

## WSU Native American Programs: June 2017 Newsletter

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# Letter from the Director

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](http://faith.price)

by Barbara Aston

Congratulations to our 2017 Washington State University graduates! What a privilege it is to read their stories, their challenges, their accomplishments, and their advice to other students. In their stories, you will see the diversity of our students and hear their voices. They represent many tribes and educational pursuits. Some came in as freshmen right out of high school, some as high school graduates with dual college credits, some as transfer students, and some as graduate students. Some balanced their role as parents with being a full-time student. I am proud of all of them. They are not only our future leaders, but they have been leaders here at WSU. We will miss them! We hold each of our graduates in our hearts as they move forward. They inspire and confirm the work that we do through our Native programs. They are the main reason that we are here doing this work.

Summer has opened up opportunities for stepping outside of the university and sharing some of our work in Indian Country. I am just returning from attending the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Scholar's Forum where along with other colleagues from the Northwest, we were a part of a panel presentation focused on Indian education. Through our part, we shared information from our experiences and the research assistance of Education Northwest Regional Lab focused on the "Misidentification" of Native American students within K-20 educational systems. We are all a part of the Tribal Educators Alliance, an alliance between the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Education Committee and Education Northwest. While I was at NCAI, Faith Price, Assistant Director, was presenting at the Native American Student Advocacy Institute (NASAI), a conference of the College Board. Faith was part of a panel sharing the same research and concerns.

I hope each of you enjoy our newsletter and are uplifted and encouraged by the stories and accomplishments of our Native people as they complete this stage of their journey and now turn their attention to giving back to their tribes, families, and communities who have supported them along the way. Blessings for a wonderful summer!

# Yup'ik Student's Future is in Architecture

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

**Name:** Abigail Bellin (I prefer Abby)

**Tribe:** Yup'ik, Alaskan Native

**Hometown:** Kent, WA

**Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor:** Bachelor's of Science in Architectural Studies. I am continuing with graduate school in Fall 2017, beginning a 2-year Masters of Architecture program

**Why did you choose WSU?** I chose WSU because I wanted to try something new and gain some independence, I wanted to be far enough from home so I would have to learn to be independent and do things on my own, but did not want to be too far that it would be impossible to go home when I inevitably got homesick. I also was looking for a university in an intimate setting with lots of school spirit and alumni support and that is exactly what I got at WSU!

**What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student?** I loved living in the dorm. I made so many friends on my floor and am still really good friends with a handful of them. It was a blast living right down the hall from so many new, exciting personalities and we all clicked so well, they were my freshman year Cougar family. Related to that, I would have to say my favorite thing about being a WSU student is that no matter what beliefs or backgrounds we all come from, there is one thing we can all agree on and that's that we love the Cougs! We are just one big Cougar family, I love it and am so happy I am a part of it for the rest of my life!

**What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU?** I was very focused on my studies while in undergrad, it was hard to find time to participate in activities. However, I am a member of Alpha Rho Chi, the architecture business fraternity. I also worked for The Daily Evergreen as a graphics technician so many of my advertisement designs were in the school paper!

**Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student?** Like I said, I was very focused on my studies in undergrad. Architecture is not an easy major by any means. However, I have two more years at WSU so I hope to be able to participate in more programs and activities over the duration of graduate school!

**What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it?** My biggest challenge throughout the duration of undergrad was having to fund my own education while also staying focused on my studies. There have been a lot of obstacles and distractions pertaining to my family that left me to figure out how to pay for college. It was a huge challenge to overcome but I am so proud of myself for completing my first degree and being admitted to the Graduate School of Architecture at WSU.

**What are your future plans?** Right now I am working as a Junior Architect at Graphite Design Group in Seattle for a summer internship. In the Fall of 2017 I will start grad school where after 2 years I will earn my professional degree in architecture. After I complete my education I hope to obtain my license

reasonably quickly because I really want to design a transitional home that is cost effective, small and efficient enough that it can be mass produced. I want to help solve the homeless crisis in the U.S.

**What advice would you give a freshman?** The best advice I can give is to not forget why you are at WSU. Have your fun, have lots of it, that is what college is for but don't forget to study. C's might get degrees but they don't get you jobs. Keep your priorities straight but make these next four years the time of your life!

# Transfer Student Balances Schoolwork, Culture

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

by Edmund Frazier Myer

Nisqually tribal member, Anthony Choke, 23, who majored in business with an emphasis on entrepreneurship and change, said that he has grown during his two years at WSU by becoming more diverse, outgoing, and independent.

