

# Haudenosaunee women share knowledge, crafts at Eagle Island Camp

Sateiokwen, Carrie Hill share traditional crafts with campers at EIC

By Kim Dedam Oct 05, 2022 2:30 PM



Carrie Hill, traditional basket weaver and artist from Akwesasne and a group of some campers she taught last summer at Eagle Island.

**UPPER SARANAC LAKE** | Summer Camp sessions at Eagle Island Camp 2022 included lessons about the land and native plants from members of the nearby Haudenosaunee community. A historic property, EIC was restored and reopened in 2019 for youth, women and family summer camp experience with provision for good stewardship of the land and its quiet place on the water.

Danielle La Cavalla is executive director.

"We open every session with a land acknowledgment statement, which is an affirmation that recognizes all lands are part of indigenous ancestral lands and territories," she told the Sun in a recent interview.

"We make a keen effort to recognize the wisdom of the indigenous people who were here before us. We believe their awareness of the natural world will help us learn and grow.

"Although Eagle Island, Inc. does not have the background or knowledge to educate its visitors and campers about Haudenosaunee culture, we are making a concerted effort to do so."

Two craftswomen came from the Mohawk community, Sateiokwen Bucktooth, who works with traditional medicine, plants and plant-based healing; and Carrie Hill, a teacher of Haudenosaunee Fancy Basketry, an ancient custom among the Mohawk people.

Sateiokwen owns Snipe Clan Botanicals. A graduate of Syracuse University with a degree in Communication and Rhetorical Studies, she furthered her work in a four-year apprenticeship with the Akwesasne Cultural Restoration Program (A:se Tsi Tewa:ton, which translates to: make it new again.)

Carrie Hill owns Chill Baskets, where she creates through and teaches the art of basket weaving with black ash and sweetgrass, a skill passed down from many generations.

Both presenters came from the Kanien'keháka Territory of Ahkwesáhsne, tribal land of the Mohawk people on the St. Lawrence River.

In an interview with the Sun, Hill said basket-making with youth at Eagle Island was fun.

"It's always fun teaching kids. I thought it was a beautiful location. There is an old sweet grass wall in the kitchen dining area, and I thought that was pretty cool."

Hill traveled from Akwesasne to Eagle Island and brought black ash splints and sweetgrass to use with the young women, sharing methods for weaving baskets and winding the long strands of sweetgrass into bookmarks. Haudenosaunee people have one of the strongest continuous traditions of basket making, which is also a way of learning about the cycles of nature and the right way to live in balance with the land through careful gathering of materials.

"The camp was well run and the staff were fantastic," Hill said.

"It was great to share a part of my culture with them."

Sateiokwen visited before camp opened and planned a trail for a Medicine Walk. She brought young people through the wooded areas, sharing information about some of the plants, their strengths and uses. The campers learned how to make some herbal teas.

La Cavalla said the six sessions shared by the craftswomen last summer were welcome additions to Eagle Island. And campers really enjoyed them.

The new tradition at EIC is made to honor ancient traditions. And the collaboration will continue to grow.

A special donation to EIC allowed for Native teachings without added cost to the campers.

"EIC is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all that we do," La Cavalla said.

To find out more about [Chill Baskets](https://chill-baskets.com), Hill's products and workshops: [chill-baskets.com](https://chill-baskets.com)

To find out more about [Snipe Clan Botanicals](https://snipeclanbotanicals.com) and Sateiokwen Bucktooth, her work and herbal products: [snipeclanbotanicals.com](https://snipeclanbotanicals.com)

To learn more about [Eagle Island Camp](https://eagleisland.org) and youth, women and family sessions in 2023: [eagleisland.org](https://eagleisland.org)

