**Council Fire Opening Ceremony #6**

**Using the NSD Rituals**

**Overview:** Council Fire Openings set the stage for a great and memorable council fire for your program. It is written to be used at the beginning of a Longhouse council fire gathering. Featured here are the use of the NSD Rituals.

The central fire is a heavy & large log-cabin style with 4 smaller fires built in teepee style. Make the smaller fires from split kindling that has been allowed to soak with starter fluid or about 15 minutes. The points of each teepee fire can be topped with feathers and fluffs. 4 Big Braves and their children will stand at each of the 4 Directions.

The Medicine Man is the leader of this ceremonial portion. He will need a torch and a source to light it. There may be a ceremonial candle or flame to accommodate this.

There are unlit torches at each of the 4 Direction fires. These will be used later to carry flame to the main council fire.

**Participants:**

* Medicine Man: Ceremonial Leader
* Torchbearers of the 4 Directions: 4 Big Braves and their children will stand at the smaller fires of the 4 Directions when instructed. They will contribute the spoken parts as scripted within. They should practice their parts ahead of time. The father will then carry the torch of their Direction fire to the central fire when instructed with children by their side. They should all be instructed of the step-by-step detail of this action in advance.
* Drumbeater

**Relevant Ceremonial Pieces:** You may wish to incorporate this ceremony with other ceremonial components to form your full ceremony. The following are basic suggestions. Your creativity is your limit.

* Parade to Ceremonial Location
* Inductions
* Officer Inductions
* Special Awards
* Ceremonial Closing

**OPENING CEREMONY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scene | *(Fires are unlit as membership gathers in a circle around the outside of the 4 Directions fires as instructed.)* |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats during this gathering time until instructed to stop.)* |
| Medicine Man | I call forward our Torchbearer families who will represent the Four Directions.  Will (**Big Brave Indian Name**) and his son/daughter (**Son/Daughter Indian Name**) please step forward and stand at the (East/South/West/North) direction.  *(Repeat until all 4 families are called and in place)* |
| Medicine Man | *(Will take his unlit torch and light it from the ceremonial flame. He will then walk to each of the 4 smaller fires and light them and then return to center.)* |
| Medicine Man | As our small fires at the East, the South, the West and the North are now lit and cast their light upon this council, I tell you that each brings us some word that is important to the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse and all Native Sons & Daughters across this great land. Braves of the **East**, what did you bring us? |
| East | We bring the Aims of the Native Sons & Daughters, which we ask all here to recite with us…   1. To be clean in body and pure in heart 2. To be Pals Forever-Friends Always, father and son 3. To love the sacred circle of the family 4. To listen while others speak 5. To love my neighbor as myself 6. To seek and preserve the beauty of the Great Spirit’s work in forest, field and stream |
| Med. Man | Well done! Braves of the **South**, what did you bring us? |
| South | We bring the slogan of the Native Sons & Daughters which we ask all here to repeat after us… “PALS FOREVER-FRIEND ALWAYS”! |
| Med. Man | Well done! Braves of the **West**, what did you bring us? |
| West | We bring the pledge of the Native Sons & Daughters, which we ask all here to repeat after us…  “We Father & Child, through friendly service to each other, to this tribe, to our community and country, seek a world pleasing to the eye of the Great Spirit.” |
| Med. Man | Well done! Braves of the **North**, what did you bring us? |
| North | We bring the pledge to the flag of our great country, which we ask all here to recite with us…  “I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America. And to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| Med. Man | Well done!  Will the Braves of the 4 Directions bring the flame from their fire representing these high ideals of the Native Sons & Daughters to the central fire. |
| Directions | *(Big Brave will take the unlit torch, light it, then proceed with their children to the edge of the central fire, standing at their direction)* |
| Med. Man | Let us start our Council fire with these symbolic torches as the embodiment of all the ideals that Native Sons & Daughters believe in. May the Great Spirit watch over and protect us as we meet here in this Council. Torchbearers of the 4 Directions, please place your torches into our Council fire. |
| Directions | *(Place their torch heads into the edge of the central fire, with the handles facing in their Direction towards their small fire.)* |
| Med. Man | Well done Torchbearers! You may return to your tribes. *(PAUSE)* |
| Med. Man | Our fires have been lit. The Great Spirit looks upon us and is pleased. The spirits of the four winds are with us. Let us conduct ourselves with dignity and show our pride in being Native Sons & Daughters. |
|  | **CONTINUE WITH CEREMONY** |
| Chief | I now declare this council of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse to be open. Let us begin. |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats until instructed to stop.)* |

Contributed by: Unknown