



# THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE NEWS

[www.astribe.com](http://www.astribe.com)

Volume 33, No. 08

August 2023

## Election Commission Swears In Newly Elected Officials



On July 5 the Absentee Shawnee Tribe Election Commission held a Swearing-In ceremony for Governor John Johnson, Secretary Misty McGirt and Election Commission Secretary Shirley Adkins. The ceremony was held at the AST Multi-Purpose Building. Diana Wilson, AST Election Commissioner, swore in the newly elected officials. The Governor and Secretary will serve a four-year term and Election Commission Secretary will serve two years.

## Thunderbird Casino Anniversary Celebration Powwow







GOVERNOR  
John Johnson



Lt. GOVERNOR  
Ezra DeLodge



SECRETARY  
Misty McGirt



TREASURER  
Joseph Blanchard



REPRESENTATIVE  
DeWayne Wilson



GOVERNOR’S REPORT

John Johnson, AST Governor

Hello tribal members,  
It is hard to believe it is August already. July had some crazy weather, cooler than normal temperatures, thunderstorms, rain and then the hot humid days. Soon, very soon the kids

will be back in school. August is always busy getting back into routines for school and work.  
I had the honor to give the welcome speech at the Thunderbird Casino POW Wow on July 1st. They also had fireworks for 3 nights and they were great. Thank you to the Thunderbird Casino and staff for putting on this wonderful event.

On July 5th I was sworn in for my second term as Governor of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe. I am excited about the next 4 years. One of the main things I would like to focus on is the completion of the new buildings on and off campus; Police department, Afterschool buildings, Shawnee Clinic, Little Axe expansion and the remodeling of Tecumseh Square.

LT. GOVERNOR’S REPORT

Ezra DeLodge, AST Lt. Governor

Tribal Members,  
Please see below for department updates. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me by email ezrad@atribe.com, call my office 405-275-4030 x 6253 or cell 405-432-0733.  
**Maintenance:**  
The Maintenance Department has completed 46 work orders in the last month while staying busy with the lawn care and cleaning up from recent storms. I would like to say thank you to the Maintenance and housekeeping crew for all their hard work they do for the department and tribe.

**OEH:**  
In total for 2023 OEH has assisted Tribal members with 36 different septic renovations and installations, water well drilling and installations, well renovations, and community water connections.  
For 2023, we have collected, processed, and recycled 20 bales of shredded office paper and cardboard equaling roughly 15 tons of recyclable waste

that has been diverted from landfills.  
The building for the new Police Safety Center has been erected. Interior framing has begun along with block work for the safe room. Construction is on schedule to be completed by the end of the year.  
We would like to remind Tribal Members that if they see any activities related to illegal dumping of trash or other discarded items on Tribal lands to please contact OEH at the email or phone number listed below.  
Jarrod Lloyd, OEH&E Director  
jlloyd@atribe.com - (405) 214-4235

**Self-Governance**  
The annual Tribal Self-Governance Conference was held in June in Tulsa, OK. Many important topics were discussed such as 105(l) Lease, Contract Support Cost, Economic Development, and Health Care Infrastructure just to name a few. I continue to listen in on all of the HHS/DOI Budget Consultations and the IHS TSGAC/DOI SGAC meetings.  
**BIA Roads Program**  
I was able to meet with Pottawatomie County District 3 Commission-

er, Abby Thompson. We were able to meet and discuss a couple of projects that we can work on in the near future. The Pottawatomie County District 2 seat is now occupied by Greg Rush.  
On July 6th we had a pre-bid meeting for the AST Road Maint. Project. Unfortunately we only had one bid. This will be re-publicized at a later date.  
Any questions or concerns please email at TwylaB@atribe.com or (405)275-4030.  
**Land Management**  
Land Management has been working on the softball field at the youth camp removing trees to expand the field. We also been working with Realty department clearing and redoing fence lines. Out of the wood that we are removing it will go back to our fire wood program for the upcoming winter months this year. Any concerns or questions please feel free to email or call cmartinez@atribe.com 405-395-8101.  
Respectfully,  
Lt. Governor DeLodge

REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

DeWayne Wilson, AST Representative

Hello Tribal Members,  
I hope everyone is healthy and continues to look out for one another during the hot weather. I would like to give a big shout out to the Thunderbird Casino staff for putting on another successful anniversary celebration! The anniversary celebration was held from June 30th-July 3rd and consisted of a pow wow, fireworks shows, concerts and other family friendly events.  
**Education Department:** From June 12th – July 7th Camp Nikoti was held, Education staff had 36 campers for this summer event. Camp Nikoti was four weeks this year for four days each week. All Education department staff, except the ARPA assistant, helped to facilitate daily camp activities. It was exciting to hear other Tribal departments talking good of their involvement and as well as enjoying their time with the young campers. On July 11th, the Education Dept. staff had a reward trip for the eligible campers. There will be a summary in the upcoming tribal newsletter. Also since the last newsletter, the Education Director applied for the TEDNA/ STEP grant. This grant is through the Office of Elementary & Secondary Education, Office of Indian Education.

In the Workforce Program; The Tribes HVAC mechanic and interns having been very busy. They are assisting AST Housing Authority with preventive maintenance by reducing the outsourcing of their calls and helping cut their costs. They worked on AST Housing additions in McLoud (24), Rolling Hills (12), Cammack Circle (20) and Tecumseh (44), on top of the work orders they normally receive from the Tribe. Each intern has been working hard obtaining their HVAC journeyman hours (requirement). The