He first noticed how much of a college town Pullman truly is. He really noticed that, compared to his community college, there were a lot more people in his age group. Although there were many more people in his demographic, Choke said it was a challenge to face the, “new environment.”

The town and the population was a lot bigger than what he was used to back in Rochester, Wash., and it took an adjustment period for him to get used to interacting with people from various backgrounds.

Choke was on a full scholarship from his tribe, and during his time at WSU, Choke shared aspects of his cultural background by teaching cedar weaving twice during the school year. He will continue to show others his family’s traditions this summer at WSU’s Native Youth Exploring Higher Education youth camp.

He first heard about the Native Center from Native Program’s outreach, and then again on his tours of campus. When he came on a tour the center was in the CUB, but it was moved down to Cleveland Hall by the time Choke arrived for his first semester. He said the center is a “very warming” atmosphere.

On top of the heavy workload his major entailed, Choke also balanced playing on the club rugby team, meeting fraternity requirements, and finding social time. He managed his busy schedule by getting things done early. He liked to start working by 9 a.m., so he could have his evenings clear.

He said that due to his community college experience and the education he gained for his associate’s degree, leaving his reservation and community wasn’t that challenging – or at least not as challenging as it would be for a freshman right out of high school who is leaving for the first time.

“Since I already had two years of higher education under my belt, I already I felt like I know what to do, and how to do it, and achieve it,” Choke said.

Throughout college, he has learned ways to work through his issues with course work. He said that whenever he has trouble with a class, or struggles with exams, he just pushes through it and makes up for it in different areas of the class.

Other challenges Choked faced in his time in Pullman was living on his own and away from his parents, since he still lived at home during community college.

“When you get older, your parents aren’t going to be there for you all the time,” Choke said. “So, you just have to be more responsible for yourself.”

He said that his advice for a Native American student who is weighing the pursuit of higher education is to try their best and apply. He would encourage them to not think of it as a “hardship,” but to think of it as “empowerment for them, and empowerment for our people.”

# Grad Student to Change World through Fashion

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

**Name:** Kalina Ebling

**Tribe:** Quinault Indian Nation

**Hometown:** I grew up in Moclips, WA before moving to Aberdeen, WA. Right now I live in Pullman year round due to living expenses.

**Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor:** My degree is a Master's in Apparel, Merchandising, Design, and Textiles.

**Why did you choose WSU?** I decided to attend WSU because of its Apparel Design program. There were several closer options, but they were either too expensive or did not have the greatest reputation.

**What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student?** My favorite part of being a WSU student was having access to the sewing labs. My favorite part about living in Pullman is having access to Cougar Gold. I honestly can't say which one had the most influence on my choice to continue my education in order to receive a Master's degree.

**What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU?** Activities? I am a couch potato who spent all my free time reading and playing with my cat. Occasionally I would go so far as to go to a friend's house to read and play with their cat.

**Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student?** The program that had the most impact on my success was actually the Native American Program. Barbara, Ken, and Faith all helped me find and apply for opportunities that allowed me to succeed.

**What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it?** My biggest challenge was overcoming my social anxiety in order to fulfill my goals. I developed severe social anxiety when I was eleven and I could not talk or approach anyone outside my immediate family without suffering debilitating panic attacks. I decided that the life I was living wasn't the life I wanted, so I decided to use self-administered exposure therapy until I could live a normal life. By the time I graduated from community college I was able to hold conversations with strangers and perform tasks such as buying groceries and ordering food. Thanks to the opportunities given to me by the Native Center, I've progressed to the point where I am working on applying for a teaching position abroad.

**What are your future plans?** I plan on applying for a teaching position abroad. I also plan on creating an online shop selling women's clothing with pockets. I have had quite enough of fake pockets or tiny useless pockets in my clothes. I shall call it something tacky like "We Have Pockets."

**What advice would you give a freshman?** Network with groups on campus. Learn about opportunities. Make friends with someone who has a car. Laminate your notes and study in the hot tubs. If you are in a class with a friend, create a Google doc where you can both take notes. If you're in an apartment or a dorm with a roommate then make sure you talk to them. Figure out how you want to split the chores and what you are comfortable or uncomfortable with. Learn each other's allergies. Keep a stash of

chocolate next to your alarm clock. Remember: Always put your mental and emotional health first. Good grades are wonderful, but not at the cost of your health.

