



Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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RESPONSE

For immediate release:
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Indian Time Article Regarding Brayden Sonny White

I am writing this statement to clarify comments that were made in the March 26th article on the Indian Time newspaper regarding the Champion for Change Award that was bestowed upon Brayden Sonny White from The Aspen Institute.

I begin by stating that my comments in Indian Time were not accurately reflected and taken out of context. The reporter inquired if the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Mental Health Program has a formal relationship with Brayden and, specifically, his Helping Hands Program. At this time, the two programs do not have a contractual relationship—though the Mental Health Program is always willing to partner with initiatives and individuals that support efforts to prevent suicides in our community.

I am pleased however, that Brayden has been an active member and has participated in community sessions held by the Akwesasne Suicide Prevention Coalition since 2015. In doing so, he has educated himself and has shared his thoughts and ideas with the coalition. I am appreciative for his contributions and am pleased with his interest in suicide prevention, especially with youth.

The Tribe's Mental Health Program continues to welcome him and others to the Akwesasne Suicide Prevention Coalition; which strives to safely promote education, intervention and healing around this important issue of suicide prevention using evidence-based interventions.

We hope that through our combined efforts we will be able to address some of the factors that attribute to youth suicides. There are many, so I encourage others to lift up and support individuals willing to take on this huge endeavor, as opposed to questioning their desire to help our people in a public forum.

Skén:nen/In peace,

Christine Venery, LCSW80909

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