

WSU Native American Programs: December 2016 Newsletter

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Happy Holidays from WSU Native American Programs!

December 22, 2016 faith.price



Letter from the Director

December 22, 2016 faith.price

By Barbara Aston

For most of our week here on the Palouse the earth has been blanketed with snow and the trees covered with frost. The snow cushions our footsteps and absorbs the usual sounds of our comings and goings, of our hurried gaits.



We are guided into the silence and peace, if we allow our minds to grow quiet and observe with our hearts and spirits. The silence is reinforced as well with most students having departed for home and faculty and staff departing for vacation, holidays, and reduced operations on campus. We will be here when they return, ready to provide our support while challenging them and one another to continue to learn and grow and lead.

I am writing to you on the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere – winter solstice – when our place on Mother Earth is the furthest away from the sun. To be precise, the solstice occurred at 5:44 am EST this morning, December 21, 2016. Just as each day there are the changing times, at dawn when night moves into day, and at dusk when day moves into night, the winter solstice is another changing time, on a bigger scale. If we pause in silence and we catch the “changing,” we too will be changed; we too can begin again and embrace the mystery.

In this newsletter, we celebrate the stories of three of our graduating students, and wish them well as they embark on this “new” time in their life. We also celebrate the commitment, passion, and life “changing” experiences of our students who traveled to Standing Rock...taking a stand for sovereignty, taking a stand for our sacred waters, and taking a stand for all of our futures.

May this winter solstice and this Holiday Season be a blessing to you! May you pause, let go, be renewed, and receive the gifts of this sacred time of year and of new beginnings!

Happy Winter Solstice!

Barbara Aston

Director of Native American Programs/Tribal Liaison

December 2016 Grad: Iris Carone

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Name: Iris Carone

Tribe: Blackfoot

Hometown: San Jose, CA

Degree received from WSU: Bachelor's in Biology with a Minor in Chemistry



Iris Carone, Blackfoot, just received her bachelor's in biology with a minor in chemistry.

Why did you choose WSU? I chose WSU because the atmosphere was very inviting, and the staff was there to support you for your next step in life. Finding a job after was an important goal for me, and the school matched that.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? I enjoyed being in such a family-like environment. It is truly something special to walk in the grocery store here in California and have friendly, random conversations with other Cougar alumni like we had known each other for years. Of course Ferdinand's was the best part too.

What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? I was part of the UREC (University Recreation) team where I worked for two years and Camp Adventure.

Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student? I believe the UREC really impacted me because they helped me increase my leadership abilities and made me step outside of my comfort zone.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? I believe my biggest challenge was Organic Chemistry. It took me more than once to complete it, but I was able to do so because I had a great support system between my roommate who was also taking the class and the Organic Chemistry teaching assistants.

What are your future plans? I am currently applying to a certification program to become a Clinical Laboratory Scientist. I want to work in a pathology lab specifically working with parasites and bacteria.

What advice would you give a freshman? Remember that you have so many more decades to live. Your plan B and C and D are still amazing options and just because plan A doesn't work out does not mean you won't be a happy, successful adult.

December 2016 Grad: Chelsea Pardini

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Name: Chelsea Pardini

Tribe: Tlingit

Hometown: Nevada City, CA

Degree received from WSU: Master's of Science in Applied Economics



Chelsea Pardini, Tlingit, earned her master's degree in Applied Economics in December.

Why did you choose WSU? I chose WSU in part for the atmosphere of collaboration and community in the School of Economic Sciences (SES), and also for the quality of the research and education.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? I am grateful that I can receive an enriching education and really experience a deep sense of belonging in the WSU community.

What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? I have not yet had the opportunity to get involved in anything outside of working for this accelerated M.S. degree, but I look forward to becoming involved in the near future.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? Financial difficulties can seem truly insurmountable to many students, and I was not an exception. When I was obtaining my undergraduate degree, I took out loans and worked as a tutor for math and economics and

as a research assistant. At WSU I was provided the opportunity to work as a graduate assistant for the WSU Graduate School and am now working as a teaching assistant in SES.

