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American Indian Ambassadors Program: *Medicine Pathways for the Future*

Report on Gathering One Neah Bay, Washington February 21 - 27, 1994

With the Makah People as hosts, bald eagles soaring overhead, the backdrop of pine-covered mountains, and the sounds of the incoming tides, the first Gathering of the 1994 Class of American Indian Ambassadors was very rewarding and productive. Governance was the theme for this first session. Because the Makah Tribe is one of the tribes participating in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Self-Governance Demonstration Project, it was fitting that we discussed the issues of tribal governance and sovereignty at Neah Bay.

The Makah Tribe recently acquired the Cape Flattery Air Force Radar Facility and converted it into a Resort Conference Center. The Makah's Cape Flattery Conference Center was the site of our Gathering. The staff and facilities were very accommodating and fit our needs well. Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) was proud to be one of the first groups to use the new Center.

Mary Jo Butterfield, a member of the AIO Board of Directors and an Ambassador Program Advisor, assisted in the arrangements and coordinated all activities with the Makah Tribal Government and community. AIO is extremely grateful to Ms. Butterfield and to her family and coworkers who provided transportation and social activities for the Ambassadors. The entire community welcomed and helped AIO and the Ambassadors throughout the week. We began the Gathering with a special prayer by a Makah elder, John Hottowe. The Community Center hosted the Opening Reception that was well attended by tribal members. Traditional songs were exchanged and Ambassadors visited with the community. David Sones, a 1993 Ambassador and Makah Tribal member, hosted a very popular activity at his home giving the participants the opportunity to meet some of the local community in an informal setting.

At the Makah Senior Citizens Center, the group partook in a traditional Makah naming ceremony of a young woman who was an intern for AIO last summer, Ticishway Windy Boy. In this ceremony, she was given her adult name which symbolizes her passage from a child to a woman. Her family performed dances and songs and held a traditional "potlash" or "give-away."