# WSU's First Udall Scholar Receives Her Bachelor's Degree

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

by Edmund Frazier Myer

Rachel "Chedda" Ellenwood, Nez Perce tribal member, and two-time recipient of the prestigious Udall Scholarship, graduated this spring with her bachelor's in comparative ethnic studies (CES), and minors in American Indian studies and women's studies.

Ellenwood transferred to WSU in the fall of 2014 after she earned her associate's degree at Northwest Indian College in 2013.

Ellenwood was majoring in healthcare, but decided to pursue the CES route after learning that she was closer to finishing and graduating with a degree in that field.

She still plans on studying healthcare and working in that industry, and plans to apply for a master's program in maternal child health, but Ellenwood said she might hold off from school for a short term before finishing her required courses.

In her time at WSU, Ellenwood has been awarded the MOU Tribal Scholarship, the Plateau Native American Scholarship, and the Udall Scholarship two times.

Ellenwood received the Udall for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. The award is one of the top scholarships in the nation and only a select number of people are selected each year (about 60 a year). Ellenwood was the first WSU student to receive the award.

Ellenwood moved "straight off the rez" to Pullman with her son Terrell, who is now 11, and she said that it was hard not really knowing anybody in town.

The biggest adversity she faced was finding time to study. With no internet at her place during her first year at WSU, there were nights when Ellenwood brought Terrell with her to the library, and he would watch movies while she studied.

Managing a busy schedule was tough, but sometimes she would rely on fellow Nez Perce WSU student Shelby Leighton to help and watch Terrell. She said Shelby was always really good about it. She figures you can't be afraid to reach out, and she has learned "that it takes a community to raise a child."

Ellenwood said that an even bigger challenge was helping Terrell adapt to a new setting, and then adjusting herself to college. Coming from the reservation, she explained that her son was the only Native American in his class, and had a hard time getting comfortable at a new school and a new environment.

"He couldn't relate to anyone in his class," Ellenwood said. "But it was good because now he is really diverse."

Being around the various cultures has also affected Ellenwood in the same way. She said that the cultural exposure was more than she expected, even when it comes to Native people. When she first came to the Native Center, she thought everyone was going to look like her and the people she's familiar to seeing, but quickly realized that tribal people come from all different backgrounds.

Ellenwood said her time at the center has helped expand her knowledge beyond what she was used to with her family and her community.

“Getting to know them and their backgrounds, has helped open my eyes to what their culture is like,” Ellenwood said.

Last year, in addition to keeping up with all of her son’s events, she was president of the Native American Women’s Association (NAWA), vice president of Ku-Ah-Mah and worked two jobs.

She also mentored for Native Programs, which she said she enjoyed because meeting others and welcoming them to the center made her feel like she was at home.

She felt being a part of the Native clubs was a chance to get out on campus, and be a voice for the Native community – a voice to create awareness and inform the people of the area that “we’re not extinct,” Ellenwood said.

Ellenwood said the Native Programs has helped her “grow as a person in general.” She attributed a lot of her development at WSU to the people at the Native Center.

Ellenwood said that being a part of the program helped her “become a better person” and helped her bring out the best in other people.

She said her first year was the hardest and that Native Programs assistant director Faith Price would help talk her through tough times and assist with finding help.

She hopes that future students can help spread the word about all of the resources available on campus and at the Native Center. And she wants everyone to know that they should feel comfortable asking for help in any fashion.

# Karuk Tribal Member Pursues Fashion Design

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

**Name:** Kaysha Kawailehua Mata-Peahu

**Tribe:** Karuk Tribe

**Hometown:** Lihue, HI

**Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor:** BA in Apparel, Merchandising, Design and Textiles

**Why did you choose WSU?** I wanted to study fashion design and WSU had a great program/department where I could study what I love, but also give me that university experience (clubs, extra-curricular activities, and sports).

**What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student?** The football games and the WSU Mom's Weekend Fashion Show.

**What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU?** I was involved with the Hawaii Club (Public Relations Officer), AMDT Fashion Club (Member and Secretary), and WSU Mom's Weekend Fashion Show.

**Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student?** Yes, the fashion club helped.

**What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it?** My biggest challenge was moving out of the dorms to a single apartment. I have been boarding in a dorm since I was 13 years old (high school boarding school), but living on my own and being responsible for bills, cooking dinner, etc. was a hard adjustment. I overcame this challenge by prioritizing my school, social, and home life responsibilities which allowed me to focus on what was important and get things done in a timely manner.

