

# Wabanaki Youth in Science SEASONAL REVIEW

## *A Message From the New Executive Director*

I am honored to step into the role of Executive Director at Wabanaki Youth in Science, following in the footsteps of the tish carr. Since 2013, tish has been a dedicated mentor, and advocate, shaping the organization into what it is today. Her passion for empowering Wabanaki youth through science, culture, and curiosity has left a lasting impact, and we are grateful for her years of service. Please join me in celebrating tish's incredible contributions and wishing her a joyful retirement!

As I step into this role, I am committed to continuing and expanding WaYS programming. My goal is to strengthen our connections with Wabanaki communities, educators, scientists, and partners to ensure that our programs remain deeply rooted in both Indigenous knowledge and scientific exploration. I welcome conversations, collaborations, and ideas, and I look forward to meeting with community members, listening to your insights, and working together to create even more opportunities for our youth.

Wolokiskot!  
Jennifer Galipeau, eel clan  
Panawahpskek Nation citizen



Jennifer Galipeau, Executive Director

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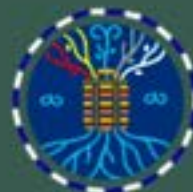
## Stay in the loop with WaYS

Sign up to receive the e-newsletter:

Or contact us at:

[wabanakiyouthinscience.org](http://wabanakiyouthinscience.org)

[waysprogram@wabanakiyouthinscience.org](mailto:waysprogram@wabanakiyouthinscience.org)



**WABANAKI**  
YOUTH IN SCIENCE





## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: RESTORING TRIBAL RELATIONS AND FOREST KNOWLEDGE

WaYS is partnering with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and the Northeastern States Research Cooperative, in Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge - a cross-cultural, land-based learning exchange grounded in Indigenous values, ecological stewardship, and intertribal connection.

Over the course of this 10-week project, WaYS is providing mentorship and supporting Indigenous youth as they explore traditional ecological knowledge, contemporary forest practices, and cultural teachings across Wabanakik homelands.

This summer, the Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge project brings together Indigenous youth, cultural leaders, and forestry professionals for two powerful gatherings grounded in land-based learning and intertribal connection.

From **July 14–18, 2025**, participants will gather in Akwesasne, Haudenosaunee territory, for a week of water teachings, forest ecology, language immersion, cultural storytelling, and hands-on activities like ash log pounding and river tours—all led by local knowledge holders.

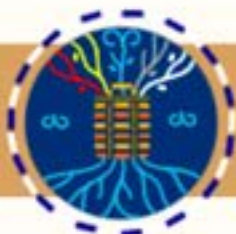
The exchange continues in Wabanakik from **July 28–August 1, 2025**, where Wabanaki hosts will share their work in forest restoration, traditional knowledge revitalization, and youth leadership. Together, these gatherings aim to strengthen cultural ties and deepen stewardship practices across tribal homelands.

We are proud to welcome Taliah Doughty, Sierra Lank, Apemesim Galipeau, and Frank Miliano IV as the 2025 Forest Knowledge Interns representing Wabanaki communities!

### JOIN US: COMMUNITY POTLUCK SOCIAL AT NIBEZUN

We invite all community members, friends, and partners to a Community Potluck Social on **Wednesday, July 30, 2025, from 5–8 PM** at Nibezun.

Come share food, songs, and stories as we celebrate our young leaders in this collective work of Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge.





# Restoring Tribal Relations and Forest Knowledge

## WaYS 2025 Summer Program Timeline 🌿



Week 1: June 9 (Mon)  
📍 Zoom  
Intern Onboarding  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

Week 2: June 18 (Wed)  
📍 Zoom  
WaYS Learning Circle  
Presenter: John Neptune  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

Week 3: June 23–27 (Mon–Fri)  
📍 In-person  
Earth Camp  
🚌 Depart: June 23 @ 12:00 PM  
🚌 Return: June 27 @ 12:00 PM

Week 4: July 2 (Wed)  
📍 Zoom  
WaYS Learning Circle  
👤 Tyler – Emerald Ash  
Borer (EAB)  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