What are your future plans? I will continue to work towards completing my Ph.D. in Economics here at WSU and see where my research interests and life take me.

What advice would you give a freshman? Breathe deeply and remember that every moment is the one you get to choose life and love.

December 2016 Grad: Cherrise Reyes

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Name: Cherrise Reyes

Tribe: Enrolled Upper Skagit, descendant of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

Hometown: Pullman, WA

Degree received from WSU: Bachelor's in Political Science, Pre-Law with a minor in Criminal Justice



Cherrise Reyes, Upper Skagit/Colville, earned her bachelor's in political science and will be pursuing a career in Indian Law.

Why did you choose WSU? I was unhappy at CSU Sacramento where I spent my first year of college. I toured the WSU Pullman campus after my first semester at CSUS and fell in love with it...It was during my tour (led by my mother) that I realized that WSU was the school for me. I felt like WSU could offer me the real college experience.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? The free food!! Lol and all of the university-sponsored events such as Coug Fest, the football and basketball games, and speakers such as Walter Echo-Hawk and Kemba Smith. I also enjoyed all of the events put on by the Native American Student Center: the community dinners, cultural workshops, and of course, the round dance and Pah-Loots-Puu powwow.

What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? The Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program, the University Conduct Board, Coalition for Women Students, Native American Women's Association, Mitamitaga O Samoa, and the Interest Group of Alpha Pi Omega Sorority, Inc.

Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student? Native programming as a whole!! Both the Native Programs staff and ladies of NAWA helped to mentor me and guide me in the right direction. Without their support, I would have had a much more difficult time navigating my way through college life. Working in the Women's Resource Center also helped me to enhance my leadership skills and professional development.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? Having a course where I basically had to teach myself the material, but I managed and I passed!

What are your future plans? I plan to take about a year off before law school so that I can work and prepare. I am also hoping to intern again next summer!

What advice would you give a freshman? Get involved, find your people/mentors, and take advantage of all the opportunities that are offered to you! You never know where they might lead you.

WSU Students Share Stories from Standing Rock

December 22, 2016 faith.price

by Edmund Frazier Myer and Faith Price

photos and video footage courtesy of Greg Urquhart

Throughout fall semester, multiple WSU Native American students have shown their support for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in their opposition to the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) that would potentially cross the reservation's water supply. Students have held "NoDAPL" demonstrations on Terrell Mall, collected supplies, and traveled to be part of the camps of "water protectors" that have gathered on the Standing Rock Reservation.

On Monday, December 5, WSU students Greg Urquhart, Kyra Antone, and Mykel Johnson shared their experiences at Standing Rock as part of a panel presentation. Greg Urquhart, a Cherokee doctoral student in Counseling Psychology, went to Standing Rock twice during Thanksgiving break.



WSU students (l-r): Emma Johnson, Greg Urquhart, Jazmine Ike-Lopez and Kyra Antone all spent a portion of their Thanksgiving Break at the Standing Rock reservation in North Dakota.

"I was blown away by the proficiency and organization of the camp," said Urquhart.

“First and foremost, the camps are prayer camps,” he said, and showed the crowd some photos as he described the scene. What is going on is “largely a peaceful demonstration.”

Urquhart explained that as you come into the camp there is a sign that says “No drugs, no alcohol, no weapons,” and a disclaimer stating that security has the right to search your vehicle.

Everyone who comes to the camp is required to attend an orientation (held daily) and receive an introduction to Standing Rock Sioux culture. There is also training for direct action, such as techniques to use and what to prepare for if on the frontlines in protection of the water.

Mykel Johnson, a sophomore and Nez Perce tribal member, visited Standing Rock in September. She said that she met a lot of different people there, including tribal leaders, members from many tribes, and people from all different nationalities.

