


Food For Indigenous Futures 2024

Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab & TEK Institute



YOUTH CALIFORNIA

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Food For Indigenous Futures

ABOUT FIF

The Food for Indigenous Futures project is building a community and youth-informed curriculum to connect with cultural practices in health, wellness, traditional ecological knowledge, and food sovereignty. The program includes youth workshops, events, and school-based curriculum for Native American High School students alongside opportunities for Native American youth to create and implement programs and projects for food sovereignty, food justice, health & wellness. Funded by the Elevate Youth Grant through the Sierra Health Fund.

Building on the good work from 2023, in 2024 we hosted a range of impactful events focused on community, cultural learning, and youth engagement. Our Youth Council came together for multiple Talking Circles and Listening Sessions. We deepened our relationship with Indigenous foods through the Sue-Meg Youth Indigenous Foods Workshop, the CPH HAPAY Berry Jam Workshop, and the Huckleberry Gathering Workshop. We attended celebrations like Dee-ni Day and Ner-er-Nerh Day honoring traditions and strengthened community ties. Our Chef in Residence Workshops brought hands-on culinary experiences, while American Indian College Motivation Day inspired the next generation of students. We also facilitated knowledge-sharing through an Expert Panel & Community Peer Support session with Lonnie Anderson, and our Film Screenings provided opportunities for storytelling and discussion. Through these events, we continue to cultivate spaces for learning, connection, and cultural expression. Food for Indigenous Futures project has facilitated and collaborated on many community events.



Meet the Team



**DR. CUTCHA
RISLING- BALDY**

Dr. Cutcha Risling-Baldy is an Associate Professor of Native American Studies at Cal Poly Humboldt. She is the Co-Director of the NAS Food Sovereignty Lab & Traditional Ecological Knowledges Institute and Co-Investigator on an NSF INCLUDES Planning Grant for inclusive STEM pedagogy for Native American Students at Cal Poly Humboldt. She is Hupa, Karuk, and Yurok and enrolled in the Hoopa Valley Tribe.



Nshong Nshong, Aiy-ye-kwee' Nek 'new **Cassandra!** I am a Research Associate here at the Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab & Traditional Ecological Knowledges Institute. This is my 4th year working with the lab. I have worked primarily on the Wiyot Food Boxes Project and the FSL Native Youth Council. I also assist with all other general programming and coordinate gathering and processing of traditional foods and medicines.



CASSANDRA MAY

Chelsea (they/them/elle) is originally from pixley, ca - located on the ancestral land of the Yokuts. Coming from a long lineage of campesinos from zacatecas, méxico - located on ancestral lands of the Zacatecatl peoples - they bring a transnational perspective to their research, focusing on vivencias Campesinas. They dream of being able to facilitate the sharing of knowledge outside white western academic frameworks, focusing on alternative ways of knowledge knowing and knowledge holding.



**CHELSEA
RÍOS GÓMEZ**

Delaney is a descendant of the Anishinaabe/Ojibwe people of the White Earth Nation in Minnesota. Born on the ancestral homelands of the Tongva, Acjachemen, and Payómkawichum peoples; colonially known as Orange County, California. She is currently a graduate student at Cal Poly Humboldt in the Social Sciences Environment & Community program. Her work includes assisting in various Indigenous programs throughout Northern California Tribal lands with special interests in food and land sovereignty as well as Native youth programs.



**DELANEY SCHROEDER-
ECHAVARRIA**

Clio is a descendant of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the Seneca-Cayuga Nation, born on Ohlone land in San Francisco. She is a Master's of Social Work student and completed her Bachelor's in Social Work at Cal Poly Humboldt with a minor in Native American Studies. She is the youth correspondent for the Youth Council and is committed to utilizing culture as a strength for Indigenous youth. She is also an intern for the Yurok tribe's Behavioral Health Department.



CLIO GENTRY

Thank You to our Program Funders

This work would not be possible without all of our partners and funders of this project.



