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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** We're talking about these issues in this country that we've never had to research before. My producer, when we were planning for your interview, she pulled out the Constitution. She's like, I don't leave the house without my Constitution. Now that she keeps it in her pocket, she's like, All right, let's go do it. We got it. We will.

[00:00:18] **Speaker 2** Keep it right.

[00:00:19] **Speaker 1** Here. Yeah, yeah, yeah. We got to do what we have to do. Have you heard that at this point of ice stopping any Ho-Chunk members.

[00:00:28] **Speaker 2** We have through social media? I heard folks that have reported that they have either identified or seen ice in the area. Some have indicated that they have been questioned by Ice officials. To date, we don't have any confirmation, nor would this nation go out and seek confirmation of that. You know, these are fairly civil matters. And so we're not going to be there when you get a speeding ticket or hit a deer or, you know. But but for the most part, you know, if folks feel like they have encountered Ice officials, a lot of times people will post that on social media and it goes like wildfire. So so if they're if they're trying to do anything incognito, good luck. This day and age. That doesn't happen. We will they will put signs all around you and see. So but there has been a couple posted messages on social media that indicated that they either were questioned by Ice officials or have seen them.

[00:01:40] **Speaker 1** Are people in Ho-Chunk Nation telling you that they are fearful right now?

[00:01:44] **Speaker 2** Yes. Yes. Overall, you know, it's fair, you know, when you have to be strong for a family, but you send your brown kids out the door and you don't have control over, you know, their environment. You know, we and this is something that is endemic to a lot of tribal communities that we we worry about our kids every day before Ice, you know, we didn't need ice to to scare us and make us feel uneasy as parents. So so, yeah, there is that uneasy uneasiness. What helps to provide assurances as our schools and local businesses and things that provide, you know, shorties that, you know, we we aren't here for Ice. We're not reporting people. We are you know, we're here for your comfort and we are our community where your friends, your family, your neighbors, your your blood relatives in a lot of cases. So having those in communities that are very alert that, you know, things are going on, even some of the law enforcement that I spoke with, you know, who have given me comfort to tell me we've spoken with our field agents, our field officers that are out there and let them know that, hey, to see, you know, when people pull you over, they might not even know that you're a county officer or a city cop or a state police trooper. They might just think of you as ice right off the bat. So be be alert that they may be on alert as well. So, you know, try to be as gracious as possible and in clear and polite and kind.

[00:03:31] **Speaker 1** I read your executive order on Facebook and you're offering the tribal ID card for free and also passport reimbursement for free. Why offer it for free for Ho-Chunk tribal members and how is it being funded?

[00:03:47] **Speaker 2** So first of all, the why the United States passport is probably what I feel is the most legitimate form of and universally accepted form of identification. And so the scrutiny for securing your passport is pretty significant. They're not cheap. They are definitely not cheap. And I just think it's a it's an interesting business because, you know, most of the folks that want a passport. That normally wouldn't get one. Usually you want it to go on a trip. Sometimes between the time that they needed to get a passport and they're going to leave for that trip is a window of time that probably does not accommodate the passport processing. So these add on fees start coming up for either expedited or urgent special delivery, you know, next day delivery. And so these these passports that could, you know, retail from $165 could jump up to $500 if you need that in a very short period of time as well. They may provide an option for a card and maybe maybe you want to get an ID card. What what I feel is important is just to get the passport. We we are not in an emergency. Some may look at it as an opportunity, like. Yeah, get a passport. The president's making it really easy for you. You may not even have to worry about going anywhere. It's just an opportunity that folks have as well. I had placed out there because of bloodlines and lineage and blood quantum. I tried to do my best to articulate that the passport will be available to tribal members and their children, whether or not they are enrolled in Rollerball or not enrolled. And so I want to have something available for them to do that. The funding for this is a part of our annual budget. And I'm able to move funding around from unexpended funds into a coffer with a designation that that will be used most. Oftentimes, we could use it in an emergency. You know, we already know that just like our home, no matter how stringent we are to a budget, we do and see unanticipated costs that come up. And this would this is where this would fall into. Okay.

[00:06:24] **Speaker 1** And my last question on tribal IDs. Your order came out Monday and it's Wednesday. What's the reaction been?

