



**Advisory Board**

**PATHWAYS TO FLUENCY PARTICIPANT COMMENTS**

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**Richard West, Jr., A.M., J.D.**

Southern Cheyenne

What was the most valuable part of the conference?

- Everyone was so open about their experiences in their communities about language. It was like everyone had been waiting for this opportunity to convene and discuss language revitalization with such humanity and shared passion. I think this aspect of the gathering will be sending people back home with renewed energy and ideas.
- Very inspiring. Very meaningful. Very impressive group of presenters and experienced group language warriors!
- All communities have similar experiences with their efforts to preserve and revitalize their native languages. These sessions provided me with new tools to utilize in our efforts to preserve and to re-introduce native language to a new generation. New tools and more importantly, new frameworks.
- We all learned a lot and had some great networking opportunities. MICA provided some top-notch keynote speakers.
- I had a great time. This was one of the most effective and productive conferences I have ever been to, and the great mix of people I met there I made a lot of great connections and learned about the use of media and multi-pronged approaches. Thank you.
- This was my first time attending a conference like this. Truly inspired by the stories told and tribulations shared – I feel stronger about the importance of our youth. Sessions were great. Very informational. Thank you.
- I enjoyed the conference and have learned a lot about where the other tribes are at in the process of revitalizing their languages. It also helped me to see where we are and where we need to go. All good. I thank all of you.
- Meeting other tribes and hearing their concerns on language. We all need to support one another and help each other. It's a shame that our languages are fading out, but we are here to bring it back!
- Networking. Of all the Tribal conferences I have attended, this one was the most filled with people who wanted to share their stories around the table of their efforts, successes, and failures around language.

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- Learning to put together the resources we have with the ideas and goals of our people to make a plan to save our language.
- [I learned] that revitalization is an ongoing process. We struggle, but coming tougher, helped me realize that it is a problem we all have.
- I met policymakers, directors and coordinators from all over and got important information I needed.
- Aleena's reflection/vision piece discussing the Language Landscape and its planning practices. It has helped my group begin to develop our discussion of next steps
- Ideas we can take back to our people. We are not alone. All of us tribes struggle in teaching the keeping of the language.
- The Milestone worksheets and Maori Language and Richard West keynotes have added purpose to our work.
- The information we received will greatly help us as we plan our language program. THANK YOU!!!
- Strong language warriors taking about successful strategies.
- Hearing different ways to really get the community involved and informed about the importance of language.
- I think the IDEAS that each speaker presented – many knowledgeable and experienced people- I wrote down so many key points and phrases – that encourage and inspire me.
- I began to understand the opportunities for small steps with big results.
- An overwhelming amount of great and relevant information and ideas to take home.
- The information provided by the speakers and handouts are valuable to our language program. Completing the worksheets on the Milestones was also very useful to me.
- Being able to hear about communal challenges that we all face. Meeting in this fashion helps all of us to re-energize and draw strength from each other.



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- Glad to attend this conference. So glad scholarships were available! THANK YOU!
- Being around like-minded people for encouragement & support. Sitting down and making goals, plans, & taking action.
- Having so many folks working toward the same goals and sharing the same experiences and struggles. I have been inspired by their stories and words, and of course came away with a few new ideas.
- That we are designing our own plan using these steps designed by the language visionaries
- Meeting other Tribes and seeing what they are doing and how its working or not working
- Feeling welcome. Feeling participating in actual useable info. These people's stories and hardships are mine, too, and their success will also eventually be my stories too.
- MICA Group has done a great job by putting up this conference.
- This is my first time attending a conference like this and I LOVED it! The entire experience was very informative and positive.
- I found it extremely useful. It provided some useful ideas and opened my eyes. I am more inspired to go forward with our language revitalization efforts.
- Excellent! Inspirational! Need more time to explore info.
- THANK YOU!!!!
- I enjoyed all the presentations and sessions I listened to.
- Meeting people from different tribes and discussing their concerns
- Hearing various experiences, especially the technical side (milestones and pathways.)
- The breaks when we got to talk to each other.
- Meeting other language enthusiasts.
- Networking, workshop info, videos to review later for info missed.



