



United States

# MCC Thunderbird Powwow Unites Native Tribes for Cultural Showcase on March 9

The MCC Thunderbird Powwow is a vibrant celebration of Native American culture, featuring traditional arts, dances, and foods, fostering community and awareness.



Geeta Pillai

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The Mesa Community College (MCC) Thunderbird Powwow, scheduled for March 9, is set to be a vibrant celebration of Native American culture, organized by the American Indian Institute and the Inter-Tribal Student Organization. This event, which brings together various tribes, will feature traditional dancing, art, crafts, singing, and food at the Southern and Dobson campus, marking an important cultural gathering for the second year in a row since the hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Reviving Tradition and Education

Shineka Clay, a member of The American Indian Institute, highlighted the importance of the powwow in promoting Native American representation and educational opportunities on campus. With over a thousand native students at MCC, the event aims to foster a sense of community and awareness of indigenous cultures among students. The inclusion of gourd dances, performed to honor veterans and tribal leaders, and the presence of host drum groups Wild Krew and Southern Slam, are central to this celebration of heritage and resilience.

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drumming contest judged by Nathan Littlechild Sr., with significant prizes for the winners. This

competition, along with the presence of vendors selling indigenous jewelry, apparel, and artwork, and an array of food, arts, and crafts, ensures a rich cultural experience for attendees. The event's goal to eventually host a dance competition highlights the organizers' commitment to expanding opportunities for cultural expression and recognition within the community.

### Building Bridges and Representation

The MCC Thunderbird Powwow not only serves as a platform for celebrating indigenous cultures but also acts as a bridge connecting the college's native students with their heritage. By providing an avenue for cultural education and celebration, the powwow strengthens the representation of Native American students on campus and fosters a greater understanding of indigenous traditions among the wider community. The event is a testament to the enduring spirit and resilience of Native American communities, offering a meaningful experience for all who attend.

For more information on the MCC Thunderbird Powwow or to get involved, students and community members are encouraged to contact the American Indian Institute at the Southern and Dobson campus, located in the Kirk Student Center, building 36N.

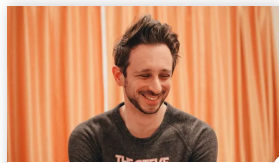
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