**15NATIVE-HERITAGE Fri 11/15/24 PKG: 1:59 Rhonda McBride/KNBA**

The Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage is known for its exhibits and cultural programs. But as KNBA’s Rhonda McBride tells us, the center’s Indigenous awareness programs are growing in popularity, especially during Native American Heritage month.

PKG: 1:59

STANDARD OUT

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<SOUND: Good morning>  
  
Almost 700 students filled the auditorium at East Anchorage High School this month to learn about Alaska’s many different Native cultures and their values – ~~and how these ways of life helped them live off the land and the sea.~~

<SOUND: Applause>

The team from the Alaska Native Heritage Center had a warm reception from students for two separate programs this month.

**CHRIS-Loves Job.** Chris Delgado (Inupiaq)/Ak Native Heritage Center/Indigenous Training & Outreach Manager: We do a lot of amazing stuff. It fills my cup. (3 secs)

Chris Delgado manages the Heritage Center’s cultural awareness programs and says they can be customized to meet the needs of a wide variety of organizations.

**CHRIS-Many Partners.** Chris Delgado (Inupiaq)/ Ak Native Heritage Center/Indigenous Training & Outreach Manager: “We have National Park Service. We’re working with the FBI. We are working with the United States Airforce.” (5 sec)

Maureen Cronin, an academics coach at East High, is not surprised that companies want to invest in programs that raise their employees’ cultural awareness. She says cultural literacy is important everywhere, but especially at East, which has students from fifty different cultures and is one of the most diverse schools in the nation.

**MAUREEN-De-Mystify:** Maureen Cronin (Choctaw & Louisianna Creole), Anchorage School District Academy Coach: “It’s really important to demystify cultural generalities, and it’s important to develop cultural understanding.”

...And cultural appreciation for what the Heritage Center calls the genius of Indigenous culture, or “indigi-nuity”

**COLTON-Survival.** Colton Paul (Yup’ik)/Arctic Winter Games Gold Medalist: “That’s how we survived out in the Arctic, back in the day.”

Colton Paul, a six-time gold medalist at the Arctic Winter Games, who demonstrates traditional Alaska Native games at the workshops, says the athletes and their feats of strength and endurance epitomize “indigi-nuity.”

**COLTON-The Stars.** Colton Paul (Yup’ik), Arctic Winter Games Gold Medalist: “They can jump so high They can kick way above their heads. ~~They can jump so far.~~ I remember when I was a little kid, I would see these other kids kicking way above their heads, I would think, “That is right above the stars. That’s so high.”

The cultural awareness trainers at the Heritage Center say they’ve noticed that when people gather to learn about another culture, they also learn to build better relationships with each other. In Anchorage, I’m Rhonda McBride.