HVAC interns will begin their second semester this fall at Moore Norman Technology Center.  
**Cultural Preservation:** For the month of June, Cultural Preservation, Language, THPO, and Library were busy with activities with both summer camps for the youth presented by other tribal programs, TYP and CCDF. Mr. Miller, of the Language Program, held 2 classes and a language bingo session with the children of the CCDF camp and 2 language classes with the participants attending Camp Nikoti. Ms. Jackson read and done several activities with the children of the CCDF camp. Mrs. Frazier-Smith and Ms. Carol Butler done an archaeological activity with both camps, and Cultural Preservation presented an Indian Football explanation to Camp Nikoti in which the participants got to play.  
• Mr. Miller and Ms. Butler worked on and submitted a request for extension for the ANA/ Language Grant so that incomplete activities could be accomplished. They are waiting on approval.  
• The Gift Shop set up a booth on the Friday of the Thunderbird Powwow. The items they sold were those with the emblem. Sales were good.  
• Details and an agenda are still being constructed for the 2nd Annual Algonquian Language and Cultural Convention in which Cultural Preservation/ Language Program are co-hosts.  
• The convention will be held at the First American Museum in Oklahoma City on Saturday, September 30th. Please save the date.  
**Gaming Commission:** The Gaming Commission continues to improve our staff by attending various training events throughout the year. On July 19th-July 20th, we will be sending

our Compliance Officer to attend the Advanced Internal Audit Workshop offered by the National Indian Gaming Commission at WinStar World Casino in Thackerville, OK with the goal of internalizing our Internal Audits through the gaming commission. The Gaming Commission will also be attending the annual Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association's Conference and Tradeshow on August 14th-16th in Tulsa, OK. These events will offer us the opportunities to network with other tribes, receive updates on different topics in the gaming world, interact with vendors, and attend several in person training seminars detailed to the regulation of gaming. The Gaming Commission continues to stay busy with the processing of gaming licenses, working with Thunderbird Casino administrative staff to update policies and procedures, and overseeing the regulation of the Tribe's gaming operations.  
**Youth Camp:** The tennis and basketball courts are completed. We have been meeting with the construction company and have finalized the amendment to the softball field project. Construction on the softball field has started. Also, we are looking into up- grades to this project. I will keep you up- dated.  
I would like to take this opportunity to encourage our Tribal membership to look on our website, our Facebook page, and/ or call our 477 department to see if that department can assist you in your future endeavors. If you have any questions or concerns about these programs mentioned in this news article, feel free to contact my office at (405) 275-4030 Ext. 3512 or by email: dewayne.wilson@atribe.com.  
Respectfully,  
DeWayne Wilson



CAMP NIKOTI SUMMER CAMP 2023



Camp Nikoti 2023 summer leadership camp had another great year. We had 36 youth attend this year. Camp Nikoti was open to youth ages 10-14. We had camp for four weeks and four days out of the week. We started camp on June 12<sup>th</sup> and ended camp on July 7<sup>th</sup>. We had our final reward day trip to Texas on July 11<sup>th</sup>. Our youth participated in all kinds of activities such as playing games, team building, arts and crafts, singing, gardening, cooking, prevention activities, cultural activities and more. We took the youth to the OKC Zoo, Wewoka Lake once to swim, Strother Cinema Seminole Movie Theater, Shawnee Bowl, Urban Air, Cracker Barrel, the Dallas World Aquarium, Ripley’s Believe It Or Not, Grapevine Mills, and Buc-ees. We also held two Friday night events during camp where youth came and hung out to watch movies, play, and eat. We would like to thank all the departments from the tribe that came out to help support, present, and do activities with our youth like the AST Police Department, Diabetes and Wellness, Jayden Watson and OKTEP, Native Connections, AST Housing Authority, Education Department, Stacy Coon with Maintenance, and OEH. We would also like to thank the Pott County Police Department for coming out to speak with our youth about Fentanyl.

CAMP NIKOTI SUMMER CAMP 2023



CAMP NIKOTI SUMMER CAMP 2023



CAMP NIKOTI SUMMER CAMP 2023



WE ARE  
HIRING

Join Our Team

BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH US

- MEDICAL, DENTAL & VISION
- BASIC & VOLUNTARY LIFE
- SHORT-TERM DISABILITY
- 401K RETIREMENT
- VACATION & SICK LEAVE
- 13 PAID HOLIDAYS PLUS BIRTHDAY

Apply at [www.astribc.com/employment](http://www.astribc.com/employment)

INTERESTED IN  
A CAREER IN THE  
HEALTH FIELD?  
JOIN OUR TEAM!

[WWW.ASTRIbc.COM/EMPLOYMENT](http://WWW.ASTRIbc.COM/EMPLOYMENT)



102-477 (477) Programs  
August 2023

On September 27, 2022, the AST Executive Committee passed a resolution authorizing and approving the submission of a 102-477 plan. On December 15, 2022, the AST 102-477 Plan was approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This plan became effective January 1, 2023.

The AST 102-477 Plan is a for three year period, January 1, 2023-December 31, 2025. The approved plan met all the requirements for the Public Law 102-477, Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Demonstration Act of 1992, as amended by the Omnibus Indian Advancement Act Bill of 2006, and the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2017.

Under the current 102-477 Plan, the AST 477 Programs will combine like services and activities to serve three components which are employment/training, education and support services. By implementing this plan it is the hope of the AST Tribe to help identify and resolve barriers that participants will face in their pursuit of employment, training and educational endeavors, to strengthen cultural and language development within all AST tribal members to encourage self-sufficiency and to serve tribally determined goals consistent with the policy of self-determination and self-governance. These are just a few programs goals thus far. The main goal is to provide resources and support to help individuals and families become economically self-sufficient.

The AST 477 Program has been in effect for 6 months now and has had a lot of growth within the administration and organization of the program. We are ready to put the information out to the greater community so that everyone can participate in the services we are offering. The 477 Program application is available on the website and as of this newsletter will be an online application process. I am very proud of the work we have done thus far but I know that we will continue to expand and create more opportunities for employment, training, support services and economic development in the years to come. Please bear with us in implementing and providing services. Ni yi wa! Si wi n'wi ke Ni ti mo wi ke!

Briana Ponkilla, MJIL  
477 Director

Absentee Shawnee Tribe  
102-477 Program (477  
Program)



Eligibility Requirements:

- Complete Intake Application
- Reside in Cleveland, McClain, Oklahoma or Pottawatomie Counties
- Provide proof of tribal enrollment/membership (AST or other Federally Recognized Tribe)
- Selected Service Registration (if applicable)
- Complete Self-sufficiency Plan
  - Also one of the following:
    - Unemployed
    - Underemployed
    - Economically disadvantaged
    - Displaced worker
    - Youth
    - Homeless
    - Veteran
    - Disability
    - In need of child care (income and additional documentation required)

What is 102-477?

The AST 102-477 Program consolidates grant funds with similar program activities in a coordinated effort to maximize those grant funds. The 477 Program will be implemented to provide a program service model that results in a single coordinated comprehensive program or "One Stop Shop" and reduces administrative costs by consolidating administrative functions for the multiple approved grants.

