



EVERHART MUSEUM
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For Immediate Release

June 16, 2021

Organization: Everhart Museum

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Photos attached to email

**Everhart Museum to Host *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories*
Opening Ceremony June 19, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.**

Scranton, PA – ***Away From Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories***, a traveling exhibition made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities, opens at the Everhart Museum **June 19, 2021** at **10:00 a.m.** and will be supplemented by a special ceremony by representatives of the **Seneca Nation of Indians** at **1:00 p.m.**

The exhibition details the personal stories born out of the U.S. government’s systematic removal of American Indian children from their homes to be assimilated into American culture at residential boarding schools, the first of which being the former Carlisle Indian School located in nearby Carlisle, PA. From the late 1800s through the mid-1900s, American Indian children of all ages and from hundreds of tribal nations were stripped of their “Indianness” and kept from using their own language and from expressing their inherent culture or beliefs.

The Everhart Museum and representatives of the Seneca Nation will come together at 1:00 pm for the opening ceremony. In the tradition and spiritual practice of the Seneca Nation, a Thanksgiving Address will be delivered by Billy Crouse of the Seneca Nation. The Address will be spoken first in the Seneca language, followed by the English translation. The purpose of this Address is to recognize the Seneca people, upon whose ancestral grounds Scranton lies, and to ensure that the traditional tone of the Six Nations, of which the Seneca is one, and the United States coming together in the spirit of friendship is honored. The ceremony will also feature song and dance celebrating Native American culture performed by the Allegany River Indian Dancers, which include members of Bill Crouse’s family.

In light of the recent news of the discovery of 215 unmarked, undocumented graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia, Canada, this exhibition and ceremony are timely. Museums like the Everhart have an important role in providing opportunities for the public to re-examine the past, consider the past’s effects on the present, and pose questions for the future. The Seneca Address will offer a chance to reflect on this dark history and set towards reconciliation.

Dr. Gere Reisinger, the Pennsylvania Advisor to the Seneca Nation Sacred Site Committee, cultural worker, and environmental advocate, says:

While the stories in this exhibition are extremely traumatic for generations of our people, they also contain the necessary elements of resistance, resolve, and the renewal of cultural and spiritual connections. We want this event to be the spiritual beginning in this country of true reconciliation, and so we invite people of all nations to join us on Saturday as we strengthen our continued chain of friendship with the Opening Ceremony of this vitally important exhibition at the Everhart Museum.

Dr. Reisinger notes that it is crucial that this sacred program happens at the opening of the exhibition to set the tone of friendship and reconciliation from the outset.

Dr. Reisinger explains that Seneca's present-day answer to Carlisle is the Faith Keeper's School in Steamburg, NY. The Faith Keeper's School is a Montessori-accredited school with a mission of fostering independent, confident, and socially responsible citizens who are exposed to the traditional teachings of **Gaiwi:yo:h** and the traditions of the Seneca people.

This event is open to the public, whose presence will add immeasurably to the timely spirit of this national conversation of reconciliation. ***Away from Home* contains sensitive content and is recommended for viewers Grades 8 and up.**

About the Everhart Museum:

The Everhart Museum is located at 1901 Mulberry Street, Scranton, PA. It has temporary hours of 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. on Saturday and 12:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m on Sunday. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and seniors, and free for children 12 and under. Admission is free for Everhart Museum members and military and family. For more information and updates on expanded hours, please visit <https://everhart-museum.org/>, contact the Museum at 570-346-7186, or email general.information@everhartmuseum.org.

Founded in 1908, the Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science & Art is the largest general museum in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Everhart Museum, located in Nay Aug Park in Scranton, is a not-for-profit institution dedicated to the collection, care, and display of a diverse array of artifacts, including natural history, science, and fine arts. Through our exhibitions and programs, the Everhart Museum has become an invaluable regional resource for educational and cultural opportunities. General support for the Museum is received from the Lackawanna County Office of Education & Culture, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the City of Scranton.

Links for more information

Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories (NEH on the Road)
<https://nehontheroad.org/exhibition/away-from-home/>

Treaty of Canandaigua with Transcription (Smithsonian Nat'l Museum of the American Indian)
<https://americanindian.si.edu/nationtonation/treaty-of-canandaigua.html>

Ganonyok - The Thanksgiving Address
English Translation according to the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf

Audio of the Address in the Seneca language
<https://senecalanguage.com/ganonyok-thanksgiving-address/>

The Carlisle Indian School Project
<https://carlisleindianschoolproject.com>

The Faith Keeper's School
<https://faithkeepermontessori.com>

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