

KAWENNÍ:IOS

Akenhnà:ke | Summer 2025



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Photo contribution: Madison Breen

Chief's Note: Taking Time To Reflect

Shé:kon sewa'kwé:kon,

I am happy to provide a warm opening to the Summer Edition of *Kawenní:ios*, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's quarterly magazine. We are excited to share stories within celebrating our community activities, upcoming events, and the people that make our organization a great place to be.

As I reflect on my first year as Tribal Chief, I have had both the honor and responsibility to lead alongside a wise and knowledgeable council of my peers. I have had the privilege to learn from their years of leadership as I forge my own path forward. Through this new endeavor, I have received an immense amount of support from not only Tribal Council, but from our dedicated team across the organization. For that, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude. Thank you to the Tribal Council team and to everyone at the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe who has supported me in this role. It has truly been an honor to serve with you.

With the close of the 2024-2025 school year, I'd like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to the dedicated students, especially this year's graduating class. You've reached an important milestone in your lives, and your hard work deserves to be celebrated. As you gather with family and friends this summer, I encourage everyone to stay safe and make wise choices. Have fun, enjoy the sunshine, and take pride in your accomplishments.

I also want to take a moment to recognize Carey Terrance Jr., who continues to make strides in the NHL and show the world that our people can compete at the highest levels in sports. Congratulations, Carey, on your success and progress as you move through your professional hockey career. Your dedication and perseverance are an inspiration to all of us, especially to the younger generation. You've shown that great achievements are possible with dedication, hard work, and perseverance. Keep inspiring our community and beyond, and thank you for being such a positive role model.

The number of local businesses in Akwesasne have grown significantly over the years and the range of services promises something for everyone. By shopping at local stores, you are supporting our friends, neighbors, and community as a whole. Shopping local strengthens our economy and helps fund important programs that benefit the community right here in Akwesasne. To our Canadian friends visiting Welcome to Akwesasne! We invite you to enjoy everything our community has to offer from our gaming operations and raceway to our restaurants and businesses.

As we coast through the warmer season, I hope you take time to enjoy our waters with your family and friends. The St. Lawrence River has much to offer from boating, kayaking, fishing, and so much more. If you plan to enjoy the river by boat, please take all safety precautions by carefully reviewing the operator's manual and ensuring you obtain or renew your boater safety and non-member fishing permit. Boating licenses are required both in the U.S. and Canada—let's all do our part to stay safe while having fun. Wishing each of you a safe, joyful, and restful summer.

Niawen'kó:wa,
Chief Don Thompson Jr.

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A Bald Eagle Called Moose

Mia McDonald, College and Career Specialist



"According to the NYSDEC, Bald Eagles are one of the largest birds of prey found in North America. At full maturity, Bald eagles stand about 30 inches tall, with a wingspan of 72-84 inches, a weight between 8 and 14 pounds, and live to be about 30 years old."

Photo contribution: Mia McDonald

Background Photo contribution: Annie Cree



We live at a point on the St. Lawrence River where many eagles hunt, so it's a common experience for us to see one. However, we noticed a young eagle on the shoreline that looked as if it were injured. As we approached, it did not fly away so we could tell something was wrong. It seemed disoriented and scared. Initially, we thought that maybe something was wrong with the young eagle's wing because it couldn't really fly.

After feeding the young eagle raw moose meat donated by our neighbor, we were able to build trust between us and eventually capture the eagle with a fishing net and some blankets. Due to it being late in the evening, there were no environmental agencies available to bring the eagle to a rehabilitation center, so we ended up keeping the bird overnight. We were able to connect with the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)**, who picked up the eagle and transported him to the Cornell University Wildlife Hospital for evaluation and care.

Since then, the hospital has kept us updated on the progress of the eagle, who we named **"Moose"** because of his love for the moose meat we fed him. Sometime later in the fall, we received a call that Moose was being prepared for release but started acting strangely again, not flying or eating, so they were keeping him for further observation.

In the last update we were informed that Moose had died in March, and his testing came back positive for the Bird Flu. They assume he most likely contracted it from consuming another bird or animal that has the virus, but there is no definitive way of knowing.

Photo contributions: Mia McDonald



The sad part is that this eagle was a young Bald Eagle, still sporting its spotted, immature feathers. We did everything we could to keep it calm and let him know we were just there to help. So it broke our hearts to hear of its passing.

According to the information shared by the **NYS DEC**, other eagles have also been infected. I am sharing Moose's story as a way to commemorate this young, beautiful bald eagle and raise awareness of this devastating virus affecting his species of bird. For more information on bird flu please visit the **NYS DEC** website at dec.ny.gov

My Brother's Keeper

Sub-Chief Agnes "Sweets" Jacobs



On May 1st, I attended the NYS Education Department My Brother's Keeper Symposium. My Brother's Keeper (MBK), was launched in 2014 by President Obama. This is a way to tackle the service gaps that boys and young men of color face in the present day. To have them see their full potential and leadership that each person has the ability to achieve. These opportunities can help to achieve these goals for our young men. MBK has expanded to 50 communities and seven tribes.

There was well over 1,000 attendees in this year's symposium. The theme was "Their Highest Potential". It is our responsibility to our youth that we all work together to help each individual reach their highest potential.