The 477 Program is designed to provide resources and support to help individuals and families become economically self-sufficient while reducing the need for short-term social service intervention.

AST 477 Program Goals

- To integrate employment, training, education, supportive services and related programs in order to improve their effectiveness in leading to participant self-sufficiency.
- To help identify and resolve barriers that participants may face in their pursuit of employment, training and education endeavors.
- To end dependency of needy parents on public assistance programs.
- To reduce current unemployment rates among tribal members and other federally recognized tribal members residing in the service area.
- To promote job readiness through preparation and self-advocacy resulting in sustainable employment for eligible participants.
- To provide and expand services that allow for safe and healthy environments for children.
- To provide continuous services to children while enabling parents and guardians to seek gainful employment, obtain educational goals, as well as providing them with a comprehensive family support system.
- To strengthen cultural and language development within all Absentee Shawnee Tribal members to encourage self-sufficiency.
- To serve tribally determined goals consistent with the policy of self-determination and self-governance.
- To improve the availability, affordability, quality and coordination of child care programs and early child development programs in an attempt to serve all eligible families.

Process for application for 477 Assistance:

1. Complete application and provide as much documentation as possible with application.
2. Intake Clerk will review your application and set up an interview appointment with you and the assigned Caseworker.
3. During the interview, you and the Caseworker will review your application and discuss you barriers to employment as well as your goals and how the AST 477 Program can help you achieve your goals.
4. An Individual Self-sufficiency Plan (ISP) will be formalized to show the steps both parties will take to help the participant achieve their goals and become successful for the agreed period up to 12 months.
5. The Caseworker will check in with you and make sure you are continuing to be successful with your employment and/or training goals as well as the need for any support services.
6. At the end of the 12 months, there will be an exit meeting to determine if additional time is needed to meet goals or if you successfully meet your goals and graduate from the program.

Questions should be directed to:

Briana Ponkilla, 477 Director  
Email: Briana.ponkilla@astribes.com  
Phone: 405.275.4030.  
Ne yi wa!

477 Application

AST 477 Application can be found at [www.astribes.com/477-program](http://www.astribes.com/477-program) or by email: [477Program@astribes.com](mailto:477Program@astribes.com).

PRIZES  
TBA

2023 AST EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE

Mushball  
TOURNAMENT

SIGN UP/MORE INFO:  
Anthony Johnson (405) 535-5356 OR  
EMPLOYEECOMMITTEE@ASTRIBES.COM  
\*PROCEEDS BENEFIT AST EMPLOYEE ACTIVITIES\*

ALCOHOL/DRUGS PROHIBITED - AST EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE IS NOT LIABLE FOR ACCIDENTS/INJURIES/THEFTS

AUGUST 26TH 2023

★ LITTLE AXE COMMUNITY CENTER  
1000 168th AVE NE NORMAN, OK 73026

★ START TIME: 9 AM

★ ALL AGES WELCOME  
\*EMPLOYEE IS RECOMMENDED ON THE TEAM BUT NOT REQUIRED

★ LAST DAY TO REGISTER : AUGUST 22ND  
MONEY DUE AT TIME OF REGISTRATION

★ 50 MIN GAME  
1 Glove on field  
1 Pitch

NO GLOVE REQUIRED


CO-ED  
TEAMS

\$100 PER TEAM


3 LADIES / 7 MEN  
OR  
4 LADIES / 6 MEN

SPONSORED BY:  
AST Employee  
Committee





Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma  
Building Blocks C.D.C.  
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Dr.  
Shawnee, OK 74801  
(405) 878-0633 Fax: (405) 878-0156



**BUILDING  
BLOCKS**  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
AN ABSENTEE SHAWNEE ENTERPRISE

Building Blocks II

We are currently hiring staff, if you are interested in applying visit <https://www.astribc.com/employment> for applications and to see what positions are available.

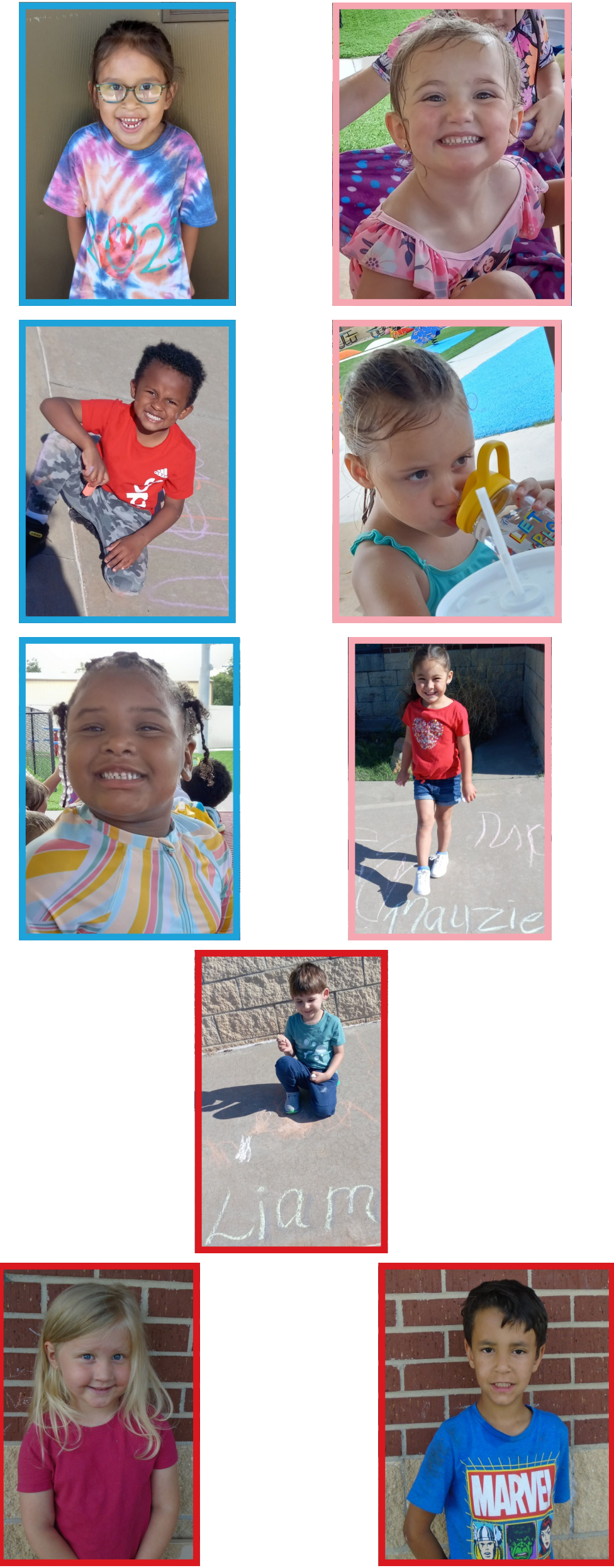
Building Blocks is accepting waiting list applications for all of our ages; 6 weeks through Pre-K/4 Year Olds. If you are interested in getting your child on our waiting list please call and we can email you a waiting list application or you may stop by to fill one out.