YOUTH CALIFORNIA

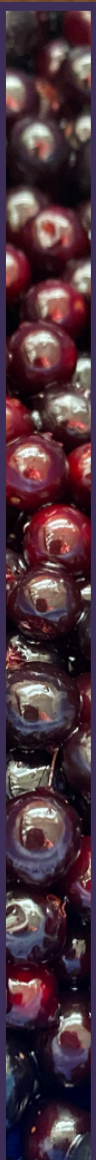


THE CENTER
at Sierra Health Foundation

Thank You to all of our second year Program Partners!

NCIDC, KLAMATH-TRINITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CAL POLY HUMBOLDT, ELEVATE YOUTH CALIFORNIA, ITEPP, BIG LAGOON RANCHERIA, TRINIDAD RANCHERIA, TWO FEATHERS NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILY SERVICES, INTERTRIBAL AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL, WIYOT FOOD BOXES PROJECT, CITY OF EUREKA, HOOPA VALLEY TRIBE, BLUE LAKE RANCHERIA, BEAR RIVER RANCHERIA, YUOK TRIBE, POTAWOT COMMUNITY GARDEN, TOLOWA DEE-NI' NATION, PIKYAV FIELD INSTITUTE, KARUK TRIBE, WIYOT TRIBE, CITY OF ARCATA, CPH NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT, MID KLAMATH WATERSHED COUNCIL, TISHANIIK TRIBAL FARM, NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL LUNCH INITIATIVE, COLLEGE OF THE REDWOODS, BLACK HUMBOLDT, CENTRO DEL PUEBLO, HUWIGHURRUK TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAM, HOOPA HIGH SCHOOL.

FIF Timeline of Project



SPRING 2024

Youth Council Talking Circle
Second Youth Council Listening Session

SUMMER 2024

Sue-Meg Youth Indigenous Foods Workshop
CPH HAPAY Berry Jam Workshop

FALL 2024

Youth Council Talking Circles
Third Youth Council Listening Session
Hucklebery Gathering Workshop
Dee-ni Day
Ner-er-Nerh Day
Chef in Residence Workshops

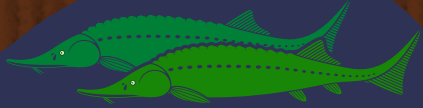
WINTER 2024

American Indian College Motivation Day
Expert Panel & Community Peer Support with
Lonnie Anderson
Film Screenings

FUTURE PLANS

Nettle Workshops
Kelp Workshops
Food Futures 9-12 Curriculum
Youth Publication
Youth Campaign
Indigenous Foods Festival 2025
Final Listening Session & Evaluation

FIF BY THE #'s



HOW MANY YOUTH ON THE COUNCIL?

13 YOUTH

ESTIMATED 2,000 YOUTH SERVED

TOTAL YOUTH SERVED

HOW MANY REGIONS REPRESENTED?

K'ICHE

YUROK

HUPA

KARUK

8 INDIGENOUS NATIONS

WIYOT

YAMONIM MAIDUM

RESIGHINI RANCHERIA

SUSANVILLE INDIAN RANCHERIA

AGES 15-26

AGE RANGE OF YOUTH SERVED

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

- YOUTH LISTENING SESSIONS
- YOUTH TALKING CIRCLES
- FOOD SOVEREIGNTY LAB STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- COLLEGE MOTIVATION DAYS
- EXPERT PANELS
- TRADITIONAL MEAL SHARING
- GATHERING TRIPS
- FOOD PRESERVING WORKSHOPS
- GARDEN DAYS



[MEDIA ALBUM LINK!](#)

**SEE OUR
PHOTOS &
VIDEOS HERE!**



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

HUWIGHURRUK HUCKLEBERRY GATHERING

MENTORSHIP/RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

NUMBER OF YOUTH ATTENDED: 9

AGE RANGE YOUTH ATTENDED: 19-26



During fall 2024, lab staff Cassandra and Crane hosted a Huckleberry event for ITEPP students, Huwighurruk students, and the Food Sovereignty Lab Youth Council.