“It changed my perspective on life,” said Johnson, noting that it caused her to pay more attention to social justice issues. After meeting all the people who care about the cause, Johnson said, “We know this is something worth fighting over.”

The pipeline, which will carry oil from North Dakota to Illinois, was originally routed north of Bismark, however, after concerns for the safety of the city’s water supply, it was re-routed half a mile north of the Standing Rock reservation, over the objections of the Tribe. In August, opponents of the pipeline began camping near the location the proposed pipeline would cross the Cannonball River. The site has grown to include four distinct camps and thousands of residents, both Native and non-Native.

Sophomore Kyra Antone, Coeur d’Alene and Tohono O’odham, spoke about the kindness everyone at the Oceti Sakowin camp showed toward one another. She said that the first morning she was there, she woke up and got out of her tent, and was greeted by multiple people and offered food. She said the camp is complete with an area for prayer and ceremony, medic tents, food stations, places to volunteer, and legal aid tents. Urquhart described it as a “small city.”

[Backwater Sunday](#)

Antone and Urquhart were both present at Oceti Sakowin on November 20, the night law enforcement drew mainstream media attention for what some are calling excessive use of force and human rights violations, which included spraying water protectors with water cannons.



A crowd gathers on Backwater Bridge on the afternoon of November 20th.

Urquhart and Antone shared their story of that day's events with the audience.

Police had used burned out vehicles to block off Backwater Bridge, meaning anyone trying to get through to the camp would have to go a longer route. This particular road was also the way to the nearest hospital, said Urquhart, estimating the blockade added an hour and a half to an ambulance's emergency response time.

Antone and Urquhart had gone up in the afternoon to just check out the frontlines. They weren't expecting anything to happen. That day, a group from the camp had decided to try to remove the blockade and open the road to the hospital. As more people began to gather, law enforcement decided to vacate the protestors from the premises.

"They came out for prayer and support and the police overreacted with tear gas and rubber bullets and everything else," was Urquhart's assessment.

Urquhart is a six-year army veteran who served in Iraq. After his service, he spent four years in the National Guard and trained on the riot response team. He mentioned that the flashbang grenades used on the protestors were specifically designed to move back crowds, and not to be thrown in the midst of people.

"Morton County sheriffs were throwing them three or four people deep into the crowd," said Urquhart.

In addition to the flashbangs, Urquhart said the police used rubber bullets, concussion grenades, and sound cannons on the unarmed, peaceful, crowd. And in what were freezing temperatures, the police used high power hoses, similar to a fire hose to "spray down people left and right," with what he said was water mixed with mace or pepper spray.

"I don't think there was one thing that I was trained on in the riot response team for the National Guard that wasn't used," said Urquhart.

Law enforcement has since received criticism for their tactics, especially dousing people with water on a frigid North Dakota winter night.

“There were literally icicles forming on people because it was so cold,” said Antone. Hypothermia was the main injury reported that night, however, one woman nearly lost her arm, a man next to Urquhart caught shrapnel to his face, and both Urquhart and Antone were teargassed on what has become known as “Backwater Sunday.”

“I couldn’t breathe. I couldn’t see,” said Antone, who noted she has asthma and expressed gratitude for Urquhart and others who pulled her out and helped her wash it out of her eyes.

“It was a really scary experience – I’ve never experienced anything like that,” said Antone. “And, I guess, it was hard for me to understand,” she added. “I never thought I would get maced by a police officer – someone that I always looked to for protection. I wasn’t doing anything but standing there.”

Urquhart had been trained on mace and tear gas in the Army.

“That girl’s fearless. She’s a warrior,” he said of Antone.

Urquhart drew on his military training to assist others. He spent many hours that day helping flush out people’s eyes with water bottles, and doing what he could to help. He noted that law enforcement was targeting the clearly-marked medics, journalists, and those trying to help by bringing blankets or hand warmers to wet people.

“They were aiming for the head and groin,” said Urquhart.

