



Schaghticoke News

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Schaghticoke Sachem Hawk Storm

Schaghticoke Sachem Opens Columbia University's 2020 Indigenous Peoples Day Program

In honor of the first Indigenous Peoples Day 2020 commemoration at Columbia University on 12 October 2020, the university hosted a special online program entitled "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and the Covid-19 Pandemic." Speakers included Sachem HawkStorm, Schaghticoke First Nations; Lisa Bellanger (Anishnabe), International Indian Treaty Council, Board of Directors; Dr. Myrna Cunningham (Miskita), President, Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y el Caribe; Victor Lopez Carmen, (Crow Creek Sioux Tribe and Yaqui), Co-Chair Global Indigenous Youth Caucus; Tarcila Rivera Zea (Quechua), President, International Indigenous Women's Forum, Vice-President, Chirapaq; Sara Nawashahu Yawanawá- Bergin (Yawanawa), Chief of Shukuvena Village; and Janene Yazzie, (Diné (Navajo)), Dzit Asdáán (Strong Women) Command Center for Covid Relief.

The program was organized by The University Seminar on Indigenous Studies, The University Seminar on Latin America and the Institute for the Study of Human Rights and co-sponsored by Native American Council, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, Center for the Study of Social Difference, Mailman School of Public Health, Institute of Latin American Studies, at Columbia University, and Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Native Studies Forum and The Latinx Project at New York University.

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Schaghticoke First Nations co-Sponsors March for Climate Justice through Racial Justice in NYC

On Sept. 20th, Schaghticoke First Nations supported the March on September 20th in New York City because addressing the climate crisis effectively rests in our unified commitment to racial justice. The march kicked off and set a tone for Climate Week by prioritizing Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples, making clear the intersection between climate justice and racial justice.

Some of the Indigenous Peoples attending the March. In photo Claudia Velandia; Michelle Marti Lopez; and Francisco Rios

SCHAGHTICOKE CALL ON U.N. TO RECOGNISE THE RIGHT TO A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Schaghticoke First Nations joined other Indigenous Peoples and civil society organizations from around the world to call on the United Nations Human Rights Council to urgently recognize the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. The letter was sent on 10 Sept. 2020 and noted that a "healthy environment is essential for human life and dignity." The letter also acknowledged that the global environmental crisis "currently violates and jeopardizes the human rights of billions of people on our planet" and that there are no human rights on a dead planet. To view the letter, [click on this link.](#)

SCHAGHTICOKE FIRST NATIONS TESTIFIES AT TROY NY CITY COUNCIL MEETING

As an Indigenous Peoples of the region, Schaghticoke First Nations (SFN) opposes the development and rezoning proposal for 1011 2nd Street in Troy, NY due to a number of factors, but among the most important, is the historic significance of this land to Indigenous Peoples. A representative of SFN testified during the Troy City Council Meeting held on 27 August 2020 to voice the concerns of the Schaghticoke with regard to this proposed development. Indigenous Artifacts have been found on this parcel in the past and there is the piece of last forested on Troy's Hudson River waterfront. To see the testimony, [click here.](#)

The Chipmunk's Stripes

As told by Wolf-Walker Conley, Powwaw



Long Ago animals could speak to one another and sometimes their conversations caused great heated debates. Here is a tale of one such debate that forever changed the playful Chipmunk. It is a well-known thing that the great bear prides himself as being the strongest animal of the forest, but this strength was put to the test by one of the smallest; the chipmunk. The great bear said to little chipmunk on one fine autumn day; "there is nothing I can not do, I can rip apart the biggest trees to get Bee's honey, I can swim fast and catch the quick salmon, there is nothing I can not do".

Chipmunk did not enjoy such bragging, so he replied, "You are great and strong, but I know something you can not do", Bear roared, "Tell me of this feat and I will do it" and he smashed a small tree to dust with his huge paw to show his power. Chipmunk knew he had opened the bear to a challenge, so he replied: "Can you stop the Sun from rising?" Bear answered "of course, I am the strongest animal and all fear me, even the Sun". Chipmunk told bear that he would meet him on the same spot tomorrow before dawn so that Bear could prove his great strength.

Bear agreed and the following morning before the singing of the birds, the bear and chipmunk met. The bear ready himself, he looked to the east where the Sun started its daily journey; he stared hard at the slow rising glow of morning sun, but it still continued to climb into the eastern sky. Bear could not stop the Sun and Chipmunk laughed and teased Him: "See, the Sun is stronger than you and still is rising to bring the light of day". Bear grew angry as Chipmunk danced around his feet sing a little song: "Oh great Bear could not stop the Sun, stop the Sun". As the Chipmunk continued his taunting, Bear caught him up in his great paw and said, "Chipmunk, I may not have stopped the Sun, but you will never see it rise again", Chipmunk being a cleaver little one replied to Bear, "Great Bear you are the strongest and surely can outdo all others, but I beg of you to allow me to give one last prayer to the Creator before you kill me".

Bear held him firmly and said, "speak your prayer quickly", Chipmunk acted as if unable to breathe and asked Bear to please loosen his grip. Bear was fooled into opening his paw to allow the Chipmunk to finish his last prayer. Chipmunk took advantage of this and broke free, running as fast as the wind, but Bear swung his mighty paw and his long claws raked the back of the small chipmunk leaving three long cuts from head to tail. The Chipmunk lived but now wears these scars as stripes.

This is his reminder to be kind and treat others well. Bear of course still walks the woods roaring about his strength and watches the sunset with displeasure.

See more Eastern Woodlands stories and history at the Schaghticoke First Nations Website at <https://www.schaghticoke.info/>