



The Lancaster County Democrat

September 2023



TORCHBEARER CELEBRATION

Lighting the way to a brighter future

County Party members and friends:

You are cordially invited to a special evening dedicated to honoring the remarkable contributions of our retiring elected officials who have left an indelible mark on our community. Join us for the Torchbearer Celebration under the theme "Lighting the way to a brighter future."

Date: **Thursday, September 21st**

Time: **5:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

Location: **Talon Room, 230 N 12th St Ste 1, Lincoln**

Throughout their tenure, these exceptional leaders have exemplified the true essence of public service, championing various initiatives that have positively impacted countless lives. As they pass the torch to the next generation, we wish to recognize their invaluable contributions and express our heartfelt gratitude.

Lancaster County Monthly Sustaining Donors will receive one complimentary ticket to this special event as a token of our appreciation for your ongoing support. For those who are not Lancaster County Monthly Sustaining Donors, tickets are available for purchase. This is a wonderful opportunity to join us in acknowledging the accomplishments of these remarkable leaders and to connect with like-minded

individuals dedicated to the betterment of our community.

Purchase tickets:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/torchbearers>

Become a Monthly Donor:

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Purchase your tickets or become a Lancaster County Monthly Sustaining Donor today! Your participation will help ensure the success of this event and contribute to our ongoing efforts to create a brighter future for all.

We look forward to your presence at the Torchbearer Celebration on September 21st. Together, we will continue to light the way toward a brighter future for our community.

Thank you for your support, and we can't wait to see you there!

Hannah Wroblewski

Chair, Lancaster County Democrats

Chair@NELancasterDems.org

Lancaster County Democrats

<https://www.nelancasterdems.org/>

Labor Day of 2023

By John Markey

Labor Day of 2023 has passed us by and working people continue to flex their collective muscle. Employees in many industries have gone on strike or engaged in fierce negotiations this year. Currently the United Auto Workers are in the headlines with a strike looming.

Public support for unions remains high at about 67% with similar numbers sympathizing with the auto workers, actors, screenwriters, and other employees in their negotiations over their employers. President Biden describes himself as "the most pro-union president in American history."

No president has been more openly supportive of unions that I can remember. Both Obama and Clinton were good for unions, but neither were as vocally supportive. I was disappointed that Obama's first years with a friendly Congress didn't result in pro-union legislation.

Biden's infrastructure bill is not only creating many union jobs in construction and manufacturing, it prohibits companies receiving money under the act to oppose any attempt by employees to organize. He openly supported the PRO Act, a great piece of legislation that is crafted to restore American unions, make it easier to organize and undo much of the damage caused by the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947. This bill was passed by the recent Democratic House but was blocked in the Senate by a Republican filibuster. Had Manchin and Sinema been on board with filibuster reform, this bill would have passed the Congress and been signed by Biden.

He signed an executive order making a \$15 minimum wage for federal contractors.

He created a Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment chaired by Vice President Harris with the Secretary of Labor as vice chair.

He rebuilt the National Labor Relations Board to look out for the interests of working people, as it should do. On day one of his presidency, he fired the previous president's anti-union general counsel and replaced him with a pro-union advocate. The NLRB now has a majority that votes to uphold the rights of working people.

Despite these and other pro-union acts, he is taking blame for the 2022 railroad settlement. Probably the biggest sticking points with the unions was paid sick leave and more flexible scheduling. In the last several years, the railroads laid off a significant portion of its workforce as it pursued a maximum efficiency policy which they call PSR, or precision scheduled railroading. PSR allows little

flexibility for illness or family emergencies for the remaining employees. Per the Railway Labor Act, when railroad negotiations reached an impasse, the Biden Administration stepped in and reached a tentative deal between the unions and railroads that included only one day of paid leave rather than the 15 short-notice sick days they wanted. This agreement was rejected by members of 4 of the 12 unions involved.

Congress used its power to regulate commerce to impose this on the 4 remaining unions. Progressives tried to include 7 sick days, but the effort was stopped by Republicans.