Both Shawnee Early Childhood Center (SECC) and Tecumseh Early Childhood Center (TECC) will go back to school on August 10th. As ‘Back to School Time’ nears we will have 22 children entering Pre-K or Kindergarten. We wish all these students good luck in their new adventures as they go to school. We will be doing afterschool van pick up at SECC and TECC Schools this year.

Our children are having a busy and fun summer. They have been going on the splash pad and doing lots of morning activities on our playgrounds. Also, our 4 and 5 Years olds have gone on field trips to the Movies and Bowling this summer.

The summer heat is officially here!! Remember to stay hydrated with drinking lots of water when out in the heat. Also, remember to apply sunscreen when doing outside activities.

Have an Awesome August!



**ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA**  
**BUILDING BLOCKS III C.D.C**  
16051 LITTLE AXE DRIVE NORMAN, OK 73026  
PHONE: (405) 360-2710 FAX: (405) 360-2726

**THIS MONTH AT BUILDING BLOCKS III**

It is officially time to go back to school! We have had such a fun summer full of outdoor activities, water play, movie days, a visit from Super Tooth, dance parties, and so much more! We will miss our school age kids but we can't wait to hear about what adventures school has for them! You may have noticed some new things around here like toys, Equipment, and staff! Last month we welcomed back our lovely infant teacher, Ms. Maddison and welcomed our newest teacher, Mrs. Dyonna, and our new housekeeper Mrs. Susan! If you see them around, please welcome them to the family. Please enjoy our pictures on the next pages. )  
Director: Skye Foreman  
Assistant Director: Renee Richardson

**We're Hiring**

We are hiring for various positions! If you love working with kids, please call the center for an application or visit [www.astribc.com/employment](https://www.astribc.com/employment)


**IN THE CLASSROOM**


Our kiddos have so much to look forward to this month! Our teachers have lessons about transportation, back-to-school, the colors and sizes of shapes! The infants are BUSY in their room with Mrs. Shelly, Ms. Brooke, and Ms. Maddison teaching them about sea life, jungle life, sports, "in the kitchen", and Absentee Shawnee culture!


**REMINDERS**

August 9- McLoud 1st day of school  
August 10- Little Axe, Noble, Tecumseh, & Harrah 1st day of school!  
August 17- Norman Public Schools 1st day of school!  
August 18- Bethel 1st day of school!  
August 29- Happy Birthday, Mrs. Kim!  
Sept 1- AST Day, Center will be closed  
Sept 4- Labor Day, Center will be closed


**AUGUST**

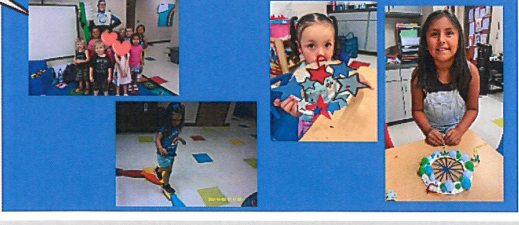


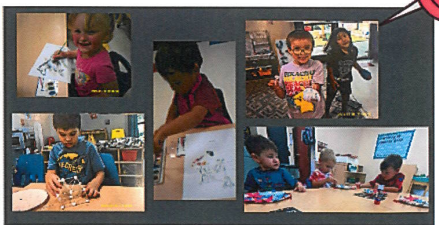




**AUGUST**









## Cultural Preservation Department

Activities have picked up in Cultural Preservation for the month of June and July. Following is a breakdown of each departmental program’s most recent activities.

### Cultural Preservation

Cultural Preservation and the Language Program will be partnering with Sac and Fox Nation and a few other Algonquian Language Groups in the capacity of co-hosts for the **2nd Annual Algonquian Language and Cultural Convention**. This year’s convention will be held at the First American Museum in Oklahoma City on Saturday, September 30th. We are very excited about this event! At the time of writing this article, the details and agenda are still being discussed.

### Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is open! We have two locations for your shopping convenience. Our Shawnee Gift Shop is located at the complex in the Cultural Preservation building (building 6), and our Little Axe Gift Shop is located in the lobby of the Little Axe Health Center. We are open in Shawnee Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and **once a month, usually at the end of the month, in Little Axe from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Please be patient with us at the Little Axe location as there is currently only one individual to cover both shops.

We are continuously going through our inventory and placing new items on sale. Some of the specials we are running are 30% off Pendleton Home – Summer Items and up to 40% off selected Pendleton items. The AST Logo Blanket is currently BUY 1, GET 2nd 75% OFF! Also, we have a selection of last season’s t-shirts, hats, cardigans, and women’s polos on sale.

**Please note, if you live out of state, we can ship items to you.** Please contact the Gift Shop Manager, Mrs. Merry Rodriguez, at (405) 275-4030 ext. 6310 or at mrodriguez@atribe.com for more details.

### Library

The Library is open! Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Last month, activity in the library included 3 library visitors with a total of 3 books checked out. Also, 17 virtual books were checked out. Ms. Paula Jackson, Librarian, added 7 new patrons. Please note the library application has recently been converted to a digital format that can be emailed. If you would like the application please contact Ms. Jackson.

Ms. Jackson has also been busy planning events and activities for the summer. In mid-June, Ms. Jackson read the Jingle Dancer book to the children of CCDF Summer School Age Program. After listening to the story, the children decorated their own art to demonstrate what dancers might be wearing at a Powwow.

She, also, passed out library card applications, and took over some new books and encouraged them to keep reading over the summer. During this time, she signed up four students for the summer reading program & also with the Pioneer Library’s summer reading program.

