



DELAWARE TRIBE OF INDIANS

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR A TRIBAL CULTURAL CENTER

Approved by Tribal Council Resolution #2020-24 on October 17, 2020

The Delaware Tribe Cultural Center will focus on the needs and wants of the tribal community. It will provide cultural education through classes, lectures, and training programs. It will also serve as a gathering space for presentations about history, culture, art, music, dance, storytelling, feasts, and ceremonial activities/events.

The Delaware Tribe of Indians Cultural Center is a function of the tribal government as authorized by its tribal membership. The Tribe will perpetually maintain a Cultural Center that will house a Cultural Resources Department. The Cultural Resources Department staff will work with the tribal administration to obtain the funding necessary to perpetually maintain the Cultural Center.

The department will consist of programs and functions organized, managed, and conducted by a staff of tribal employees and volunteers.

Library – The tribal library consists of over 1,200 titles of books, publications, discs and tapes (both audio & video). All items in the library will be available to tribal members for reading & viewing.

Archives & Collections – The department houses artifacts, documents, and photos in its archival collections. Tribal members may view these items in person at the Cultural Center. They may also view and research the collections by computer access. The department will provide such access to tribal members at

computer stations in the Cultural Center.

Cultural Activities –The Cultural Center will be a site to organize and conduct cultural activities and events that provide experiential learning and social gathering. Such activities and events may include singing, dancing, feasting, storytelling, classes & lectures, and ceremonies.

History & Culture – The department maintains a considerable amount of historical data and institutional knowledge. It is shared and practiced at various tribal events & activities. Tribal representatives have also presented history & culture to non-tribal audiences across the country. Additional information can be found on the tribal website home page clicking on the Culture & Language button.

Language – Since 2005 the Lenape language program has been converting analog recordings to digital data now used on the language website www.talk-lenape.org. Word pages and lessons are presented at tribal events and cultural gatherings. Additional information can be found on the tribal website home page viewing the menu bar at the top and clicking on the Services/Programs drop-down menu tab, then click on Language Revitalization. The Cultural Resources Department staff shall perpetually maintain the language website and make it available to tribal members and other interested members of the general public.

Museum – The Delaware Tribe Museum is located in the Tribal Cultural Center. It presents the tribe's historic timeline through documents, maps, drawings, photographs, paintings and other artwork, textiles and apparel, artifacts and sacred objects, plus audio and video recordings. The Cultural Resources Department shall perpetually maintain the museum and make it available to tribal members and the general public. The Cultural Resources Department will develop and present cultural programming to support the museum and its exhibits.

It is important to tell our own stories

It is a unique institution to provide cultural education where we learn through objects.

A museum performs a role as an educational organization by collecting, preserving, and presenting objects in special settings called exhibits or displays).As an educational institution our museum provides **Interpretation** which is what we say about an object(s) as a vehicle for teaching.

In many academic and museum circles a “**museum**” is geared more towards a totally disconnected and disenfranchised tribal membership with no knowledge or spiritual connection with Delaware heritage & culture and a non-native public. It is also often considered a “safe” place to repatriate and store tribal artifacts and sacred objects. It is also considered an economic venture (tourism and gift shop).

Gift Shop – The department operates a small gift shop with many items bearing the Seal of the Delaware Tribe of Indians. Some books and tapes are also available for sale. The Gift Shop also accepts items on consignment for sale at the discretion of management. The gift shop is a Pendleton Woolen Mill distributor. Our current inventory has blankets and accessories. Online sales are also available at www.delawaretribe.org, viewing the home page and clicking on the Gift Shop button at the bottom of the page.

Strategic Plan foundational elements:

Delaware Tribe Constitution: Preamble...the tribal members state they are establishing a constitution to “**preserve our heritage**” implying their cultural heritage and historic identity. Article 5; Powers of the Tribal Council, Section E, “**to cultivate, promote, and encourage the culture and crafts of the Lenni-Lenape**”.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Delaware Tribe of Indians is to **promote and preserve the culture, growth, and development of the Lenape**, and to protect our tribal sovereignty by exercising our right to self-governance.

Vision Statement: The vision of the Delaware Tribe of Indians is to provide quality services to our Elders, Youth, Veterans, and Tribal Members; **to maintain and protect our culture and traditions**, and to continue to move forward as a self-dependent sovereign nation.

Values and Behaviors:

Tribal approaches to community development and cultural awareness should involve everyone in the community, using ceremony as a balancing and healing process. These are the values and behaviors that reflect our culture both historic and contemporary:

Adaptability – We welcome new direction and innovation. As each succeeding generation becomes aware of their history and culture we must be open to new ways of gathering, keeping, and sharing our traditional knowledge and practices.

Communication and Teamwork – we will foster an open, collaborative and inclusive environment. We realize that historic colonization and assimilation has created obstacles to obtaining traditional knowledge.

Constituent Focus – we develop and provide effective, progressive programs and services for our own tribal members.

Hospitality – In keeping with our historic values, our cultural gatherings will provide a welcoming environment for our tribal members and their families.

Professionalism – we will reflect dignity, trustworthiness and integrity.

Quality – we will insist on quality in work, take pride in results, and embrace continuous learning through professional development.

Relationship – We will nourish the spirit of partnership and create an environment where everyone's contribution is valued.

Responsibility

Promote accountability in all aspects of behavior.

Respect

Honor the diversity of all cultural values and perspectives.

Reciprocity

Embrace the mutual and cyclical exchange of sharing and receiving.

Stewardship

Manage effective and efficient use of resources.

Goals:

Revitalize Delaware/Lenape culture and promote it to support unifying tribal members.

- Language class
- Dance Class
- Singing Class
- Traditions & customs:
- Food (crops and gardens, harvest, cooking classes with lectures, herb garden for medicinal and culinary purposes)
- Burial practices; historic and modern, cemeteries, ceremonies; ceremonial leaders & attendants.
- Storytelling – knowledgeable and trained storytellers.
- Arts & Crafts; classes & instructors.
- Promote the business of arts & crafts through Gift shop and Artists Directory. Displays and exhibits throughout center and around campus.
- Network with other departments, programs and committees to incorporate culture & language into their services.

Come together to unify, heal, & celebrate our members, culture and heritage

Strategy: Promote and Encourage Cultural learning

Priorities:

- Support a more comprehensive culturally relevant curriculum for students geared toward non-academic areas such as music, dance, arts and language.
- Integrate cultural elements into tribal services provided by the government administration.
- Develop and fund Cultural Scholarships to attract tribal members to dedicated cultural involvement.
- Promote an active NAGPRA Awareness and Enforcement Program.

- Welcome all tribal members to participate in cultural activities.
- Support and expand teaching of language to young children through active and on-going classes and training activities such as the Summer Gathering Youth Culture Camp.
- Cultural outreach to members living outside the tribe's service area.

Strategy: Record Inventory of Cultural Resources and Historical Assets

Priorities:

- Initiate a history and genealogy research library project to focus on correcting Delaware History
- Documenting ceremonial knowledge and preserving intellectual property.

Strategy: Enhance Access to Cultural resources through multiple mediums

Priorities:

- Publish articles on Delaware culture and history on a regular basis in the Delaware Indian News, tribal website, and social media sites.
- Support dissemination of Delaware history and culture in books, magazines, documents and other print material plus all electronic equivalents (DVDs, CDs, online downloads, etc.)
- Make cultural education materials available on the Internet while retaining ownership of intellectual property where practical and applicable.
- Offer on-line language classes and training materials.

This is the conclusion of the Strategic Plan as presented to the Delaware Tribal Council. This plan is subject to amendment or revision by the Delaware Tribe of Indians. ***