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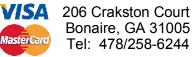


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Native Words, Native Warriors - Continued From Newsletter

Protecting the Homelands

American Indian nations have always fought to defend themselves. Anyone who threatened their families, cultures, and lands was their enemy, including the United States. As a result of wars with the United States, many tribes were forced off their lands, relocated, or confined to reservations where they endured poverty, racism, and attempts to erase their traditional cultures. Languages were particularly targeted in the government's efforts to change the American Indians' ways of life. Beginning in the late 1800s, Indian children were forbidden to speak their own languages and punished in government- and churchsupported boarding schools if they did.

Most American Indians were not legally considered citizens of the United States until 1924. Even then, some states refused to let American Indians vote until as late as the 1950s.

Despite this tragic history, many American Indian men and women have served in all branches of the military. In many conflicts and wars, including World War I and World War II, American Indians honorably defended their homelands and the President Barack Obama awards Joseph Medicine Crow (Apsaalooke [Crow], 1913-2016) the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Washington, D.C. August 2009. The Apsaalooke [Crow] people named Medicine Crow a war chief for his military exploits in Europe during World War II.





Native American tribes have lived and thrived upon the North American landscape for thousands of years - long before there was a United States. Historically, about 500 distinct Native languages were spoken in North America. All Code Talkers were fluent speakers of their tribe's language.

Lasting Legacy

The Code Talkers' achievements are many. They overcame the difficulties imposed on Native peoples. They served their families, their communities, and their country by helping to win the two major wars of the twentieth century. They demonstrated the importance of their tribal languages to the world and helped preserve them for the future. They met the challenges of life and achieved many things after their military service. They are respected and admired by younger generations of American Indian people. For all of National Museum accomplishments, the of the these American Indian (www.NMAI.si.edu) thanks and honors the Code Talkers ... Native Warriors of the twentieth century. ggd 😳