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- The Milestones sessions with Aleena and intergenerational involvement
- Contact and info exchanged between the people attending
- Listening to others share. Meeting others (tribes) that have succeeded in bringing their languages back and their struggles that stand in the way
- Learning I'm not alone, even though I'm alone.
- The Milestone worksheets and discussions
- The ideas and concepts that we learned to help our program.
- Learning how tribes are losing their languages.
- More inner strength to work towards getting our language to all to value.
- All the information that that was presented
- Wonderful!!
- Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!!! Next time take a group picture at the conference!
- Overall this conference was very valuable.
- Let MICA send us to Hawaii to learn their teaching methods!!!
- This conference was really excellent!!! Elders should go first to eat!!!
- Meeting and hearing all the trials and successes for the different Tribes.
- Meeting all the other Tribes from different states.
- Networking
- Keep communication with students and most of all, with the Elderly.
- In all, I have learned a lot! Wow, OMG, I'm really not OLD yet!!!
- PASSION!



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- To learn how others are teaching and motivating ways the teach. I love getting ideas on teaching methods.
- ALL!
- Listening to presenters talk about challenges and successes
- Speakers Ron Lessard and Dr. Christine Sims were very informative and inspiring!
- Being involved! I value all the input provided! So many tribes are facing the same issues.
- I enjoyed all of it!
- Session with Penny Bird where we discussed intergenerational values and I was given suggestions on how to go about getting our Elders more involved.
- Work sheets to gather my thoughts about our language program.
- I really enjoyed the media portion from the Hawaiian people.
- EXCELLENT!! Had some great contact with experts and motivated folks to keep language alive
- All of it was important. Even if it wasn't part of what we are doing, I know it will help another program later.
- Coming together with others. Tribes on the same journey.
- Just meeting and hearing about other language programs. I am brand new to language and found all this to be very valuable.
- Meeting others that have been involved in language revitalization for years and hearing about their quests.
- The panels and networking
- Knowing that other tribes have struggled and now have success.
- Too many to list.



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- Suzan Harjo's summary
- The awareness and understanding just how important it is to bring our languages back to our people and that teaching it and learning it is vital to our survival.
- All!
- How to use technology. I brought one of younger staff to attend to get as much info as possible for future leadership as she teaches the younger children.
- Encouragement from presenters
- Hearing other people's experiences and seeing some of the tools that others have developed.
- The ideas, sharing of stories, and information from presentations
- Learning about the success or failures of other programs.
- Learning how to use media and Elders and documents
- The presentations on successful programs
- Daryl Baldwin (Myaamia) gave hope to near-extinct languages
- This conference helped me get more ideas on where our language program needs to go.
- Hearing about other Tribes that no longer have their first speakers! It was sad, but so real.
- Teaching basic skills and language to parents, grandparents, and guardians. Very valuable for any Tribe.
- The stories participants had to share.
- The time to reflect and evaluate our efforts. Hearing much of what I have been thinking reiterated by language activists from other communities.
- The collection of experts.
- Seeing friends, hearing inspiring speakers, meeting others engaged in similar work.



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- Knowing that our Tribe isn't the only one struggling and tips and ideas are a plus!
- I enjoyed Suzan Harjo and the Tribal Sovereignty panel. It was very interesting.
- Being able to talk to the other tribes to see what they are doing.
- The presentation of Iris Pretty Paint was astounding! She is surely an indigenous woman.
- The networking and sharing. The planning formula for implementing/rethinking our plan and process.
- Enjoyed the talk from Daryl Baldwin.
- How it takes patience to move forward with programs.
- The review meetings and the information gathered about where to begin.
- The breakout sessions were good informative and precise – Dr. Zepeda –Good!
- Inspiration! Seeing the possibilities!
- Meeting old friends and making new connections\*\*But for the Tribes new to language revitalization, the ideas presented were probably very important to them
- Just that we all got to learn how other Tribes are having the same problems with their language!
- I liked the learning session with Wilhelm Meya and Dr. Penny Bird was a very valuable part of the language conference. I got a lot of helpful information.
- Networking and hearing others share teaching methods and planning language activities in communities (NOT in schools.)
- The feeling of kinship and community.
- That we are not in this alone, and we should work and help each other achieve our visions.
- The sharing of lessons learned.



