

**ONE-ON-ONE WITH:
Kevin Jones**

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When Kevin Jones tried to get some more information on computer classes at the Tulalip Tribes' Reservation a few months ago, little did he know that he was just one step away from becoming a Web Developer on the Tulalip Technology Leap Project (TTL).

I sat down with him to find out about his Native American roots, his role as a vital member of the TTL team, and his plans for the future.

This is what Kevin had to say....

RVR: Perhaps you could begin by telling us about your Native American connection. Did you grow up on the Tulalip Indian Reservation?

KJ: I was born on the Reservation and have spent most of my life here. My mother and step-father are Steve and Karen Gobin.. My grandparents are Ralph (Breezer) and Dorraine Jones. All are Natives from Tulalip. I also have part Lummi background, which comes from my grandparents.



Photo by Christine Raymond

RVR: How long have you been a student at EvCC?

KJ: I've attended EvCC for two years now, and I also spend some time at BCC. I am planning an academic transfer to a 4-year college. Some classes I've taken include business management, a lot of computer classes with some programming, and some design courses. I'm just sampling everything and trying to figure out what I want to do.

Presently, I am enrolled in a systems analysis class, writing studies, and then my internship with TTL.

RVR: And how did you get your internship with TTL?

KJ: I actually came to TTL searching for more computer training classes. I was introduced to Maureen (Hoban) who works in the Tulalip Education Center. It turned out that the courses they were offering were not quite what I was looking for. I asked her if there were any more advanced classes, but none were available.

I was then given a tour of TTL. Fortunately, I met Kris (Fritz) and Valerie (Edmunds), two project managers who told me more about TTL and encouraged me to apply for the internship.

RVR: What was your first project?

KJ: When I joined TTL, the teams were working on many different projects. I found myself more involved with the web team. They were working on the first phase of TulalipCasino.com. One of my first projects was creating style sheets and HTML, incorporating them into the site. Starting off slow helped me to find my way around and get settled in.

RVR: And what else have you been working on since then?

KJ: Many web sites since then. Including: TulalipTechLeap.com, TulalipTribes.com, RatecOnline.org, a site for Health & Social Services, and soon there will be a site for all of the Tulalip Veterans.

This site will list all the Tulalip Veterans throughout all wars and eras. It will show links to the most popular veteran sites, and will feature biographies with pictures, rank upon leaving the service, and contact information. There is also talk about having access to a database that could, for example, give the user information on a lost family member or fallen comrade.

RVR: Didn't you get involved in the Children's Health Fair as well?

KJ: Oh yes ... that was fun. We brought a few computer stations down to the Boys and Girls Club, and promoted the Health and Social Services web site. We let the kids run through the children's section of the web site, and we were able to show them the interactive and fun ways to learn about health. It was a good experience.

We're also planning to develop a Tulalip Kids web site. It's going to be educational and will include games to play, the use the calendars and message boards. It will provide an opportunity for children to learn the Lushootseed Language, and will also feature Native American artwork.

RVR: It can sometimes be a challenge to get the content you need for a website. Do you think you have an advantage being a Tulalip Tribe member?

KJ: Being familiar with all of the faces, and knowing almost everybody does help. But I am still meeting new people and gaining many new experiences. So I would say that, yes, it is an advantage.

RVR: Apart from having the opportunity to work with children, is there anything else that you particularly enjoy about the job?

KJ: Yes, my environment. I love everybody here! I mean there are people from all over the world, as you've already noticed. It's fun.

The on-the-job training is wonderful experience. It's good to be able to take the courses at the college and then use what I am learning at the same time in the actual working environment. It's wonderful.

Although I am supervised, I also like the feeling of independence that I get with this job. I always know what "my tasks" are and come into work knowing what needs to be done every day.

RVR: Can you tell us a bit more about the training?

KJ: At TTL, when I come across problem areas, or if I don't quite understand how to do something, of course there is always plenty of help. But I usually find myself taking courses, from one-day workshops to month long classes.

Some courses I have taken include HTML, Dreamweaver, Flash, Project, Outlook, and Database Design.

The possibilities are endless.

RVR: What are your plans for the future?

KJ: Although I plan to eventually transfer to the Computing and Software Systems (CCS) program at the University of Washington-Bothell, I'm in no hurry. I like to take my time while I learn and working here just gives me the ability to apply the knowledge that I am gaining.

RVR: Is there anything else that you'd like to mention?

KJ: I don't think we have enough advertising out there. I would like to see more Tribal members come in and take advantage of the opportunities and take some courses as well. I don't know how to go about maybe advertising or just letting everyone know, "Hey, we're here! There are opportunities available for you."

RVR: Do you think what we are doing here is going to be helpful to the Tribes?

KJ: Yes, I do. It is estimated that the TTL projects will result in over 33 technology-related positions to be filled by Tribal members.

RVR: After graduation, do you see yourself coming back here to the Reservation and filling one of these jobs?

KJ: Yes, It's going to be a long road but I do see myself planting my roots here. This is my home, and I really can't see it any other way.

RVR: Thanks Kevin. There are many different ways to start working on jobs at TTL. Please tell your friends to stop by, and we will be happy to talk with them about some career paths and ways to get involved.