The event provided an opportunity to learn about huckleberries, their nutritional benefits, cultural importance, and their name in the Wiyot language, Vou'gul. Attendees also worked together to gather over 8 lbs of huckleberries for the local Native community. In addition to learning about Vou'gul, participants engaged in discussions about other culturally significant foods from various tribes and exchanged words in six different Indigenous languages. Special thanks to the Youth Council member who not only helped gather huckleberries but also captured beautiful photos of the event.



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

WIYOT PLAZA GARDEN DAYS

PEER LED-MENTORSHIP
JAIME LARA, JOE



During fall 2024, Wiyot Plaza Student Site Manager, Jaime Lara, led efforts in Wiyot Plaza. In a first of its kind land co-management agreement on a CSU Campus, the FSL is working to remediate the land in a land return project. Lab staff Jaime and Joe worked to coordinate volunteer days, allowing young people to engage with the land. These included site clean up days, maintaining the site of our future sculpture garden, the removal of a large shed and cobb bench, the construction of a trellis, as well as sign making. In 2024, Jaime helped to lead weekly volunteer days and will be hosting weekly garden days in 2025 as we continue to #LANDBACK Wiyot Plaza.





EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERT PANEL & TALKING CIRCLES

MENTORSHIP & PEER
LED PROGRAMMING

NUMBER OF YOUTH ATTENDED: 40+
AGE RANGE YOUTH ATTENDED: 15-26
TRIBAL NATIONS REPRESENTED: HOOPA, YUROK,
 KARUK, BEAR RIVER, CHIMARIKO, WAILAKI, POMO,
 YUKI, ROUND VALLEY

During Lonnie Anderson's week-long visit, we hosted several impactful events to inspire and empower youth. Lonnie shared his powerful story of resilience and community with over 20 youth from various local tribes at the Youth Ambassador Young Women's Leadership Group (NCIDC). Later, he visited Humboldt County Juvenile Hall, and then with students at Hoopa Valley High School, where his storytelling and art resonated deeply. The visit to the Hoopa Valley culminated in a healing talking circle led by Yvonne Guido (2FNAFS), FSL staff, and Hoopa Senior Youth Ambassadors at the Il-Tuq Center, where youth, elders, and staff shared wisdom and experiences. These events created lasting connections and healing for over 40 youth and community members.



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

DEE-NI' DAY

SINGULAR PROGRAMMING

NUMBER OF YOUTH ATTENDED: 100+
ATTENDED BY: DELANEY SCHROEDER-
 ECHAVARRIA AND THE TOLOWA DEE-NI'
 NATURAL RESOURCES TEAM

Research Associate Delaney tabled at Dee-ni' Day with the Tolowa Dee-ni' (TDN) Natural Resources Team. Sixty bags of Lat (nori) and eighty bags of Traditional bull kelp seasoning were offered to community present. The Lat was donated by Sunken Seaweed and packaged by Delaney. We were also able to provide an interactive touch pool for youth that wanted to touch live lat, ogo, and dulse. Delaney also brought pepperwood leaves for people to enjoy. Over 700 community members and over 100 youth attended this event. The Lab also donated Native-owned seaweed products to the Dee-ni' Day raffle.



**PANEL 1 [10:00-11:00] SERVICE IN SEAWEED: SERVING OUR
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIVE COMMUNITIES**

Moderated by Monique Sonoquie, Indigenous Community Initiatives

Rosa Laucci, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
Jessica Gravelle, Trinidad Rancheria
Delaney Schroeder-Echavarría, Traditional Ecological Knowledges Institute

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

CALIFORNIA SEAWEED FESTIVAL

SINGULAR PROGRAMMING

**ATTENDED BY DELANEY SCHROEDER-
ECHAVARRIA, JAIME LARA AND JOSEPH
TAYLOR**

The Food Sovereignty Lab was able to provide three one hour tours of the Lab on the first day of the California Seaweed Festival. Attendees were able to select free tickets through the CSF website. Staff provided samples of our Traditional bull kelp popcorn, Paa-moh salsa, and an afternoon tea blend. We were able to raise over \$500 for the Lab within those three tours. Research Associate Delaney along with FSL student staff and an NAS 333 student attended the California Seaweed Festival Fair event. Delaney was apart of the Service in Seaweed: Serving our Northern CA Coastal Native communities panel along with TDN Marine Division Manager Rosa Laucci and Trinidad Rancheria Marine Division Manager Jessica Gravelle. This panel was moderated by Monique Sonoquie.