This year I was so proud to see the induction of the eighth class of MBK. I reflect on the resiliency of our people and how this goes hand in hand with MBK. To lead with excellence and resilience and to see these young men transform and begin to reach their own full potential. This symposium was uplifting, I wish this for all. To gain education, mentorship, achieve goals and to believe in your potential is something that is so powerful with all this in one room.



In closing, to have witnessed the gathering of dedicated students, administrators, community leaders, elected officials and supporters was moving. So much so that you could feel it in the room, bursting with pride, and the opportunity to forge ahead and pave the way for successful careers and higher education.

If you ever get a chance to listen to the keynote speaker: Brian Favors take advantage. He is the co-founder of Breaking the Cycle Consulting Services and specializes in preparing educators and parents to utilize culturally responsive teaching methods to increase academic achievement in at-risk populations.

Also, please look up Jordan Pierre, a Syracuse University Alumnus. He was also an uplifting keynote speaker and is a youth advocate and media strategist. He is a force of modern storytelling and inspires action. He has harnessed the power of his voice to educate, uplift and mobilize communities.



2025 CHILDREN'S POWWOW

Teionkwarihwaienawà:kon Community Services Building Grand Opening

Previously known as the former IGA, the all new Teionkwarihwaienawà:kon Community Services Building is now fully renovated and open to the public. The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe celebrated the Grand Opening opening of the Teionkwarihwaienawà:kon, meaning “we work together, we help each other,” on Friday, June 6, 2025. This event gave community members a chance to get a first hand look at their new hub for many essential services.

Executive Director Tsiorsa Barreiro shared, “The Community Services Building represents a significant investment in our tribal staff and community. Use of the historic ARPA funding for the renovation improved core facilities for important Tribal programs that serve Akwesasro:non including Food Distribution, Heating Assistance, Economic Development, Tribal Courts and Environment Division. Community members have a centralized location to access services and a facility they can be proud of. Teionkwarihwaienawà:kon will be a lasting reminder of the historic federal support to tribal nations during the pandemic, and more importantly, our Tribe’s ability to successfully manage those resources for the lasting benefit of the people.”

The Community Services Building also houses the Compliance Division, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Social Services Division, Community & Family Services Administration, Akwesasne TV, Emergency Management and Safety, Security, Homeowners Assistance Fund Program, with satellite offices for Facilities and Maintenance, and Technical Support.



From Left to Right: Sub-Chief Benjamin Herne, Chief Michael Connors, Chief Beverly Cook, Sub-Chief Derrick King, Chief Don Thompson Jr., Executive Director Tsiorsa Barreiro



Traditional Medicine and Support Programs:

Strengthening Mohawk Culture and Identity

Mose Herne, Director, CMC

It is widely known that Indigenous people often prefer traditional medicine to western biomedical treatment, opting for natural and herbal medicines and traditional ceremonies over pharmaceuticals and psychological counseling. Others may prefer western medicine and forego traditional medicine altogether, while others may prefer a combination of traditional medicine and western medicine to treat their ailments.

The Traditional Medicine program is housed within the **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Kanikonri:iohne “Good Mind Counseling Center.”** The program takes a whole person approach to helping clients and relies on traditional knowledge, skills and practices to help heal people dealing with physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual challenges.

The SRMT Health Promotion and Planning Program recently hosted a “Lunch and Learn” presentation featuring **Tekatsitionkie “Tسیونkie” Cook, Traditional Medicine Support Worker.** Tسیونkie shared shortened versions of several stories - including the Creation Story, the Great Law, the “Good Message” from Handsome Lake, and others - that remind us of our original teachings.

Tسیونkie explored the association between the Creation Story and unresolved grief, stressing the importance of “letting go” of relatives who have crossed over to the spirit world. He spoke eloquently about the beauty and peace of the spirit world. In this context, holding on to relatives who have crossed over may be viewed as selfish. He also spoke of the significance of ceremony in processing with grief, sharing examples of how each part can help us move toward acceptance.

From a traditional lens, healing is a process that is individualized for the client. For physical challenges, healing can include herbal medicines picked while thinking of the person being helped. Herbal medicines may include burdock root or blueberry leaves to treat diabetes and inflammatory diseases, for example. Both are powerful antioxidants and antimicrobials and coupled with prayer and ceremony, can help to reduce symptoms and improve quality of life.

“Our culture, our songs, and our ceremonies reflect who we are as a people. We all have strengths and weaknesses, and traditional medicine helps fortify the mind,” Tسیونkie explained. This may be viewed as analogous to contemporary concepts of resilience, a teaching that the traditional medicine program brings to all its work with individual clients and partner agencies, including area schools.

The Traditional Support Program is housed within the **Social Services Division** and works with families receiving services. The program offers a range of services, from advocacy and cultural competency training to classes making traditional crafts and transportation to cultural events.

Ian Clute, Traditional Support Worker, shared an example of advocacy that is not uncommon among traditional families: Children in traditional families can have excessive absences when attending ceremonies throughout the year, which can get the attention of school officials. In these cases, Ian meets with school officials to explain the significance of going to ceremony for the family. This promotes understanding and dispels any misconceptions before they develop.