By continuing pressure on the railroads, Biden helped employees represented by the IBEW to gain 4 sick days with the ability to convert vacation days into sick days. Hopefully this effort continues. It's easy to say the Biden Administration do more for the rail unions, but we weren't at the bargaining table with him. I do believe Biden to be the most pro-union president in my lifetime.

FDR did more, but he had a friendly Congress and a Supreme Court that learned to see things his way. If Biden had the same, he probably would be the most pro-union president in history.

The benefits that unions win don't just go to the union members, they become the standard. When labor won the fight for an 8-hour day and 40-hour workweek with overtime pay, that became the standard. When labor fought for minimum wages, that became the standard, when labor fought for workplace safety, that became the standard. Labor's fight is a fight to set the standard for the rest of us.

Dave Johnson

"Labor's Fight is OUR Fight", *Campaign for America's Future*

Nebraska Election Law: The Case for Ranked Choice Voting in Lincoln

By Rank the Vote Nebraska

Edited by Tommy Blanton

Lincoln is the only primary class city in Nebraska. Cities of the primary class are governed by Chapter 15 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. While Chapter 15 outlines the general election of the city council in odd-numbered years, it remains silent on primary elections, ballot formats, and vote tallying methods. Crucially, Nebraska Revised Statutes do not detail the vote tallying process for primary class cities. At best, these statutes mention "the candidate with the most votes prevails," but fail to clarify what constitutes a valid vote. Thus, implementing ranked choice voting, or other alternative methods, appears to be legally permissible for city elections of the primary class such as Lincoln.

Home Rule Charters

Article [XI-5](#) of Nebraska's state constitution empowers cities with over 100,000 inhabitants, like Lincoln, to establish home rule charters.

NRS [32-556](#) states "...All city and village elections involving the election of officers, **except cities with home rule charters**, shall be held in accordance with the Election Act and in conjunction with the statewide primary or general election. **All city elections in cities with home rule charters shall be held in accordance with the home rule charter except as otherwise provided in the Election Act** and may be held in conjunction with the statewide primary or general election. **If the home rule charter is silent as to any subject covered by the act, the act shall apply.**"

In other words, NRS [32-556](#) states that cities with their own home rule charters can have some flexibility in how they conduct their elections, as long as it aligns with their charter, albeit subject to the Election Act where applicable. If the charter doesn't address a subject covered by the act, the act's provisions apply.

Lincoln's Election Regulations

Chapter 15 of the Nebraska State Statutes offers limited guidance on election procedures for primary class cities like Lincoln, deferring to NRS [32-556](#), which grants authority to home rule charters. Key statutes within Chapter 15 include:

NRS [15-247](#) allows primary class cities to divide into election districts.

NRS [15-301](#) schedules general city elections for odd-numbered years' first Tuesday in May, following the Election Act.

Required Approval of Voting Systems

Chapter 32 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes includes provisions that could necessitate specific steps apart from charter amendments before adopting ranked choice voting or alternative voting methods for primary class cities.

NRS [32-1041](#) describes using approved voting systems, subject to Secretary of State endorsement. NRS [32-119.01](#) defines "Voting System" as "the process of creating, casting, and counting ballots and includes any software or service used in such process." In other words, approval from the Secretary of State is necessary before voting machines capable of tabulating ranked choice votes can be used.

Conclusion

Upon analyzing pertinent Nebraska statutes, introducing ranked choice voting or other alternative methods seems legally plausible for city elections of the primary class such as Lincoln. While state statutes detail state-wide elections, they leave primary class city election processes mostly to home rule charters, with Secretary of State oversight regarding approved voting systems. Consequently, implementing ranked choice voting in Lincoln involves charter amendments, Secretary of State coordination, but potentially bypasses the need for changes to state statutes by the legislature leaving the decision to implement ranked choice voting or other alternative vote methods to the city of Lincoln.

The Nebraska GOP's Tyranny of the Majority

By Dennis Crawford



The Nebraska GOP wants to ban all abortions.

