

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County to Dedicate CSKT Flag, Native Artwork at Ceremony

Missoula County commissioners and members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' Tribal Council will hold a flag and artwork dedication ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19, in the Sophie Moiese Room at the Missoula County Courthouse.

The ceremony will recognize the county and tribes' longstanding relationship and honor that present-day Missoula County is located on the aboriginal lands that the Salish people inhabited until the U.S. government forceably removed them to the Flathead Reservation in 1891. The southeastern edge of the reservation also overlaps with Missoula County.

Following opening remarks from Commissioner Dave Strohmaier and CSKT Tribal Council Chairwoman Shelly Fyant, Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee Director Tony Incashola will lead the dedication. Tribal drum group Yamncut will perform, and the CSKT Veterans Warrior Society will present the flag, which the tribal council gifted to the county. It will stand alongside the U.S. and Montana flags at the head of the room.

"Missoula County respects the sovereignty of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and feel it is long overdue that we honor our government-to-government relations with the tribes by displaying the Flathead Nation's flag in the commissioners' public hearing room," Strohmaier said.

"This dedication is an important moment in our history," Fyant said. "Our Tribal Council relishes the support and friendship offered by Missoula County and hopes it serves as a model statewide for improved relations between tribal governments and counties. We thrive as a community when we find ways to work together."

The ceremony also will include dedication of the artwork by Salish artist [Jaune Quick-to-See Smith](#) currently on display in the room. The two pieces, "Nature/Medicine" and "Tribe/Community," are on loan through the Missoula Art Museum's Art in Public Places program. MAM Executive Director Laura Millin will share insights about Smith and her work. Smith, who was born in St. Ignatius and is an enrolled CSKT member, now resides in New Mexico.

The event is open to the public, and members of the media are encouraged to attend. Commissioners will be available for interviews following the dedication.

Commissioners have made it a priority in recent years to honor and foster the relationship the county has with CSKT. Leaders from the two governments meet at least once a year, and in November 2018,

commissioners named their public meeting room in honor of Sophie Moiese, one of the most highly respected Salish cultural leaders of the 19th and 20th centuries.

For more information, call Anne Hughes, Communications and Projects director, at 406-258-3160 or email ahughes@missoulacounty.us.

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