



Washington State University

## Letter from the Director

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Who are we as Native people? We know that our students, staff, and faculty represent diverse tribes, backgrounds, and experiences. The academic setting is an environment that challenges each of us in our identity as Native people as well as our values and world views.

Through Native programming, we strive to support our students, all of our students, as they face these challenges and grow in an understanding of themselves. We seek to affirm their individual strengths and aspirations and their tribal sovereignty and cultures. This time is but one phase in what we hope will be a journey as a "life-long learner."

We are not alone in this effort. The Native American Advisory Board to the President is committed to working with our President, Provost, and WSU leadership to strengthen the educational opportunities for Native Americans. We recognize as well how important each of you, parents, tribal coordinators and educators, extended family members, allies and friends are to the success of our programs and our students. Thank you for your part in holding up our students and our efforts!

Last fall, WSU was part of a case study for research conducted by the Regional Educational Laboratory at Education Northwest. This research was conducted in response to needs identified by the Northwest Tribal Educators Alliance in collaboration with ATNI (Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians) Education Committee. This research examines how Native students, K-20, are being identified by their educational institutions, how that data is reported, and the impact that these numbers have on services available and provided to Native students. The final documents for their research can be found at: <http://bit.ly/tribal-educators-alliance>. These documents are available to inform people of the issues around identifying Native students. Your comments are welcome! All documents are available for use within schools, universities, tribes, professional organizations, governmental agencies, etc. and can be modified with your organization/tribe's logo/template. This is an important issue for us to address at every level and I consider it an area for exercising sovereignty in education.

At WSU, we make every effort to identify Native students and inform them of our services and invite them to benefit from our services and the opportunities at WSU. We will continue to do so. We have been in conversation with our own institutional research team at WSU and they are working with us to support our goal of improving the identification of Native students.

I hope that you enjoy the newsletter and also hope that spring is right around the corner!



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