

Northwest Connection Family Resources

2025

Spring Tribal Conference

**A Day of Language,
Culture, Teachings, and
Activities**

Friday, April 4, 2025

Registration 8:00 am

Conference 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

**Flat Creek Lodge, 10290 State Rd 27 S
Hayward, WI 54843**



For more information call:
(715)634-2299 ~ (800) 733-KIDS ~ wisconsinchild.org

2025 Spring Tribal Conference Speakers

David J. O'Connor is originally from and is a member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe) in northern Wisconsin. In January 2012, he became the American Indian Studies Consultant at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). In David's role at DPI, he supports school districts' efforts to provide instruction on the history, culture and tribal sovereignty of Wisconsin's American Indian nations and tribal communities, often referenced as Wisconsin Act 31 and the education of Native American students.



Bwaakoningwiid
David J. O'Connor

David provides training opportunities and presents at conferences and workshops throughout the state of Wisconsin on American Indian education and studies. He also provides general consultation on issues related to the education of American Indian students. David serves as liaison to American Indian nations and tribal communities of Wisconsin; tribal education departments, Wisconsin Indian Education Association (WIEA), Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) and the Special Committee on State-Tribal Relations.

David received both his Masters of Science degree in Educational Leadership Policy and Analysis (ELPA) and Bachelors of Arts degree in History with certificates in American Indian Studies and Chican@ and Latin@ Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is also a graduate of the School District of Ashland where he did his K-12 education and a graduate of the Bad River Tribal Head Start where he started his education and his early learning.

Dr. Wendy Makoons Geniusz is a Bear Clan woman and an enrolled Citizen of the Red River Métis Nation. One of her grandmothers was from Opaskwayak, a Cree reserve in Manitoba, and one of her grandmothers was from Poland. Geniusz was raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with Ojibwe language and culture, and she has taught Ojibwe language for over two decades. Geniusz is the author of *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Anishinaabeg Botanical Teachings* and the editor of *Plants Have So Much to Give Us, All We Have to Do is Ask: Anishinaabe Botanical Teachings*, which was written by her late mother, Mary Siisip Geniusz.

Errol Geniusz is an enrolled member of the Sokoagon Chippewa. He recently graduated from the Master's of Social Work Program at York University in Toronto. Errol also holds a Master's Degree of History, with an emphasis on the histories of Indigenous peoples in the Great Lakes Region, from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. He holds a bachelor's degree in American Multicultural Studies with a minor in Sociology from Minnesota State University Moorhead. Ojibwe language studies have long been an important part of his life and academic career. He was fortunate enough to grow up with the language listening to his grandparents George and Mary McGeshick speak Ojibwe. He has also worked with elders in various Wisconsin and Michigan Ojibwe communities and several Minnesota Ojibwe communities, and he has taught the Ojibwe Language.



Dr. Wendy Makoons Geniusz
and Errol Geniusz

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Teaching About Cultures vs. Teaching Culturally

Bwaakoningwiid David J. O'Connor

This workshop will help participants understand how to incorporate American Indian Studies into your teaching and learning. Many educators have been taught to teach about cultures; however, students will be better engaged and retain more information when educators teach culturally. In this session, not only will resources and materials about the American Indian nations' histories, treaty rights, sovereignty and cultures will be shared, but participants will also be given ideas, examples and direction regarding teaching culturally. Participants will gain the knowledge and information needed to integrate the components of First Nations Studies into lesson plans, pedagogical practices, material selections and curriculum.

A Day of Language, Culture, Teachings, and Activities

Dr. Wendy Makoons Geniusz and Errol Geniusz

Join us as we spend the day exploring the importance of language, culture, teaching and some interactive activities. Conversations will include healing and moving forward together, respectful interactions and learning about and respecting Indigenous cultures as we move through the sessions as listed below:

The Four Orders of Creation

Respectful Interactions Between Care Providers and Families

Why Indigenous Languages Matter For All Ages

Dream Catchers, Cradle Boards, and Moss Bags: Our Original Early Childhood Education

Nimisenh, Zhingob (My Elder Sister, Balsam): Teachings on Respect and Caring for Oneself

Activities Making:

Dream Catchers, Origami, Lotion, and Foot Baths



Northwest Connection
FAMILY RESOURCES

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One registration per person. Please make copies if needed. Registration
Deadline: Monday, March 24, 2025

Name _____
Program or School District _____
Address _____ County/Tribe _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Registry # _____ OR _____
Birthdate _____ & last 5 digits of your Social Security
Number _____ (required to complete registration)

Conference Registration: \$50.00
Early Bird Registration (Ends March 14th): \$40.00
Breakfast and Lunch will be provided.

Please send your completed registration form
to the address below, scan the QR code or register
online at: <https://forms.gle/1MVuJQqyq3zzRmVU6>



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