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**Suicide Survivor Works to Eradicate Stigma of Silence Preventing Indian Youth From Getting Help**

**[Michelle Tirado](#) [5/29/12](#)**

*Suicide may still be a hush-hush topic for many Indian people, but it's not for Arnold Thomas, [Shoshone-Paiute](#). And Thomas, who tried to commit suicide in 1988, when he was 18—and miraculously survived—has plenty to say about it. In fact, that is what he has done for most of the past decade. Under the banner of his Salt Lake City-based firm, [White Buffalo Knife Consulting](#), he has traveled to dozens of tribal communities in the United States and Canada to speak about his attempted suicide. During the first half of the 2000s, he was telling his*

*inspirational story to some 20,000 to 30,000 people every year, hoping to encourage more open communication of a problem that touches too many Indian youths.*

*Thomas, 41, was recently ordained the first chaplain from the Native faith traditions with the [College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy](#), and he is a chaplain for the [Veterans Health Administration](#). While he does not deliver his suicide-prevention talk as often as he used to, he is still eager to speak about his experience—what drove him to the point of suicide, how he survived, the healing process and how he emerged from it all with a soaring spirituality and a renewed love of life.*

### **Tell me about your suicide attempt—how did you do it?**

I used a .30-30 hunting rifle. I put it under my chin and pulled the trigger.

### **What brought you to that point?**

Not understanding that the pain will go away, that pain of losing my father. Not understanding that other people would understand how I am feeling.

My father committed suicide when I was 16. I was the oldest of three kids, the only son, so we spent a lot of time together. So when he died, it was like the foundation that I had was ripped away. I really did not understand how to deal with those intense emotions and the stigma that comes with suicide—you're not supposed to talk about what happened. Sometimes a person—especially a teenager—doesn't have the words for those emotions, those thoughts. So I turned to drugs and alcohol to drown my sorrows.

### **How did you react when you became conscious?**

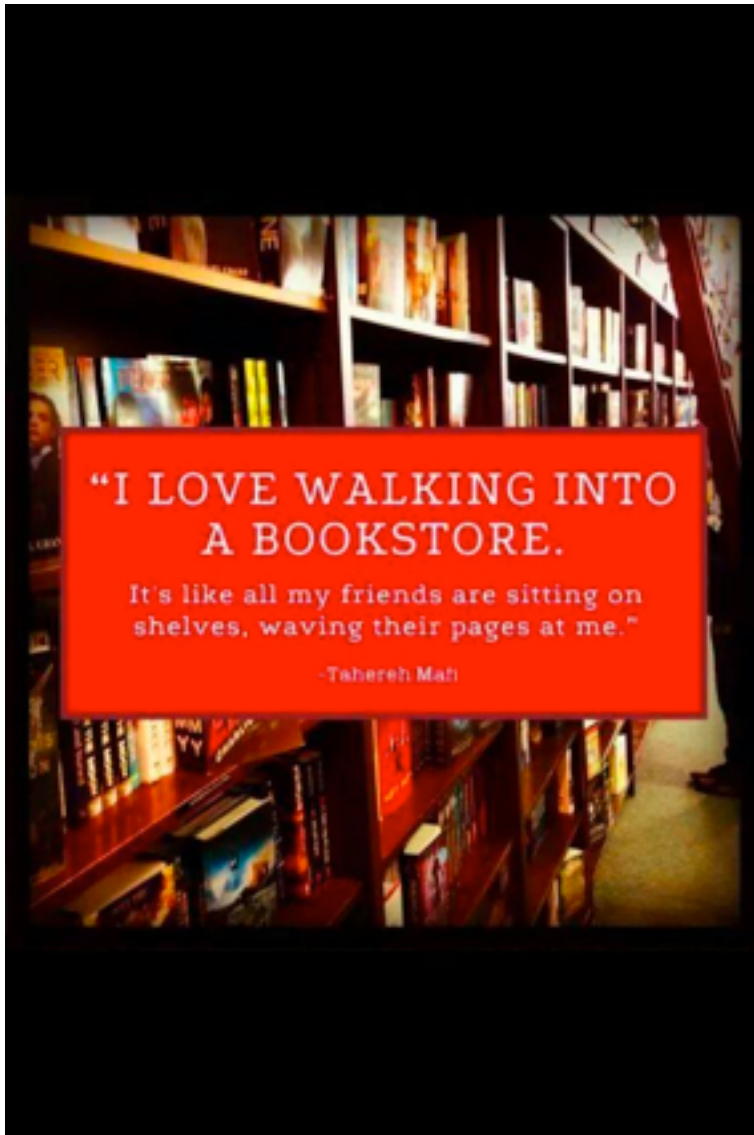
After I pulled the trigger, I blacked out, became conscious, blacked out again. I shattered my whole face—my eyeballs, all the bones in my nose, my cheekbones, my upper and lower jaw. With every breath I was taking, I was gasping, bleeding to death. I knew that the bullet had not killed me, but I knew I was going to die. Some 40 to 50 minutes later, paramedics arrived.

