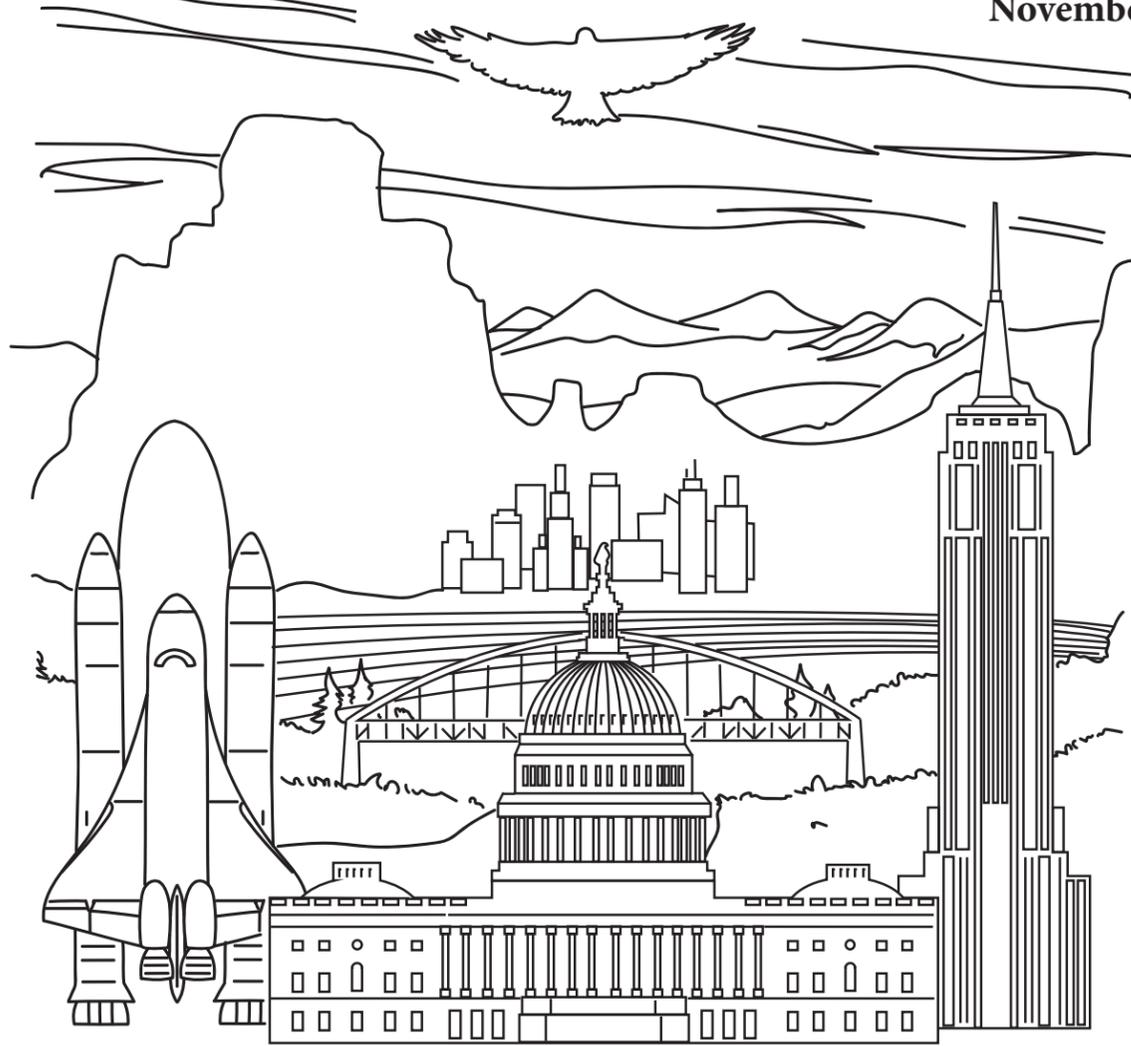


**CULTURAL
AWARENESS**

**NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN
HERITAGE MONTH**

OBSERVANCE

November



Every November, the Department of Defense (DoD) joins the Nation in celebrating **National American Indian Heritage Month**. The event is also known in some circles as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.

There are over 9 million American Indian and Alaska Natives living in the United States today.

With over 574 federally recognized tribes, there are hundreds of different cultures that are as unique as the people they represent.



Native Alaskan **TSgt Blassi G. Shoogukwruk** grew up in White Mountain, a village on the Seward Peninsula. There, a childhood experience inspired his Air National Guard career.

When he was 4 years old White Mountain had a massive flood. His family had to spend a few hours on a piece of ice to stay afloat until the Army Guard rescued them.

