Indigenous Research Convention, Research Workshops Held

by Ken Lokensgard

Recent weeks have seen numerous events held at The Plateau Center for Native American Research and Collaboration. These are in addition to the regular activities of graduate student support, consultation on grants and grant proposals, departmental outreach, and communication with the cultural resources representatives of numerous tribes. Many additional activities are planned for the summer months, too.

The WSU Chapter of the Society of Indian Psychologists (SiP) coordinated the 2nd Annual Indigenous Research Convention on April 23. Attendees included undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members from WSU, the University of Washington, the University of Idaho, and Eastern Washington University. Presenters covered topics ranging from Indigenous research models to arctic mercury contamination. WSU student participants included Jorden Dakin-White (Coeur d’Alene), who discussed the role of narrative in language preservation, and Sequoia Dance (Shoshone–Bannock), who described her research activities in horticulture.

The symposium was sponsored by the Plateau Center and the Center for Mestizo & Indigenous Research & Engagement, with whom we hope to collaborate more. Special credit goes to organizer Greg Urquhart (E. Cherokee descent), a counseling psychology graduate student, and his fellow student Alicia San Miguel.

We look forward to hosting the 3rd Annual Indigenous Research Convention next year.

On April 20 and 21, the Plateau Center and The WSU Graduate School held its first in a series of workshops devoted to Native American graduate student recruitment and mentoring, as well as collaborative research with tribes. Each of the workshops is intended for faculty, staff, and researchers. In the first of these, Ken Lokensgard and Tribal Liaison Barbara Aston presented information about Federal Indian Policy, tribal sovereignty, government-to-government relations, and “Indigenous research methods.” The well-attended workshop, held on two different days, was opened by Nez Perce Tribe Cultural Resources Director Nakia Williamson.

A second and third workshop will take place this fall. The first of these two workshops will be devoted to discussions of recruitment and funding. The second of the two will focus specifically upon mentoring and community engagement. These workshops are made possible, in part, by the Pacific Northwest Circle of Success: Mentoring Opportunities for STEM Alliance (PNW-COSMOS). WSU’s participation in this alliance is funded by National Science Foundation AGEP-T grant #1432932. For more information about the workshops and other PNW-COSMOS activities, visit the PNW-COSMOS website. You can find the PowerPoint slides from the first workshop under “events.”

As always, we encourage members of the tribal communities, graduate students, and faculty members, and staff, who are interested in responsible, collaborative research or who simply want to know more about the Plateau Center and its activities, to contact us. You can reach Dr. Ken Lokensgard at kenneth.lokensgard@wsu.edu or at 509–335–1055.