Republicans defend the electoral college by claiming it protects smaller red states from an alleged tyranny of the majority led by California and New York. If the Republicans want to make that argument, I would contend that it's smaller blue states like Rhode Island and Vermont that need to be protected from Texas and Florida's big government agenda that threatens our freedoms.

The Republicans sing a different tune when they control a state government. Large Republican legislative majorities created by extreme gerrymandering have led to a tyranny of the majority in states like Wisconsin, North Carolina and Tennessee. We saw the worst abuse of power in Tennessee when the GOP majority expelled three Democratic state legislators during a debate over the ongoing gun massacres of innocent children.

We are now beginning to see a GOP tyranny of the majority in Nebraska. Before 2023, a handful of moderate Republicans kept the MAGA Republicans in check. However, in the 2022 election cycle, three moderate Republicans were replaced by extremists. This has opened up the door to a continuing abuse of power by the Nebraska Republican Party.

Just within the last two weeks, the Nebraska GOP flexed its muscle in many different instances. Governor Jim Pillen's choice to lead the Department of Health and Human Services drew fire for nasty anti-vaxxer and anti-LGBTQ posts on social media. Senator Megan Hunt has pledged to try to block the nomination. In addition, Senators Jane Raybould and George Dungan have told me that they will be joining Hunt in this effort.

Pillen followed this up by making a false claim of executive privilege to block access to four emails from disclosure to the press. Former Republican Governor Dave Heineman disputed Pillen's claim and

said he was not familiar with the concept of executive privilege regarding a governor's emails.

"When you're the governor, you're a publicly elected official and your records are subject to freedom of information requests, and we routinely complied with those," Heineman said. "I think that's important, because the public has a right to know what a governor is doing and the kinds of emails that we get."

Meanwhile, Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers issued an opinion in which he claimed that a pair of inspectors general created by the legislature to perform oversight of corrections and child welfare is unconstitutional. "The IGs were created by the Legislature in response to systemic problems that were uncovered by two major legislative investigations in the last decade relating to the operation of the state's child welfare services and the Department of Corrections," Former Nebraska Ombudsman Marshall Lux wrote in an opinion piece.

"The reason the Inspector General was given these powers, which are common in other states, is because children were literally dying under previous administrations, and no one knew about it without legislative oversight. It should also be noted that AG opinions are advisory and hold no power so for DHHS to simply stop following the law because of one is not proper." Adam Morfeld, former state senator.

Hilgers remained in the spotlight last week for all of the wrong reasons. The Nebraska Attorney General was blasted for hiring former state senator and failed mayoral candidate Suzanne Geist, to a position as a policy advisor. The former state senator isn't a lawyer and doesn't have a law license. Geist's career prior to her election to the legislature in 2016 was as a style consultant for two companies that run pyramid schemes.

All of these abuses of power are occurring because Pillen and Hilgers don't have to be concerned about being held accountable by his fellow elected officials in a one-party state. No Republican constitutional officers and state senators said anything about their exercise of executive power.

The University of Nebraska has also been affected by the Republicans' one party rule. In 2021, then Governor (and now U.S. Senator) Pete Ricketts alleged that the University of Nebraska is "racist" because they teach critical race theory. (Ricketts attended the elite University of Chicago.) In addition, the legislature has paid for a tax cut for the wealthy by cutting the University of Nebraska's budget.

These attacks on Nebraska's flagship university have caused the leadership of this venerable institution to leave Nebraska for jobs in other states. The loss of University President Ted

Carter and Chancellor Ronnie Green is a significant setback for the university and state. These leaders most likely could have been retained in the absence of the GOP's attack on the University of Nebraska.

The entire state is paying a heavy price for this inept one-party rule. Conservative economist Ernest Goss said, "More Nebraskans over the last decade have continued to leave than enter from other states. More people have continued to leave than enter Nebraska from other states, and the loss is heavily those with an education level of at least a bachelor's degree."

Despite these setbacks, there is still real hope for the people of Nebraska. Citizens opposed to one party rule have skillfully used the petition process to do an end run around Republican rule. In recent years, the voters have passed ballot initiatives raising the minimum wage and adopting the Medicaid expansion.