Week 5: July 9 (Wed)  
📍 Zoom  
WaYS Learning Circle  
👤 Speaker: Pending  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

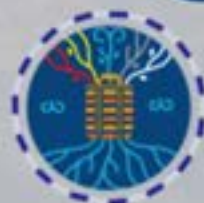
Week 6: July 14–18 (Mon–Fri)  
📍 In-person  
Akwesasne Trip  
🔥 Reconnecting Camp

Week 7: July 23 (Wed)  
📍 Zoom  
WaYS Learning Circle  
👤 Speaker: Pending  
✅ Tyler available  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

Week 8: July 28–Aug 1 (Mon–Fri)  
📍 In-person  
Nibezun Gathering

Week 9: August 6 (Wed)  
📍 Zoom  
WaYS Learning Circle  
👤 Speaker: Pending  
🕒 4:00–5:30 PM

Week 10: August 13 (Wed)  
📍 In-person  
Presentation Event –  
Manchester, NH  
🚌 Travel on August 12 or 14



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# INTERNSHIPS

WaYS internships remain a core aspect of our programming. From the start of their time at WaYS, interns ranging from ages 16 to 25 are exposed to an abounding array of opportunities regarding the interconnectedness of both traditional Indigenous knowledge and western science.

The true power behind these internships, however, lies in the hands of the youth themselves. As the future of our communities, we hold our youth in great esteem, just as our ancestors did before us. By fostering existing passions of our youth and introducing them to new learning opportunities, we have watched countless cohorts of WaYS interns become leaders and mentors in their own right.

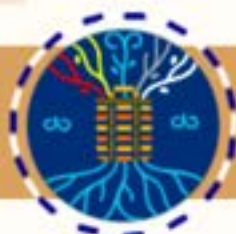


A talented paddler, Aliya has competed in both the 2017 and 2023 North American Indigenous Games as well as the Flatwater Nationals for many years, and she now uses these skills to coach other youth on Team Penobscot. "I have realized how much I truly care about the youth in our community and what their futures hold," Aliya said. After graduating from college, she plans to go to school for physical therapy, and her time with WaYS has led her to consider a focus in pediatric physical therapy so that she can continue to work with youth throughout her career.

## INTERN SPOTLIGHT: ALIYA SAPIEL

Aliya Sapiel, Panawahpskek citizen and rising senior at the University of Maine in Orono, joined WaYS last summer. Aliya is majoring in Kinesiology: Exercise Science with a minor in Human Nutrition, and she has carried this passion for nurturing bodily health and physical activity into her internship where she is placed at the Boys & Girls Club of the Penobscot Nation. "I work with [the youth] to not only be a mentor," she said, "but to help them find interest in cultural traditions such as basket making and find interest in physical activities they enjoy."

**"I work with [the youth] to not only be a mentor, but to help them find interest in cultural traditions such as basket making and find interest in physical activities they enjoy."**





# wskitkamikw EARTH CAMPS



WaYS is always looking to expand our list of location options for earth camps!

Please fill out this survey if you know of any welcoming spaces to host us:



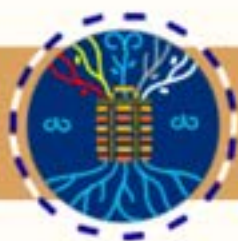
Since the summer of 2013, WaYS has hosted regular wskitkamikw earth camps. We hold these camps in a variety of locations throughout Wabanaki homelands, and the primary focus of each camp is to connect our youth with experts in both traditional ecological knowledge and western science in an immersive, outdoor setting. These camps allow youth an opportunity to understand components of their own cultural heritage firsthand, acknowledge various current and pressing environmental changes, and learn ways forward to manage the lands to incorporate a broader and more holistic understanding of their own roles as stewards of the land.

## SEASONAL wskitkamikw EARTH CAMPS: A FULL CIRCLE OF LEARNING AND CONNECTION

This past year, WaYS hosted all four seasonal wskitkamikw Earth Camps - fall, winter, spring, and summer. This full seasonal cycle represents not only a deepening of our year-round programming, but a continued commitment to helping Indigenous youth build strong relationships with the land, with their culture, and with one another. Each gathering was a unique expression of the season's teachings, grounded in traditional ecological knowledge, cultural practice, and mentorship. From working with animal hides in the fall to swimming in lakes in the summer sun, youth experienced the beauty, responsibility, and abundance of each season.