The Program also helps clients and their families navigate the spectrum of Social Services programs, and provides opportunities for families who want to put a “toe in the water” with traditional teachings. **Ian** and his co-worker, **Norah Benedict,** hold a number of classes making traditional crafts, including rattles, drums, cradleboards, tobacco pipes, kastowas (headdresses) and condolence canes. The program also provides the cultural component for many retreats and cultural camps held across Akwesasne.

The Traditional Support Program also provides cultural sensitivity training for **SRMT Health Services** and other programs that employ relatively larger numbers of non-Natives or Natives who lack cultural knowledge. *Ian explains, “We do the teaching side of things. The traditional medicine program does the ceremonial part; we would help them prepare and bring them to ceremony.”*

He expressed some concerns about the future of cultural knowledge, *“Currently only about 20 people that do this type of work, and many are older. We need the younger generation to ensure this knowledge is carried”* Ian suggests the central problem may be the loss of language. He benefited from his grandfather helping him understand what was being done and why. He says that without this, young people may lose interest and focus on other things instead of their culture.

Akwesasne is fortunate to have traditional medicine and Traditional Support Workers to provide culturally-grounded services for those who opt for it alone or in combination with contemporary services. **Traditional medicine services can be accessed through the Kanikonri:iohne “Good Mind Counseling Center” by calling (518) 358-3145. Traditional Support Services are available to clients of the social services programs and can be reached by calling (518) 358-2360.**



Tسیونkie Cook



Photo contributions: Austin Herne

Photo contributions: Austin Herne



Norah Benedict and Ian Clute



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Introducing the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Center for Media and Communications

Mose Herne, Director, CMC

The Communications Department recently underwent a reorganization and is now the **Center for Media and Communications (CMC or the “Center”)**. I proudly serve as its inaugural Director and look forward to fully staffing the Center very soon. We have taken on expanded roles to improve the services we provide to Tribal Council, programs and services, including public relations and social media, graphic design and web services, and publications. The **CMC** is also responsible for distributing press releases, news stories, and now Akwesasne TV activities.

Photo contributions: Austin Herne



New positions include an Administrative Assistant to improve coordination of projects and provide administrative support to **CMC** staff, a second Graphic Designer to reduce turnaround time on program requests, and a full-time Webmaster to help develop and maintain the Tribe’s website.

We work closely with many Tribal divisions, including Environment, Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure, and Health Services. We are also working with the Office of Emergency Management and Safety, and Office for the Aging on special projects, ranging from crisis communication and elder abuse awareness prevention to health promotion and traditional medicine.

We are very grateful for this opportunity and thoroughly enjoy working with my exceptionally talented team, as well as Tribal Council and Tribal programs and services. Storytelling is an integral part of our history and culture, and we look forward to telling those stories of cultural revitalization, innovation, and resilience in the coming months and years.

To contact the CMC please email communications@srmt-nsn.gov



The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Agriculture Program



Emma Phillips, Agriculture Program Manager

The Agriculture Program has been hard at work planting and getting the farm ready for the summer season! The Agriculture Program team is notifying community members about a few new things happening at the Mother Earth Farm.

First, an introduction to who is the Agriculture Program: **Emma Phillips** is the **Program Manager**; **Ida Thompson** is the **Administrative Technician**; **Ahtkwiroton Skidders** is the **Laborer Supervisor**; **Teddy McDonald** is the **Carpenter**; **Christopher Adams** is the **Equipment Operator**; and the **Agricultural Laborers** include **Leslie Benedict Sr**, **Karontawakon Roundpoint**, **Gabe Cook (Seasonal)**, **Vance Adams (Seasonal)**, and **Mary F. Arquette (Seasonal)**. Our team is excited to continue to provide fresh, local, healthy, and culturally relevant foods for you!

Second, a reminder about upcoming Community Days. **Every Tuesday and Friday until October**, the Agriculture Program is inviting community members to come to the farm and join us in our garden from **10:00am – 4:00pm**. This is a great opportunity to get your hands dirty, learn about food production, and to enjoy the outdoors! If you are interested in stopping by on the Community Days, please give us a call at (518) 358-5937 ext. 5070 or 5059.

Third, when you see the **Mother Earth Eggs** in stores around Akwesasne, please know that buying these eggs supports our team and local agriculture! Our team works to collect the eggs every morning, washes, inspects and packages them daily. They are delivered to stores around Akwesasne every Friday.



You can find Mother Earth Eggs at the following locations:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Speedway | • Jock's Kwik Stop |
| • Truckstop #9 | • Akwesasne Duty Free |
| • Red Fox | • Corner Convenience in Massena |
| • CT's Country Market | • Potsdam Co-op. |
| • Wild Bills | • Happyeats |
| • Bears Den Main and Western Door | • the Senior Center |
| • Twinleaf Akwesasne | • Big Spoon Kitchen in Potsdam |
| • Akwesasne Mini Mart | |

If you are interested in sourcing eggs from the Agriculture Program, please contact Ida Thompson by phone at (518) 358-5937 ext. 5059.