Concerned citizens are once again acting as Nebraska's "second house" and are currently gathering signatures to place several initiatives on the 2024 ballot. At the present time, there are promising petition drives aimed at repealing the GOP private school bailout (LB 753), establish paid family and medical leave, allow medical marijuana and to protect a woman's right to choose.

Other states that have suffered from one party GOP rule in the past have successfully broken the GOP's grip on power. Colorado used to be a red state but now it is solidly blue. Virginia is now nearly blue. Georgia has transitioned from being a red state to a purple or battleground state. These examples prove that there is hope for Nebraska.

George Harrison said it best in his 1987 song. "Got My Mind Set On You."

"But it's gonna take money,
A whole lotta spending money,
It's gonna take plenty of money
To do it right, child.

It's gonna take time,
A whole lot of precious time
It's gonna take patience and time, mmm
To do it, to do it, to do it, to do it
To do it right, child."

Now let's get it done!



The Devil went down to Georgia

ordered to appear at the Fulton Cty. Jail,

His early scheme to overthrow the presidential election

led to a criminal indictment

the result of a monumental crooked fail,

The 45th U.S. President is now labeled as inmate PO1135809,


And the sordid image of his glaring mugshot

Captured and recorded for all time

The Inflation Reduction Act: It's Already Doing A Lot of Good

By Dennis Crawford

The Inflation Reduction Act



Lowers costs by:

- ✓ Allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices
- ✓ Capping out-of-pocket prescription drug costs and the cost of insulin for seniors
- ✓ Lowering health care premiums by an average of \$800 a year for 13 million people

And it's fully paid for by:

- ✓ Cracking down on wealthy and corporate tax cheats
- ✓ Making billion-dollar corporations pay a fairer share of taxes

Thank you, Democrats!

A year ago this month, President Biden signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act (hereinafter the IRA). This is the Biden administration's signature policy achievement thus far. This groundbreaking new law shows what a united Democratic government can achieve. It's already doing a lot of good.

"The bill provided billions of dollars improving the energy grid and bringing clean jobs to communities; it has already created more than 170,000 good-paying jobs in 41 states.

Every single person who gets their insulin through Medicare will see lower monthly costs, thanks to the \$35 cap on monthly insulin costs — meaning 1.5 million people are saving hundreds of dollars a year.

The IRA also reduces health insurance premiums by up to \$800 for people who buy insurance on their own.

What's more, it's leveling the playing field by ensuring that no family making less than \$400,000, will see their taxes go up and making the big corporations and the ultra-wealthy pay their fair share." *Newsweek*

The Inflation Reduction Act gives Medicare the power to negotiate lower drug prices — saving money for the federal government and senior citizens.

The IRA makes significant investments aimed at the manufacture of electric cars, encourages wind and solar energy production, provides tax credits for Americans to encourage energy efficiency, places restrictions on the burning of coal, and has even more

tax incentives aimed at reducing the emission of greenhouse gases by up to 40% by 2030.

The IRA's climate provisions largely rely on tax credits offering individuals and businesses a variety of payouts to adopt renewable technologies, with the leading example being electric vehicles powered by green energy sources.

"Right at the beginning, the Biden administration decided that its climate policy would be all carrots, no sticks — that it would provide incentives to do the right thing, not penalties for doing the wrong thing. This strategy, it was hoped, would prove politically feasible in a way that, say, a carbon tax wouldn't. And this hope has been vindicated." Paul Krugman of the *NY Times*.

Increased production of renewable energy will reduce U.S. dependence upon hostile countries like Russia and Saudi Arabia for energy resources. Foreign dictators will no longer be able to hurt the American people by reducing oil production.

The IRA has reformed the resource starved IRS. For years, Republicans in Congress have cut funding to the IRS to allow tax cheating by the GOP billionaire donor class. Thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, the IRS has significantly improved service for individual Americans and has recovered approximately \$38 million from 175 cheating millionaires.

