

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska and MCC Fort Omaha Intertribal Powwow Patch Program

The Metropolitan Community College Fort Omaha Intertribal Powwow offers Girl Scouts an opportunity to learn about Native American cultures, traditions, history, art, music, dance, foods, and contemporary tribal communities.

This patch program is designed to encourage **respectful observation, participation, cultural learning, and reflection**. Girl Scouts should spend enough time at the Powwow to meaningfully participate in the required number of activities for their level. While they are not expected to attend the entire event, completion of the patch should reflect a genuine Powwow experience rather than a brief visit.

How to Participate

Girl Scouts should complete the required number of activities for their Girl Scout level and spend enough time at the Powwow to engage meaningfully in the experience.

Before leaving, Girl Scouts should have their troop leader/adult verify completion of the activity requirements. **Patches will not be distributed on-site at the Powwow.** They're available for purchase at the Girl Scout Shop or by emailing shop@girlscoutsnebraska.org.

Before You Begin: Powwow Respect and Etiquette

A powwow is a cultural gathering and should be approached respectfully.

- Listen to and follow instructions given by the emcee and arena director.
- Ask permission before taking close-up photographs of dancers or individuals.

- Do not take photographs when the emcee announces that photography is not permitted.
- Never touch another person's regalia, feathers, instruments, artwork, or personal belongings without permission.
- Be respectful of the drum and the people surrounding it.
- Stand and remove hats when instructed during prayers, honor songs, flag songs, or other ceremonial moments.
- If visitors are invited to participate in an intertribal dance, Girl Scouts may respectfully join.
- Remember that Native American people and tribal nations are part of **contemporary American life**, not simply people or cultures from the past.

Regalia, Not Costume

Powwow dancers wear **regalia**, not costumes. A costume is generally clothing worn to portray a character or pretend to be someone or something else. Powwow dancers are not pretending to be Native American.

Regalia may include clothing, beadwork, feathers, jewelry, moccasins, and other items that can hold personal, family, cultural, tribal, or spiritual meaning.

Throughout your Powwow experience, use the word **regalia** when referring to what dancers wear.

Ambassador Girl Scouts

Complete at least 9 activities.

1. Regalia, Representation, and Respect

Explain why *regalia* is the appropriate term and consider how word choice can show respect for another culture.

2. Understand Powwow Protocol

Identify expectations for visitors and consider the responsibility guests have when entering another community's cultural space.

3. Learn About a Nebraska Tribal Nation

Learn about one Native nation connected to Nebraska, including its history, contemporary community, government, or cultural traditions.

4. Powwow as Cultural Continuity

Observe how dance, music, art, food, family participation, and intergenerational learning help traditions continue.

5. The Drum and Arena

Learn about the roles of the drum, singers, emcee, dancers, and other participants.

6. Beadwork and Cultural Expression

Learn about a beadwork tradition represented at the Powwow and consider how beadwork can serve as both artistic expression and cultural tradition.

7. Quilts, Textiles, and Community

Learn about quilts, star quilts, clothing, or other textile traditions represented at the Powwow. Consider how textiles may be used to honor, celebrate, gift, or preserve traditions.

8. Food and Culture

Try or learn about a Native food represented at the Powwow. Explore how food can connect people to family, community, history, and cultural traditions.

9. Powwow Princess: Leadership and Community

Learn about the Powwow Princess and her role. Consider how cultural ambassadors can help represent traditions, encourage younger generations, and serve their communities.

10. Learn Through Listening

Spend time intentionally listening to the emcee, a presenter, artist, or educator and identify several key takeaways.

11. Attend a Study Circle or Demonstration

Attend an educational session and reflect on what you learned.

12. Standing Bear and Fort Omaha

Learn about Chief Standing Bear's connection to Fort Omaha and why his story remains important.

13. Contemporary Native Communities

Identify five examples showing how Native culture is expressed today.

14. Grand Entry — Optional

If you attend Grand Entry, reflect on how ceremony, music, regalia, flags, and community participation establish the tone of the Powwow.

15. Representation Matters

Think about something you have seen or heard about Native American people in school, books, movies, sports, or popular culture. How did your Powwow experience add to or change your understanding?

16. Continue the Learning

Identify one way you can continue learning after the Powwow, such as reading a book by a Native author, visiting a cultural center or museum, attending another public program, or learning more about Nebraska tribal nations.

For Adult Leaders and Families

Adults are encouraged to help girls observe, ask questions, and reflect on what they experience.

Try asking:

- What did you notice?
- What surprised you?
- What did you learn?
- What would you like to know more about?
- How did you show respect?
- What was your favorite part of the Powwow?

Adults should not ask dancers, elders, artists, or other Native participants to answer questions simply so a girl can complete a patch requirement. Respect for people and the cultural gathering always comes first.

About the MCC Fort Omaha Intertribal Powwow

The Fort Omaha Intertribal Powwow is held at Metropolitan Community College's historic Fort Omaha Campus. The annual gathering celebrates Native American dance, music, regalia, oral history, artistry, food, community, and cultural traditions while providing opportunities for learning and cultural exchange.

Fort Omaha also holds historical significance through its connection to Ponca Chief Standing Bear and his people.

Come to learn. Listen with respect. Participate when invited. Leave knowing more than when you arrived.