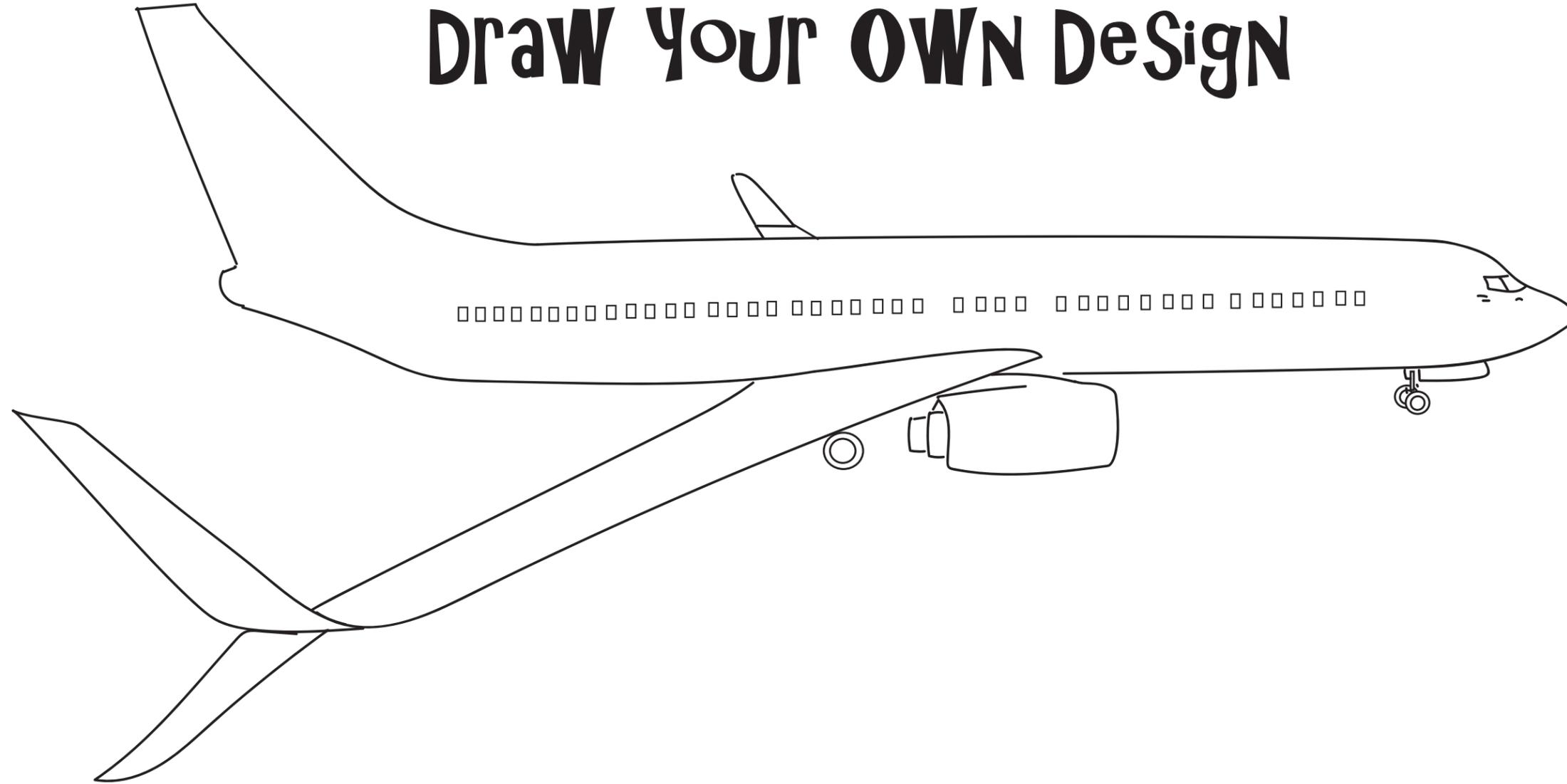
He joined a rescue unit to return what he and his family had been given. Additionally, he wanted to continue his family's legacy of military service. Both of his grandfathers served with the Alaska Territorial Guard, and his mother served as one of the first female Army Guardsmen in Alaska villages. He also has uncles that served in the Alaska Army National Guard, Navy, and Marine Corps.



www.defenseculture.mil



Draw Your OWN DeSign



Alaska Airlines unveiled a new plane with an original design, displaying Juneau artist Crystal Worl's tribute to salmon.

The blue, white and pink plane features images of sockeye salmon using traditional form-line design specific to the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian tribes. The aircraft is named Xáat Kwáani — a Tlingit phrase that translates to "Salmon People." The Boeing 737-800 is the first plane from a domestic airline to be named in an Alaska Native language, according to Alaska Airlines.

Alaska Airlines flies a number of other aircraft with unique designs, including one with an orca design, three paying tribute to U.S. military members, and a Star Wars and Disney-themed plane.