**What are your future plans?** My ultimate goal is to become a fashion designer of my own clothing line, but until then, I hope to gain as much experience as I can and enjoy life!

**What advice would you give a freshman?** Time management is key. Always prioritize and put your class work first, but don't forget to have fun and enjoy every moment at WSU!

# Grad Turns His Love of Basketball into a Career

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

by Faith Price

As the saying goes, “ball is life.” For 25-year-old Frazier Myer of the Chehalis tribe, basketball has been the driving force behind his pursuit of higher education and helped him determine his career path.

Any free time he had during his years as a college student, he could be found on the basketball court. “All my friends play basketball,” said Myer, noting, “I always have a basketball in my car.”

Ultimately, said the 2017 graduate, “Basketball is the reason I came to college.”

It’s in his genes. Both of his parents played basketball for Centralia College. Myer, however, took a different path. He saw sports broadcasting as the way he could remain involved in basketball for life.

“I wanted to go to school for something I’d be happy doing,” said Myer. “I always loved sports. I always watched the people talking about it on TV, like the analysts and broadcasters, and I thought I like what they do, and I liked their characters and I figured I could do the same thing.

Myer began his college career, like his parents, at Centralia College. There, he had the opportunity to take a sports broadcasting course from Professor Wade Fisher, who became his mentor and inspired him to attend WSU.

“He’s the reason why I’m here,” said Myer. “The first day I took his class he was like, ‘you’re going to be a Cougar in two years.’”

He noted that while Professor Fisher was a Husky, he told his students if they wanted to be broadcasters WSU was the best school to attend. At Centralia, Myer had a sports radio show, and did play by play for Centralia College. Myer received his associate’s degree from Centralia with a focus in mass media before transferring to WSU in fall 2014.

At WSU, Myer met another professor who has been influential in his life, communications professor Ben Shors. Myer went to Shors’ office hours to get help with an assignment, and things snowballed from there. Shors told him about the communications assistant position at Native American Programs, which he landed and stayed at for the remainder of his college career.

“If I hadn’t started writing for Native Programs, I wouldn’t have started writing for the Evergreen,” said Myer. “All thanks to Ben.”

The Daily Evergreen is WSU’s student-run newspaper where Myer started as a columnist giving the Native American perspective on campus and the news. After one semester as a columnist, he transitioned to a position as a sports reporter.

During his career at WSU, Myer has done it all when it comes to journalism. He wrote for the Native Programs newsletter for two years, for which in April he won WSU Student Employee of the Year. He wrote for the Daily Evergreen for the past year. He did play by play on KUGR radio station for the WSU basketball teams. His last semester, he produced the nightly news on Murrow Cable News 8.

His two favorite stories over the years were the first article he wrote for Native Programs and his last one for the Daily Evergreen. Both were sports-related. In December of 2015, Myer interviewed fellow Chehalis tribal member Valea Higheagle for the Native Programs newsletter.

“I never knew her before, and then come to find out we’re from the same tribe,” said Myer. “And then she is just this amazing twirler. But I don’t think she knows how great she is, with everything she does. She twirls in front of 25,000 people!”

The last edition of the spring 2017 Daily Evergreen featured a story that Myer’s wrote on former Seattle Seahawk Mack Strong, who now resides in Pullman.

“I never met an NFL player before,” said Myer.

While he professes, “I still loves sports!” an internship Myer had in summer 2016 has potentially changed his path. Another connection from Professor Shors led Myer to interning with Native broadcast company Vision Maker Media. For the first time, Myer had the opportunity to work in documentary filmmaking, and he was hooked.

He liked the style and the ability to get more personal and in-depth with subjects, as opposed to the news where you might only be at an event for 15 minutes, just to get the right shot. Myer will be interning with Vision Maker again this summer, and says that perhaps he will eventually have a career in documentary filmmaking – and maybe make a few sports documentaries.

Myer is the fifth of seven children, and the first of his siblings to get a college degree. His advice for future students is, “Don’t forget where you came from!”

One way Myer maintained his connection with the tribal community while away from home was getting engaged in the Native American Student Center at WSU. His mentor, Sequoia Dance, invited him to the NASC during the Week of Welcome, before classes started, which helped him feel comfortable there.

“I started coming to the Native Center every day,” said Myer, both to hang out and study. “You really see happy people,” said Myer, listing off the other Native students he would see with continually positive attitudes and big smiles. “That’s what I always think of the Native Center”

Several of them also became members of his intramural basketball team. He played continuously throughout his college career, competing against other Cougs in both male and co-ed leagues. He also made some amazing friends in the newsroom at WSU, and on a College of Communications trip to Cuba he had the good fortune to experience.