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- How we are all working towards the same goals, but just getting there may be in different ways, to different degrees; how the planning practices are the same!
- Recognizing tribes struggles in revitalization and understanding the pathways; how to keep going.
- Helping me to see where we are and the next steps to developing my program's goals and objectives
- Sharing of experience and knowledge.
- Too many to list.
- The presenters were all very knowledgeable in their fields. All very informative.
- How other nations are working towards revitalizing their languages.
- Different perspectives on language efforts.
- Information on successful programs gives hope.
- The panels.
- The group work with Aleena as a whole is much easier to participate in because we know everyone else is doing it!! (ha) I loved the SKYPE
- The things accomplished in the Hawaiian charter schools are really very inspiring!!
- The most valuable part was the reminders of approaching our moves through love AND to always check our awareness AND to convince others.
- Thinking about what our needs are and what we can do and what we need to do.
- The information learned. The inspiration gained.
- Learning we all have the same issues, but we can use each other's ideas to help reach our goals
- Coming to these plenary sessions they showed me that we all need to work together and network, because we all have the same issues. It also helped remind me that we need to keep putting our ancestors and ourselves into our language work.



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- The information regarding integration of the language with culture was the most valuable.
- It is always good to hear and know that others are going through the same challenges.
- Dr. Wilson (Hawaii) and his group gave a great presentation. I enjoyed hearing what they have to say
- Getting ideas and motivation to continue on our path.
- What other tribes are doing (as well as the Hawaiian and Maori people).
- Just excellent information and informative in many areas.
- Very detailed information on teaching teachers.
- Inspiration and conversation. Aleena's visioning sessions were helpful for taking new information home.
- Meeting people from other tribal language programs and hearing descriptions of what their language activities are in their communities.
- The fascinating information presented.
- I always wondered about the Hawaiian Immersion Schools, how well it works and inspired me to do more for our children.
- Having knowledgeable panels that can provide insight and field questions from the audience.
- ALL SESSIONS!!!!
- It was great to see so many interested in the battle of language revitalization and to have some with the same views.
- Working on the Landscape Milestones.
- Listening to speakers discuss their challenges and how they addressed them.
- Enjoyed the sessions I went to and will be valuable information for me good insight from one that has had concerns same as for my tribe.



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- Just all sessions were valuable for everyone.
- Seeing and hearing about all the challenges and triumphs through the process of language revitalization and ways they used to overcome the challenges.
- Discussions and exercises on the language landscape.
- Ongoing language programs that are successful and how these programs came about.
- The Milestones and strategies, and documentation of next steps.
- The sessions were very helpful as they provided information in all areas of the language revitalization.
- Inspiring remarks.
- Truly enjoyed the two Hawaiian presentations during breakfast and lunch.
- Hearing about issues from well-known and influential individuals.
- Breakout sessions were the best.
- The diversity and honesty the tribes bring to each topic is real and serious.
- Learning about what is available to us in preserving our language.
- Contacts made at our table during the facilitated sessions and exchanging information at our table.
- Working on the Milestones.
- The information provided was insightful and useful.
- Aleena Kawe's presentation and participants' work on their Milestones. Take home info was good.
- The group work and planning part.
- Commitment and dialogue of best practices.
- It was great and a good chance to meet other to help you in your situation that they had already dealt with.



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- Lots of important people to network with.
- Made several friends and we can network when we all get into a bind.
- This was the biggest language conference I have ever attended. Definitely more opportunity to network with so many experts.
- This is my first time attending this conference but everything that was presented in the conference was good information and I picked up ideas on how to improve our language program with new ideas.
- A feeling of kinship and community!
- Several people exchanged contact information with me after they found out I've been teaching young parents in our rez communities and how I went about doing that.
- They were wonderful!! The mix of people from other tribes was stupendous.
- Got some networking for potential linguists; also made a few friends.
- A great way to connect tribes and learn from their successes.
- Awesome!! I met colleagues and most rewarding experience as we pioneer and strive to keep our languages alive!
- Great, much needed as we have secluded ourselves for a while and this was great because there were so many successful programs here.
- If we didn't have speaker during the meals, networking would have been easier. I liked the small group activities.
- Really amazed me that people were succeeding in revitalizing their languages! Gave me hope!
- Networking during the breakouts was great.
- Having and sharing each other's techniques in teaching and learning goals within each tribe in attendance.
- Awesome!



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- I enjoyed the conference and open affection felt by everyone. Their generosity and willingness to share their stories and support is amazing.
- Have contact information to help me when I need to reach out for guidance.
- Was great to re-connect with past mentors and beginning language activists and to meet and connect with new ones.
- I found Hualapai allies! A handful of people I really like, and great discussions, felt welcome. Real info I will implement!
- People were really available and willing to share info and contact info with business cards.
- Summer Language Institute ideas (teacher training. Use Elders and traditions).