[00:06:31] **Speaker 2** Hopefully, I never know. The processing for tribal ID cards or any ID cards should be protected by the tribal member in the enrollment division. The tribal member. Even Even the tribal member in the United States passport. We we don't stick our nose into their business. All we need is a receipt. We don't even need to know how many people got their their tribal IDs or their CD abs. We we also have a responsibility to protect our tribal members from a rampant abuse of of information gathering, fraud, misuse, waste, and, you know, providing those security features, making sure that those processing, even within the enrollment division, they don't even share information among themselves. So so I may not know that number. I and I and I don't want to, but yeah, I'm guessing that we've because we've opened this up to mail order as well. And through links on our home page, we probably see a lot more people utilizing that application. We still have the same requirements. We're not going to print off IDs, storming the envelope and send them out the door. We are going to make sure that we can verify those individuals who are requesting. Okay.

[00:07:54] **Speaker 1** And before I go into our last topic of the UW Madison program, I want to ask you, as a leader with so much on social media and so much a lot happening in a short amount of time, how do you calm the community's fears?

[00:08:15] **Speaker 2** Some of my colleagues were always telling me that if your leaders look nervous, your people will look nervous. And if your leaders look strong. They'll look strong. You know, So you do things like you would if you were a parent. You know, you you smile. You'd be kind. You'd be calm. You don't manufacture a bunch of paper dragons and start running around from them, you know? And when I say as a parent, you know, we have stressors. We have bills, we have. Things that we want that we're not able to get for our children. But we don't convey that on them. We don't put that on them. We want them to feel empowered and feel feel safe. And so there's no way I can do that if I run around like we just had an emergency in the sky is falling. I love these people. Not going to do that.

[00:09:17] **Speaker 1** So thank you for that. Now on to something positive which will intersect with treaty. But the UW Madison, about a year, year and a half ago now, they launched a new program to offer free tuition, room and board to all Native students in Wisconsin who are accepted to UW Madison specifically to go to school. I interviewed their tribal director, Karla. And she says hello. She says now they have about their first year, about 80 students at the batterers level, including also graduate medical students and law students using the program. So how do you feel about that?

[00:10:07] **Speaker 2** I think it's a great start. I think the Wisconsin promise. Is a very old promise that is finally getting kept, at least at the UW level. At least at the college level. Education has always been one of the highest and hardest struggles for communities, whether they're communities of color and racial groups or communities that had suffered through economic deprivation for generations. Education is also the cure for poverty and the cure for racism. The cure for a lot of social epidemics that we we go through. If we were to take a regressive analysis of of communities that that aren't dealing with opioid addiction, poverty, domestic abuse, elder abuse, you will find in most cases, you will find affluent communities who aren't just old money and generationally rich, but communities that are sophisticated and educated to and have opportunities for professional development. And we haven't had that for a long time. So you to be Madison is is really sourcing the cure and making it really hard to not go to college and and develop some sort of personal value, academic value, academic capital for a community to build on. So I do believe it's a it's a promise. I'll be elated, but but a promise kept.

[00:11:54] **Speaker 1** There's well, there's services for Native students on campus. There is an indigenous student house that I'm going to visit on campus, which are great initiatives and great programs to support Native students. But we know UW Madison is on hold Chunk land. Can you take us back and tell you about the treaties of the 1800s? I think 1837 that brought us to where we are in modern education with the university on Ho-Chunk Land.

[00:12:31] **Speaker 2** Well. The 1837 treaty wasn't a revered treaty at all. These are forced agreements to cede our land. Such as that particular treaty move west of the Mississippi. And, you know, and we relinquish our ownership of our historic. Holmes And, you know, we we did so, you know, under conditions that were not of our making. We had eight months to vacate. But then we didn't. And in the coldest parts of the winter, they shipped us in rail cars across to the neutral ground. And, you know, we. We suffered a lot for that. But we always had this mantra among our people that we would, you know, in our in our many returns offer at least seven returns. So that we would rather die on our land and live somewhere else and. The treaty. History is pretty profound and deep on the face of it. It not only provides historical markers for engagement, but it also validates and verifies our nation's status as as a sovereign that we have always been looked upon as that these treaties eventually become the vehicles for early shared governance between tribal groups. And these are before the tribal nations have really consolidated into one government because that's not how we were organized. Nobody was really organized that way. It wasn't until 1934 with the Indian Reorganization Act that the federal government forced consolidated governance on tribes by creating models for government and selling the idea our concept, so that they could move forward on Elko, which wasn't even a law. Back then, the Indian Land Consolidation Initiative, so that we had one owner rather than a number of years. And so so the treaties gave way to a lot and substantiated our abilities to negotiate not only with local governments, but also later on with these other governments that were starting up with the education campuses with the UW. So it played a significant role. But again, you know, I don't think there was anywhere at that particular time that any representatives, any any. Representatives of authority could walk away from one of those agreements and say they were the beneficiary of something, even if they were given money as they were in 1837, even if they were given goods in food and horses and some of means. I can't believe that they would feel that they've walked away with an advantage. So I think in retrospect, we see the saliency of those treaties that benefited us to evolve our relationship with the UAW, Dane County eventually, and the state of Wisconsin.