Starting around mid-July, you will find produce from our program at the **Akwesasne Farmer's Market** from **10:00am – 2:00pm** at Generations Park and at our **produce stand** at the Akwesasne Cultural Center, Museum, and Library every Wednesday from **11am – 2pm**. Please stop by and see all of our locally produced goods! From our garden, we'll have the following vegetables available throughout the season: cucumbers (slicers & pickling); onions (red, white, & yellow); garlic; cabbage (green & purple); kale (curly & winter blue); collards; broccoli; cauliflower; brussel sprouts; tomatoes (roma, beefsteak, cherry); zucchini; long pie pumpkins; crooked neck squash; honey bear squash; and patty pan squash. In addition, we'll have white corn available in washed/dehydrated packages and as flour. All of our vegetables are grown without the use of pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides!



The Agriculture Program is providing information on our Mother Earth Pork share purchases. We currently raise piglets to about 7 months in age. During that time, the piglets are raised outdoors with plenty of space to roam and forage. Once a group is nearing 7 months, we will put out a community announcement about available pig shares. A pig share is half a pig and will cost \$150 (paid to the Agriculture Program via the SRMT Finance Office) and \$80-\$100 in processing fees (paid at pick-up at Tri-Town). The processing fees are dependent on the size of the pig. Depending on the size of the pig, your share could be 100 to 120 lbs of meat. You choose the types of cuts you would like by submitting a cutting sheet. Community members are welcome to sign up at any point and we will contact you when the next batch is going to butcher.

If a meat share is too much, we will have meat packages available at the Akwesasne Farmer's Market and our Produce stand. These are \$35.00 and include a variety of cuts along with your choice of sausage (hot, Italian, breakfast links, or bulk).



Last, the Agriculture Program is hosting monthly educational and hands-on workshops focusing on sustainable agricultural topics. Keep an eye out for the announcements on the SRMT Programs & Services Facebook page. A few examples that we have hosted in the past include composting and vermiculture, soil testing, pest management and planting. If you are interested in co-hosting a workshop, we'd love to collaborate. Thank you for supporting our local Mother Earth Farm!



SRMT congratulates Robert Dwyer on his retirement

Madison Breen, Communications Officer

We honor **Robert Dwyer** and are grateful for his decades of exemplary service, leadership, and dedication to national security and community partnership.

As **Port Director** at the **Massena, NY Land Port of Entry**, Mr. Dwyer played a critical role in one of the nation’s most unique and sensitive border environments—between Ontario and Quebec, Canada, and the sovereign lands of the Akwesasne Mohawks. Bob’s work has demonstrated a deep respect for the Akwesasne Mohawk community by developing strong relationships built on communication, trust, and mutual understanding.

officers. His leadership extended beyond operations; he built bridges between agencies, cultures, and communities.


Niawenkó:wa/thank you Robert Dwyer, for your unwavering commitment to border protection and collaboration over the years. Wishing you all the best in your well-deserved retirement!

We would like to welcome and congratulate **Tracy Casey** in her promotion to **Port Director** at the **Massena, NY**. Casey has been working with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and CBP as the Tribal Liaison at the Massena Port for over six years. She has provided great connections and has helped former Port Director Dwyer building the meaningful partnership with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe.

Under Mr. Dwyer’s leadership, the Massena Port of Entry became a key part of the **Beyond the Border initiative**, strengthening binational cooperation while honoring the region’s cultural and jurisdictional complexities. Mr. Dwyer’s efforts helped ensure that border security and Indigenous sovereignty could coexist through meaningful partnership.

For nearly **30 years**, Mr. Dwyer led with integrity, compassion, and a tireless commitment to mentoring the next generation of






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AKWESASNE

SHARING THE MOHAWK SPIRIT

EXPERIENCE AKWESASNE



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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Food Distribution Program

Katelynn Delormier, Communications Specialist

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Food Distribution Program (FDP) is reimagining the process of accessing local and nutritious food for the southern portion of Akwesasne, with the introduction of an elevated client experience and state-of-the-art facility. FDP aims to make food sovereignty a reality while putting an end to the stigma around government-assisted food for our local community. In previous years, offerings through the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reserves was limited to providing pre-packages boxes of canned goods and non-perishable items only. With the dedication of their staff, a variety of fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy products have hit our shelves.

Melanie Conners, FDP manager, shares, “During my time here, I was able to add fresh produce and eggs to the list of food offerings. This was a big accomplishment for me and our clients because our community deserves fresh products in their monthly benefits.”

Photo contribution: Lucy Barnes

Located at the new Teionkwarihwaenakon Community Services Building, tribal members can access the program through a private entrance and skip the inconvenient travel to nearby towns. The new FDP layout mirrors a modern grocery store, with aisles freshly stocked with grain products, low-sodium canned goods, and industrial-sized refrigerators showcasing a wide selection of vibrant fruits and vegetables; meats like chicken, beef, and bison; dairy products; and of course, eggs. With a growing list of over 70 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) products, their program has brought the community closer to healthier meal options while instilling a sense of pride and dignity in the process.

Akwesasne’s unique landscape presents multijurisdictional challenges when accessing fresh and affordable food, especially those relying on federal nutritional supplementary programs. Though stores in Akwesasne accept NYS benefits, like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), convenience comes at a high cost. Free delivery is yet another bonus of the program for clients, especially elders, who face financial and physical challenges traveling to and from the grocery store. Through the collective efforts of their staff, the program achieved its goal of creating a space where clients felt empowered about their food choices, regardless of income level.