I woke up in the ICU. I could hear people, but I could not see them. I could hear my mother at the foot of the bed crying. There was this doctor placing a notepad on my chest. He was explaining to me where I was, what they had done in surgery. There was a wire brace around my face, screws in my jaw holding that wire brace together, tubes in what had been my nose and my nostrils, a tracheotomy tube in my neck, and I was hooked up to a respirator to keep me alive. My face was the size of a basketball.

### **How did this change you spiritually?**

I spent two years not being able to speak. I had to eat food through a gastric tube and breath through a tube in my neck. The physical pain is one thing, the countless surgeries—there have been a lot of bone-graft surgeries, skin-graft surgeries since 1988 to slowly rebuild my face. I had to teach myself how to speak, so people could understand me. I don't have any lips, so I have to make an extra effort when I do speak.

Spiritually, I really came to appreciate life. It has been a hard lesson. I had to forgive myself. I had to forgive my father. I had to ask my mother to forgive me for how I hurt her. More than 20 years later, I am still asking for forgiveness from people who know me. I had to go back and forgive, way back, however long it was, when the first people came here, some of what happened in history.



I wanted to be able to forgive and let go, so I could be okay with those memories and they wouldn't have power over me—to be okay with myself. And I have come to the understanding that I have a purpose.

**Did you ever contemplate suicide again?**

Oh, yeah. I went through intense feelings of anger and guilt, shame. One night I got so frustrated after my first surgery—they had taken my fibula out, below my knee, 12 inches of it, put it in my lower jaw, made me a nose. They took muscle out of my right forearm. When I went back home, I was so frustrated that I packed my bags in the middle of the night, grabbed my mother's car keys, went out to the car and started it up. My mother came running out, and she was crying. She said, "What are you doing?"

One of my aunts hooked me up with Services to the Blind in Nevada, but because they had no training schools in Nevada, I picked Utah. I went because I was still young and I wanted to learn. I did not want to sit at home doing nothing. The director of that program said there are only two things [blind people] can't do without help from others: You can't read any printed material, and you can't draw. He said anything else you want to do in life, you can. That gave me hope.

**What is the lesson from your story that everyone should learn?**

To be thankful for what you have, not focus on what you don't have. Oftentimes, we really don't realize what we have. When I speak, I tell people, "When you go home, whomever you live with, give them a hug and say, 'Thank you for what you are teaching me.'?" People teach us good behavior and bad behavior. It's up to us what we are going to do with that.

I have also been talking about love. When I work with Indian people, I say, "All right. Everybody say love." More often than not, you can barely hear them. The love I am talking about is compassionate, kind, loving, and it's gentle and caring.

Our ancestors knew that Mother Earth loved them. They knew because the grass grows, as do the fruit trees, the vegetables, the corn, squash, beans, the deer and elk, cows and chickens. I tell them, "Mother Earth loves us. She can say no, but she is giving." All indigenous people had an understanding of this relationship to natural elements, natural law. A lot of our young people are yearning for traditional tribal teachings of how to be, how to live.

### **You've said suicide is not the "way" of Native people. Why not?**

Because all the Native ceremonies and teachings are about caring for one another, being thankful for what you have, praying.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2012/05/29/suicide-survivor-works-eradicate-stigma-silence-preventing-indian-youth-getting-help>

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Now you may be wondering, to yourself "**What does a 6,500-year-old body have to do with genealogy?** Isn't that a bit far back in the ahnentafel?" It is not the skeleton itself, but the events surrounding it that are very applicable to genealogy.

Often we get so caught up in the thrill of research that we don't spend time enough time processing our findings. Think about how many electronic files and pieces of paper you have with your genealogy materials. And how easy it is to misplace something. Have you ever gone through your materials and occasionally found something you hadn't seen in ages? And this rediscovery can lead to major new avenues of research.

One way speed up this rediscovery is to periodically review your files. Is everything organized properly? Anything misplaced? And regularly process your backlog of files, both electronic and paper. Start by taking everything you are waiting to deal with and putting it all in a single place: a file folder, an archive box, a special folder on your computer.