[00:16:02] **Speaker 1** Tell me about the values of Ho-Chunk people, not just then, but even still now.

[00:16:11] **Speaker 2** Yeah. So the Ho-Chunk rides on a couple of principles and and sometimes we because of a lot of Westernization, that the spectrum changes a little bit for the traditionals. We talk about Will Quixote, which means a love for one another. Or why shock is a is a general and accepted respect for each other that we keep amongst us, which means that, you know, we are not combative amongst ourselves. Now, don't get me wrong, we we are a warrior tribe. This is where we come from. And each one of our traditional way of life is built around our warriors, not simply a political podium speech about their love for veterans. We are a warrior tribe and we are here because of that. But we also are a loving tribe and we embrace our friends and neighbors and family. And we we work for the greater good. That hasn't changed over hundreds of years. We do struggle with Western as a nation. And this there are inadvertent outcomes of how we are raised in modern society. And it could be today, it could be could be in the 90s. You know, in our own models of learning, we we always talk about the Western education. We want to be right or wrong with answers that are up or down. True or false? One to a B, and there's no alternative to that. In our Ho-Chunk culture. However, we're not so objectives. We are come from an oral tradition thousands of years, which means that you could take a group of friends to a movie and every one of you would have a different. Interpretation of what that movie was about. But those would be wrong. And it's okay to have it that way. Unfortunately, you know, that model of education, you know, the Western education now on people that have for thousands of years done things this way really was was a hindrance. Advancing beyond that. You know, we we try and the newest way is the old way. And a lot of this stuff to go forward is to go backwards, to learn our language, to learn our kinship, to learn our clan system and our clan responsibilities, to learn our history. Which is really important because we're at a day and age where the. Agenda of the White House is to erase that history, is to make it go away because it doesn't make us look good. Cultures change. Futures can change, but history doesn't change. History can be written from different perspectives, but it doesn't change. And you know it. I fear the future of my grandchild not being able to learn the things that have happened not only in her cultural history, but also in American history. And we need to know these things that would you know, I would never want my what's in the news. I would never want my airplane mechanic to forget the principles that he or she learned back in aviation school. Because they were wrong or they were different, you know. We as a society don't do that or shouldn't do it. So those are some of the items that, you know, the fundamental principles that we have that we retain and why we retain them or how we do. And I do emphasize struggle because, you know, we're not just competing with. The Western culture. You know, it's it's we're competing in our own homes, you know, with our children who learn math a different way or, you know, no longer can you write cursive. And, you know, so we as parents are we're we're in a struggle of our lives right now.

[00:20:26] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Yeah. And it's and it's complicated. It's complicated. And I'll end with this. You know, I earlier this month, I spent time in Menominee Nation. I went to the language school there, beautiful campus school. And I was telling them about the CW program, working on this story. And many students there said they'd never they never heard about this opportunity. You know, they're living a life and they never heard that they can apply to this program and that they can tell other friends and different nations and different tribes that they can apply for this program. They're going to watch this. One girl said, I'm waiting for it. I'm waiting for you to send it to me. What would you say to Native youth right now about the present culture and about their education and the future and that are feeling all kinds of questions? What would you say to the Indigenous youth right now?

[00:21:22] **Speaker 2** If you were ever fortunate to hear an elder tell you what you're going to need to survive. The skills that you're going to have to have. You will know now that they are needed more than ever. Things that you were taught, things that you lament that you may not have been paying attention for are now more important than ever to feed your families, to educate yourself, to bring food on the table, to pay your bills. Everything that you were taught, all those old principles, all the new principles are now more important than ever. Your tribal nation needs you. You are important. You are valued. Go out. Learn their ways. Build yourself. Make yourself strong. Come back to the communities that need you. Yeah.

[00:22:30] **Speaker 1** Thank you. Thank you. It's really powerful. Thank you so much. This is great. Thank you. I think that's why we got a lot of ground. I hope he.

[00:22:42] **Speaker 2** Had a record because that's something I wouldn't have done.

[00:22:45] **Speaker 1** I think.