July has been busy in the library. For Fourth of July, Ms. Jackson helped the 3 and 4 year old classes at both building block locations construct a 4th of July Wreath. She, also, helped the children of the CCDF program construct dreamcatchers out of paper plates, yarn, beads, pompoms, and feathers.

If you would like to view what books we have in the library currently, please visit <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/ASTribe> to view the catalog. Also, recently she added some new Native American titles available in either eBook or audio format to the virtual library (<https://okvirtuallibrary.overdrive.com/>). If you would like to fill out an application for a library card, you may contact Ms. Paula Jackson at (405) 275-4030 ext. 3530 or at PJackson@atribe.com.

Please come in and visit! We have a wide variety of resources available for checkout, and many magazines, newspapers and journals for your reading leisure. We are open to your suggestions for the library and look forward to serving your informational needs!

### THPO (Tribal Historic Preservation Office)

The THPO Program continues to make great strides and advancements. The THPO staff has steadily been receiving Section 106 projects from various Federal Agencies. Over the past month, the THPO Officer, Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith, has received 650 new Section 106 projects for review. In conjunction with receiving projects, the program has consulted on 471 projects. These projects were completed in 18 of our 25 areas of interest/states. The THPO and Cultural Preservation Director has also taken part in 21 teleconference calls as it concerns Section 106 projects as well as NAGPRA cases.

On June 21st, Carol Butler, the Director and Interim NAGPRA Coordinator, presented an archaeological activity to the campers of Camp Ne ko te. Six flower pots were painted then busted with hammers. The campers then had to put the flower pots back together. This activity gave the campers a glimpse of what archaeologist do; piecing together items to understand the past.

On June 26th, Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith presented an archaeological activity to the children of CCDF Summer School Age Program. This activity included digging up artifacts and describing what was found on site forms. The children really enjoyed the activity and had many questions.

Further, we are still looking for individuals interested in our **Oral History project**. If you would like to volunteer for this project or have any other questions, please contact the Cultural Preservation Department.

### Language

Throughout June, Mr. Miller has met with the children of CCDF Summer School Age Program several times. Using the vocabulary they learned in the early language sessions, recently, the children played Shawnee Jeopardy and Language Bingo. Both games are memory association games where the kids had to match Shawnee words with pictures they were shown. Prizes were given for language bingo winners.

On June 21st and July 3rd, Mr. Miller had two language lessons with the campers of Camp Ne ko te. Some of the campers were from Shawnee families and were familiar with a few words. Covered categories included the Shawnee Alphabet, animals, garden items, and numbers.

As a Cultural/Language Activity, on July 3rd, the Camp Ne ko te campers were shown how to play Indian football. Some of the campers knew how to play and the rules of the game. They played two games with the girls winning both.



Picture 1. Archaeological Activity at Camp Ne ko te



Picture 2. Archaeological Dig with CCDF



Picture 3. Language Bingo



Picture 4 and 5. Indian Football Demonstration

For general language questions and information, please contact the department by phone or email at [ASTLanguage@atribe.com](mailto:ASTLanguage@atribe.com).

Your concerns are important to us. Ne yi wa for the continued support of our department as we continue to make changes to our programs to better serve the Tribal community. Please feel free to contact me, Carol Butler, at 405-275-4030 ext. 3525 or [cbutler@atribe.com](mailto:cbutler@atribe.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

## NOTICE

### IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR STORY

Please give us a call at (405) 598-1279 or send an email to [media@atribe.com](mailto:media@atribe.com)

All articles for the next month’s issue are **DUE** by the **15th of the current month.**

Unfortunately we can only accept **ONE PICTURE PER BIRTHDAY PERSON**, not per birthday wish.





Happy 8th Birthday  
Alexia!

≡ HAPPY ≡



Birthday



Happy 20th Birthday Desiree!!  
We all love you so much!!  
Have a blessed Day!!  
Love Mom and Family.



Happy  
B-Day



Happy 5th Birthday to Jordan  
& Happy 8th Birthday to her  
cousin Harbor!  
Mimi & Pops love you both so  
much!



HAPPY  
Birthday



**Congratulations!**

Skyla Lowe graduated from the nursing program at Gordon Cooper Vo-tech and has obtained her LPN license. She also received First Place in Clinical Nursing at the HOSA International Leadership Conference. Skyla is an AST Tribal Member; her and her husband, Colby, have three children, Dominic, Clementine and Atticus. Her parents are Debra and Ronnie Little Axe; her grandparents are Glendine Blanchard and Boyd Ponkilla, her great-grandparents are the late Cynthia Blanchard and the late Lewis Blanchard, the late Tony Ponkilla, Sr. and Bonnie Valdez.

We are so proud of you and all you have accomplished!

2nd Annual Running to Produce 5K Cross Country Run / Mile Fun Run/ Walk



Congratulations to all the runners and walkers who participated in the 2nd Annual Running to Produce 5K/Mile Fun Run. The event sponsored by the AST Agriculture Department was held Saturday, July 1 at the AST Farm. Cheyenne Deatherage was the fastest male with 22:24 and Hanna Rolette the fastest female finished at 25:34. June Buckner the eldest female and Tom Pitts the eldest male were also honored.





AST Complex – (405) 275-4030	Toll Free - 800-256-3341
All Nations Bank.....	(405) 273-0202
Brendle Corner.....	(405) 447-3372
Building Blocks.....	(405) 878-0633
Building Blocks III LA.....	(405) 360-2710
Court.....	(405) 481-8575
Domestic Violence.....	(405) 273-2888
Enrollment.....	(405) 481-8650
Food Pantry.....	(405) 481-8640
Gaming Commission.....	(405) 360-9270 x1110
Housing Authority.....	(405) 275-1050
Human Resources.....	(405) 275-1468
ICW.....	(405) 395-4490
Media.....	(405) 598-1279
OEH/OEP.....	(405) 214-4235
Police.....	(405) 275-3200/275-3432
Social Services.....	(405) 878-4723
Tax Commission.....	(405) 481-8600
Thunderbird Casino Norman.....	(405) 360-9270
Thunderbird Casino Shawnee.....	(405) 273-2679
Tribal Store Little Axe.....	(405) 364-0668







## ASTHS August 2023 Monthly Update

### August is National Breastfeeding Month

Breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for most infants. It can also reduce the risk for certain health conditions for both infants and mothers. Most mothers want to breastfeed but stop early due to a lack of ongoing support. Certain factors make the difference in whether and how long infants are breastfed.