Once you have everything accumulated, the next step is to look at your calendar. Schedule some time to review the files on a regular basis. It doesn't matter if it is once a week, once a month, or once a quarter. The important thing is to go through the materials regularly, process them, and put them in their permanent places. This is the best way to minimize problems with lost items, and keep you from repeating the mistakes of the Penn Museum and Noah.

[http://blog.mocavo.com/2014/08/noahs-skeleton-can-help-research?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=20140809+newsletter&utm\\_content=blog\\_posts](http://blog.mocavo.com/2014/08/noahs-skeleton-can-help-research?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20140809+newsletter&utm_content=blog_posts)

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## **“You Can Do Better”: Michelle Obama Urges Girls To Honor The Value Of Education**

**[Aug 6, 2014](#)**

**By [Sonya Eskridge](#)**

**Michelle Obama** is calling on young women in the U.S. to take their education a little more seriously.

Kids in the United States are often depicted viewing school as an unbearable daily chore, but education is not a basic right everywhere in the world.

In her open letter to [Seventeen](#) magazine, the first lady asked readers to consider how hard it is for some women to even access an elementary-school level education. Whether for financial reasons, gender inequality or even religious beliefs, girls all over the globe are actively kept out of class.

“Often, even when girls do have the chance to attend school, they do so at great risk,” Michelle wrote, stressing that some men will do everything they can to keep young women from going to school and discouraging others with hopes of getting an education.

**MUST READ: [Malala Yousafzai Creates #StrongerThan Social Media Campaign To Help Nigerian Schoolgirls](#)**

She even pointed to two prominent example of how violent some people will get when girls want to learn. “We saw this in Pakistan when Taliban terrorists boarded a school bus and shot a 15 year-old girl named **Malala Yousafzai** because she had spoken out for girls’ education,” she said before mentioning the horrific event that spawned the #BringBackOurGirls movement. “We saw it in Nigeria when men from a terrorist organization called Boko Haram kidnapped more than 200 girls from their school dormitory in the middle of the night.”

Michelle noted that only about 62 million girls around the world are not in school. The ones that are face seemingly insurmountable obstacles to learn. She urged girls in the United States to think about that when they devalue their own education.

“Knowing the heartbreaking challenges so many girls in the world are facing, think about all the girls you know who don’t take their education seriously,” she wrote. “To any girl – or any young person – who might be thinking this way, I have a simple message: you can do better – for yourself, your family and your country.”

**MUST READ: [First Lady Michelle Obama Joins #BringBackOurGirls Movement By Tweeting Her Support](#)**

Michelle added, “Maybe that means talking to a teacher or a counselor to get some help, or committing yourself to concrete goals each week, like showing up on time for class and getting your homework done each night.”

[EdWeek.org](#) reports that 73 percent of senior girls graduated high school in 2007. According to [The Washington Post](#) that number was 72 in 2003. There was an improvement, but not much.



The first lady highlighted how having a basic education is essential to becoming a self-sufficient adult.

“No matter what you want to do with your life, I guarantee that you will need a high school diploma and some higher education, like a two-year or four-year college degree or a professional certificate,” she stated.

In closing, Michelle also tasked young women serious about getting an education to make sure that they’re reaching back to help others that can’t.

“As you get yourself on track for higher education, I hope you’ll work to give girls around the world opportunities to attend school too,” she challenged. “Get involved with an organization that focuses on girls’ education; form a club at your school to raise money and awareness; use social media to educate everyone you know about this issue.”

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### **[Ask the SBA Administrator](#)**

#### **[Live Online Event with Google Small Business Community](#)**

SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet will be answering your questions live during a Hangout on Air in the Google Small Business Community. Want to learn how the SBA can help you start and grow your business? Now’s your chance.

**Wednesday, August 27 4:30 PM ET / 1:30 PM PT**

[> Click to RSVP & Submit Your Questions](#)

### **[ALL ABOARD! SBA Participates in the Millennial Trains Project Across the Country](#)**

From August 7-17, [The Millennial Trains Project](#) will convene young aspiring and current entrepreneurs by acting as a mobile entrepreneurial workshop, allowing participants and virtual audiences to explore emerging opportunities and challenges in communities across America while on board a train traveling from Portland, Oregon to New York City. [> Read more](#)

### **[How to Talk to the Media Like a Pro](#)**

Do you dream of getting interviewed by a reporter, radio personality or blogger? Getting the media’s attention is only half the battle for a small business owner. What really matters is how well you handle being interviewed. These expert insights will help you succeed. [> Read more](#)