The Program currently serves **75 clients**, and with the implementation of an **elevated client experience**, we expect that number to grow steadily over the next year. When asked about the program’s positive impact, clients collectively expressed appreciation for the caring staff and the convenient location. A woman who preferred to stay anonymous shared, *“There is more variety of food choices, and it keeps my grocery bill low. I am very grateful for this program.”*

The FDP is available to tribal members as an alternative to SNAP. To be eligible for benefits, clients must meet income guidelines and reside on the reservation or in neighboring towns such as Fort Covington and Bombay. The process to apply is simple and seamless. The compassionate and dedicated staff assist clients with the application, requirements, and certification. Once certified, clients may begin visiting the grocery store.

If you want to learn more about the program, how to apply, or see the complete list of food offerings, please visit www.srmt-nsn.gov.



Photo contribution: Austin Herne

Protecting Our Gaming Operation Through Licensing: What You Should Know

Jill Benedict, Executive Director, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission

Tribal gaming operations continues to provide critical revenue and employment for our community. At the heart of protecting this resource is a strong licensing system managed by the **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission (SRMTGC or the “Commission”)**. Licensing helps ensure that the people working in and around our gaming operation meet the highest standards of honesty, reliability, and responsibility.

Why Are the Standards So High?

Casinos involve significant amounts of cash moving through games, count rooms, and cages. This cash-intensive environment requires us to be vigilant to ensure the safety and integrity of our operations. Strict licensing standards help protect our Tribal assets by reducing risks such as:

- Money laundering
- Theft, collusion or cheating
- Involvement from organized crime
- Misuse of tribal resources

These standards are not only important for the Tribe’s financial security, but they also preserve the long-term success and reputation of our gaming operations.

Why Licensing Matters

Licensing is not just a formality—it’s a cornerstone of fairness and security for everyone involved. Each person working at the gaming facility, whether handling cash, working in security, or even serving food, undergoes a background check and must be licensed by **SRMTGC**. This ensures that the gaming environment remains safe, transparent, and trustworthy for employees and patrons alike.



Photo contribution: Kahentawaks Perkins

Jeremy Thompson, Licensing Manager, explains, “The Licensing Department is the frontline defense of a tribal casino’s integrity, ensuring every individual and entity involved upholds the legal, ethical, and cultural standards that protect tribal sovereignty and sustain economic prosperity.”



Photo contribution: Austin Herne

Gaming vs. Non-Gaming Employees

Not all jobs are the same, so **SRMTGC** uses a system based on the risk and responsibilities of each position:

- **Gaming Employees:** Positions such as dealers, slot technicians, cage cashiers, and security staff undergo a detailed background investigation, including fingerprinting and a review of their criminal and financial history.
- **Non-Gaming Employees:** Roles like housekeepers, food & beverage, maintenance, and hotel staff still require a license but may have fewer requirements based on the nature of the job.

What If Someone Has a Criminal Record?

We understand that everyone’s past is different, and having a criminal record doesn’t automatically disqualify candidates from being licensed. **SRMTGC** looks at each situation individually. Some offenses, particularly older or non-violent ones, may not be a barrier to employment.

Serious offenses such as theft or fraud, may disqualify an applicant, particularly if they are recent or related to gaming. However, the Commission also considers rehabilitation and the time passed since an incident. Our goal is not to judge, but to make sure that everyone involved upholds the standards that keep our casino safe.

What to Bring to Your Licensing Appointment

To make the process as smooth as possible, applicants should bring the following to their licensing appointment:

- Birth certificate (original document)
- Valid photo ID (driver’s license, tribal ID, or passport)
- Social Security card or proof of SSN
- Any legal documents related to name changes, arrests, or convictions
- Contact information for previous employers and places you have lived for the past 5 years
- References from at least 4 people

Ongoing Responsibility for Licensed Employees

Getting a license is not a one-time event. Current license holders must report any new arrests, police contact, charges, or changes in personal information immediately to **SRMTGC**. This assists us with continuous reporting and protecting the integrity of the casino.

A Commitment to Our People and Our Future

Licensing is about more than rules—it’s about accountability, integrity, and pride in what we’ve built. By following strong licensing standards, the **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission** helps ensure that the casino remains a source of strength for our people, now and for future generations.

About SRMTGC

The **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission** is an independent regulatory body responsible for overseeing all gaming activities on tribal lands. Its duties include licensing gaming facilities and employees, conducting background investigations, and ensuring compliance with tribal, federal, and state regulations. The **SRMTGC** oversight helps protect the health, welfare, and safety of employees and patrons, and ensures the fair and honest operation of gaming activities.

Have more Questions?

If you have questions about the licensing process or how it works, **SRMTGC** is here to help. Please call us at **(518) 358-2222 ext. 1122** or email us at **licensing@mohawkcasino.com**.

07
AUG

Save the Date 2025 Disability Awareness Day!

Location:

Teionkwarihwaienawà:kon
Community Services Building, Room 103C

Time:

10:00am – 2:00pm

Hosted by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's
Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Email: tvr@srmt-nsn.gov

For accomodations please contact: (518) 358-2276



Make adventure a part
of your summer.



