

# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

## PRESS RELEASE



46411 Timine Way  
Pendleton, OR 97801  
541-276-3165 • CTUIR.org

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Contact: Travis Snell • 541.429.7394 • [travissnell@ctuir.org](mailto:travissnell@ctuir.org)

### **Cosper Named CTUIR's New Legislative Affairs Manager**

MISSION – The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) has found its new Legislative Affairs manager in Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen Sterling Cosper.

Cosper, who began his career in 2012 as a reporter with the MCN's Communications Department (now Mvskoke Media), took over the Legislative Affairs role Monday, Dec. 2. The job entails being the key liaison for the CTUIR's state and federal lobbyists as well as the Board of Trustees on policy along with tracking and analyzing legislation that may affect the CTUIR.

The position also calls for developing and recommending strategies and actions related to legislation at the local, state and federal levels.

"It is an honor to be chosen as Legislative Affairs manager during this critical period for all tribes," he said. "I will utilize my experience working with journalists from Indigenous nations around the world to learn more about and help respond to the pressing issues specifically facing CTUIR. I am in awe of the tribe's land, which is an invaluable resource for its people, which I seek to help protect. I also aim to assist CTUIR in upholding its right to consultation regarding any outside measure that affects its general sovereignty and wellbeing along with the promised support outlined in its 1855 Treaty."

While at MCN Communications, Cosper was promoted to manager, successfully drafting and advocating for a free press law for Mvskoke Media and leading coverage on the U.S. Supreme Court case *MCN, McGirt v. Oklahoma*, which re-established reservation status for the Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole nations.

Cosper resigned as manager in protest after the MCN government repealed its free press law. He then joined the Native American Journalists Association (now Indigenous Journalists Association) as program manager while continuing to restore a constitutional free press law at MCN.

While at IJA he learned nonprofit work and expanded his membership-based organization skills after his full-time promotion as the organization's membership manager. He has also served as president of the

Oklahoma Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, vice chair of the SPJ Freedom of Information Committee, president of the Mvskoke Media Editorial Board and on the IJA Board of Directors.

CTUIR Communications Director Kaeleen McGuire said she welcomes Cospere into the Legislative Affairs manager position.

“I believe with Sterling’s background in journalism and leading national nonprofits his skills should successfully translate over to legislative affairs,” McGuire said. “Sterling has a solid grasp on tribal sovereignty, and a comprehensive understanding of both state and federal legislation and issues. He will be a tremendous asset to CTUIR.”

*The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.*

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Caption: Sterling Cospere