Myer spent twelve days in Cuba with a group from WSU. He said that the people there were extremely smart and spoke many languages. He enjoyed being one of the first Americans they had ever met.

“I was telling one of them that I was Native American. He was like ‘Native American?’” to which he then told the rest of Myer’s group, “‘All you guys, not real Americans.’ He knew his history I guess,” said Myer laughing.

“It’s all about how many friends I’ve made and the people I’ve met throughout my time here,” said Myer. “I’m learning, but I also get to spend time with all these great people. WSU, thank you for creating this great environment!”

# Communications Graduate Interned at ESPN, Managed Student Radio Station

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

by Edmund Frazier Myer

John Reichel, 22 year-old Cowlitz tribal member, graduated with honors from the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication in May.

Reichel graduated with a specialization in journalism and media production. During his time on campus, he hosted a radio show on KUGR Cougar College Radio, and served as the general manager of the station for the 2016-17 school year.

As general manager, Reichel was in charge of “keeping the ship afloat” by making sure all of the shows were in line, and doing all of the daily duties such as the budget for the station and scheduling events.

He did an internship with 710 ESPN in Seattle last summer, where he learned first-hand how professional broadcasters operate. And in doing so, he said he learned how to be a better sports journalist and reporter.

Reichel learned how to edit sound, upload podcasts onto their website, and networked with many professionals in the top-15 market. He also felt like he picked up better leadership skills from seeing how things were managed at ESPN.

Reichel said that this year as general manager of a student-radio station he was “trying to keep KUGR to the same standards that I was kept to when I was at my internship.”

Reichel said he managed his busy schedule by “taking it one week at a time.”

He said that he tried not to get overwhelmed about his grind as a senior and serving in a key role at the radio station. In addition to being heavily involved with KUGR, he focused on keeping his grades up to ensure that he would graduate, and be prepared for the next stage of his life.

Reichel has had up and downs throughout his four years of college. In one instance, he had his car broken into and everything was stolen, even his laptop with all of his important files.

“Remind yourself that this kind of stuff happens. This is not the end,” Reichel advised. “This is just a bump in the road.”

He described his growth at college as “humbling.”

“Before I came here, I was in my own kind of world, my own kind of bubble,” Reichel said. “But once I came here, I started talking with people with all sorts of different lifestyles.”

Reichel said that having the opportunity to meet people from different places of the country, and even from different parts of the world has expanded his knowledge of the world.

“I am by no means all knowing, but I like to think that I’ve matured in my world view,” Reichel said.

Part of that expansion of knowledge he gained was through the Native Center, where Reichel both learned and taught others about the Native culture.

He heard about the WSU Tribal Nation Building Leadership program when he was still in high school, and he looked into what it offered. He said he found interest in the fact that the program helps build stronger student leaders.

“The people who have been running the Tribal Liaison office have all been really awesome people,” Reichel said.

Reichel said that everyone involved with the programs were really understanding and helped him through his “bumps in the road.”

He said he felt like everything the Native Programs had done, such as Friday Feeds, helped him make it through college, and had made him “feel like a part of one big family.”

Reichel is currently applying for jobs, and would eventually like to do production at a radio station. He hopes to produce his own radio show and is looking into many different stations. After working for a while in the industry, he may go back to school.

His advice to all students, even those who still have their senior year ahead of them, is to take advantage of their time at the university. He encourages that the students use their time as undergraduates to gain as much experience in whatever possible.

“WSU provides the experience you really need for a baseline to be able to grow,” Reichel said.

He credits his ability to get the internship with 710 ESPN to his experience with KUGR.

Reichel said he wouldn’t feel as “comfortable and confident in my abilities,” had he chosen to not dedicate his time to getting involved.

# Future Teacher Connects with Heritage at WSU

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

**Name:** Tillie Keyonnie Torpey

**Tribe:** Coeur d'Alene

**Hometown:** Plummer, ID

**Degree/Major:** Bachelor of Education, Elementary Education

**Why did you choose WSU?** I chose WSU because I saw a lot of opportunities for myself that I could take advantage of considering professors I knew, financial aid, and that it's close to home.

**What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student?** Being a cougar, my best experience was meeting the great people that I know now and being involved to learn more about myself. Being away from my home on the reservation, I thought I would have lost myself, but in reality I learned more than ever about myself as a Native woman, mother and as a teacher. Being here I was able to really connect with my heritage by being placed in a completely different culture with different people.