### **Fall 2024: Honoring Animal Relatives, Nibezun**

Our journey began with the Fall Earth Camp, where youth learned about hide processing, a traditional practice of gratitude, respect, and resourcefulness. Participants worked with deer and moose hides under the guidance of John Neptune, Gabe Paul, and Wambli Martinez. We learned to scrape, stretch, and utilize brain tan methods. The process taught patience, care, and respect for the animals and all they provide. Youth also participated in talking circle, hunting, beading and shelter building.





# wskitkamik EARTH CAMPS

## **Winter 2025: Listening to the Stillness, Motahkomikuk**

In winter, our camp brought youth out onto the ice of Grand Lake Stream and snow-covered trails. Ice fishing, snowshoeing, tree identification, fish smoking, tea-making, track identification, and cultural sharing offered participants the teachings to connect them to the season and to the responsibilities we carry even in times of rest.

## **Spring 2025: Renewal and Resilience, Wilderness Pines**

As the snow melted and we returned to the forest and rivers, our spring earth camp focused on birch bark basket-making, a skill that carries deep teachings about balance, respect, and renewal. Canoeing and plant walks further connected participants to waterways and spring medicines, inviting them to observe how life emerges and regenerates after winter.

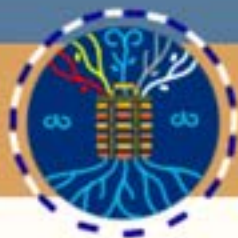
## **Summer 2025: Celebration and Connection, Flagstaff Lake**

This summer, we continued our tradition of gathering Wabanaki youth to celebrate culture, community, and leadership through summer wskitkamikw Earth Camp. Students spent their days paddling, fishing, swimming, hiking, and sharing meals and laughter around the fire. These camps are not just recreational; they are immersive learning spaces where young people step into their power, connect with mentors, and see themselves reflected in their cultures and communities.

Each season brought new teachings and strengthened the intergenerational and intertribal bonds that WaYS is honored to support. Together, these camps have created a continuous circle of learning rooted in relationship with place, people, and purpose. We extend our deepest appreciation to the cultural knowledge sharers, educators, and mentors who make this work possible through your guidance, time, and teachings. Your dedication continues to guide youth as they grow into leaders and caretakers of land, language, and Wabanaki lifeways.



Special thanks to John Neptune, Panawahpskek citizen and WaYS Cultural Knowledge Coordinator. For decades, John has lived by an example of what leadership is and it shows through his commitment to youth, culture, and land-based learning. Through his steady presence, traditional teachings, and deep-rooted care for the next generation, John has shaped the spirit of WaYS in every season. His leadership is a bridge between generations and a model of humility, strength, and cultural responsibility. Woliwoni, John!