Police began spraying the water cannon around 5pm and were still going when he left at 2am.

Urquhart filmed parts of the evening to document the events and shared his videos with the audience. Although it was very dark that night, the audio was enough to understand the setting. On one recording you could hear people drumming and singing, while others were asking for assistance in the form of blankets, water, and earplugs. Another clip shows law enforcement dousing the crowd with water as they stand in protest, song, and prayer.

Both Antone and Urquhart noted that their experiences at Standing Rock were very different than what was depicted in the news.

“Being there and then seeing the videos on the media, it was very different,” said Antone.

“I came back and read the news that we were starting fires. That was the police tear gas canisters,” said Urquhart, noting the water protectors had only one fire to warm people up. He was eager to share his first-hand account with campus.

“The more people know about it, the less tolerant they’ll be of it,” stated Urquhart. “The news kind of sanitizes it.”

It's Not Over Yet



A few of the tribal flags being flown at the Oceti Sakowin camp.

The day before the panel, on December 4th, news broke that the Army Corps of Engineers put a halt to construction of the portion of the pipeline nearest the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation while they explored alternative routes and prepared an environmental-impact statement.

“The decision yesterday is historic in that it’s a victory for us,” Urquhart said. But he reminded the audience that this is not over yet. “The oil company has not stopped activities there. Trump has said that he supports this pipeline.”

The panelists urged the audience members to pay attention to what’s going on in our society and stand up for what they think is right.

“Do your research. Hear these people’s stories,” Johnson urged the audience. “Be aware of injustices going on.”

Urquhart, for one, is traveling back to Standing Rock over his winter break to bring firewood to the camps.

“Just like Wounded Knee was a symbol of resistance and strength, I think this is our generation’s time,” Urquhart said. “This is where our people are going to say, ‘okay we drew a line in the sand and said no more.’”

Applications Open for Washington State University Scholarships

December 22, 2016 [faith.price](#)

by Faith Price

WSU Native American Programs is now accepting applications for the MOU Tribal Scholarship and Plateau Native American Scholarship for the 2017-18 academic year!

MOU Tribal Scholarship due February 1

Incoming freshmen and transfer students from tribes who have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WSU are encouraged to apply for the MOU Tribal Scholarship. Eligible tribes include: Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Colville Confederated Tribes, Confederated Tribes of the Salish and Kootenai, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Cowlitz Tribe, Kalispel Tribe, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Nez Perce Tribe, Spokane Tribe, Quinault Tribe, and Yakama Nation. Applicants must have a minimum high school GPA of 3.3 or college GPA of 3.0.

Twenty awards are available at the Pullman Campus and freshmen students will be given priority consideration. One student will be selected from all applicants to receive a \$10,000 per year award. The remaining rewards will be in the amount of \$2,000 per year. The WSU Tri-Cities and Vancouver campuses also offer two \$2,000 MOU Tribal Scholarships on each campus.

Recipients of the WSU Pullman MOU Tribal Scholarship have the additional benefit of being enrolled in WSU's Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program. This program provides students with leadership skills and knowledge based on tribal principles and values. Participants in the leadership program take specially-designed courses together, interact one-on-one with guest speakers, travel for field trips, and have other unique opportunities.

Plateau Native American Scholarship due February 15

The Plateau Native American Scholarship was developed by a linguist, and is open to students from tribes known as Plateau Salishan, Sahaptian, or Kootenai speakers. Applicants must be an enrolled member of one of the following tribes: Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Colville Confederated Tribes, The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Kalispel Tribe, Klamath Tribe, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Nez Perce Tribe, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Yakama Indian Nation. Enrolled members of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs and of the Cowlitz Tribe who are of Sahaptian-speaking descent are also eligible to apply.

High school applicants must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75. Transfer and current undergraduate WSU student applicants must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5. The amount and number of awards varies.

[More Scholarships!](#)

WSU offers additional scholarships specifically targeting Native American students from all tribes. To be considered for them, and over 700 other scholarships, students should complete the WSU General Scholarship application due on January 31 each year.

