



Sovereignty Speaks® *Stomp Dance*

Mekko Chebon Kernell



The OSU Native American Student Association held a Stomp Dance in the Startlight Terrace at the Student Union. NASA members, advisors, and community guests gathered to learn about Stomp Dance customs of the Southeastern Tribes of the United States. Mekko Chebon Kernell and members of respective ceremonial grounds shared dances and their significance. Stomp Dances are cultural expressions that are practiced by many tribes of the United States including the Muscogee Creek, Seminole, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Euchee, Shawnee and others. Stomp Dances are mostly done as a social event in conjunction with a ceremony.



Dances are held at ceremonial grounds, which are congregations of families who practice these ceremonies in a way unique to each ground. Before Indian Removal to Oklahoma, each ceremonial ground had an original counterpart in their homeland. During Indian Removal, about 40 to 50 ceremonial grounds were relocated to Oklahoma. Of those 40 to 50 grounds, only about 15 remain. Thus, cultural practices and customs are not as prevalent as they once were.

Demonstrations are now held outside of the grounds as a way to share these customs to people who may have not been raised around a ceremonial ground. It is a goal of many traditional practitioners to foster and share cultural traditions with others in order to preserve and promote tribal identity and sovereignty.