Photo contribution: Annie Cree



Air Quality Program

Silver
Telly Award
Winner!

Dust
Bunny

Photo contribution: Austin Herne

Madison Breen, Communications Officer

The **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Air Quality Program** educates the community about climate change and the importance of clean, fresh air. This program is led by **Angela Benedict**, who has served the community through numerous air crises—from the pandemic, when there was uncertainty about how the air would be affected by the virus, to the Canadian wildfires that created unsafe air quality for all of Akwesasne.

Over the past couple of years, the **Air Quality Program** has expanded its outreach efforts by helping community members receive air filtration systems for their homes, hosting community climate reduction meetings and education sessions, and, most recently, receiving funding to support innovation for a climate-resilient Akwesasne.

The **Air Quality Program** hosts **Community Climate Reduction Meetings** from **February to September**. These gatherings provide education on climate change and offer a space to hear your thoughts and suggestions on what changes you'd like to see in building a climate-resilient Akwesasne.

As the warmer season gets in full swing, the Air Quality Program team would like to remind everyone that poor air quality can have a major impact on community members. Make sure you are checking the air quality in your area, whether it's due to pollen, pollution, or the increasing threat of wildfire smoke.

For more information on the **Comprehensive Climate Action Plan for Akwesasne** or tips on improving home air quality, contact the **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Air Quality Program** at (518) 358-2953 or by email at environment@srmt-nsn.gov.

BOATERS SAFETY

IN EFFECT

ANYONE OPERATING A BOAT MUST HAVE A BOATING LICENSE

DON'T WAIT REGISTER FOR YOUR COURSE TODAY

FOR ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE SRMT ENVIRONMENT DIVISION: environment@srmt-nsn.gov



SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE
ENVIRONMENT



Council Recap

Photo contribution: Katelynn Delormier

Katelynn Delormier, Communications Specialist

Now that summer is in full swing, it is prudent to encapsulate the events leading up to this issue of Kawenní:ios. May and June have been incredible months, marked by achievements and progress in critical areas that have been decades in the making.

Across the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's social media accounts, the Tribal Council has shared updates on the land claim, the award presentation recognizing the "Akwasasne Hometown Hero," and collaborated with state and federal agencies to find common ground in the endeavor to enhance public safety for Akwasasne and surrounding areas, among other initiatives.

The efforts of the Tribal Council demonstrate their commitment to the community by recognizing the outstanding achievements of our next generation of Indigenous changemakers, facilitating opportunities to grow relationships with state and federal partners to enhance border security and law enforcement cooperation collectively, and affirming tribal law enforcement jurisdiction on the territory of Akwasasne and land claim areas in the near future.

In the spirit of recognizing rising athletes who inspire hope and demonstrate perseverance and commitment, the three-time International Ice Hockey Federation

(IIHF) World Junior Champion and now New York Ranger, Carey Terrance Jr., shines on and off the ice, especially across Indian Country. Terrance's significant feats with Team USA and second-round selection in the 2023 NHL Draft have earned him the Hometown Hero Award.

During the award presentation, Sub-Chief Benjamin Herne commended Terrance, "You are a beacon of inspiration for young athletes, especially those across Indian Country and here in Akwasasne. You've shown them that greatness is not a distant dream but a path that begins right here at home." Carey's path to the NHL shows us no dream is too big with the drive and determination to chase it.

On May 12, the Tribal Council convened in Albany, NY, for the NYS Senate-Native American Relations Subcommittee Roundtable, bringing together tribal nations across the state to discuss issues affecting our communities. Tribal Council addressed barriers to breaking ground on the proposed new St. Regis Mohawk School project. Additionally, Tribal Council addressed delays moving the Akwasasne Mohawk Land Claim toward ratification.



Photo contribution: Austin Herne

The proposed new St. Regis Mohawk School project included a site relocation and a \$110 million state-of-the-art education campus. Tribal Council also addressed the need for economic development, creating opportunities for tribes to benefit from nation-to-nation trading, and last, state transportation funding for State Route 37.

Following the Roundtable, the Tribal Chief Beverly Cook testified before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs in Washington, D.C., on June 11, in support of bill H.R. 2916. The proposed legislation, H.R. 2916, would ratify and confirm the Agreement of Settlement and Compromise to Resolve the Akwasasne Mohawk Land Claim in the State of New York. The Tribal Council will update the community as the bill progresses through the House, Senate, and final approval.

Closing out the month of May, Tribal Council welcomed Columbia University's 2025 International Program on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Policy cohort to Akwasasne. Participants from across the globe learned firsthand about modern Indigenous affairs, the impacts of the Indigenous movement, and the functioning of the interstate system over the past half-century.



Photo contribution: Austin Herne



On June 2, the Tribal Council hosted federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to discuss approaches to strengthening public safety and border security efforts. Tribal Chief Beverly Cook presented “Common Ground,” a look into the United States and Indigenous people’s history, impacts of generational trauma, disproportionate effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), and challenges related to law enforcement intervention in Akwesasne’s modern society.

