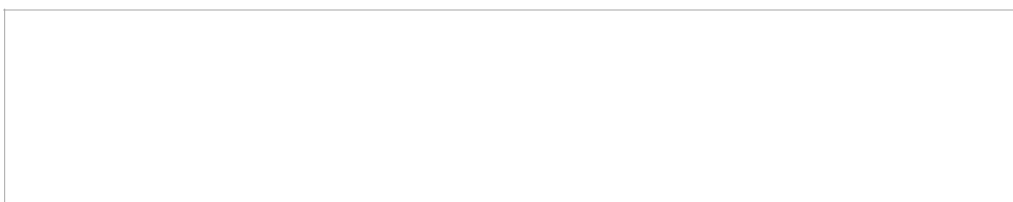


Journal #5889 from sdc 1.3.25

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'The Medicine My Ancestors Prayed For': Medi-Cal Now Covers Native Healing Practice



- One woman's journey shows [the potential of traditional native healing practices](#) to restore hope as Medi-Cal expands its coverage for culturally appropriate care for Native Americans.

Inside the Friendship House, a rhythmic drum beat fills the air as clients gather in a circle, chanting a Lakota battle song. For Priscilla Lenares, the sound transports her back 11 years to her own time as a patient at the Native-led recovery center in San Francisco.

“I remember hearing the drum for the first time, and tears fell from my eyes,” she recalled.

Today, Lenares’ life is on track, but her childhood in Bakersfield was marked by gangs, violence and pervasive substance use. She told KQED that her parents struggled with addiction, and by middle school, she was smoking methamphetamine on weekends. At 18, she was dealing drugs to support her habit. Over the next decade, Lenares cycled through 10 treatment programs before boarding an Amtrak train to San Francisco, a mother of three children, carrying nothing but hope that her time at the Friendship House would be different.

The treatment center is a unique in-patient program combining Western medicine, like individual counseling, with traditional healing practices like smudging. The staff treated Lenares like family, and she found solace in singing prayers in the sweat lodge.

This month, Medi-Cal began to support more people like her by expanding coverage to include traditional healing practices like music therapy, rituals and ceremonial dances.

The director of the federal Indian Health Service, Roselyn Tso, has praised these practices for helping people for generations and called them a “vital link between culture, science and wellness in many of our communities.”

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced the two-year pilot program as a response to the health challenges facing Native Americans, who suffer from some of the highest rates of addiction and overdose death in the country.

Advocates are optimistic that expanding Medi-Cal coverage will increase access to culturally appropriate care and allow facilities to expand. However, that will all hinge on reimbursement rates, which have yet to be released.

Historically, substance use treatment in the U.S. has relied on clinical approaches like medication-assisted treatment, behavioral therapy and standardized detox protocols. However, these methods often fall short when applied to Native American communities.

Damian Chase-Begay, a researcher focused on American Indian health at the University of Montana, explains the difference. “Traditional practices are, by nature, holistic,” he said. “They are treating the person physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. They benefit the whole being, not just the physical symptoms.”

Scientific research on these approaches remains limited, but preliminary studies suggest that integrating cultural practices into addiction treatment can lead to higher patient engagement and

more positive recovery outcomes. Most existing evidence is qualitative, underscoring the need for more comprehensive research, which has lacked funding, according to Chase-Begay.

“What California is now covering under Medi-Cal is exactly what our Native communities have been asking to be covered for years,” Chase-Begay said. He believes this support could have potentially interrupted cycles of intergenerational trauma and substance use much earlier.

For Lenares, the Friendship House was more than a treatment center — it was a path to self-discovery. “I’m a woman who understands the medicine my ancestors prayed for,” she said. “A woman who knows her song. A woman who knows ceremony.”

Now, Lenares volunteers at the Friendship House and works full-time for a domestic violence agency. Her story is a powerful testament to the potential for healing when culture and medicine intersect.



American Indian College Fund spotlights scholarship recipients

Thank you for believing in Native students and trusting them to find a better future for their communities through the power of higher education. As we enter the New Year, we want to share a story of resilience and strength to remind you of the incredible dreams your gifts help keep alive.

Deanna grew up on the Navajo reservation, where more than 500 abandoned uranium mines sit and continue to threaten her community to this day. When the mines were closed, but never cleaned up, the message was sent that the world saw them as “disposable.”