**What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU?** McNair Achievement Program, Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program, Coalition of Women Students, Native American Women's Association, Native American Alliance, Mitamitaga O'Samoa, Ku-Ah-Mah, and WSU Leadership Sports STEM Camp.

**Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student?** I would have to say two programs had an impact on my life. The McNair Achievement Program strengthened my academic skills in being a stronger student. They also helped me find my passions in finding my purpose as a student and finding passions with my life. As for the Tribal Nation Building Leadership Program, they provided me a home and family away from home. They also provided me more opportunities in being connected with the Native and academic communities.

**What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it?** My biggest challenge was a lot of things. From being separated from my daughter for four years, losing my second baby, grandfather, and brother, to finding my own way in the education program as a Native teacher. These were some of the hardest things I've had to ever deal with throughout my life, but the way I overcame them was simply staying connected to my roots. A lot of praying, singing, going to sweat and seeking support from my friends and family.

**What are your future plans?** My future plans consist of becoming a teacher in Cusick, WA, and enjoying and appreciating time with my family. In the long run I want to eventually earn my masters in administration and doctoral degree in indigenous epistemology.

**What advice would you give a freshman?** To a freshmen I would tell them to get involved as much as they can to understand their purpose in their life but also as a student. Once you understand that, everything else will come easier.

# WSU Hosts Gathering on Indigenous Research

June 10, 2017 [faith.price](#)

by Ken Lokensgard

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Washington State University hosted their third annual Indigenous Research Conference. The conference was organized by the WSU Chapter of the Society of Indian Psychologists, led by Ph.D. candidate Greg Urquhart (Eastern Band of Cherokee descent). It was supported by WSU's Plateau Center for Native American Research & Collaboration, a branch of [Native American Programs](#), and the [Center for Mestizo and Indigenous Research](#).

Conference participants included undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, researchers, and community members. Among the institutions they represented were WSU, Eastern Washington University, Northwest Indian College, and the University of Idaho. The conference included thirteen presenters, addressing topics ranging from business development among Northwest tribes to Indigenous language revival in Libya.

WSU Tribal Liaison and Director of Native American Programs Barbara Aston (Wyandotte) opened the conference by welcoming attendees to WSU Pullman. She also acknowledged that the university is located on traditional Palus land and ceded Nez Perce territory. She emphasized that this fact should inspire attendees to engage in the most ethical, most effective research with tribes as possible. Undergraduates Shelby Leighton (Nez Perce) and John Reichel (Cowlitz), members of WSU's Tribal Nation Building and Leadership Program followed Aston with presentations of their senior projects.

During lunch, keynote speakers Dr. Zoe Higheagle Strong (Nez Perce) and Emma Elliot-Groves (Cowichan) delivered a presentation entitled "Indigenous Research Methodology, Ethics, and Academia." Dr. Strong, Plateau Center Research Fellow and Asst. Professor of Educational Psychology, summarized the key concerns and principles expressed in these methodologies. Then Dr. Elliot-Groves, Asst. Research Professor at WSU's [Partnerships for Native Health](#), offered a powerful example of how these methodologies can facilitate respectful, collaborative research by describing her own work with her community. Dr. Strong's father, Gordon Higheagle (Nez Perce), opened for the two presenters, welcoming attendees to Nez Perce territory.

This year, the conference was scheduled the day after the spring meeting of the Native American Advisory Board to the President. There, representatives from the twelve tribes with whom WSU has a [memorandum of understanding](#), had the opportunity to visit booths manned by various WSU researchers working in Native America, before meeting with President Kirk Schulz. That day, WSU also held its annual [Academic Showcase](#), during which all faculty, staff, and graduate students have the opportunity to display posters and discuss their research projects. The Indigenous Research Conference, the preceding Advisory Board Meeting, along with the WSU Academic Showcase offered the WSU community and visitors the opportunity to see a huge range of research pertaining to Indigenous peoples, over the course of two days.

The conference will be held again next spring, and will likely follow the Native American Advisory Board Meeting and Research Showcase once again. We urge interested parties to consider submitting proposals for presentations or posters. Next year, The Plateau Center plans to expand the conference

significantly, accommodating many more researchers from institutions of higher education, regional tribes, and other Indigenous communities. The call for proposals is months away, but anyone with questions can contact [Ken Lokensgard, Ph.D.](#) in the meantime.