Attendees included the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police Department and Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service, United States Attorney’s Office – Northern District of New York, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Drug Enforcement Agency, Homeland Security Investigations, Border Patrol, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, New York State Police, and Royal Mounted Canadian Police Service. This historic meeting was the first time local, provincial, state, and federal agencies gathered in Akwesasne to discuss law enforcement approaches to respectfully navigating Akwesasne’s unique jurisdictional landscape.

As we look ahead to the rest of summer, the strides made over the past two months signify what can be achieved with determination and vision. From advocating for a long-standing claim and hosting law enforcement leaders to celebrating far-reaching dreams and collaborating with Indigenous changemakers, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe continues to collaborate toward building a better future for our community and Indian Country. These efforts lay the groundwork for resilient future generations of Akwesasne leaders and professionals in our growing workforce.

Nia:wen’kó:wa to all who contribute to our strong and prosperous community. Stay tuned for our next issue of Kawenní:ios in the Fall of 2025 for more community stories, events, and progress updates.



Photo contributions: Austin Herne



The program’s primary focus includes human rights studies, international law, political science, Indigenous studies, and other topics of interest.

In addition to touring the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, the cohort embarked on an immersive cultural guided tour of the Akwesasne Cultural Center’s Museum and received a warm welcome at the Akwesasne Freedom School in Raquette and visited the new school site as well.

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe has actively participated in the International Program on Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and Policy cohort for several years. The partnership between Columbia University, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Auckland in New Zealand facilitates the cross-cultural exchange of knowledge on Indigenous rights and issues.



Migraines...

with Mary Herne, FNP



Madison Breen, Communications Officer

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is recognizing the innovative work of its employees, including Mary Herne, a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and proud Akwesasró:non.

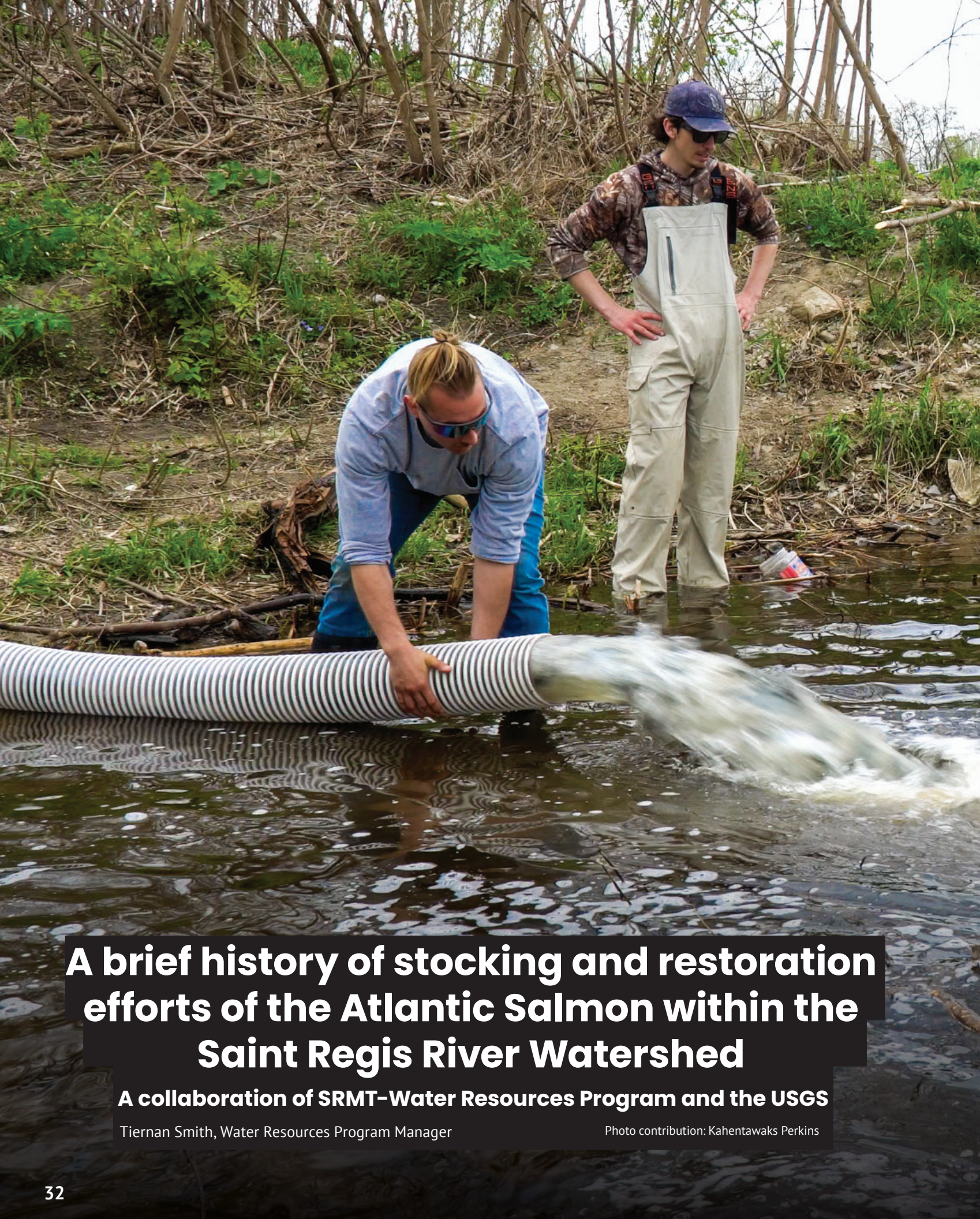
Herne has served with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Health Services Division for years. She is also an Executive Board Member of the Association of Migraine Disorders and serves on the board of the Indigenous Migraine and Headache Advisory Forum.