### **[ChallengeHer – Opportunities & Access to Federal Contracts for Women-Owned Small Businesses](#)**

If you’re a woman-owned small business looking to contract with the federal government and seeking assistance on how to navigate in the federal procurement arena, we have good news that can help! [> Read more](#)

### **Upcoming ChallengeHER Events:**

- **ChallengeHER – Raleigh, NC** Tuesday, August 19 | 8am – 12pm ET  
> [Click to register](#)

### **3 Essential Financial Statements for Your Small Business**

Accurately tracking financial data is not only critical for running the day-to-day operations of your small business, but it is also essential when seeking funding to take your business to the next level. Get to know these three basic financial statements that are important for your small business. > [Read more](#)

### **SBA & AARP Webinar: Q&A Session to Help You Start Your Business—Ask the Experts!**

This is your chance to get your small business questions answered by those in the know! Join AARP and SBA on **Tuesday, August 12 at 2pm ET** to ask about developing your business plan, securing financing, accounting, marketing, bookkeeping and more.

> [Submit questions and register now](#)

### **7 Techniques to Help You Save Money with Technology**

As small businesses rely more and more on technology, you may find yourself spending a bigger chunk of your budget on technology. But why spend more money than you need to? Here are some tips for how to spend as little as possible on that all-important technology for your business. > [Read more](#)

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### **Register Today: National Clean Energy Summit 7.0 September 4, 2014 - Las Vegas**

National Clean Energy Summit 7.0: Partnership & Progress is a high-powered national conversation about growing the clean energy economy. Now in its seventh year, this prestigious annual conference convenes high-level industry leaders, policymakers, government officials, innovators, investors and advocates to discuss the future of our nation's clean energy economy. Join us in Las Vegas on September 4th!

We are delighted to announce a new panel at National Clean Energy Summit 7.0. "Stepping to the Plate on Climate Change: Business Leadership on Pollution Reduction" features former Governor of Utah, Jon Huntsman, Former Secretary of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Henry Cisneros, and Chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International, Jim Murren.

These distinguished speakers will address the risks of climate change from a business perspective, covering topics such as the need to develop new business models and the importance of sustainability for a strong economy.

National Clean Energy Summit 7.0: Partnership and Progress confirmed speakers include:

- Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton (Keynote Speaker)
- Senator Harry Reid (D-NV)
- 
- U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack
- John Podesta, Counselor to President Barack Obama

- Former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros
- Jon Huntsman , former Governor of Utah
- Neera Tanden , Center for American Progress
- James Murren , MGM Resorts International
- Rose McKinney James , Clean Energy Project
- Billy Parish , Mosaic
- Lyndon Rive , SolarCity
- Matt Rogers , Nest Labs
- Daniel Yates , Opower

More speakers to be announced soon!

Showcase your business: Our Exhibition Hall is situated at the heart of the Summit between the registration area and the event room. Touring the exhibition booths has become a highlight of the day for speakers, media and attendees. [Click here for more information](#), or contact Anna Turner at 702.987.4556.

Mandalay Bay is offering a special rate for NCES 7.0 participants! [Click here](#) for room rates, on-line booking and more information about Mandalay Bay's amenities .

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**[HORROR " Pacific Ocean Now Dead From Fukushima Radiation "](#)**

The entire 200 kilometers we checked of Canadian Pacific Coast Line was devoid of all life , recovery is highly unlikely . This presentation will be followed...  
youtube.com

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**[When Trash Talk Becomes Brainy](#)**

By LARRY ROHTER

The Smithsonian Summer Showdown has brought out both a competitive and a sassy streak in the normally sober-minded specialists charged with caring for the nation's heirlooms.

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Today's selection - *Missing Microbes* by Martin J. Blaser, MD. Blaser, former chair of medicine at NYU and president of the Infectious Diseases Society of America, is one of a growing number of medical practitioners and researchers who believe that we are experiencing a



growing array of "modern plagues," and that the cause of these plagues is rooted in our "disappearing microbiota":

"Within the past few decades, amid all of [our] medical advances, something has gone terribly wrong. In many different ways we appear to be getting sicker. You can see the headlines every day. We are suffering from a mysterious array of what I call 'modern plagues': obesity, childhood diabetes, asthma, hay fever, food allergies, esophageal reflux and cancer, celiac disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, autism, eczema. In all likelihood you or someone in your family or someone you know is afflicted. Unlike most lethal plagues of the past that struck relatively fast and hard, these are chronic conditions that diminish and degrade their victims' quality of life for decades. ...

