



IN-NA-PO

Indigenous Nations Poets

For Immediate Release

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Indigenous Nations Poets To Host Trio of #LanguageBack Workshops

In-Na-Po, [Indigenous Nations Poets](#), is delighted to announce the launch of three inaugural #LanguageBack Workshops to be held in Wisconsin during November and December of 2024. Funded in part by a grant from [Wisconsin Humanities*](#), with funds from the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#), the In-Na-Po #LanguageBack workshops center on writing poetry that incorporates Indigenous languages and tribal teachings. In-Na-Po welcomes Indigenous language learners of all levels to participate in a one-day Indigenous language and poetry workshop with the guidance of Indigenous language experts, community members, and poets. The three workshops will take place as follows: Menominee and Mohican Language and Poetics: November 9th, 2024 at [College of the Menominee Nation](#), Keshena, WI, Oneida and Anishinaabemowin Language and Poetics: November 23rd, 2024 at [University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee](#), Milwaukee, WI, and Anishinaabemowin Language and Poetics: December 7th, 2024 at [Lake of the Torches Casino](#), Lac du Flambeau, WI. All of the #LanguageBack Workshops are free and will include meals, supplies, and literary resources for all participants. Knowledge of Indigenous languages or experience writing poetry is not required.

“We both learn and teach Indigenous languages through poetry writing and performance,” says In-Na-Po Founding Director Dr. Kimberly Blaeser. “Because the language carries important teaching—environmental, spiritual, and subsistence teaching (among others)—using the language in poetry can also carry that Traditional Indigenous Knowledge into the world at a time our planet desperately needs it.”

With help from project and site coordinators Dr. Ryan Winn (College of the Menominee Nation), Dr. Michael Wilson (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee,) and Carol Amour, (First Nations Traveling Resource Center), In-Na-Po staff, including Blaeser (Project Director), Emily Clarke (Project Manager), and Sunni Parisien (Project Assistant) have invited the following list of Indigenous language experts and poets to collaboratively facilitate the #LanguageBack workshops: Richard Oshkeshequoam (Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin), Brock Scheiber (Mahican), Dr. Yekuhsi•yó Rosa King (Oneida Nation), and Wayne Valliere (Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe).

“Teaching and learning Indigenous languages in a community setting can be a tool to community wellness, Tribal Sovereignty, and self-determination,” says language expert Dr. Rosa King. “Learning our languages in our community builds our nations, relationships, and restores our kinship practices. Our languages are a medicine and can be healing for our people and build our identity as a collective. By reclaiming languages in our own spaces, we are able to build up our nations once again, heal our communities, empower our learners, and ensure our survival for the next seven generations.”

The #LanguageBack workshops will include leadership from language experts, Indigenous poets, project and site coordinators, and In-Na-Po staff. Together, they have planned a day of presentations and communal activities geared to help participants stretch their language skills using the tools of poetry. Filmmaker Dusan Harmic of [Stumptown Media](#) and Lane Hall of the [Overpass Light Brigade](#) will be present at the workshops to film participants partaking in activities as well as conduct interviews for a larger In-Na-Po film project. Throughout the day, participants will take part in Indigenous language lessons, delve into the world of Indigenous poetics and discuss how language and poetry intersect, write their own poems inspired by the use of Indigenous languages, and have the opportunity to appear on camera. The day will conclude with a community dinner and reading in which participants will have the opportunity to discuss and celebrate new language knowledge and the work they created.

In-Na-Po is a national poetry community committed to mentoring emerging writers, nurturing the growth of Indigenous poetic practices, and raising the visibility of all Native writers past, present, and future.

*Wisconsin Humanities strengthens our democracy through educational and cultural programs that build connections and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs throughout the state. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this project do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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