ATTENDED BY DELANEY SCHROEDER-
ECHAVARRIA, JAIME LARA, CHELSEA
RIOS GOMEZ, COVIN SIGALA,
JOSEPH TAYLOR, AND CRANE CONSO

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

PAA-MOH SALSA AT NER-ER-NERH DAYS

YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT/ LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Food Sovereignty Lab staff, volunteers, and students attended the 1st Annual Trinidad Rancheria Ner-er-nerh Days. They participated in a variety of activities, including serving herbal teas made by Research Associate Cassandra, using the Rou Dalagurr Plinko Trivia board for the first time, and witnessing dance demonstrations by the Tolowa Nation Ne Dos (Nee-Dosh) and the Flower Dance led by Lab Co-Director Dr. Cutcha Risling-Baldy. Students also shared recipe cards and served Paa-moh (seaweed salsa) made with three types of seaweed—Red Ogo, Sea Lettuce, and Bull Kelp—prepared with the help of Research Associate Delaney.





EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

YOUTH LISTENING SESSION 2 & 3

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Preserved Strawberry
- ✓ Learned Proper Canning Technique
- ✓ Made Winter Wellness tea blends
- ✓ Made Winter Wellness Salves
- ✓ Created Labels for Salves & Tea Blends

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Kelp Workshop
- ✓ Nettle Workshop
- ✓ Youth Publication
- ✓ Listening Session #4
- ✓ Youth Campaign
- ✓ Program Evaluations



“Our cultural connection is what keeps us balanced, without it we lose a part of ourselves; physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.”

- Maidu Youth Council Member, Age 22

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

YOUTH LISTENING SESSIONS

The Native Youth Council is essential to the work we do at the Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab. This council provides a platform for young individuals to have a voice in matters that affects their communities. It helps in preserving cultural heritage, addressing unique challenges faced by Indigenous peoples, fostering leadership skills, and ensuring youths’ perspectives are included in decision-making processes, empowering them to shape their own futures. In 2024, we held two youth listening sessions; one in March and the second in November, at the Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab on the Cal Poly Humboldt campus.

We had an average attendance of 7 out of 13 youth council members at both events alongside three mentors and FSL Staff.

The youth on the council represent nine Indigenous nations that include Yurok, Karuk, Wiyot, Yamonim Maidum, Susanville Indian Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, K’iche peoples. The age of our youth council ranges 15 to 26.

The Youth Council has met throughout the year, both virtually and in person. In addition to their participation in Listening Sessions they have attended Talking Circles & FSL events that are targeted towards Youth with an emphasis on mental health, substance use, food sovereignty, and culture. There will be a final listening session in 2025. Additionally, the Youth Council will be involved in creating a Food Futures 9-12th grade curriculum that will be implemented in the Native American Studies Model Curriculum for the State of California, as well as, a publication on Tribal food sovereignty and substance use prevention through the Rou Dalagurr Food Futures Magazine.

Youth Listening Session on Food Sovereignty, Substance Abuse and Mental Health

What are the potential impacts of being culturally connected to traditional foods and medicines?

How does strengthening the connection & knowledge in cultural practices play a role in preventing or reducing substance use among Native youth?

How do you think participating in cultural activities can help improve mental health and emotional wellbeing in Native communities?

Questions asked by FSL team on food sovereignty, substance abuse and mental health in their communities.

How could the Youth Council better support you in your efforts to enhance traditional food systems and food sovereignty?

What keeps you motivated to learn more about food sovereignty and work with traditional foods and medicines?

What are some of your main concerns around the preservation and cultivation of traditional foods and medicines?

Youth Response Themes

Cultural Strengths

Motivational

**Collective
Strength & Unity**

Key Themes



**Hope & Vision for
the future**

**Creativity &
Innovation**

**Mutual support &
Encouragement**

Youth Testimonies on Food Sovereignty

Feeling proud of myself for being able to partake in making Jam. Just reflecting on my ability and how it made me feel to do it with others has been really healing.

