girl scouts spirit of nebraska



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.

Senior Girl Scouts

Complete at least 8 activities.

1. Language Matters: Regalia, Not Costume

Explain the difference between *regalia* and *costume* and why respectful terminology matters.

2. Powwow Protocol

Identify five expectations for visitors and explain the importance of two of them.

3. Learn About a Nebraska Tribal Nation

Learn about one Native nation connected to Nebraska, including its history, contemporary community, and culture.

4. Observe Dance Traditions

Watch multiple dancers or dance styles and compare movement, rhythm, and regalia.

5. Listen to the Drum

Observe a drum group and describe its role in the Powwow experience.

6. Beadwork as Art and Tradition

Explore an example of beadwork and learn about its materials, technique, use, or meaning.

7. Quilts and Textile Traditions

Observe quilts, star quilts, clothing, or other textile arts. Learn how these items may be connected to honoring, gifting, family, celebration, or community traditions.

8. Explore Native Foods

Try or learn about a Native food represented at the Powwow. Learn something about its ingredients, preparation, history, or cultural role.

9. Powwow Princess: Representation and Leadership

Learn about the Powwow Princess and her responsibilities. Consider what it means to represent a community and identify qualities that strong cultural ambassadors demonstrate.

10. Learn from the Emcee

Listen intentionally to the emcee and identify several things you learned about the Powwow or appropriate visitor behavior.

11. Attend a Study Circle or Cultural Demonstration

Attend a session and identify three things you learned.

12. Standing Bear and Fort Omaha

Learn about Chief Standing Bear, his connection to Fort Omaha, and the importance of his story.

13. Native Nations Today

Identify five examples showing that Native communities are contemporary, active communities.

14. Grand Entry — Optional

If you attend, observe the ceremony and reflect on the importance of tradition, protocol, and community.

15. Share Your Learning

Share what you learned with your troop, family, school, or another group in an appropriate way.

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.