Exclusive human milk feeding is one of the best ways to start an infant off on the path of lifelong healthy nutrition. Exclusive human milk feeding, commonly referred to as exclusive breastfeeding, refers to an infant consuming only human milk, and not in combination with infant formula and/or complementary foods or beverages (including water), except for medications or vitamin and mineral supplementation. Human milk can support an infant's nutrient needs for about the first 6 months of life, with the exception of vitamin D and potentially iron. In addition to nutrients, human milk includes bioactive substances and immunologic properties that support infant health, growth, and development.

#### Why it Matters

According to the CDC, only 1 in 4 infants is exclusively breastfed as recommended by the time they are 6 months old. Low rates of breastfeeding add more than \$3 billion a year to medical costs for the mother and child in the United States. Fewer non-Hispanic Black infants (74.1%) are ever breastfed compared with Asian infants (90.8%), non-Hispanic White infants (85.3%) and Hispanic infants (83.0%). Infants eligible for and receiving the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are less likely to ever be breastfed (74.7%) than infants eligible, but not receiving WIC (85.6%), and infants ineligible for WIC (91.2%). Younger mothers aged 20 to 29 years are less likely to ever breastfeed (79.9%) than mothers aged 30 years or older (84.9%).

#### Breastfeeding Benefits Both Babies and Mothers

Benefits for Infants:

Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma
- Obesity
- Type 1 diabetes.
- Severe lower respiratory disease
- Acute otitis media (ear infections)
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Gastrointestinal infections (diarrhea/vomiting)
- Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) for preterm infants

U.S. data show that about 84% of infants born in 2017 were ever fed human milk, with only 25% fed human milk exclusively through age 6 months, and 35% continuing to be fed any human milk at age 12 months. Nearly one-quarter of infants were fed some human milk beyond age 12 months, with about 15% of toddlers being fed human milk at age 18 months.

#### Contraindications to Breastfeeding or Feeding Expressed Breast Milk to Infants

While human milk provides the most complete form of nutrition for infants, including premature and sick newborns, there are rare exceptions when human milk or breastfeeding is not recommended. Physicians should make case-by-case assessments to determine whether a woman's environmental exposure, her own medical condition, or the medical condition of the infant warrants her to interrupt, stop, or never start breastfeeding.

#### Mothers Should NOT Breastfeed or Feed Expressed Breast Milk to Their Infant If:

- Infant is diagnosed with classic galactosemia external icon, a rare genetic metabolic disorder
- Mother has HIV and 1) is not on antiretroviral therapy (ART), or 2) is on ART but has not achieved sustained viral suppression during pregnancy (*at a minimum throughout the third trimester*) or at the time of delivery, or is unable to maintain sustained viral suppression postpartum. If a mother with a detectable viral load chooses to breastfeed, the provider should remain engaged, offer guidance on ARV prophylaxis and HIV testing for the infant, and assist the parent to rapidly regain and maintain virologic suppression.
- Mother is infected with human T-cell lymphotropic virus type I or type II (HTLV – 1/2)
- Mother is using an illicit drug, such as opioids, PCP (*phencyclidine*) or cocaine (*For mothers who discontinue illicit opioids or other substances and are on stable methadone or buprenorphine maintenance therapy, breastfeeding should be encouraged.*)
- Mother has suspected or confirmed Ebola virus disease

#### Mothers Should Temporarily NOT Breastfeed and Should NOT Feed Expressed Milk to Their Infants If:

- Mother is infected with untreated brucellosis
- Mother is taking certain medications<sup>1</sup>
- The mother is undergoing diagnostic imaging [PDF-778KB] with radiopharmaceuticals
- Mother has an active herpes simplex virus (HSV) infection with lesions present on the breast3 (**Note:** *Mothers can breastfeed directly from the unaffected breast if lesions on the affected breast are covered completely to avoid transmission.*)
- Mother has mpox virus infection (**Note:** *Breastfeeding should be delayed until criteria for discontinuing isolation have been met (i.e., all lesions have resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed).*).

#### Mothers Should Temporarily NOT Breastfeed, but CAN Feed Expressed Milk If:

- Mother has untreated, active tuberculosis
- (**Note:** *The mother may resume breastfeeding once she has been treated appropriately for 2 weeks and is documented to be no longer contagious.*)
- Mother has active varicella infection (*chicken pox*) that developed within the 5 days prior to delivery to the 2 days following delivery

#### Are Medications Safe to Take While Breastfeeding?

Few medications are contraindicated while breastfeeding. Although many medications do pass into breast milk, most have no known adverse effect on milk supply or on infant well-being. However, healthcare providers should always weigh the risks and benefits when prescribing medications to breastfeeding mothers.

As always, if you have questions or concerns regarding breastfeeding or need more information, contact your primary healthcare provider.

### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

#### Little Axe Health Clinic

- Demolition and construction has begun in the old Pharmacy location. The expected completion date (ECD) is December.
- Construction and remodel continues Behavioral Health area. Services are temporarily housed in the Diabetes/ Wellness area and in Administration. ECD: August
- Construction continues in the new Primary Care and Dental areas. We expect delivery of all equipment and furniture in August. ECD: September
- Remodel of the current Primary Care will begin in October. This will be the new location of the Specialty Clinic and PlusCare and the final phase of the expansion project! ECD: February 2024

#### Shawnee Health Clinic

NEW SHAWNEE HEALTH CLINIC! (Coming Soon!)

39665 Benson Park Road, Shawnee, OK 74801 (adjacent to Tecumseh Lake)

The team continues to work through the design and scoping phase with the architect (anticipate 73K-80K sq. ft)!

#### July 2023 Health Employee Awards of the Month

Employee of the Month: Kendra Mitchell, Physical Therapy Aide

Team of the Month: Behavioral Health

Special Leadership Award: Darrol Davis, Transportation Coordinator

Chris A. Larkin, MBA, FACHE, CHC  
Executive Director





Drive-Thru Event

August 9, 2023

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

K-12 Grades

Incentives include backpacks, supplies, and other misc. items (while supplies last)

AST Multi-purpose building

Little Axe Health Clinic

2029 James L. Edwards Lane

15951 Little Axe Drive

Shawnee, OK

Norman, OK

For more information, contact the Public Health program at

405-701-7600 or 405-701-7190

Or email Beverly Felton at [bfelton@astribes.com](mailto:bfelton@astribes.com)



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL  
**HEALTH SYSTEM**  
Prevention. Progress. Pride.