# wskitkamikw EARTH CAMP

NIBEZUN - FALL 2024



Photo credit: Logan Dana, Panawahpskek



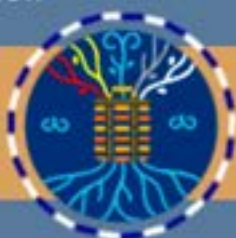


# wskitkamikw EARTH CAMP

MOTAHKOMIKUK - WINTER 2025



Photo credit: Logan Dana, Panawahpskek



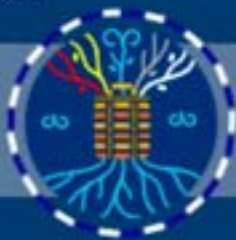


# wskitkamikw EARTH CAMP

WILDERNESS PINES - SPRING 2025



Photo credit: Logan Dana, Panawahpskek





# wskitkamikw EARTH CAMP

FLAGSTAFF LAKE - SUMMER 2025

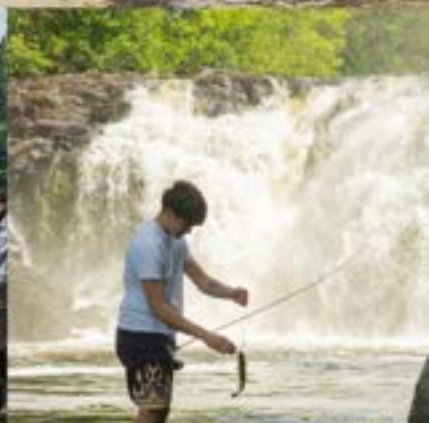
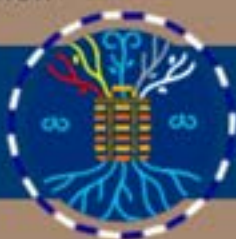
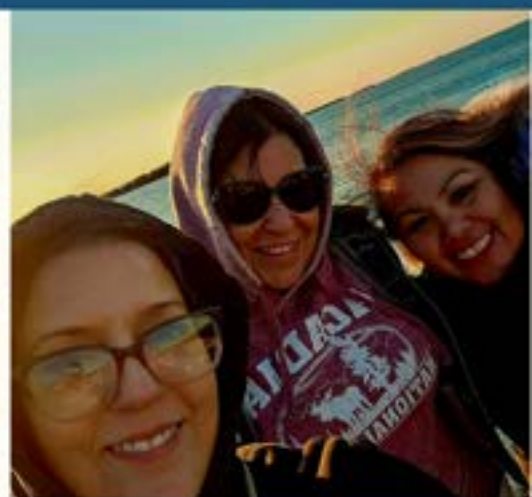


Photo credit: Logan Dana, Panawahpskek





# THE BUTTERFLY PROJECT

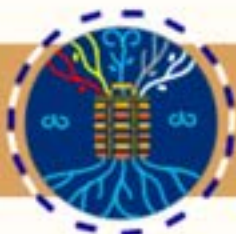


*"Scientists are storytellers too."*

The Butterfly Project is a year-long cohort-style program that fosters meaningful relationships between educators across the state, in classroom and community-based settings, and Wabanaki advisors. As with all WaYS programming, this project strives to connect Wabanaki ways of knowing with western science, highlighting reciprocal relationships with the natural world. This spring, Heather Augustine (Mi'kmaq), Minquansis Sapiel (Peskotomuhkati), and Jennifer Galipeau (Panawahpskek) led the first in-person cohort gathering of the year along with Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Science, where they introduced frameworks for integrating Wabanaki knowledge systems into existing curricula. At the end of May 2025, the cohort with the Maine Center for Research in STEM Education (RISE Center) will culminate the year-long project. This marks a meaningful step forward in fostering mutual understanding and respect for Wabanaki indigeneity in science education.

## STRENGTHENING THE WORK THROUGH NEW PARTNERSHIPS

WaYS is now partnering with Panawahpskek citizen and Wabanaki Studies Specialist at the Maine DOE, Brianne Lolar. Brianne has worked diligently for the past three years, alongside her own team of Wabanaki advisors and educators to make a wide variety of free quality resources and professional development opportunities available to all educators. She now leads Butterfly Project Cohorts 1 & 2, and through this merge, our cohorts now regularly connect with three more educators and more than twenty additional Wabanaki advisors.





# AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING

This past spring, WaYS had the honor of bringing youth to Nibezun - a place of healing, ceremony, and ancestral return - located along the Penobscot River. There, under the guidance of respected Panawahpskek elder Stan Neptune, youth stepped into the maple trees to learn the practice of collecting sap and boiling it into syrup.



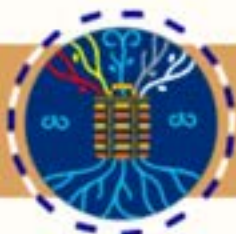
## LEARNING FROM THE LAND OF OUR ANCESTORS

For the Wabanaki, the maple tree is not only a source of sustenance, but also a teacher. The early spring thaw awakens the sugar maples. Traditionally, this time was marked by community, gratitude, and stewardship. Maple sap was among the first sweet medicines of the year, gifted to us by the trees and cared for through teachings passed down for generations.