I want to be a part of the gathering and processing.

“Our connection is what keeps us balanced, without it we lose a part of ourselves; physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.”

Maidu Youth Council Member, Age 22

“It helps with self identity and being in confident in your culture, Traditional foods and medicines may help with today's diabetes and other modern health problems”

Karuk Youth Council Member, Age 24

“It's something better and a more healthy distraction and distance to western problems”

Yurok/Bear River Youth Council Member, Age 18

“Knowing there are other ways to help yourself with the pain rather than drowning it out with alcohol and the such”.

Yurok Youth Council Member, Age 18



Youth Council Contribution: Photography

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER & LAB
PHOTOGRAPHER: KIMORA VANPELT
HUPA & YUROK
AGE: 19

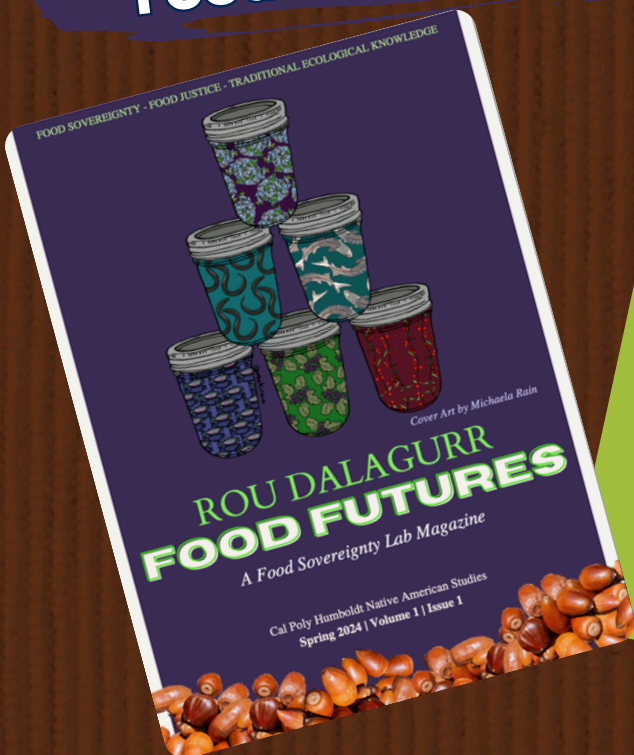


Kimora VanPelt joined the Youth Council in 2024 - and brought her artistic eye to the lab, capturing community events through photography and designing event flyers.

Kimora's work is being used broadly, including in this report and our upcoming magazine publication. Having local Native photographers in cultural spaces is essential, and Kimora's work has made a lasting impact.

They have gained mentorship, explored the university; learning how to navigate the system to get paid for their work, and brought levity to our spaces. They connected with inspiring creatives like artist Lonnie Anderson, photographer Lloyd, Chef Sara, and Dr. Cinthya—who bonded with Kimora over her upcoming kayaking trip to Chile! We're grateful for Kimora contributing her talents to the lab, and happy to have them on the Youth Council.

Youth Council Contribution: Food Futures Magazine



Cover Art by Michaela Rain

“canned food”

k'isehtme:ch me:q' k'iwiyul
i boiled it, inside it, food

k'e:yun'-te dahungwho'
i will eat, at some time.

Michaela Rain participated in the Native Youth Council this past year and played a significant role in contributing to the Rou Dalagurr Food Futures Magazine. They were responsible for designing the cover, which is the first thing people notice when they engage with the magazine, as well as crafting the poem featured on the opening page.