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Legacy Tribal Services  
Simple Solutions. Uncommon Service.

Medicare Medicaid Marketplace

**Help Yourself  
Help Your Tribe**

Al Triggs  
Contracted Benefits Advisor  
Legacy Tribal Services  
(918) 853-1211  
Exclusively serving The Absentee Shawnee Nation

Bringing More to You

We are always innovating and looking for new ways to bring value to our members. AST contracts exclusively with Legacy Tribal Services to help educate, empower and inform you on how you can maximize your health benefits. This service is of no cost to you and helps us enhance everyone's experience within the tribal health system.



**Olivia Wilson**  
★★★★★

"Customer service was excellent- In 15 minutes I learned how Medicare will work with my tribal benefits and Mr. Triggs even got me a plan that costs me absolutely nothing extra!"



Dedicated Agent

Al Triggs has over ten years of experience working with the native population in Oklahoma. His extensive knowledge in Medicare, Medicaid and health insurance plans is unmatched. You will feel confident in his recommendations and ongoing follow up.



Proactive Approach

Our pledge is to be comprehensive as we assess your needs and we strive to find all benefits and programs you're entitled to.



Guaranteed Satisfaction

Discovering how to get everything you're eligible for is your goal and delivering on this promise is ours.

BOOK A CONSULTATION TODAY

918-853-1211



[atsales.exec@gmail.com](mailto:atsales.exec@gmail.com)



[www.asthealth.org](http://www.asthealth.org)



VIETNAM



GULF WAR



POST - 9/11

# WERE YOU EXPOSED TO BURN PITS, HERBICIDES, OR OTHER TOXINS WHILE IN THE MILITARY?

You may be eligible  
for VA health care  
and compensation.

Learn more at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT)



VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Have questions?

Call 1-800-MyVA411  
(1-800-698-2411)



## VA SURVIVOR BENEFITS & THE PACT ACT

You may be eligible for VA benefits and services after your loved one has passed.



### The PACT Act makes it easier for many survivors to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

VA will be contacting survivors who were previously denied DIC benefits and may be newly eligible under the PACT Act. You do not need to wait for VA to contact you to submit a claim.

#### How to Apply for DIC and/or Accrued Benefits

Surviving family members may apply for these benefits using the appropriate VA form on [va.gov/family-member-benefits](https://va.gov/family-member-benefits).



#### Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Monthly payment for the eligible surviving spouse, dependent children or parent(s) of the Veteran or service member IF Veteran or service member died in the line of duty or due to a service-related injury or illness.



#### Accrued Benefits

A one-time payment to a surviving spouse, dependent child(ren) or dependent parent(s) of a deceased Veteran based on relationship when the record shows additional benefits (such as VA compensation or pension) due to the Veteran prior to passing.

#### Additional Survivor Benefits Available:



#### Burials and Burial Allowance

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our National cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost. Some survivors may also be eligible for a plot allowance, transportation allowance, and burial allowances based on the service connected disability status of the deceased Veteran.



#### Final Monthly Payment

If a Veteran who is receiving VA compensation or pension benefits passes away, their last month of benefits can be paid to their surviving spouse.



#### Home Loan Guaranty

Certificate of Eligibility is available for surviving spouses receiving DIC.



#### Education and Training

Chapter 35 benefits and Fry Scholarship are the two main GI Bill programs offering educational assistance to survivors and dependents of Veterans who died in the line of duty or as a result of service-related disabilities.



#### Health Care

Survivors and dependents of Veterans may qualify for health care benefits, such as CHAMPVA.

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Learn more and sign up at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT)  
Download the [VA Health and Benefits App](https://va.gov/PACT)  
Call us at 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411)  
Find a VA at [VA.gov/find-locations/](https://va.gov/find-locations/)

# HEALTH BUZZ!!



I hope everyone is staying cool, safe and taking much deserved vacations!

We already know so much about the countless benefits of physical activity; but a new study published in May of 2023 can now be added to our repertoire. The study followed 33 participants between the ages of 71 and 85 years old for 12 weeks. Half of the participants had mild cognitive impairment, memory or thinking problems that often precede Alzheimer's disease, and the other half had normal cognitive functioning. Before beginning, the volunteers were given a series of physical and mental tests and an MRI. Under close supervision for the following 12 weeks, each participant walked briskly for 30 minutes four times a week on a treadmill.

At the end of the 12 weeks, the mental and physical testing and MRI process were completed again. The volunteers, even those with mild cognitive impairment, did significantly better on the cognitive testing. Furthermore, scans of the walkers' brains showed stronger connections in and between major brain networks. Scientists attribute this to neurogenesis, our ability to create new neurons in adulthood. What should we take away from this study? That walking is not only good for the body; it's also good for our brains!

I know physical activity may not sound very appealing right now and a great deal of physical activity in the heat is not recommended by experts when it is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Perhaps, when it is a bit cooler and you can go for a walk outside, you will want to take some safety measures. It is important to always check with your doctor before beginning any exercise regimen and before moving your current exercise regimen outdoors.

It is hottest between noon and 3 pm. Try to avoid physical activity outside during this time. Make sure you drink plenty of water before, during, and after physical activity. Carry water with you, if possible. Wear appropriate clothing for hot weather; loose-fitting, light-colored, lightweight and moisture-wicking is best. Wear sunglasses, a hat or visor, and use sweat and water-resistant sunscreen to protect your eyes and skin. Take frequent breaks in the shade and allow yourself time to adapt to the heat; some experts say that this can take up to two weeks. You may not be able to work out as long or as hard as usual when it's very hot. Finally, work out with a partner for safety and fun!

For more information on *The Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country* or *Music & Memory*, email me, Gayla Temple, at [gtemple@astribes.com](mailto:gtemple@astribes.com) or [adpi@astribes.com](mailto:adpi@astribes.com), or call 405.561.7870. You can also visit the Seeking Hope webpage. Go to the AST Health System's website, [asthealth.org](http://asthealth.org), click on "Programs and Prevention" and click on "Seeking Hope".