[American Indian Residency Bill](#)

Out-of-state students should check to see if they are eligible for in-state tuition under the American Indian Residency Bill. Idaho, Montana, and Oregon residents from tribes who had traditional homelands in the state of Washington are eligible for in-state tuition at public colleges and universities in the state of Washington.

More information on financing your WSU education is available online at native.wsu.edu. If you have questions, please call or [email](#) Faith Price at (509) 335-5849.

Join Us Next Semester for More Food and Fun

December 22, 2016 faith.price

by Ke-Niah-Kiw "Kay Kay" Weso

Happy Holidays, Cougs!

December has been a busy month in the Native Student Center. We hope that you are all prepared to fully enjoy the winter break and look forward to seeing you in January. Please note that this is a great time to apply for scholarships. For more information, please visit: native.wsu.edu/tribal-liaison/scholarships/



Ken Lokensgard was the winner of the 3rd Annual Native Programs chili cookoff with a bison chili.

Our First Friday Feed this month was the annual Chili Cook-off and our winner this year was Ken Lokensgard with his bison chili submission. It was fantastic and we should have known he was a contender with his catch phrase "Old school is still the best school." Sincere congratulations to you, Ken!

Almost a week later, we celebrated our annual Stress Smash! We filled a Tyrannosaurus Rex piñata with candy, toys, and proceeded to let students alleviate their end of term woes with a good old fashioned stick to piñata exercise. Jay-J Yarborough-Jones finished him off in a spectacular fashion that lent no doubt to his baseball abilities. Afterward, Austin Kicking Woman placed the T-rex on his head to the mirth of us all in the Center while we snacked on the candy and played with the toys.



Jay-J Yarbrough-Jones smashes the Stress Smash piñata and sends candy raining down to the spectators!

We had homemade soup available in the Center during Dead and Finals weeks to help students to stay focused by being fed. Please let me know if you have any ideas of soups you would like to see in the future or if you have ideas for snacks you would like available for your visits in the Spring term.

Your final grades will be posted on MyWSU around December 22nd or 23rd. Please make sure that you check your grades every term to ensure that you are on track for graduation.

Please complete your FAFSA if you have not done so yet, and apply for WSU's general scholarship application (Due January 31st, 2017) for the 2017/2018 academic year.

<https://fafsa.ed.gov/> and <https://www.applyweb.com/wsunivss/index.ftl>

As always, when you need help, I am here for you.

Sincerely,

Keniahkiw "Kay Kay" Weso

Native American Retention Specialist

Washington State University

Cleveland Hall 25

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Recruitment Corner: Learn What It Takes to be a College Athlete at WSU Sports Summit

December 22, 2016 [faith.price](#)

by Autumn Jones

Native American Programs invites students to campus on April 22, 2017 to hear insider advice on playing college sports from successful Native athletes during the Native American Youth Sports Summit, followed by the WSU Cougar Baseball game.

A panel of WSU athletes will share their experiences in college athletics with Sports Summit participants and share the realities of playing sports at a collegiate level. All students attending the Native Youth Sports Summit will receive complimentary admission to the WSU vs. UW baseball game and lunch.

The event is open to students in grades 6-12. Students must pre-register for the event online at native.wsu.edu/outreach/sportssummit.html. Please contact Autumn Jones (509) 335-6718 or native@wsu.edu in the Native American Programs Office with any questions.

NATIVE YOUTH SPORTS SUMMIT



Saturday, April 22, 2017

Washington State University, Pullman, WA

6th-12th grade students are invited to hear insider advice on playing college sports from successful WSU athletes during the Native Youth Sports Summit, followed by complimentary tickets

to the WSU Cougar Baseball game.

WSU vs. UW

Register online at native.wsu.edu

Questions? Contact native@wsu.edu

or (509) 335-6718

Sponsored by WSU Native American Programs

