



## Virtual Culinary Event In Boston

The program comes ahead of Indigenous People's Day on October 12.

By [Press Release Desk, News Partner](#)

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The series, "Celebrating What Unites Us," honors diverse cultures and promotes healthy living for older Bostonians through food.

The [Age Strong Commission](#), in partnership with the [Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway](#) and [Old Ways](#), yesterday hosted a virtual culinary event with Native American Chef Sean Sherman. The program comes ahead of Indigenous People's Day on October 12.

Kathryn Burton, the Chief of Staff for Mayor Martin J. Walsh, member of the Gesgapegiag Mi'kmaq tribe in Quebec, Canada and the first Indigenous person to hold a Cabinet-level position at Boston City Hall, made introductory remarks.

"I want to thank the many groups that brought such an esteemed Chef to this event," said Chief Burton. "There is no monolithic food experience among Native communities. Programs like this echo Mayor Walsh's commitment to

cultural understanding, knowing that the more diverse voices you have at the decision making table, the more equitable the policies are for all constituents."

"This collaboration brings heritage cooking classes weekly to a wide online audience is one that we are very proud of," said Old Ways President Sara Baer-Sinnott. "Old Ways' vision of healthier, happier lives through cultural food traditions is brought to life every other Wednesday by talented chefs, cookbook authors and other friends who share their passion and skills. It is a pleasure to collaborate and a pleasure to learn."

Sean Sherman, member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and co-founder of [The Sioux Chef.com](https://www.siouxchef.com) will give a live cooking demonstration. Sean received the 2019 James Beard Leadership Award and is the author of *The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen*, which received the James Beard Award for Best American Cookbook.

"I am working to reconnect Native Americans with traditional food systems to improve health, promote economic development, establish food sovereignty, and preserve tribal history and culture across artificial colonial boundaries," said Lakota Chef Sean Sherman. "Through development of a new food system based around cultivation and incorporation of healthy, wild, culturally appropriate, traditional ingredients and agriculture, we are empowering Native people to use the power of their history and culture to counter the multigenerational impacts of colonialism and dispossession. If you control your food, you control your destiny."

*Current demographic data on Native Americans in Boston can be [found online](#).*

**About the "Celebrating What Unites Us series**

The series began over three years ago as a collaboration between the Age Strong Commission, the Armenian Park on the Greenway, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement, the Mayor's Office of Food Access and the KITCHEN at the Boston Public Market. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts provided funding. Pre-covid, attendees would meet at the Park on the Greenway and a member of the cultural group being highlighted would share their immigrant story. People walked the labyrinth, itself a symbol of the interconnectedness of all people, and on to the Boston Public Market where there was a cooking demonstration followed by a delicious, healthy lunch for everyone to enjoy.

After one of these installments last year, a resident from the North End named Rita had been sitting with a woman named Myrtle from Mattapan. They got along so well she wanted to visit her neighborhood, where she hadn't been in many years. This, essentially, has been one of the purposes of the series: by exploring our cultures, we can experience our common humanity and foster an understanding and appreciation of one another.

Since the pandemic, "Celebrating What Unites Us" has transitioned to an online event, in partnership with Old Ways, a non-profit teaching people how to make traditional food from around the world. Since many are at home, cooking more than usual, and able to join from their homes, attendance has soared. It is also re-aired on Boston City TV and BNN.

Barbara Tellalian of Friends of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway said, "We are so grateful for the commitment of our collaborators, for the chefs and cooks who demonstrate signature dishes influenced by their heritage, and for all who join us. When it is safe to do so, we look forward to coming together once again at the Park to continue the two-part program,

launched three years ago, to celebrate the immigrant experience, what unites and connects us, and to meet and greet each other. We hope you will join us!"

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*This press release was produced by [the City of Boston](#). The views expressed here are the author's own.*