Warmest Regards,  
Gayla Temple  
Dementia Care Specialist  
Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative



Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System  
**SEEKING HOPE**  
Dementia Caregiver Support & Services





# AUGUST

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1 CHICKEN SALAD LTOP CHIPS MANDARIN ORANGES	2 BEANS CORNBREAD ONIONS	3 HAMBURGER LTOP TATOR TOTS WATERMELON	4 OATMEAL SAUSAGE PATTIES FRUIT
7 CHICKEN SALAD CHIPS MANDARIN ORANGES	8 BEEF TIPS & NOODLES VEGGIES CRISP	9 TACO SALAD SALSA COOKIE	10 CHICKEN FRIED STEAK MASHED POT/GRAVY BEETS PEARS	11 SCRAMBLED EGGS HAM TOAST FRUIT
14 HAM BRUSSEL SPROUTS *TOSSED SALAD PEACHES	15 BAKED ZITA BREAD STICK GREEN BEANS JELL-O	16 BAKED CHICKEN VEGGIES *SALAD BAR	17 TAMALE SPANISH RICE SALSA/CHIPS MANDARIN ORANGES	18 SCRAMBLED EGGS SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT
21 FISH SANDWICH COLESLAW PICKLES ORANGE	22 CHEF SALAD CHICKEN, CHEZ, ONIONS CRACKERS/PINEAPPLE	23 ENCHILDA CASSEROLE MEXI-CORN CAKE	24 BAKED POTATO HAM CHEZ ONION BROC N CHEZ PUDDING	25 BOILED EGG BACON TOAST/FRUIT
28 BBQ PULLED PORK SANDWICH PICKLES/ONIONS ICE CREAM	29 COOK'S CHOICE	30 TURKEY SANDWICH LTOP PASTA SALAD	31 MIPPA EVENT MULTI PURPOSE BUILDING INFO COMING SOON	

**LUNCH SERVED MONDAY – THURSDAY 11 AM TO 1 PM**  
**BREAKFAST ON FRIDAYS- 9 AM TO 11 AM**

[www.asthealth.org](http://www.asthealth.org)



# AST HEALTH SYSTEM DIRECTORY

LITTLE AXE HEALTH CENTER.....	405-447-0300
Administration	
Business Office	
Little Axe Dental	
Health Information Management	
Lab/X-Ray	
Optometry	
Patient Benefit Advocates	
Primary Care	
Public Health	
Security	
Electronic Health Record	
Physical Therapy	
Behavioral Health .....	405-701-7987
Little Axe Purchased Referred Care .....	405-701-7951
Diabetes & Wellness .....	405-701-7977
Pharmacy .....	405-292-9530
CompleteCare Home Health.....	405-701-7085
Transportation.....	405-701-7603

SHAWNEE CLINIC .....	405-878-5850 OR 877-878-4702 TOLL FREE
Administration	
Business Office	
Health Information Management	
Lab/X-Ray	
Patient Benefit Advocates	
Contract Health	
Physical Therapy	
Primary Care	
Public Health	
Behavioral Health .....	405-878-4716
Diabetes & Wellness .....	405-701-7977
Pharmacy .....	405-878-5859 OR 866-742-4977TOLL FREE
Transportation.....	405-701-7603

PLUSCARE .....	405-447-0477
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GENERAL	
AST Resource Center.....	405-364-7298
Corporate Compliance Hotline.....	405-701-7135
Patient Advocate .....	405-701-7623
AST Tribal Complex .....	405-275-4030
AST Tribal Police .....	405-275-3200
AST Housing .....	405-273-1050
COVID Hotline .....	405-695-1787

Worried about losing your SoonerCare Coverage?

Two ways to renew

1

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Update your contact information ie: mailing address, email and phone number.

Online at [mysooner.org](https://mysooner.org)

Contact a Patient Benefit Advocate

2

CHECK YOUR MAIL

Take action quickly to avoid any disruption in your coverage.

Respond to the request for information

Bring the letter to a Patient Benefit Advocate

FOR THOSE WHO NO LONGER QUALIFY FOR SOONERCARE COVERAGE

If you no longer qualify for SoonerCare you could receive health insurance coverage through the Marketplace at NO COST TO YOU or the tribe.

Our contracted benefits advisor with Legacy Tribal Services is available to assist in the enrollment process. Just give us a call!

Little Axe Health Center: 405-447-0300

Shawnee Clinic: 405-878-5850

[www.asthealth.org](https://www.asthealth.org)

HEALTH SYSTEM

Prevention. Progress. Pride.

OKLAHOMA

Health Care Authority

MEDICARE 101

IN-PERSON LEARNING EVENT

You're invited to attend these FREE in-person events hosted by the Medicare Assistance Program at the Oklahoma Insurance Department. Medicare 101 will provide unbiased Medicare information and resources for Oklahomans, along with a chance to ask questions directly to CMS-trained counselors. Whether you're approaching Medicare eligibility or looking to learn more about your existing coverage, these events can help you navigate the Medicare maze.

Summer 2023 Medicare 101 Schedule:

Monday, June 19 | 2 p.m.

Monday, July 17 | 2 p.m.

Monday, August 21 | 2 p.m.

Monday, September 18 | 2 p.m.

Located in the Public Conference Room at the Oklahoma Insurance Department

400 N.E. 50th St. | Oklahoma City, OK 73105

All events are free & open to the public. No registration is required.

OKLAHOMA INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

MEDICARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Visit [www.map.oid.ok.gov](https://www.map.oid.ok.gov) for more information.

PREVENTING SUICIDE

Help Prevent Suicide

Suicide can touch anyone, anywhere, and at any time. But it is not inevitable. There is hope.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

If you are feeling alone and having thoughts of suicide—whether or not you are in crisis—or know someone who is, don't remain silent. Talk to someone you can trust through the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org). Call or text [988](https://www.988lifeline.org) or chat t

Help Yourself → Help Your Tribe

SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR A PLAN AT NO COST TO YOU OR THE TRIBE

Contact a PBA today to learn more! 405-447-0300

Native American Special Enrollment Periods

Special enrollment periods for ACA/Marketplace and Medicare insurance plans available to eligible AI/AN individuals.

Did You Know?

60% of the cost to render care to tribal members comes from other payment sources outside of tribal funding?

If you qualify for and enroll in a zero-cost plan, it can help Purchased & Referred Care apply funding to more patients in need?

When you participate in enrolling in insurance plans-you help us add services, buy equipment and deliver care to more people?

HEALTH SYSTEM

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[www.asthealth.org](https://www.asthealth.org)