The GOP has falsely alleged that the IRA will fund 87,000 new IRS agents. Independent fact checkers have repeatedly rebutted this disinformation. The GOP is lying about the IRA because they want their wealthy donor class to continue to cheat on the American people by illegally underpaying their taxes.

Biden's economic policies represent a major break from the Republican trickle-down policies that date back to the Reagan Administration in 1981. The Republicans like to cut taxes for rich people and hope that maybe someday they will create some jobs. The problem is that it never trickles down.

In contrast, Biden and the Democrats want to grow the economy from the middle out and the bottom up. It turns out investing in our people, and being pro-labor and manufacturing grows the economy. Consumer spending accounts for about 70% of America's gross domestic product. Putting more money into the pockets of America's middle class and working families is the key to a strong economy.

In response to the passage of the IRA, the Republicans have resumed their usual doomsday predictions. Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) termed the IRA as a Trojan Horse for their "socialist agenda."

Does Blackburn even understand socialism? The GOP has been subsidizing the wildly profitable oil industry for generations.

Nikki Haley, not to be outdone, claimed that the IRA is Joe Biden's "communist manifesto." Does Haley expect Americans to be sent to the gulag? You can't make this stuff up. As president, she promised to repeal the IRA.

"Want proof that the Inflation Reduction Act is working and popular? Many Republicans are actually trying to take credit for the jobs in solar and EVs and wind, even though they voted against these jobs in Congress. They're coming to the ribbon-cutting ceremonies!" Chuck Schumer

Every Republican voted against the IRA and they have pledged to repeal it if they win in 2024. In other words, they want to raise your prescription costs and continue our energy dependence upon dangerous foreign dictators. What's more, the Republicans want to shut down the government and show you pictures of Hunter Biden's penis.

The Democrats have created 13.4 million new jobs and reduced unemployment to its lowest level in over fifty years. We have had a record 18 straight months of unemployment below 4%. Wages are finally going up and inflation is finally coming down. We're turning the corner.

Why would anybody want to go back to the dark days of 2020 when you could barely leave the house or even find toilet paper? People were afraid. Trump held daily briefings in which he shamelessly lied, recommended quack cures, and blamed everyone else. No one really knew what was going on. Millions of Americans lost their jobs and thousands were dying every day. We can't go back.

It's America or the MAGA Republicans in 2024. Choose wisely.

Chef Anthony L. Warrior, Presenter of Information and Communications Technology

By Dan Ninham

Reprinted with permission

The Cultural Connections summer youth camp at the Neihardt Center seemed like any other camp on a late June morning.

Native girls and boys from elementary to high school were hustling and bustling with activities from Indigenous games to arrow-making to listening to a presenter talk about the parts and uses of a buffalo.

When lunch time arrived, the campers gathered outside to Native foods and to learn more from the towering Indigenous chef wearing traditional clothing, including a *gustoweh* on his head.

It's one of the things chef Anthony L. Warrior loves to do — to educate and promote Native American food revitalization and traditional food ways with Native communities.

"I was raised in kitchens with my mother," Warrior told *ICT*. [*Information and communications technology*] "My own health issues helped to motivate me to learn what we as Natives once had for health and wellness. I have always been inspired by history, so learning about how we as Natives sustained ourselves and our ways of life drives me to learn more about behaviors and customs linked to our ways of life..."

"During my younger years, I witnessed many tribes that celebrated the food through dances, feasts, and spiritual connection," he said. "In the last 20 years, I see the absences of that connectivity coming to a critical point of losing our attachment to our Mother Earth."

Warrior, or Ma-te-yi-ma-pe-to, a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and also Absentee Shawnee of Oklahoma and Sicangu Lakota, is a celebrated chef and owner of Warrior's Palate Catering and Consultation.

He also serves as the human resources director at Nebraska Indian Community College in Macy, Nebraska, in the heart of the Omaha Nation, and has worked as a chef for the Seneca Nation and for the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino Resort.