But Deanna didn’t let the world continue making her feel invisible or forgotten. Now pursuing her degree in Environmental Science, Deanna is determined to advocate for environmental justice and ensure the next generation will have a chance at a **healthier** and **stronger future**. The support she has received from friends like you has given her the chance to pursue her goals without the weight of the financial burden holding her back. -Cheryl Crazy Bull



The Wall Street Journal

More Gen Z workers are going into trades as disenchantment with the college track continues, and rising pay and new technologies shine up plumbing and electrical jobs.

Read more: <https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/careers/gen-z-trades-jobs-plumbing-welding-a76b5e43?mod=e2fb>
[ils-birdwatching-and-indigenous-demonstration-sites/](https://www.wsj.com/lifestyle/careers/gen-z-trades-jobs-plumbing-welding-a76b5e43?mod=e2fb)

Like the Christmas Bird Count itself, the conflict started with the Audubon Society's interest in stopping a destructive tradition — in this case, the use of DDT. Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane had been first synthesized by Austrian chemist Othmar Zeidler in 1874; in 1939 Swiss chemist Paul Hermann Müller discovered its potential in staving off insects, and it was deployed during World War II to combat diseases like malaria and typhus among soldiers and civilians. Müller was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work with the pesticide in 1948, and in the 1960s the World Health Organization promoted its use around the world to fight malaria.

Scientists had first found evidence of the pesticide's harmful properties in the 1940s. In May 1948, *Audubon* [asked](#) its readers to document and report DDT's effects on "the normal bird inhabitants of orchards." And in April 1949, it published an article [titled](#), "Are The New Insecticides Dangerous To Other Wildlife?", which documented the DDT's cumulative effects and the way it provided a "fatal diet for adult birds and their young." Among the most effected were birds of prey. The chemical [led](#) to thinning of their eggshells, resulting in mothers crushing their young during the incubation period. All across the country, their populations collapsed. For example, observations from CBC before the 1960s [suggested](#) there were between 40 and 50 breeding pairs of peregrine falcons in New York state; by 1965, there were none. (The species was reintroduced in the 1980s, and its numbers have gradually increased since then. There is even a breeding pair nesting in the George Washington Bridge.)

Marine biologist Rachel Carson was pivotal in raising public awareness about the dangers of DDT. In 1962, she published the book *Silent Spring*, first serialized by the *New Yorker*, which exposed the environmental harm caused by DDT, brought the debate to the national stage, and helped catalyze the environmental movement. The title of the book was inspired by a letter to the editor Carson published in the *Washington Post*, where she describes the silencing of bird voices due to the decimation of bird populations across Britain and North America. She ended her piece with a question: "If this rain of death has produced an effect on birds, what of other lives, including our own?"

In July 1962, months before the book was published, the *New York Times* [reported](#) that the "pesticides industry has been highly irritated by a quiet woman author." Carson was called a hysterical, a communist, and a witch. Chemist Robert H. White-Stevens argued that if DDT was banned because of Carson — something she did not advocate — humanity would return to "a Dark Ages, and the insects, and the vermin will once again inherit the Earth."

Scientists continued to gather evidence of the effects of DDT not only on wildlife but also in humans. In 1969, the National Cancer Institute published a report on the long-term effects of DDT on mice, which suggested the chemical could lead to tumor development in other mammals, like humans. Three years later, the Environmental Protection Agency banned the use of DDT, citing evidence that DDT's toxic properties were magnified across the food chain. The first administrator of the agency, [William D. Ruckelshaus](#), [stated](#) that the data was "a warning to the prudent that man may be exposing himself to a substance that may ultimately have a serious effect on his health."

to continue reading: <https://www.historynewsnetwork.org/article/for-the-birds>

RELATED

[**A Strange Blight: Rachel Carson's Forebodings**](#)

Along the Colorado River ...

Shrinking Colorado River will take a toll on the nation's food supply

“The shelves and prices at your local grocery store could look a little different soon. The Colorado River, which provides water for about 15% of our country's agriculture, is shrinking, and the current agreement that divvies up the water usage ends in 2026. [The Imperial Valley in Southern California relies 100% on the Colorado River for its water. This valley receives less than three inches of rain a year, yet still produces about two-thirds of the country's winter produce. Farmers in the valley say the shrinking water levels and competing interests over river usage will badly impact the nation's food supply. “A lot of people say that the Colorado River and the diminishing water supply is an issue that affects 40 million people, because that's who rely on it. I think that number is too low. I think 100 million people rely on the water from the Colorado,” said fourth-generation farmer Andrew Leimgruber. ... ”](#) [Read more from Fox Business.](#)