### **Click to through to interact with the graphic**

"The autoimmune form of diabetes that begins in childhood and requires insulin injections (juvenile or Type I diabetes) has been doubling in incidence about every twenty years across the industrialized world. In Finland, where record keeping is meticulous, the incidence has risen 550 percent since 1950. ... But the disease itself has not changed; something in us has changed. Type I diabetes is also striking younger children. The average age of diagnosis used to be about nine. Now it is around six, and some children are becoming diabetic when they are three.

"The recent rise in asthma, a chronic inflammation of the airways, is similarly alarming. One in twelve people (about 25 million or 8 percent of the U.S. population) had asthma in 2009, compared with one in fourteen a decade earlier. Ten percent of American children suffer wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing; black children have it worst: one in six has the disease. Their rate increased by 50 percent from 2001 through 2009. But the rise in asthma has not spared any ethnicity: the rates were initially different in various groups, and all have been rising. ... No economic or social class has been spared.

"Food allergies are everywhere. A generation ago, peanut allergies were extremely rare. ... Ten percent of children suffer from hay fever. Eczema, a chronic skin inflammation, affects more than 15 percent of children and 2 percent of adults in the United States. In industrialized nations, the number of kids with eczema has tripled in the past thirty years. ...

"Why are all of these maladies rapidly rising at the same time across the developed world and spilling over into the developing world as it becomes more Westernized? Can it be a mere coincidence? If there are ten of these modern plagues, are there ten separate causes? That seems unlikely.

"Or could there be one underlying cause fueling all these parallel increases? A single cause is easier to grasp; it is simpler, more parsimonious. But what cause could be grand enough to encompass asthma, obesity, esophageal reflux, juvenile diabetes, and allergies to specific foods, among all of the others? Eating too many calories could explain obesity but not asthma; many of the children who suffer from asthma are slim. Air pollution could explain asthma but not food allergies. ...

"The most popular explanation for the rise in childhood illness is the so-called hygiene hypothesis. The idea is that modern plagues are happening because we have made our world too clean. The result is that our children's immune systems have become quiescent and are therefore prone to false alarms and friendly fire. ...

"We need to look closely at the microorganisms that make a living in and on our bodies, massive assemblages of competing and cooperating microbes known collectively as the microbiome. ... Each of us hosts a ... diverse ecology of microbes that has coevolved with our species over millennia. They thrive in the mouth, gut, nasal passages, ear canal, and on the skin. In women, they coat the vagina. The microbes that constitute your microbiome are generally acquired early in life; surprisingly, by the age of three, the populations within children resemble those of adults. Together, they play a critical role in your immunity as well as your ability to combat disease. In short, it is your microbiome that keeps you healthy. And parts of it are disappearing.

"The reasons for this disaster are all around you, including overuse of antibiotics in humans and animals, Cesarian sections, and the widespread use of sanitizers and antiseptics, to name just a few. ...

"The loss of diversity within our microbiome is far more pernicious [than the overuse of antibiotics and resulting antibiotic resistance]. Its loss changes development itself, affecting our metabolism, immunity, and cognition.

"I have called this process the 'disappearing microbiota.' It's a funny term that does not immediately roll off your tongue, but I believe it is correct. For a number of reasons, we are losing our ancient microbes. This quandary is the central theme of this book. The loss of microbial diversity on and within our bodies is exacting a terrible price. I predict it will be worse in the future. Just as the internal combustion engine, the splitting of the atom, and pesticides all have had unanticipated effects, so too does the abuse of antibiotics and other medical or quasi-medical practices (e.g., sanitizer use).

"An even worse scenario is headed our way if we don't change our behavior. It is one so bleak, like a blizzard roaring over a frozen landscape, that I call it 'antibiotic winter.'"

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**84th ANNUAL PINENUT FEASTIVAL & POW WOW - Sept 19th - 21st, 2014.**

Location: Walker River Indian Community Shurz, Nv 89427

Date: September 19th - 21st.

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**Rosalie Little Thunder: Truthsayer.**

Rosalie is a Lakota elder, a longtime indigenous and environmental activist. At the close of last week's Protect the Sacred II conference opposing the Keystone XL and its man-camps, she urged

us to make a serious commitment to resist the pipeline—“the artery of greed”—and other such threats.

“Remind yourself every morning, every morning, every morning: ‘I’m going to do something, I’ve made a commitment.’ Not for yourself, but beyond yourself. You belong to the collective. Don’t go wandering off, or you will perish.”



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every morning, every morning:  
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ROSALIE LITTLE THUNDER, LAKOTA

**Chukk T Ron** ·

I know of a **Northern Nevada school looking for a Photography teacher**. If anyone is interested please send me a PM for deatails