

WWF USA GWPB: When we say thank you to Mother Earth, that's how we heal

Natascha Phillips
November 17, 2021



Venus Brightstar

November is Native American Heritage Month, a time to honor and celebrate the rich culture, history and significant contributions of Indigenous peoples in North America - referred to as "Turtle Island" by Native Americans.

In Native American tradition, the corn, beans and squash are known as "The Three Sisters" because they are planted in the same mound and rely on each other just as sisters do - the tall corn stalk provides support for the bean vine, the beans provide nitrogen for the soil and the squash, which grows close to the ground, offers shade and helps the soil retain moisture. For many generations, this system ensured life-sustaining crops as well as a healthy soil. It is just one example of how we as human beings can live in harmony with Mother Earth, and Native Americans have much to teach us in that regard.

The Global Women's Peace Network in the DMV area (DC, Virginia, and Maryland) offered an interactive platform to bring awareness to Native American culture, and in particular the sacredness of Mother Earth, with a program entitled "Honoring Native American Heritage Month: Building Bridges of Understanding," on November 17, 2021.

The event was hosted online by the GWPB DMV as part of a regular monthly series (see previous report [here](#)). We had 27 people registered for this particular event, several of whom had never attended a previous GWPB program.

Gregory "Dawn Wolf" Woods set the stage with his rhythmic, powerful drumming as participants came on the call.

The program officially kicked off with a warm welcome by Natascha Phillips, the GWPB Southeast Regional Coordinator, who also introduced the moderator for the evening.

This was Dottie Chiquelo, Ph.D, the GWPB DMV coordinator, who spoke on the theme for the evening. "What is building bridges of understanding?" she asked. "[It is] understanding that we are all God's children."

Dottie encouraged us to celebrate our differences, and to work in harmony for the sake of a better world. "We need to understand that we as a people must come together to save the planet," she concluded.

She then introduced Nana Korantema, a priest (spiritualist) in the Akom Tradition of Ghana who provides healing rites and therapeutic bodywork through her practice ConjureWorks, based in Richmond. Nana offered a special prayer that called upon the spirits of the land and the ancestors.

Following the prayer, Natascha returned to give a brief presentation on the GWPB, which was initiated in 2012 as a project of the Women's Federation for World Peace by co-founders Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. She shared about the main areas of impact, as well as the variety of activities carried out on the international, national and local level, all focused on empowering women to build a culture of peace.

The keynote speaker was Venus Brightstar, whose name is Tewenaweta Teioswathé in her native tongue, a Native Indigenous woman of the Creek Nation. Venus spoke passionately about living in gratitude to Mother Earth on her 100-acre land in Nashville, Tennessee, where she runs a project called ["Journey to Venus - Sustainable Living"](#).

Growing her own food on the land, she uses traditional teaching methods to empower people with knowledge to sustain themselves. "We are learning how to feed ourselves and be a part of nature," Venus explained. "Our food is the three sisters: the corn, bean and squash, and we always had that diet to nourish our bodies - our temple. We should honor our temple."

GLOBAL WOMEN'S PEACE NETWORK DMV
PRESENTS



**HONORING NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH:
BUILDING BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING**

Keynote speaker



**Venus
Brightstar**
Creator of Journey
to Venus -
Sustainable Living

Drummer



**Gregory E.
Woods**
President,
Song of the
Wind, Inc.

Moderator



**Dottie
Chicquelo,
PhD**
DMV Coordinator
of GWPN

Spiritual healing



**Nana
Korantema**
Spiritualist and
Founder of
ConjureWorks

November 17, 2021
7:30 PM EST

REGISTER HERE:
tinyurl.com/hcuwxm9s

For more information, please contact nphillips@gwpn.us

Promotional Flier for the Event

Her lifestyle is about more than just eating the right food, as she shared about the healing properties of the red clay, the pure water and the various trees and shrubs that she calls pharmacists.

Most important of all is a heart of gratitude towards Mother Earth for all the gifts we have been given. "By honoring the clay, the water, the animals, etc., [and] by giving thanks, that is how we take care of Mother Earth," Venus emphasized.

Practicing gratitude is mutually beneficial. "I say thank you to Mother Earth every morning just for being here. And she takes care of me. [...] When we say thank you to Mother Earth, that's how we heal," she said, adding that there is a spiritual dimension to it as well: "We hold ceremonies here to teach people how to go inside themselves and find God within."

When Dottie asked her about the trauma that Mother Earth is facing, Venus replied that the trauma is "deep inside of us" and the healing has to come from within. Anger and hate only bring pain to Mother Earth, so we need to find peace within ourselves.

"Once we understand our pain, we can speak directly to our Mother Earth and Father Sky. We are connected to everything, and we can show others how to love again," explained Venus. "Love is the answer."

There was so much wisdom that our speaker shared that evening, and the participants expressed their gratitude and eagerness to visit Venus' land and experience it for themselves. Venus mentioned that she would be honored to host a group of women from our organization.

After everyone had been given the opportunity to ask questions, Gregory Woods came back on to play the drums and offer some words of gratitude for the soothing message. "I just want the drum to speak from one heart to another," he shared, as he performed his final piece.

Natascha then returned with the call to action by inviting everyone to attend the monthly GWPN DMV series and also to partner with the GWPN by becoming a [Global Friend](#).

WFWP USA President Angelika Selle offered some closing remarks, expressing her gratitude for this event: "It was a healing session tonight. Thank you, Dottie, and thank you, Venus Brightstar. You are a healer and a mother. What we heard tonight should be shared with as many people as we can."

Nana ended the program with a prayer and everyone left that evening feeling inspired and at peace.

To experience the full impact of the event please view the recording [here](#).