He is also author of a cookbook, "Warriors Palate Catering Recipes," which includes such recipes as wildberry dumplings, bison meatloaf, breakfast blue corn mush, and Three Sisters soup.

This year marked Warrior's second to attend the Cultural Connections camp at the [Neihardt Center](#) on the John G. Neihardt State Historic Site, which was established in Bancroft, Nebraska, at the former home of Neihardt, Nebraska's Poet Laureate in

Perpetuity. Neihardt was author of “Black Elk Speaks, Cycle of the West,” and other works of poetry and prose.

Rediscovering lifeways

The camp lunch was set up as an outdoor picnic, with bowls of food stretched along the middle of a string of picnic tables.

Among the foods presented were sage-roasted leg of bison with sweet potato, spring squash with Ukwakhwe white corn, smoked turkey with maple and blueberry wild rice, pickled hominy in maple-berry vinaigrette, fire-roasted mushrooms, Cherokee yellow rice pilaf, Kohnastole white corn, and wood-fired bison sliders with charred corn and red bean salad. Desserts included chocolate corn pudding with fresh berries, Kohnastole white corn and honey cake with berries, and dark chocolate, peanut butter and toasted quinoa bark.

Warrior has been a regular at the Neihardt Center the past few summers. He prepares, cooks and serves Indigenous foods at lunch time to the summer camp youth, but he also shares stories about the significance of eating, being Indigenous and using Indigenous languages.

He could be mistaken for a member of one of the Six Nations, since he wears the *gustoweh*, a traditional headdress often worn by men during the longhouse ceremonies. He was gifted it by a Mohawk friend, and it has been one of his trademarks in attire while on the job.

“The *gustoweh* was a blessing from Mohawk artist Toteks Thomas,” Warrior said. “I was employed by the Seneca Nation of New York and the Akwesasne Mohawk of New York, and I was treated like family. I also would frequent the longhouse ceremonies throughout the years along with singing practice to learn and share songs.”

He believes strongly that Native communities should return to their traditional foods and lifeways.

“I have seen many feast-tables, funeral observances, and naming ceremonies that are not utilizing our cultural foods, and instead are being replaced with processed and fast foods,” Warrior said. “We have to return to our tribal food pathways.”

Chris Stogdill, special projects coordinator for Cultural Connections, is a leader of the weekday summer camp program for youth from the local and regional Omaha, Ho-Chunk, Santee Sioux and other tribal nation communities.

The camp is designed to “provide awareness and access to culturally relevant student opportunities,” Stogdill said.

Warrior was asked to prepare and discuss the noon meals during camp, and to provide a food sovereignty workshop that was held the week after the summer camp to provide staff and students an opportunity to learn about the history and traditions of Native American food and preparation.

“He is passionate about sharing his knowledge and skills with the next generation of students,” Stogdill said. “His stories and skills provide insight and inspiration about learning traditional ways.”

Warrior told *ICT* that it’s important to reach the younger generations.

“We are attempting to provide a tribal connection to youth that live away from their homelands or are not connected to the tribal communities on a daily basis,” he said. “The program has included an educational platform on teaching the youth about our food offerings to the world, healthy eating behaviors, and food and medicine benefits of our native growing and harvesting practices.”

He continued, “My overall mission is to promote growers and seed keepers to produce our sacred seeds for healthy lifestyle offerings while establishing the spiritual respect for our foods.”

Learning from the ancestors

The message that Warrior hopes to send is in the stories he shares wholeheartedly with his words and spirit.

“The stories I like to share with the youth campers, is my personal struggle of being diagnosed with diabetes at the age of 18,” Warrior said. “I also share how my future was shaped by understanding that the disease was incurable and was most likely linked to genetics and that by being Native I was at a higher risk of living with it for the rest of my life.”

But his learning didn’t stop there.

“I learned later in life that I was believing a lie that was not true, and that, in fact, the foods we should be eating with the eating behaviors of our ancestors was actually the cure for many diseases,” he said.

