjoying the summer thus far, and doing the things you love with the people you love.

Some housekeeping...

Please remember ALL educators must pre-register for Harvest of Ideas 2019. If you haven't already pre-registered, please do so here:

<https://forms.gle/MXCx3pe9RskotUd27>

If you are interested in being a presenter at Harvest of Ideas, or know of a colleague or professional in the field you think would be just PERFECT, please email Sarah at wcc@maine.edu and share your recommendations. We'd love to support local talent in contributing to the day's programming.

I shared in a prior email a flier for a Career Camp I've been working on in partnership with Washington County Community College. We are still accepting registrations and would love to get more Washington County students involved for the week! The camp runs July 22-28 and is open to 8th-10th graders. Please see the flier below for a link to registration and additional details.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W9Z2PNsehCeof3U3Qf7-RC88RaT4IT1qTCz0mFLXFhw/edit?usp=sharing>

Please check out the Washington County Educator Profile on the next page. I LOVED sitting down with Lynn Mitchell, Passamaquoddy Language and Culture Teacher at Calais High School. Thanks for taking the time to talk with me, Lynn!



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Washington County Educator Profile

Meet Lynn Mitchell, Passamaquoddy Culture and Language Teacher at Calais High School

Have you ever considered learning Passamaquoddy? If you are not Native, does this question give you pause? Have you ever wondered if learning the Passamaquoddy language and culture is an endeavor you should or could have access to? According to Lynn Mitchell, yes and yes.

Lynn Mitchell is the Passamaquoddy Culture and Language teacher at Calais High School. She's been teaching Passamaquoddy Culture and Language to Native and non-Native students at Calais for four years. Lynn believes her class bridges divides between Native and non-Native communities, creates a shared experience, and develops empathy and deepens ties between the communities. Lynn isn't the only person at Calais High School who believes this. Her passion reverberates throughout the school.

Mary Anne Spearin, Principal at Calais High School, recommended I profile Lynn for this month's newsletter. Mary Anne said, "Her love for all students became apparent during our Blue and White review when Lynn presented her academic awards. She became emotional when referring to the ever strengthening connection between the Calais High School students and staff and the Passamaquoddy culture, traditions, and language, stating it had been a long time coming." In our divisive times, these connections are so important in our shared quest for a more kind and just world. And Lynn is building more connections, too.

Lynn recently visited a fifth grade classroom in Norridgewock, Maine. She arrived at 10:30 AM and spent the rest of the school day with the class. She taught the young people and teachers about her people, the First People, about their language and traditions, and their existence as people, not as caricatures or mascots. Lynn is clearly committed to creating bridges, and I admire the love with which she builds them.

Lynn teaches with love too. I asked her the best part of teaching and she didn't miss a beat- the kids. She smiles when she talks about the games she uses to engage them, about the challenges of differentiation, about the student who told her he wanted to be a linguist because of her class.

Lynn learns with love. She is finishing her coursework in Education at the University of Maine at Machias next year. She told me she's grateful for the experience, is excited for the credential, but especially appreciates the knowledge and skills she is acquiring that supports her work in the classroom. She loved the coursework that taught her about unit design and lesson planning. Lynn has created the curriculum and content she is using in her classes. The frameworks and planning processes she's learned have allowed her to offer a course that always has a waitlist.

Two more loves of Lynn: working at Maine Indian Education, and her husband, Dana Mitchell. Lynn is proud of her 32 years at Maine Indian Education. She and her husband were actually married at the Wabanaki Culture Center, where Maine Indian Education is located. Dana also works for Maine Indian Education, at Beatrice Rafferty School, and has his own illustrious career in service to Native students that would require another profile to do justice. Lynn loves that her husband "supports everything I do." Knowing Dana and Lynn, his support of Lynn is unwavering, but it's also worth noting that he supports the spirit of her work, and shares her passion for teaching, learning, and building community.

I'll end here with a quote from Lynn: "It is a passion of mine to advocate for our beloved Passamaquoddy culture and language and to educate not only our children from the reservation, but all children." Do you share Lynn's passion for educating children? Do you want to provide your students with increased opportunities to

authentically learn about Passamaquoddy culture and language in your classroom? If so, reach out to Lynn (mrslynn.mitchell@gmail.com), and build another bridge together.