Herne focuses much of her work on migraines in Indigenous populations, an area she says requires both clinical and cultural approaches.

"We use a combination of medical treatment and traditional approaches," Herne said. "Sometimes that includes medication, but it also involves stress management, dietary adjustments, and community support."

According to a study by the Indian Health Service, approximately 22.1% of Native Americans experience migraines or severe headaches. Recent data collected by Herne suggests a significant number of Akwesasne residents suffer from chronic migraines, with contributing factors including genetics, stress, poor sleep, and dietary habits.

Herne's work highlights the importance of culturally sensitive healthcare practices and the need for targeted treatment strategies in Indigenous communities. If you would like to schedule an appointment to discuss any migraines or severe headaches, please reach out to The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribes Health Service Clinic at (518)358-3141.



A brief history of stocking and restoration efforts of the Atlantic Salmon within the Saint Regis River Watershed

A collaboration of SRMT–Water Resources Program and the USGS

Tiernan Smith, Water Resources Program Manager

Photo contribution: Kahentawaks Perkins

Since the early 2000’s the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe’s **Water Resources Program (WRP)** has been working in collaboration with the **United States Geologic Survey’s (USGS) Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Science (TLAS)** to research the complexities and possibilities for the reintroduction of Atlantic Salmon to the greater Saint Regis River Watershed and the Saint Lawrence River, within the reach known as Lake Saint Francis, situated between the Massena, NY Power Generation complex to the Beauharnois Dam complex in Montreal, QC.

In the years since, multiple habitat suitability studies had been conducted on the small cold water tributary streams to the St. Regis River, specifically those below the St. Regis Falls area which represents the first naturally impassable barrier to fish migration beyond the former, now decommissioned and removed Hogansburg Dam. These studies identified locations that either remained, or had once again become suitable from a water quality and habitat perspective for Atlantic Salmon to be spawned and reared through the juvenile stages prior to making their downstream journey to big water as Smolts. Ideally, these fish would have had the appropriate opportunities for home water imprinting, a crucial process for migratory fish such as the Atlantic Salmon, which returns to its natal streams to spawn several times annually before completing its adult life cycle.

Over the past decade or so modest attempts to restore the species through stocking have been an annual event within the tributaries, unfortunately and without explanation minimal success had been documented and concerns mounted that the stocked fish might be migrating fully downstream to the Atlantic, a pathway that would lead to the inability of these fish to return back to within the system they were raised.

The dams and lock system located at Montreal would make the upstream journey almost impossible. And, following the fish throughout their downstream life would not have been feasible until the past few years.

With recent advancements in fish tracking technology, specifically Acoustic Telemetry, a unique opportunity was developed through the existing partnership between **WRP** and **TLAS**. We designed a study where we’d surgically implant acoustic tag devices into several hundred of these fish in an effort to take advantage of the recently installed and functional Acoustic Tracking Receiver network within both U.S. and Canadian waters, including the Ocean Tracking Network. This array of tracking antennas allows our tagged fish to be uniquely identified from their stocking location, downstream in the St. Regis River, throughout Lake Saint Francis reach and if they continued to wander downstream, out into the Atlantic Ocean (hopefully not).

As of this spring, we have been able to stock approximately 310 fish with tags implanted and as of the Fall of 2024 have begun to see what looks to be positive preliminary results with no tagged fish leaving the Lake in search of the Ocean. These initial results have given us a beam of hope that continued efforts could show positive results and allow the justification for scaling up our stocking program toward achieving population densities that promote successful seasonal spawning migrations up into their natal tributary streams and thus restoring a Native Fish Species that had been locally extinct for more than a century.

Please check out the media works of Justin Dalaba, a partner in memorializing these efforts over the past few years. The outcomes are available at:
<https://www.justindalaba.com/p/restoring-silver>

Candidly: Celebrating the Spirit of Akwesasne



2025 AKWESASNE POWWOW

*September 6 - 7, 2025
Lamoureux Park, Cornwall*

*Traditional Craft & Food Vendors
Dance, Drum, & Smoke Dance Competitions
Free Parking*

**Grand Entry Begins
Noon**

**Gates Open to the Public
10:00 A.M**

**This is a drug and
alcohol free event**

**No pets allowed
(Service Animals Only)**

www.akwesasnepowwow.com



Akenhnà:ke | Summer 2025



Featured Spotlight: Madison Breen

**Want to have your photo or artwork featured?
Email communications@srmt-nsn.gov to submit your content.**



www.srmt-nsn.gov

Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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*Ska'tne ionkwaio'te ón:wa wenhniserá:te ne sén:ha aioianerénhake ne enióhrhen'ne
Working Together Today to Build a Better Tomorrow*