



Nulasuweltom ~ I am grateful



Photo courtesy of Heather Newton Brown

What We are Grateful for in 2022

As 2022 came to an end, we all reflected back on the year. Staff and volunteers were asked to share something for which they are grateful.

I am grateful for every day new opportunities and choices.

I am grateful for working in an organization that values well-being..

I am grateful for all the people who support REACH and put their faith in us to do this important work of truth, healing and change here in the Dawnland.

I am grateful for the ability to learn lessons, both from others and from myself.

I am grateful for all the people and relationships in my life, especially with my children, grandbaby and husband - I cherish all the present moments. I am so fortunate to have reciprocal relationships with wonderful friends, some of whom are life long and others I'm just getting to know. I appreciate all the people I get to work with in both my paid profession and volunteer work with Wabanaki REACH, I learn so much from listening to and interacting with each and every one of them. I am grateful for continued good health, the ability to move freely and grow older. I pray to and remember those that have passed into the spirit world, I thank them for their love, especially my mother, whose lessons I carry with me and practice every day. Koselmol psite wen ~ I love all of you.

Wow, there is so much to be grateful for this year! It starts with continuing good health for self and family. A revived collaborative healing project has attracted unexpected support and given me more good work to do next year. Wabanaki REACH continues to thrive, and as always it's a huge gift to be part of truth, healing and change with such a wise and wonderful group of people. Thank you to everyone in my life, for giving joy and meaning.

When I reflect back on 2022, I am filled with gratitude for my Mother. My Mother has stood by my side, giving me strength, courage, and support to reach for the stars. All of my accomplishments over this past year are a direct result of her love and support. I know that our relationship is a gift and I treasure her.

I love being out in nature, whether it's going on a hike, taking a boat ride, or just sitting there watching the various birds and animals. Now I have a job where I'm able to help restore the rivers along with the Passamaquoddy Bay, improve the environment & ecosystem, participate in tribal ceremonies, work with the elders and the youth of our communities. Meet so many incredible people, and now to work for REACH that is so supportive for my ideas, never had a job that I have loved so much.

I am grateful for and appreciative of:

The awareness -

Everything always works out

Health & Healing take many (and unexpected) forms

The many points of light that illuminate the path at its darkest

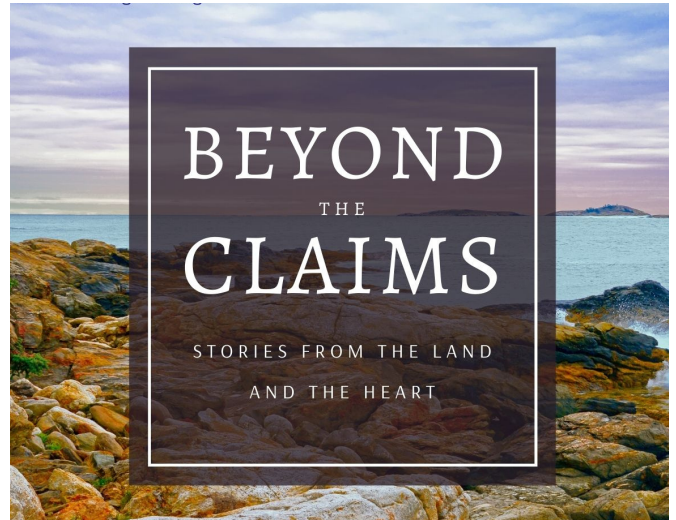
In 2022, I am grateful for the opportunity to become part of the Wabanaki REACH team. Working for an Indigenous led organization has given me the chance to create new connections and have more creative freedom. I am very lucky to be associated with so many kind and conscientious people on a daily basis.

Reflecting back on 2022, I am grateful for the simple joys that I once took for granted. I am grateful for beautiful sunrises and sunsets, walks in nature, and happiness and laughter with loved ones,. I am grateful to be part of an organization that works for truth, healing and change and the amazing coworkers and volunteers who have become like an extended family.



Beyond the Claims Update by Kate Russell, Beyond the Claims Project Coordinator

This year has been a plentiful one for truth-telling, deep listening, and stories— stories that have made our Beyond the Claims archive all the more nuanced, beautiful, and honest. We are grateful to all the Storytellers who sat with us and our devoted Story Collectors who spent 2022 interviewing, documenting, and transcribing these incredible conversations for the collection. Stay tuned as we begin to build creative resources for the greater community in the coming year. We can't wait to share the next step of this truth-telling journey.



Educational Programs Update by Heather Augustine, Community Education Development Coordinator

Wabanaki REACH educational programs continue to be in high demand. We are now booking programs into the Spring, offering on average two programs per week for a variety of organizations and institutions. We are grateful to the staff and volunteers who dedicate their time and emotional energy to bringing this unique education to so many. The continued interest in the work of REACH is a reflection of the community's desire for truth, justice, and support of Wabanaki self-determination.

Our multi-session programs, Decolonizing Non-Native Communities and Decolonizing Conservation Communities are tailored to each organization to create pathways of understanding to the personal and professional identity of people who occupy this territory. Each program is revised every two years to assure our content is current and relevant..

After two and a half years of meeting virtually REACH held two in-person workshops this past fall. We have explored how to do this more often this winter but the challenges with Covid continue to create barriers to being together safely in person. We look forward to presenting more in-person programs in the spring when the weather is beautiful and people are healthy.