Environmentalists hail bipartisan bill to protect native fish in Colorado River

“Legislation to protect endangered and threatened native fish in the Colorado River is heading to President Joe Biden's desk. Environmentalists are hailing the bipartisan work that made it possible. Proponents of the bill say it does more than just protect fish. “It's a win, win-win right now for fish, for river health, agriculture, recreation, birds and their Riverside habitat,” said Abby Burk with the National Audubon Society. She's not surprised that the bill got bipartisan support. “I feel that the demonstrated success of bringing people together with water projects in support of our connection to the river stands on its own, that when we really get down to the core of it, we all depend upon river health,” Burk said. ... ” [Read more from KJZZ.](#)

Utah will pay millions for farmers to leave fields empty — and leave water for the Colorado River

“Coby Hunt's farm field near the southeast Utah town of Green River would normally be filled with alfalfa growing up to his knees. This year, however, it was barren — pale gray dirt cracking under the late summer sun. The only green things were scraggly scraps of whatever accidental plants somehow survived without irrigation. It wasn't a pretty sight for Hunt. “It hurts,” he said as he surveyed the desolate field. “But there's also a benefit of it looking like this, right?” That benefit is taking the water he could have used to irrigate his land and leaving it in the nearby Green River, which flows to the increasingly strained Colorado River. “There's only so many pieces of the pie you can pull out before there's no pie,” he said. “Every little bit you can save adds more.” ... ” [Read more from the Salt Lake Tribune.](#)

AWWA: LCRI in current form ‘not feasible’

“On Dec. 13, the American Water Works Association (AWWA) filed a Petition for Review of the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. With the petition, AWWA looks to address the feasibility of replacing all lead pipe in water systems across the United States. The final LCRI rule was filed on Oct. 8, 2024, requiring drinking water systems across the country to identify and replace lead pipes within 10 years, although the LCRI compliance deadline will not begin until 2027. The LCRI will also require more rigorous testing of drinking water and a lower threshold requiring communities to take action to protect people from lead exposure in water. But AWWA has concerns about how it can be done effectively and affordably. ... ” [Read more from Water Finance & Management.](#)

Aboriginal women are reclaiming traditions of fire

Like Aboriginal women before her, Siobhan Singleton helps manage controlled burns—small, cool fires that spare the canopy—to shape the land.

Read in National Geographic: <https://apple.news/A7Pp6GpWwTjqaKABT1JKmPw>

naisi.brown.edu [https://naisi.brown.edu > educational-resources](https://naisi.brown.edu/educational-resources)
[Educational Resources | Native American and ... - Brown University](#)

The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional ...

Includes recordings of some past live-streamed NAIS-related events at Brown University. Dawnland; Decolonization at Brown on Colonialism in STEM (March 2021) Sarah Deer,



Presidential Lecture: "Sovereignty of the Soul: Confronting Gender-Based Violence in ...

[50 years of](#)

[The Oregon Trail: The hidden controversies of a video game that defined the US](#)

https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20241219-the-oregon-trail-how-a-50-year-old-video-game-defined-america?utm_placement=newsletter

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OpenAI Restructures

Artificial intelligence giant OpenAI revealed long-anticipated plans to [restructure the organization](#) Friday, announcing it will transition to a public benefit corporation with an associated nonprofit arm. The company said the move will allow it to raise the capital needed to finance its massive computing needs while balancing the interests of shareholders and the public ([see overview](#)).

Now valued at \$157B, the maker of ChatGPT originally began as fully nonprofit in 2015. In 2019, the organization moved to a hybrid model, with the relatively smaller nonprofit arm controlling a for-profit operation—a structure that played a role in a [failed attempt to oust](#) CEO Sam Altman in 2023.

In response to the new plans, an AI safety nonprofit joined [an existing lawsuit](#) brought by Elon Musk—an early investor in OpenAI and CEO of competitor xAI—attempting to block OpenAI's transition to a for-profit entity. The suit alleges the move violates OpenAI's founding charter, among other claims.

Take a deep dive into OpenAI's history, Musk's relationship with the group, and much more [here](#).

What Tribes can expect from a new White House and Congress in 2025

In my email from yesterday, I outlined the ways Donald Trump's policies attacked Native peoples during his first term in office -- from siding with fossil fuel corporations over Tribal sovereignty to targeting programs meant to invest in Native health and education.

Now, Trump and his Vice President-elect JD Vance have proposed seizing federal lands to address the housing crisis. This is the 21st century version of stolen land and violating our treaties and civil rights.

With just three weeks until Donald Trump is sworn in as the 47th president of the United States, we're preparing to defend Indian Country from the attacks to come.