“Food is medicine if eaten and sourced properly,” he said. “I also share that we as a society are fighting addiction not only with alcohol and drugs, which are behavior derivative of years of improper nutrition, but with substance abuse in the form of sugar, salt, and fat.”

He continued, “We are fighting the craving each and every day from the time we wake up to the time we rest. Our bodies are constantly fighting to rid itself of the hyper-processed chemicals in our preserved foods. The final product is a lifetime of depressed mental and immune systems.”

Warrior is a self-taught cook who benefited from mentors in and out of the kitchen.

"I have had too many mentors to count," he said. "Unfortunately, most of them have passed, from Mvskoke grandmothers, making sofke, sour cornbread, to Zuni relatives explaining how the food has evolved..."

"Most recently, our Six Nations people are revitalizing their food even against the will of the USDA," he said. "My travels across Turtle Island have brought many into my path. I celebrate many of our newer chefs who are bringing our efforts to the forefront."

Native people are also learning to accept the ways of their ancestors, he said.

"In the Great Plains, I hear that a lot of our community members are hesitant to eat bison or game meats," Warrior said. "With my extensive ability to season and flavor the dishes, it's exciting to see them try the food and watch their faces as they enjoy the cultural foods."

But he also shared an uneasiness that some tribal leaders may not be following the right road.

"Unfortunately, we are seeing these leaders implement practices that may not be Native to their people but what seems to fit at the time," he said. "We will always evolve as a population, but balancing spiritual with modern ways can get scary and may be uninformed and damaging to our future generations. Words like decolonize, sovereignty, and Indigenize are driving words but may lead to unfavorable consequences."

'Culturally empowering'

Some of Warrior's travels in Haudenosaunee, which translates to mean "people of the longhouse," took him to Wisconsin among the Oneida. Steve and Becky Webster, Oneida citizens and the owners of the nonprofit [Ukwakhwa](#), which translates to "our foods," are among two leaders of Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives.

Becky Webster recalls meeting Warrior more than a few times.

"We met him when we went to Iowa State University to consult with them on their Three Sisters Soil Study," she said. "We went down there a couple times. He cooked for us both times, using Indigenous ingredients. It was phenomenal! He also came down to our farmstead to visit once. We're looking forward to more opportunities to collaborate with him."

Another fan is the legendary athlete Billy Mills, an Olympic gold medalist and co-founder of the nonprofit Running Strong for American Indian Youth. Mills was featured at a recent event that Warrior

catered for the Society of American Indian Dentistry in Omaha.

Warrior said he prepared bison-stuffed sweet peppers, smoked walleye salad on blue corn fritters, wild rice with charred corn and roasted tomato salad in a berry maple vinaigrette, hen of the woods mushrooms, turtle bean and toasted quinoa pilaf, and dried berry and quinoa chocolate bark.

Mills took notice.

"His presentation and dinner was awesome," Mills told *ICT*. "He presented himself so professionally and culturally empowering."

Warrior said the highlight of the dinner, however, was perhaps that his mother was able to talk with Mills.

"The best thing about it, besides the meal, was my mother, who was my inspiration to cook, got to visit with Billy Mills after 47 years from when they first met," he said.

Looking ahead

Warrior said he is continuing to set goals as he moves on his empowered journey with Indigenous foods. His goals include continued research in tribal food systems, developing an updated reference guide for tribal historians to document and preserve foraging, medicinal, and recipe analysis.

He is also working to share his knowledge.

"The cookbook is a first-ever of me recording any of my recipes and cultural connections," he said. "For the future I hope to build off of the recipes and food guides for many of the tribal unique foods."

He is also working to source local products in a three-state area to meet the demand.

"This is proving to be a challenge as production rates cannot fully meet my demand of producing enough food for about 1,200 people a month," he said.

"My future hopes are to have enough growers and producers to supply the demands of many of our community schools for a proper addition to the farm-to-school table push. But these efforts will be all for nothing if we cannot change the eating behaviors that our current legislation and beliefs adhere to," he said.

"We need to eat more nutrient-rich foods and less highly processed foods, in turn leading to less consumption of nutrient-lacking foods."



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