

ANCESTRAL VOICES



SOUTH OMAHA
MURAL PROJECT



Bluebird Cultural
Initiative

NEBRASKA URBAN INDIAN
HEALTH COALITION



About this mural~

This mural was created in tribute to the strength and importance of the women in the Native American community. The letters over the top of the mural spell out the 4 tribes headquartered in Nebraska, the Ho-Chunk, the Isanti (or Santee) the Osni Ponca, and the UMÓꞤHOꞤ (or Omaha Tribe.) The words are painted like graffiti to symbolize that the community is alive and changing and being carried into the future by creative, resilient youth.

The faces are without features in the style of Native American dolls and Ledger Art, forcing viewers to use their imaginations to imagine the details, maybe even their own grandmothers. The decorative patterns depicted are combinations of many unique family patterns.

The night sky depicts the Milky Way and the Big Dipper, both of which were important to the Nebraska Native people. The Big Dipper is depicted upside referring to the legend that in the spring it spills blessings, causing rain and growth. The earth, including the sacred plants chosen at the bottom of the wall and the 4 rivers that shape the territory of the Omaha Tribe are also sacred symbols. Youth, working with the organization Soaring Over Meth and Suicide, researched plants sacred to local tribes and painted them on the wall.

American Bison were central to the lives of Nebraska's first people and we chose to depict them in a way that was evocative of the work Nebraska Native Donel Keeler, who's son gave us permission to use his image. Donel was a well recognized Isanti painter who lived in Omaha, and we wanted to pay tribute to his contributions to Native American Art. The patterns were chosen from the 4 tribes as well.

This is the 11th mural in the South Omaha Mural Project series, which includes murals about the history and unique ethnic communities here. Like the murals for the Mexicans, Mayans, Polish, Croatian, Lithuanian, and Irish in South Omaha, this was done through community meetings and paint days, often involving youth.

learn more about our murals at SouthOmahaMuralProject.com!



This was a project of the South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance, with support from The Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund, The Nebraska Arts Council and the Omaha Community Foundation!



Omaha Community
Foundation

Good grows here.