We are also strategizing on how we can build broad alliances in support of issues which cut across the political spectrum

Judith LeBlanc Native Organizers Alliance Action Fund <info@nativeorganizing.org>

Damned ancient Mayans. In anticipation of the end of the world on December 21, I put off my Christmas shopping, blew off my writing deadlines, told a...

Legal weed entrepreneurs promised a windfall from tribal lands. Then it fell apart. The Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone are still picking up the...

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Celebrate Those in Your Community

Honor an incredible person, project, organization, or historic site open to the public that has transformed your community through historic preservation by nominating them for a National Preservation Awards. [Submissions](#) are due **January 10**.

The National Trust is now accepting nominations in the following categories:

- the Louise du Pont Crowninshield Award
- the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation National Preservation Awards
- the National Trust/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Award for Federal Partnerships in Historic Preservation
- the Trustees' Award for Organizational Excellence
- the Trustees Emeritus Award for Historic Site Stewardship

START YOUR SUBMISSION

Share your input on the innovative practice of preservation! The [PastForward 2025 Call for Ideas](#) is now open and we want to hear from you!

Submit your suggestions on content, speakers, and Milwaukee area tours by **January 10**.

The conference will specifically address innovations in the following important areas: a climate-friendly, community-driven repurposing of older buildings; a reimagined commemorative landscape that honors the contributions of all Americans; and an invigorated public sphere that serves as catalysts for civic engagement.



Port Huron, MI is turning vacant lots into edible parks! The city is starting by planting apple, peach, and pear trees near two elementary schools. Residents can pick fresh fruit for free. If all goes well, they plan to expand to more lots.



Embracing the Balance of Tradition and Regeneration

As the new year approaches, the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) reflects on the remarkable work of American Indian and Alaska Native producers. With a mission rooted in conservation, development, and sustainable use of agricultural resources, IAC continues to champion the innovation and heritage of Native producers across the nation.

Stewarding the Land and Culture

The spirit of regeneration builds with IAC's American Indian Foods (AIF) and Natural Resources programs, which support producers like Abianne Falla of the Chickasaw Nation. She founded [CatSpring Yaupon](#) following a drought in Texas, where she saw an opportunity to promote environmental stewardship and cultural heritage. Abianne's commitment to grassland restoration, soil health, and biodiversity exemplifies the values of the [Rege\[N\]ation Pledge and Seal](#)—an initiative exclusively available to Native producers—that honors sustainable agricultural practices and traditional ecological knowledge.



Another producer whose work integrates the values of the Rege[N]ation Seal and Pledge is Brigette McConville, owner of [Salmon King Fisheries](#) and a member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. For over 14 years, Brigette has honored traditional food harvesting and preparation methods, weaving cultural heritage into her operations. Her success highlights how Native producers are culture keepers whose values are rooted in respectful and reciprocal relations to the land, water, and fish.



Extension offers combined small-acreage and farm-to-fork certification program
Program offers support for new or up-and-coming Nevada farmers and ranchers
Education & Public Service | December 19, 2024 Claudene Wharton

[University of Nevada, Reno Extension's Herds & Harvest Program](#) is providing a certification program Jan. 22 – March 19 geared toward new or up-and-coming ranchers and farmers that will

allow them to obtain a Nevada Beginning Farmer & Rancher Level 1 Small Acreage and Farm to Fork Certification. The classes will take place 6 – 8 p.m., Wednesdays, Jan. 22 – March 19, with additional field trips touring small-acreage farms and ranches in Washoe and Douglas counties.

The program's courses will be conducted via Zoom and will draw upon the knowledge and experience of established Nevada agriculture producers and University of Nevada, Reno experts. Participants who complete the course, attend a tour or one of the spring Nevada agriculture conferences, and complete a business plan review will receive their Level 1 Certification. Course topics include:

- **Jan. 22:** An overview of small-acreage and farm-to-fork production, including identifying resources, understanding jurisdictions, developing a business plan and setting goals.
- **Feb. 5:** Soil health and livestock grazing, focusing on plant needs and how to determine the best plants for a given land space. This will include an overview of how plants grow, nutrients and day length requirements, and soil basics.
- **Feb. 12:** Value-added programs in Nevada and where and how to market products, including farm stands, direct market sales, sale yards, using Nevada Grown and social media. Participants will also learn how to develop a marketing plan.
- **Feb. 19:** Livestock production focuses on needs and requirements, including basics of livestock and poultry nutrition, feed management, reproduction and the Quality Assurance Program.
- **Feb. 26:** Meat quality, processing and training, including the characteristics of meat based on nutritional management and an overview of meat regulations in Nevada and the statewide meat program.
- **March 5:** Understanding Nevada water, focusing on the basics of water rights and water law in Nevada.
- **March 12:** Farm financial management in the 21st century, focusing on financially building a farm, building business skills and assets, estate planning, and balance and cash flow basics.
- **March 19:** Partners and funding, including an overview of opportunities and resources available to Nevada producers.
- **Field trip (dates to be determined):** Field trips touring local farms and ranches in Washoe and Douglas counties will be available to participants, who can choose to attend either a tour or one of the [Extension's Agricultural Conferences](#) to receive certification in the course.