Maple sugaring is one of many seasonal practices that WaYS weaves into our programming because it connects youth to place, to practice, and to community. In a world moving faster every day, returning to the rhythm of the sap run reminds us to slow down, listen, and participate in the ways our ancestors did: with humility and care.

At Nibezun, surrounded by the scent of wood smoke and the rhythm of ancestral lands, youth tapped trees using hand tools, learned how to collect the clear, sweet sap, and worked beside Stan and others to tend the fire and boil the sap into syrup. The process was not just about making syrup - it was a return to relational ways of knowing: about land, trees, fire, and the gifts of the season. We give thanks to Stan Neptune for sharing his knowledge, Nibezun for hosting us, and to the sugar maples for sharing their medicine.







## ANCESTRAL LANDS TRAIL CREW

Trail season has officially begun at WaYS! Our Ancestral Lands Trail Crew started their work in late April, and the season will continue through November.

Upon joining, trail crew members have access to various related trainings including Wilderness First Aid, Leave No Trace, AMC Trails Skills College, and engagement with cultural knowledge sharers on topics such as paddling and archaeology. Participating on the trail crew gives members a chance to connect with their culture directly through stewardship of the land, spending over 90% of their working hours each week outdoors during trail season.

Since the beginning of the WaYS Ancestral Lands Trail Crew in 2020, the crew has collectively worked in relationship with the land over hundreds of miles on Wabanaki homelands.



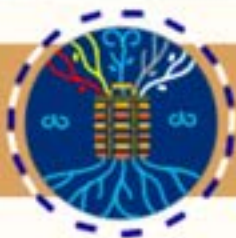
### WaYS TO CONTACT

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# TALES FROM THE TRAILS



At the start of the season, the crew worked hard to restore the Gulf Rim Trail at Gulf Hags.



Two days were spent clearing brush and repairing structures on the Wahsehtekw Trail System.



The crew cleared brushed from 5+ miles of trails at Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

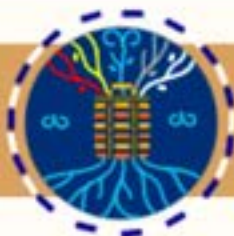


## TEACHING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

In May, the Appalachian Mountain Club hosted members of our Ancestral Lands Trail Crew for several days of teaching and learning through the AMC Trails Training College at Camp Dodge. WaYS has been represented at the Trail Skills College each year since this annual trails event began in 2022.

"I had the absolute pleasure of working alongside George and Skinny on dismantling and rebuilding a rock staircase during the Trail Skills College rock work progression. I can only imagine how much fun it must be to work with these guys more long term. We had a lot of laughs (and a lot of mud) while digging in the dirt, setting gargoyles, rolling rocks (with George at the helm of the rock moving operation), smashing big rocks into smaller rocks, and musing about which characters from history and fantasy might make for the most raucous crew on a pirate ship. Hoping to work with the WaYS crew again soon. What a delight!"

**-Jen Passios, AMC Trails Volunteer Crew Leader**







# WaYS TO SUPPORT

Your generosity helps support the next generation of Wabanaki leaders, scientists, and knowledge sharers. Every contribution helps remove barriers and deepen youth connections to land, culture, and community.



Supplies for afterschool programs: notebooks, field guides, art supplies, and science kits.

One youth's participation in a land-based learning activity like archery, canoeing, or plant walks.

Fuel or transportation costs to bring youth to a local gathering or site.

Honorarium for a Wabanaki knowledge sharer or language speaker to spend ½ day mentoring youth.

Provides nourishing meals for camp or community gatherings for 25 people.

Seeding our gear library outfitting youth with boots, rain jackets, backpacks, and sleeping bags.

Funds a stipend for a WaYS intern in a seasonal land and leadership program.

Covers staffing, meals, and materials for a week-long land-based learning camp.

Fully funds a paid summer internship for one Wabanaki youth, supporting their growth as a future environmental and cultural leader.

## DONATE HERE



Wabanaki Youth in Science empowers Indigenous youth by connecting them to culture, science, and the land through hands-on, land-based learning rooted in Indigenous knowledge.

WaYS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations are tax-deductible.  
EIN: 47-5239057

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