[Access Food Futures Magazine here!](#)

Native American Studies Model Curriculum (NASMC)

Indigenous Food Sovereignty & Health

History; Cultural Strengths; Relationship to Place
Theme

Grade 9-12

Subject Standard(s): Health Education Content Standards

Nutrition and Physical Activity Standard 2: Analyzing Influences 2.1.N; 2.2.N. Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors 7.4.N. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Standard : Essential Concepts 1.4.P; 1.5.A; 5.1.A; 5.2.A. Personal and Community Health Standard 1.10.P ; 1.12.P; 2.3.P; 2.4.P; 6.1.P; 8.1.P



NASMC consists of lesson plans, primary sources, teaching strategies, and professional development resources to aid educators in teaching Native American studies (K-12) in California. The Humboldt and San Diego County Offices of Education are leading its development, collaborating with California Tribes, other County Offices of Education, and organizations serving Native youth. The curriculum will be open access for all teachers.

The lesson plan titled “Indigenous Food Sovereignty & Health” is currently being reviewed by the California Office of Education and will soon be made publicly available. This lesson plan introduces articles from the Rou Dalagurr Food Futures Magazine, allowing students in grades 9-12 to explore traditional foods by reading articles about acorns, salmon, and seaweed written by FSL Staff. The lesson plan addresses Health Education Content Standards, including those that focus on substance use and the impact of food sovereignty.



FIF OUTCOMES



SUCCESSSES

In 2024, we successfully moved our programming into the Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab and TEK Institute on campus. Having access to this custom space has allowed for many successes, including increased hands on activity opportunities for our Youth Council members as well as the many young people who engage in our broad programming. The Youth Council successfully created multiple cultural-based gifts for the local community, including healing salves, teas, and canned preserves. Additionally, we had the honor of welcoming cultural bearers like Chef Sara and Lonnie Anderson, who have contributed greatly to our mission. This new space serves as a home base for students, fostering a built-in community that encourages mentorship and leadership while allowing young people to explore new opportunities. It also strengthens connections to culture and food, offering a positive alternative to substance use.

CHALLENGES AND PLANNED SOLUTIONS

This year, transitioning fully into our on-campus space presented significant challenges, particularly within a system that has historically excluded Native students and programs. A key example was our effort to compensate our Youth Council Photographer with an honorarium—an exciting milestone that was met with months-long payment delays due to restrictive university policies, despite our funds being ready. Similar barriers affected payments for expert panelists, film series guests, and community partners, as CSU-wide software changes and strict payment limits created additional hurdles. With strong demand for our programs from both local and broader communities, our limited staff—especially student staff—have been stretched thin. In 2025, we will continue working with the university to streamline payment processes, explore external partnerships to improve financial flexibility, and prioritize wellness for our team, as something as simple as payment procurement adds significant workloads to our already busy team..

FIF OUTCOMES



PARTICIPANTS

Outcomes for the youth who engaged with our programming included improved connection to culture, food, and a deeper understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty. Additionally, youth were connected to a network of peers and mentors, and programs working in community coalition. All of these improved connections have a wealth of benefits in regards to reduced substance use. We maintained consistent attendance from youth council members, who participated meaningfully with the programming, and used their creativity to add new pathways of programming. Youth expressed explicitly that engaging in FIF helps them stay on a good path.

POLICY OUTCOMES

Our commitment to policy, systems, and environmental change is driven by the active participation of our Youth Council in the Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab and cultural programming. These spaces are more than just events—they are opportunities for Native youth to step into leadership roles, speak on issues that matter to them, and engage in hands-on food sovereignty work. Whether facilitating Talking Circles, working alongside cultural knowledge holders, or advocating for Indigenous foodways, these youth can gain tangible experience navigating institutional systems while staying grounded in their cultural identities. We provide opportunities for Native youth to strengthen their voices and expanding their impact within both their communities and the broader policy landscape.

FIF OUTCOMES



PROGRESS

In 2024, we had consistent engagement from both the Youth Council and youth who attend or partake in our broader programming. We have been able to measure their progress, not only through survey responses but by their willingness to repeatedly engage with programming by the FSL such as their contributions to curriculum, the lab, and their peers. This year has been filled with the strengthening of existing partnerships as well as new collaborations within the community; creating a healthy network and environment for young people. The Native American Studies curriculum is expected to be taught in schools across the state. We also have programming planned for another Food Futures Magazine volume and for future events for youth and by youth.

Food For Indigenous Futures 2024

Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab & TEK Institute

