NEWS RELEASE
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Native American Arts and Culture Festival at Colgate University
– Hamilton, NY

Colgate University’s annual Native American Arts and Culture Festival will be held on Saturday, October 18 from 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The festival celebrates Native American culture with live music and dance, craft demonstrations, handmade Native American items and traditional foods for sale, and more. The festival is free, open to the public, and fun for all ages. It will take place indoors, rain or shine, at the Sanford Field House on Rte. 12B in Hamilton.

Music and dance acts take place all day, with plenty of seating for all. Dan Hill (Cayuga) will open the festival with traditional flute music. The Onondaga-based troupe Haudenosaunee Singers and Dancers includes many young dancers performing fast-paced smoke dances as well as traditional Iroquois social dances in which the audience is invited to participate. Destiny Sampson will perform Plains-style hoop dances. Ayazamana, an exciting troupe of musicians and dancers, will perform traditional dances and masquerades of Ecuador. A special treat this year is a performance by the Martha Redbone Roots Project, which is being presented in partnership with the Earlville Opera House. Martha Redbone (Choctaw/Cherokee) and her band blend Native American musical traditions with blues and Appalachian folk.

The festival includes a Native American craft market, in which vendors from various indigenous cultures and communities offer a wide array of unique items for sale including exquisite jewelry, pottery, baskets, leatherwork, and woodenware. Artists also offer sculpture in stone, antler, and clay, as well as prints and paintings.

Although all of the artists enjoy speaking with visitors about their work, special craft demonstrations will take place throughout the day, including lacrosse stick making, stone sculpture, pottery, and fancy beadwork. A presentation of Iroquois cultural artifacts by Mohawk educator Mike Tarbell and a display and explanation of replica wampum belts by Cayuga curator Allan Jamieson will take place all day.

Visitors may also sample traditional Iroquois corn soup, chili, sweet fry bread, as well as strawberry drink, made-to-order Indian tacos, and other foods, which will be available for purchase throughout the day.

All are welcome and families are encouraged to attend. Young children will especially enjoy activities in the festive “Children’s Corner” just inside the entrance, including coloring, maze puzzles, and making traditional cornhusk dolls, paper canoes, ornaments, and bead bracelets with the help of Colgate students. Visitors may register at the welcome table to win a Native American craft item, which will be given away as door prizes each hour.

The Native American Arts and Culture Festival is organized by Colgate’s Native American Studies Program and Longyear Museum in cooperation with the Native American Student Association, and generously supported by the Upstate Institute, Core Communities and Identities, Sociology and Anthropology Department, and ALANA Cultural Center.

For more information contact Carol Ann Lorenz (315) 228-7184, clorenz@colgate.edu or Brian Smith (315) 228-6643, bdsmith@colgate.edu.