The fall semester has proceeded at a rapid pace at the Plateau Center. Recent weeks have seen workshops, student meetings, conferences, and more. Increased engagement with faculty and growing numbers of enrolled Native American graduate students are responsible for much of the activity.

Most notably, the Plateau Center and The WSU Graduate School held its second 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 this latest one, held on Nov. 1 and 2, Asst. Director Dr. Ken Lokensgard and Dr. Lori Carris, Assoc. Dean of the Graduate School, led discussions on funding Native American graduate students. Subsequent workshops will focus upon mentoring, tribal community engagement, and collaborative research. The third workshop in the series is tentatively scheduled for January 31 and February 1 (to maximize attendance, the same workshop is presented on consecutive days).

All of the faculty 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 and click on “Resources.” You can find the PowerPoint slides from the first two workshops under “Workshops” link.

In an effort to share information about WSU with potential Native graduate students, Dr.’s Carris and Lokensgard attended the American Indian Science and Engineering Conference on November 10 and 11 in Minneapolis. Dr. Shelley Pressley, Director of Undergraduate Research, also attended in order to inform conference attendees about summer research opportunities for Native undergraduates (for more information, see this site). Meanwhile, graduate students Danielle Guzman (Nez Perce) and Daylen Isaac (Yakama) presented posters on their research to attendees.

Graduate Students Veneice Guillory-Lacy (Nez Perce), Angela Picard (Nez Perce), and Paulina Abustan (Filipina) attended the Annual Nation Women’s Studies Association meeting on November 10–13 in Montréal, Québec. The theme for this year’s conference was “Decoloniality,” and the students delivered papers on that topic. Their panel was entitled “Healing as Resistance: Indigenous Women of Color Educators Reclaiming and Transforming Learning Spaces.” Other WSU students attended the conference as well.

Here on the Pullman campus, several graduate students have been meeting on Fridays in the Native Graduate Student Center for lunch. These meeting will continue throughout the school year on alternating Fridays and all Native graduate students are welcome. History Ph.D. student, Ryan Booth (Upper Skagit) also met with senior Tribal Nation Building Leadership Students in the Graduate Center one evening, to discuss graduate school and his personal post-college experiences. Ryan entertained the undergraduates with accounts of his many professional and personal experiences, ranging from graduate studies to BIA work in Washington, DC, to service as a National Park Ranger.

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 activities such as those described here to contact us. You can reach Dr. Ken Lokensgard at kenneth.lokensgard@wsu.edu or at 509-335-1055.