

Kake Regional Cultural Healing Center

Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake, Alaska

With support from Alaska Friends Conference

“My Name is Wanita Bunny James. The reason I’m on the advisory board for the Healing Center here in Kake is because I have lost two of my daughters to alcohol. One of my daughters left behind two kids, one of whom is autistic. And the other left behind four children. They both passed within one year apart. My heart was broken for what has seemed like forever. My wish is that if we can save a mother's child from all this heartache we’ll have accomplished something. The loss of a child is devastating.”

The Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake has an agreement with the US Forest Service to lease an unused, well-maintained Forest Service bunkhouse for a healing center. The new *Kake Regional Cultural Healing Center* will be a place for people to experience land-based healing for substance abuse, rooted in cultural practices and values.

Alaska Friends Conference (AFC) is supporting the Tribal Council by fundraising for the Native-led Kake Regional Cultural Healing Center in Southeast Alaska. (Kake is pronounced like “cake”.)

More information from the Tribal Council follows.

Please consider donating as individual Friends and as Friends meetings, churches, and organizations as an act of reparations. Friends had a day school and other missions in Kake, Alaska from 1891 to 1912. We are seeking to raise \$75,000 by November 2023 toward the insurance and other start-up costs that are needed first.

To donate on-line, click here

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=Y2UNTTZRDBFJQ Other ways to donate are at the end of this article.

Initial donations received by November 30, 2023 will help fund insurance and Kake's next steps towards getting their center up and running. Further donations will be gratefully accepted toward the Native-led priorities of the Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake. Thank you.

Gunalchéesh! Thank you!

Jan Bronson and Cathy Walling

Co-clerks, Alaska Quakers Seeking Right Relationships with Indigenous People (AQSRR) —a committee of Alaska Friends Conference

Opening Doors to Healing

The Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake:

We have all experienced how tough it is for our Native people to heal from trauma and addictions in the current systems. We are passionate about developing a program founded on our culture and the environment that will effectively help our people heal. We envision a Regional Cultural Healing Center using a 16-bed Forest Service building approved for this purpose. This endeavor holds immense promise for Keex Kwaan (Kake) and all tribal communities in Southeast Alaska.

Goals of this project:

The objective of this Regional Cultural Healing Center will be in-patient treatment for substance abuse with a focus on land-based healing founded in cultural practices.

We are building regional buy-in using listening sessions to gather ideas from our people about what this center can look like and cultural practices we can use. In addition, we have been promised some funding to begin a feasibility study. We will begin with assessing the building and ensuring it can be insured before transferring it from the Forest Service to the Organized Village of Kake (OVK). In addition, we seek a partner to run the center once the programming is developed.

Specific Support Requested:

The Quaker community has resources that could support the success of this project.

- Support the cost of insurance for the building
- Contribute toward the costs of planning, start-up, and ongoing operations.
- Identifying foundation and grant funding possibilities to support Ongoing Operations.

History of the Quakers in Kake:

We are still learning about the history of the Quakers in Kake. The Quakers had a day school in Kake, Alaska, from 1891 to 1912. We are beginning to acknowledge the full impacts of settler colonialism on Indigenous communities.

Quotes from Kake Community Members.

Simon Friday — “Healing is important, but healing close to home is everything”

My name is Lolanda “Lonnie” Cavanaugh. I am Tlingit and belong to the Keex’ Kwaan people. Let’s encourage people to become the very best version of themselves by offering them hope.”

“The impact the Cultural Healing Center will have on the community and people is tremendous because it is going to help our people find themselves as Native individuals through the cultural based practices and ceremonies that will be offered and it will also help people connect back to the land and the beautiful lifeforce that sustains all of Creator’s creations, in turn helping the participants find balance and peace within.”

“The Healing Center will provide different forms of connecting and healing in our communities. Relearning our ways of life provides the place inside of us that challenges us to be better people to ourselves and others. Learning and connecting to stories of our ways of life add to our wellness. My weaving is the part I will share today.”

“My wife and I have been sober for 13 years and if this program had been around when we were getting sober we would have taken advantage of it. Practicing our way of life and our culture has played a big role in our sobriety and I feel that this Healing Center could benefit a lot of our people by giving them tools to help them stay sober.”

More Information:

- **“Where a Logging Camp Once Stood, a Center for Healing Takes Root”**
(Article in Earthjustice, August 13, 2023)
<https://earthjustice.org/article/tongass-alaska-kake>
- **“Our Way of Life: Keex’ Kwaan Culture Camp**
<https://sustainablesoutheast.net/our-way-of-life-keex-kwaan-culture-camp>
- **“Alaska Friends Conference Formal Apology to Alaska Native People”** (August 2022)
<https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/alaska-friends-conference/announcements/afc-formal-apology-alaska-native-people>

- “Resources consulted in developing AFC Apology to Alaska Native people”
<https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/alaska-friends-conference/resources/alaska-quakers-seeking-right-relationships>

How to Donate:

To donate to the Healing Center fundraising initiative through Alaska Friends Conference, please make your check out to Alaska Friends Conference with “Kake” in the memo line and send it to:

Alaska Friends Conference
PO Box 241732
Anchorage AK 99524-1732

To donate by credit card through PayPal, click on this link to go to the AFC home page in QuakerCloud:
<https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/alaska-friends-conference> and then click the “Donate” button at the top of that page. Then set your amount and frequency, and adjust the “Use this Donation For” drop-down menu to select “Kake Healing Center” option.

All money donated in this manner will be sent to the Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake. AFC hopes to have a hefty collection to offer by the end of November 2023. The initial goal is to raise \$75,000 by November 2023 toward the insurance and other start-up costs that are needed first. All donations earmarked for this after November 2023 will continue to be given toward the priorities of the Tribal Council of the Organized Village of Kake.

*Alaska Friends Conference is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization in the USA.