Thank you to all who engage with and support the work toward Truth, Healing, and Change.

Wabanaki Wellbeing Program Update by Brian Altvater, Wabanaki Wellness Coordinator

Efforts to restore the Schoodic River or St. Croix have been bolstered by substantial funding through the work of the Schoodic Band in St. Andrews, Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township & Pleasant Point and our many allies on both sides of the river. About 20 million dollars has been awarded through the Department of Marine Resources (DMR). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has provided the bulk of the award of nearly 15 million for the removal of the Milltown Dam scheduled for the summer, 5 million will be used for a fish-life at Woodland Dam Mill located in Baileyville which is approximately 20 miles upstream from Milltown in Calais.

The Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point with the help of Bob Wood who works for Downeast Fisheries Partnership solicited over 84 thousand dollars from private donors which funded the Tribe's match with the Army Corps of Engineers 1 million 3-year feasibility study to determine the best route to open the causeway with a bridge between Pleasant Point and Carlow Island.

Bob Wood also helped the Tribe receive 250 thousand dollars to fund a 3-year clam reseeding project. Bob has been a godsend and is currently also helping us with a sweetgrass reseeding project, farming & growing of oysters and made it possible for me to be one of the Sunrise County Economic Council boards.

I have been in contact with various individuals who want to start a food gardening project for Wabanaki people incarcerated in the Washington County Jail in Machias on available nearby farmland. They are also interested in having me conduct sweat-lodge ceremonies later this Spring with some of the same gardening participants.

I conducted eight sweat-lodge ceremonies with incarcerated native people in Windham, Charleston, and Maine State prison last year and look forward to doing more this year.

The Passamaquoddy Tribe has some abandoned cranberry bogs on their blueberry barrens and I am hopeful we can recruit youth to plant some traditional plants and herbs there this Spring.

I continue to meet each Wednesday via zoom with the Living Tides committee which has been active for over two years and a big help with the work to help restore the Schoodic River Watershed. Chief Akagi of the Schoodic Band of Passamaquoddy St. Andrews leads a Tuesday morning conference which has been active at least the past 6 years. They released a St. Croix River Restoration Plan this past fall.

Website Communications by Heather Newton Brown, Wabanaki REACH Volunteer

At Wabanaki-REACH, we answer many questions through our website, mostly from non-native people who are in various stages of building awareness of systems of colonization. These messages are sent by people who want to focus on progressive changes and largely support Wabanaki independence. At times, requests are made that inadvertently support colonization and undermine indigenous sovereignty. Some examples are content that:

- Uses ownership-based language
- Engages in performative allyship
- Uses support of indigenous people to sell products or services
- Makes decisions that they believe benefit Wabanaki people without the input of Wabanaki people
- Creates land acknowledgements without taking action to decolonize the land.
- Asks indigenous people to do work on their behalf
- Requests access to Wabanaki cultural items or resources for their own benefit.

Things you can do to help:

If you own a small business, you can support indigenous people without posting on your website or making donations contingent on sales. If you would like to donate a portion of your income to Wabanaki REACH lead initiatives, you can sign up for recurring donations.

You can provide information about important work Wabanaki-led organizations are doing without attaching this information to your sales. The Wabanaki REACH website has resources available.

Create a land acknowledgement in conjunction with actions that have been requested by Wabanaki-led organizations, such as donations, distribution of Wabanaki-created resources, supporting Wabanaki sovereignty. Wabanaki REACH does not review or approve land acknowledgements for organizations or individuals.

Use language that shows you recognize Wabanaki sovereignty and independence, ie: "Wabanaki People" not "Maine's Wabanaki people".

Research and use Wabanaki-created resources to further your knowledge. Engage in movie screenings, public events and education resources that are already occurring.

Support Wabanaki businesses - buy local.

Follow Wabanaki leadership. This means adjusting how you think things "should" happen and noticing new ways of experiencing. This can be uncomfortable, and it's important to talk to other trusted non-native people who are engaged in this process about how difficult it can be.

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Thank You

Wabanaki REACH would like to thank the many people who donate to us. Your donation, large or small, monthly or one-time, makes a difference for us and we are grateful. We would also like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers who bring their time, skill, and energy to REACH and everyone in our larger community who is learning and on this journey of truth, healing, and change with us.

The following organizations believe in the work of Wabanaki REACH and gave their invaluable support to make a real difference in Wabanaki lives and communities. Thank you all.

Maine Initiatives

Maine Community Foundation Donor Advised Funds

Morton Kelly Charitable Fund

Carita Foundation 2022

Cornelia Cogswell Rossi Foundation

DLA Piper

Louis and Anne Abrons Foundation

Gwendolen Elwell Flanagan Foundation

Woodside Foundation

Lojo Foundation

Thank you for
the great work
you are doing
to help educate
our friends and
neighbors.

Thank you for
doing all of the
important work
you do.

We appreciate
your traditions
and your
challenging but
continuing
process of
educating.

Visit our website to learn more, read the blog, engage with resources, find out about events, join our listserv or make a donation:

<https://wabanakireach.org>

Visit our Facebook page for the latest in truth, healing, and change

www.facebook.com/wabanakiREACH

Access all episodes of Dawnland Signals on the WERU archive here:

<https://archives.weru.org/category/dawnland-signals/>

