



# St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Mohawk Tribe Seeks Recognition for WWII Code Talkers**

*Mohawk Language used in Allied Invasion of Europe*

**Akwesasne Territory** – The Navajo code talkers were the largest group of Native Americans in World War II to use their language skills to confuse the enemy. Widely recognized in literature and film, they have become famous for their exploits. But many other tribes used their traditional languages to develop virtually unbreakable codes for battlefield communications. The Mohawk Tribe is one of these tribes and they are seeking recognition from the federal government for their contributions to the war effort in the 1940s. The Mohawks performed this duty during the invasion of Europe during World War II. They worked with General George Patton's Third Army. It was thought that a German professor, called back to active duty in the German Army, could possibly understand Navajo. Therefore a different Native American language was used: Mohawk.

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council has sent a letter of request to the United States Mint to develop a Code Talkers Congressional Medal for Mohawk Code Talkers. "Those Mohawk Veterans of World War II who used the Mohawk Language to help the Allied Forces win victory demands Tribal and U.S. Government distinction as true heroes," the letter stated.

The tribal council has appointed Jeffrey C. Whelan to serve as the Mohawk Tribe's official liaison to assist the United States Mint in the design of the medal. Whelan, a veteran of the Vietnam conflict, is also the Commissioner of the tribe's Division of Social Services and the Vice Chair for the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. Veterans Affairs Committee. He will serve as the Tribal Veterans Representative and develop a Veterans Program.

In addition to developing a list of all Mohawk World War II veterans, he is also developing a list of veterans from any time period. "I have no problem developing a list that goes back to the Revolutionary War," he remarked. "If veterans or relatives of veterans would like to have somebody on that list, please contact me." The list of veterans will help to determine the level of benefits that veterans receive and allow the tribe's health clinic to collaborate with the Veteran's Administration to provide funding for medical services to veterans.

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The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the St. Regis Mohawk People.

**Helping Build A Better Tomorrow**

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