Project Updates

Godwineq Gayogoho:ng7

Cayuga Language Nest

We are thrilled that five children participated regularly in the day care. Video consent forms have been collected, and video documentation has recently commenced. Coordinator Quinlyn Staats has been hard at work developing media aids for Program Leader Janie Johnson to use in the classroom. These resources will include children's songs, stories, and games, and we hope they will enable the children to develop vocabulary in a fun way!

Dwadewaygsta7 Gayogoho:ng7

Master-Apprentice Program

Last season's M/A program was a huge success! All of the Apprentices made great strides in their language skills. Their fluency and depth of understanding in the language advanced continually as they met one morning every week with Master Speaker, Alfred Keye, to go through the Gayogoho:yo. The M/A program is now on summer break, but we hope to commence the program once again in the fall.

Subproject: Gayogoho:yo Community Outreach

This group meets every Thursday evening at the Onondaga Language Centre and is proving to be a valuable resource to the community! Participants are becoming increasingly comfortable speaking the language. We recently finished going through the Gayogoho:yo and are now looking at other Longhouse ceremonies. We will meet until the end of July and then take a one-month break.

A video testimonial by one of the participants is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8po2RTU11LDo

Cayuga Language Conference

The second Cayuga language conference was held on February 28th, 2011 at Six Nations Polytechnic. The aim of the conference was to bring together Cayuga learners, speakers and researchers to share knowledge and network.


The conference was organized and facilitated by Joanne Longboat and Renea Bombery of the Dwadewaygsta’ Gayogoho:ng7 Adult Immersion Class.

Stay tuned for news on the next conference! Swawadhọ:dọ: ghọ ńe Iwewdọ: e’ ngęyę ngi:awhę!

Staats has been hard at work developing media and Culture Lead Teacher, who presented on integrating Smart Board technology in Cayuga teaching.

Joanne Longboat’s interview with a Master Speaker from the M/A Program.

Students and two of their “Masters” from the Master/Apprentice Program.

Cayuga Digital Dictionary

Cayuga uses unique characters and has special sounds. As a result, someone with little knowledge of Cayuga may not enter a complete word in the search field of the dictionary. This system is designed to tolerate partially-correct or incomplete words, unlike traditional digital dictionaries. It also facilitates a bilingual search (Cayuga-English/English-Cayuga). A unique feature of Cayuga is the prevalence of prefixes and suffixes. A grammar-driven dictionary allows users to search for words that have the same prefix/suffix or similar construction. The current version of the project offers:

1. Different dictionaries (e.g., Cayuga-English)
2. Bilingual translation results in Cayuga to English and English to Cayuga.
3. Given a word ‘w’, - 3a. Search returns all words that begin with ‘w’. - 3b. Partial Search returns all words that contain ‘w’. (This is useful when users only remember part of a word).
4. Stem identification: finds the word stem and produces results for all words with that stem.

The dictionary will be available on the website by August 31, 2011.
Christine Jacobs

My Cayuga name is Gawęnǫ́:gye’ and I am Turtle Clan of the Onondaga Nation, Six Nations. I received degrees for a Bachelor of Arts, Visual Arts Major and a Bachelor of Education at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. I returned to Six Nations to teach at Kawenonio/Gawęni:yo Immersion High School and earned a certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization through the University of Victoria.

I decided to learn more of my Cayuga Language so as to encourage my students to use our language and become more involved in our traditional ceremonies in the Longhouse. I have been studying Gayogo̱ho:nǫ’ since 2006, at Ogwehoweh Skills Trades and Training Centre and Six Nations Polytechnic Ogwehoweh Language Diploma Program.

I have a 16 year old son and 19 month old twin boys that I hope will also speak our language. I am glad to be working as the Language Community Liaison and assisting the various programs at preserving and revitalizing Gayogo̱ho:nǫ’.

Many Gayogo̱ho:nǫ’ words begin with a part that tells you about people or things. In hadęihonya:nih, the ha- part at the beginning means ‘he’, and in the word ǫdęihonya:nih, the ǫ- part means ‘she’ or ‘someone’.

In fact, there are many more words for ‘teacher’ in Gayogo̱ho:nǫ’! Here are just a few examples:

hadęihonya:nih ‘you (one person) are a teacher’

ǫdęihonya:nih ‘you two are teachers’

swađęihonya:nih ‘you (more than two of you) are teachers’

Why does Cayuga have two words for ‘teacher’?

MINI GRAMMAR LESSON