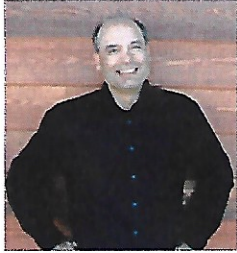


LUSHOOTSEED LANGUAGE INSTITUTE 2017  
STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

**Zalmai ʔəswəli Zahir, Sioux**



PHD candidate, Linguistics at the University of Oregon  
Lushootseed Language Consultant, Puyallup Tribe of Indians  
Lushootseed Instructor, Lushootseed Language Institute  
Lushootseed Instructor, Northwest Indian Language Institute.

Zalmai ʔəswəli Zahir is a student of Lushootseed and has been working with the Lushootseed language and culture for over 40 years. His mother was of Sioux descent and his father was Afghan. His step-father was Puyallup Indian from whom he began learning Lushootseed at the age of eleven. Beyond language learning with his step-father, ʔəswəli has studied with various Lushootseed speaking elders. The majority of his study has been on the Southern Lushootseed dialect. Since 1989, ʔəswəli has been teaching Lushootseed classes. His current focus includes language revitalization by focusing on language-use. He is currently finishing a Ph.D. in the Theoretical Linguistics graduate program at the University of Oregon. The primary focus of his degree is Lushootseed. He conducts online Lushootseed sessions that promote language use and is a consultant for the Puyallup Tribal Language Program located in Tacoma, Washington. Zalmai has also been a Lushootseed Instructor at the Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI) held each summer at the University of Oregon for the past 10 years. Currently, he works with about twenty 2<sup>nd</sup>-language speakers that use Lushootseed at least one to two hours per day. Their goals include making Lushootseed a primary language in their lives.