The cost for the program is \$60 per person, and registration can be completed [online](#). For more information, email [Staci Emm](#), Extension professor, or call her at 775-312-0424; or email [Kaley Chapin](#), Extension outreach specialist, or call her at 702-467-2668.

Persons in need of special accommodations or assistance should email [Paul Lessick](#), civil rights and compliance coordinator, or call him at 702-257-5577 at least five days prior to the scheduled event with their needs or for more information.

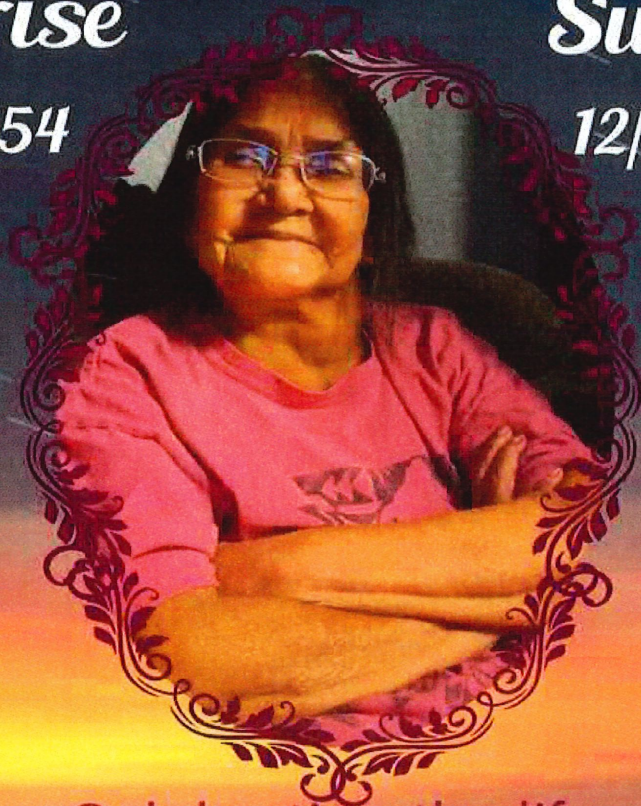
The Extension Herds & Harvest Program combines a series of workshops on different topics and provides educational business management and mentoring skill building to support Nevada agricultural producers. The project is supported by the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Scholarships (I-L) with February 1 Deadline

<u>IEEE Life Member History Fellowship</u>	\$25,000	February 01, 2025
<u>Jacksonville State University Music Company Scholarship</u>	\$2,000	February 01, 2025
<u>JLT Scholarship</u>	\$2,500	February 01, 2025
<u>John F. and Anna Lee Stacey Scholarship Fund</u>	\$5,000	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Agnes Manes Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Bush Memorial Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Charley Pell Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Cole (Leone) Memorial Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Curley Memorial Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Dr. Dave Walters Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Dr. James Reaves Memorial Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Dr. Perry & Kay Savage Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Farmers & Merchants Bank of Piedmont Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Four Year Communications Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Hallman Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Jeff Parker Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Johnson (J.C.U.) Memorial Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Kennamer Academic Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Leadership Scholarship</u>	\$30,000	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Moersch Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Montgomery Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Power Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Alabama Theatre and Film Scholarships</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Julian Jenkins Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Lovett Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JSU Mildred L. Sheppard Scholarship</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025
<u>JVS Chicago Scholarship Program</u>	\$4,000	February 01, 2025
<u>KPMG Future Leaders Program</u>	\$40,000	February 01, 2025
<u>Legacy Scholarship Program</u>	Full-Tuition	February 01, 2025
<u>Loyola University- New Orleans Need-Based Grants</u>	Varies	February 01, 2025

Sunrise
06/16/1954

Sunset
12/22/2024



Celebrating the life of
Diane Mae Kaiser - Scott

Viewing
on January 4th 2025
@ 10:00 a.m

Funeral services
On January 4th 2025
@ 11:00 a.m

Nixon gym | Burial @ Nixon
cemetery

* food and flower donations appreciated.