



For Immediate Release

April 4, 2022

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Shawnee Youth Place in 2022 Virtual Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair

MIAMI, OK – The Sam Noble Museum announced the Shawnee youth winners of the 2022 Virtual Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair (ONAYLF). The Shawnee Tribe’s Language Immersion Program had three winning entries to the ONAYLF this spring, including two taking first place in the Spoken Language category and a third-place winner in the Film and Video category. “We cannot express how proud we are of our students who participated in the Sam Noble Language Fair,” said Joel Barnes, Director of the Shawnee Tribe Language Immersion Program. “Their success only encourages us to do more and continue to build on the success of our participants.”

The ONAYLF videos were published on the group’s Youtube page.

Pre-K-2nd Grade Division –

First Place, Cecily Blanchard (Absentee Shawnee Tribe) & Kaya Stand (Shawnee Tribe)

[“Far Away Friends”](#)

Cecily is in kindergarten, and she is the daughter of Eric and Jessica Blanchard of Norman, OK and great-niece of George Blanchard. Kaya is a first grader and the daughter of Trenton and Kaci Stand of Quapaw, OK.

6th-8th Grade Division –

First Place, Mya Blanchard (Absentee Shawnee Tribe) & Gage Stand (Shawnee Tribe)

[“Two Shawnee Kids”](#)

Although only in fourth grade, Mya competed alongside Gage Stand (sixth grade) in the 6th – 8th Grade Division. Mya is also the daughter of Eric and Jessica Blanchard and the great-niece of George Blanchard. Gage is son to Trenton and Kaci Stand and Jacque Cabrera of Quapaw, OK

9th-12th Grade Division –

Third Place, Eloisa Roach (Shawnee Tribe)

[“The Turkey and the Fox Tale”](#)

Eloisa is a 10th grader from Iowa City, IA and the daughter of Steve and Silvia Roach. Steve Roach is a Community Language Program instructor with the Shawnee Tribe Language Immersion Program.

“The team at the Shawnee Language Immersion Department in piloting this brand-new program has been doing amazing work,” said Chief Ben Barnes. “Work that has been reflected within these children.”

WATCH the [2022 Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair](#).

EXPLORE the [ONAYLF Information & results](#).

About the Shawnee Tribe

The Shawnee Tribe is a sovereign nation of more than 3,700 citizens living across North America and abroad. Tribal headquarters are located in Miami, Oklahoma, and Shawnee Chief Benjamin J. Barnes was elected in 2019. In January 2020, Chief Barnes issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency for the Shawnee language. The Shawnee Tribe Business Council adopted resolution R-01-06-20-K, which officially declared the years 2021-2030 as the Decade of the Shawnee Language and pledged tribal resources flow toward a comprehensive plan to create fluent speakers from the youngest Shawnees and deploy language curriculum to all Shawnee people. For more information, visit shawnee-nsn.gov.

