



Benjamin J. Barnes

Chief

Shawnee Tribe

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Chief Benjamin Barnes of the Shawnee Tribe was elected to his position in 2019. Prior to that, he served the Shawnee Tribe as Second Chief for seven years and was a leader in the Tribal gaming industry for over 20 years prior. Chief Barnes is a devoted scholar of Shawnee history, language, and culture and has been involved in preservation efforts for over a decade. Chief Barnes has published his scholarship widely, authoring articles appearing in journals like *Archaeologies* and *Ethnohistory*, contributing chapters to edited volumes, and co-editing the upcoming volume *Replanting Cultures: Community-Engaged Scholarship in Indian Country* through SUNY Press. Chief Barnes previously founded an interdisciplinary research group, the Ancestral Pottery Traditions of the Shawnee Project, an initiative that seeks to reclaim traditional Shawnee potting practices. Chief Barnes has worked closely with Tribal scholars and artisans, archaeologists, and historians to learn more about ancient ceramic technologies. From this knowledge, he and other Tribal members have worked toward reviving and recreating their ancestral arts.

The Shawnee Tribe is one of three federally-recognized Shawnee nations, a people whose history interweave with more than 20 US states. With nearly five hundred years of post-European contact, this history and culture informs Chief Barnes' framework of understanding, as it stems not only from the vantage of political office, but from a traditional, cultural framework where he belongs to the White Oak ceremonial stomp ground, a place where the traditional religion for Shawnee people is still practiced. Having witnessed firsthand the struggle of community elders working to ensure the continued survival of the Shawnee religion and language, it is from this deep and personal connection that upholding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and human rights activism have become cornerstones of the Shawnee Tribe's government.

Recent Publications:

The Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma: Resilience through Adversity. (contributor.)
<https://bit.ly/3sqNmON>

Salvaging the Salvage Anthropologists: Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, Carl Voegelin, and the Future of Ethnohistory, (co-author.) <https://bit.ly/39KuT97>

Drums Along the Scioto: Interpreting Hopewell Material Culture Through the Lens of Contemporary American Indian Ceremonial Practices. (co-author.)
<https://bit.ly/3L2Yckv>

Replanting Cultures: Community-Engaged Scholarship in Indian Country. (co-editor, contributor). Forthcoming title from SUNY Press, Late 2022/Early 2023.

