

THE MVSKOKE NATION YOUTH COUNCIL  
ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared for

United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) Executive Committee and  
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Prepared by

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**Introduction**

This report is a review of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council's (MNYC) events and service learning projects. UNITY sets guidelines for each youth council to complete at least one project per year in the four areas of community service, cultural preservation, environmental awareness, and healthy lifestyles. The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council has not only completed one project for the areas assigned, but has achieved doing two or more in all of the designated areas.

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**Mvskoke Nation Youth Council**

The purpose of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council (MNYC) is to empower the Mvskoke Youth by listening and taking action, enhance the voices of the youth by promoting positive changes and informed decisions, and affect all generations and sustain the Mvskoke way of life. The MNYC was created on June 20, 2015. The MNYC was the vision of the Mvskoke Nation Youth Services program, which was established in October of 2014. The vision provided an opportunity for a program to focus solely on working with Mvskoke Youth. As a result, Mvskoke Youth have the opportunity to express themselves, obtain resources, and understand their importance within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The impact of this creation allows direction for Mvskoke Youth to be the leaders of today and tomorrow.

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council currently has 41 active members with at least 25 members in attendance at each monthly meeting. The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council meets on the second Saturday of every month. Meetings include the singing of traditional hymns, a cultural activity, officer and committee reports, discussion of old and new business, and, occasionally, presentations from the community.

**Officers**

Speaker: Darrell Proctor II

2<sup>nd</sup> Speaker: Alexis McHenry

Secretary: Claudia McHenry

Treasurer: Karen McGirt

Sergeant at Arms: Joseph Kahbeah

Public Relations: Erin Bunner

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### **Community Service Events**

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council (MNYC) has been involved in many events that include community service or service learning. The MNYC has completed 1,439.5 hours of service from June 2017- May 2018. The MNYC is called upon many programs of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to provide service. For example, members often serve lunch to the elders at the community nutrition program. The youth enjoy services with the elders because they are able to recognize the significance of elders in our community while spending time with them, building connections, and learning from them. Members have also assisted in other elder activities, such as the Senior Games and a dance for elders held on Valentine's Day, called the Sweetheart Dance.



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## Cultural Preservation

Preserving Mvskoke culture is a priority for the Mvskoke Nation Youth Council. As a result, MNYC's Culture and Language committee incorporates culture or language into each regular meeting by facilitating an activity, such as games like the Mvskoke version of Jeopardy, Mvskoke Charades, or having open discussion about the importance of language/culture. The Culture and Language Committee also planned a trip to a traditional Mvskoke church in the spring. Furthermore, MNYC members also participated in the Oklahoma Native Language Youth Fair in April. All members who participated placed in their individual categories, in addition to winning 1st in High School Traditional Song. The MNYC was also represented in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Challenge Bowl. The High School team placed 2nd out of 31 teams. Two members competing on the MNYC's High School team received the Belvin Hill Scholarship.



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**Environmental Awareness**

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council has made a positive contribution to the environment around them both together and individually. The MNYC voted to begin a Gardening Project in March of 2018. A committee was formed and took a field trip to visit with Mvskoke farmers who taught the youth how to create a small green house using water bottles. The committee also met with the Sons of Mvskoke and decided to partner with them to expand the raised garden beds at the Okmulgee Elderly Nutrition Center.

**Healthy Lifestyles**

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council promotes healthy living and lifestyles to their members and Mvskoke people. The MNYC coordinated a major health event, the Mvskoke Mvnettvlke Temvrkv (Mvskoke Youth Games). The event was created to highlight the physical attributes of the Mvskoke people. This event was similar to the Olympics with traditional Mvskoke games to promote cultural involvement, preservation, and health and wellness. There were several categories in which Mvskoke youth could compete in: running, blow darts, stick ball, atlatl, bow shooting, and stickball throwing. There were 64 youth who participated in the Mvskoke Youth Games and represented were 7 schools or communities within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation territory. This project was connected to the national NB3 Fit Week and was a collaboration with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Museum and Cultural Archives, and the Muscogee Bow Shooters Society.



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The MNYC collaborated with Mvskoke Nation Youth Services to compete in an art contest that was created to bring hope and awareness to mental health issues. The art theme was “Wings of Hope.” Members created wings using feathers from the MNYC logo. The members wrote their name, things, or other people that gave them hope on feathers to make up the wings.





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The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council also collaborated with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Behavioral Health Department to create Creekchella, a wellness music festival created to raise awareness for mental health. The event featured many activities such as a wellness scavenger hunt, a kickball tournament, resource fair, live artists, and more.

### **Presentations**

The Mvskoke Nation Youth Council hosted a workshop at UNITY providing an interactive discussion about Mvskoke culture, traditions, stomp dance demonstration, and Q&A session. Additionally, MNYC participated in UNITY's Cultural Exchange night by providing a Mvskoke fashion show featuring traditional Mvskoke attire from different eras, dating back from pre-removal to modern wear.



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MNYC member Louisa Harjo created Heleswv Nakvhakv (Art is Medicine) to reach youth and help them experience art as therapy to express their emotions while embracing their cultural identity. She hosted a class with the elders in her home community as well as a calls for MNYC members.



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**Members of Distinction**

**Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) Challenge Acceptors**

2017-2018

- Laura Mason
- Tafv Sanders
- Charles Mason
- Jadynd Randall
- Ashleigh Fixico
- Kintv Deere
- Louisa Harjo

**WeRNative Ambassador**

2017-2018

- Iesha Phillips
- Karen McGirt

**Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair**

2018

- Charles Mason, Sutv Harjo, Louisa Harjo, Mahiya Ramirez, Tehilla Wind - 1st Place in HS Traditional Song
- Sutv Harjo - 1st Place MS Comic Strip
- Louisa Harjo - 2nd Place HS poster
- Mahiya Ramirez - 3rd Place HS Spoken Poetry
- Jay Fife - 1st Place HS Spoken Poetry & Language

**Jr. Miss Muscogee Creek Nation**

2018 - 2019

- Louisa Harjo

**Oklahoma Indian Student Honor Society**

2018

- Erin Bunner
- Jay Fife
- Jadynd Randall
- Darrell Proctor II

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**Mvskoke Women's Leadership Award**

2018

- Arianna Osborne - Middle School Student of the Year
- Iesha Phillips - High School Student of the Year

**2017 Sargent Shriver Youth Warriors Against Poverty**

2017

- Nancy Deere-Turney

**UNITY 25 Under 25 Award**

2018

- Jay Fife
- Ashleigh Fixico
- Nancy Deere-Turney

**Contact Information**

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