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The Great Law of Peace Education Center

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The Onondaga Nation, Onondaga County, the Onondaga Historical Association, and area colleges (SU, ESF, OCC, and LeMoyne) announce a partnership to create the Great Law of Peace Center. The Center will be located along Onondaga Lake at the former St. Marie Among of the Iroquois historical site.



"This Center will be focused on educating people about the Haudenosaunee," said founding director Phil Arnold, Syracuse University Religious Studies Professor and director of Native American Studies. "I wrote an editorial about the need for such a center in the Post Standard last March. The next week I am in discussion with the executive director of OHA Gregg Trippoli about how to make this happen."



The St. Marie Among of the Iroquois site on the east site of Onondaga Lake has had its challenges. The site was re-opened in the 1980's. The site's focus was to create a historical recreation of the life of the 1600 French Missionaries (the French set up a fort along the lake from 1656-1658 as a way to open up trade and to bring Catholicism to the Onondagas). But the historical site encountered difficulty maintaining a steady stream of visitors to keep it operational.


"There is a lot of interest in learning about Haudenosaunee," added Phil Arnold. "I think that a lot of people will come to the Center to learn about the Great Law of Peace and the Onondagas. And this is a great place to do that."

Phil Arnold and OHA director Gregg Trippoli are in the beginning phases of changing the current site. The site will change a focus from examining colonial French culture to Haudenosaunee culture. The site plans to have an emphasis on the Ganoñheñyoñ' (Onondaga Thanks Giving Address) and the Gayaneñhsa'gonah (Great Law) as well as a rotation of different topics, art exhibits, games and festivals.

Phil Arnold explains, "This is an exciting time to create a new Center. We will be working with people like Oren Lyons, Sid Hill, Jake Edwards, and Brad Powless from the Onondaga Council as well as Clan Mother Wendy Gonyea to guide how and what we will be teaching at the center. I hope that when it's done, everyone will be pleased with the results."

The Great Law of Peace Center plans to reopen in the spring of 2014.

"There is a lot to do in such a short amount of time," added Phil Arnold. "We will be getting to work right away."



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