WSU Native American Programs: December 2019 Newsletter

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Letter from the Executive Director of Tribal Relations

December 20, 2019  faith.price

Dear friends,

Our fall semester has seen many positive developments in Tribal Relations at Washington State University. On October 25, we held our biannual meeting of the Native American Advisory Board to the President. We were joined by President Kirk Schulz and incoming Interim Provost Bryan Slinker. Dr. Slinker, as one of his first acts as Provost, added his signature to the Memorandum of Understanding between WSU and the Signatory Tribes. In so doing, he emphasized his office’s commitment to the MOU, which established the Advisory Board and which represents WSU’s ongoing commitment to the MOU Signatory Tribes and to Native students and communities generally.
Late Native American Advisory Board member Gloria Atkins and Colville student Jaissa Grunlose at the 2018 Native American Advisory Board meeting in Pullman.

At the Advisory Board meeting, we also had a productive discussion about developing an executive policy for Tribal relations, which will be implemented throughout the WSU system. I am grateful to board members for sharing their views on Tribal research approval protocols and other matters related to Tribal consultation and collaboration. I will continue to work on developing this policy with Christine Hoyt, Chief of Staff for President Schulz. We look forward to sharing more about it with you in the future and seeking further input from members of the Advisory Board and others. When the executive policy is completed and implemented, our hope is that it will ensure a knowledge of and respect for Tribal sovereignty in all aspects of WSU’s activities.
I am saddened that future Native American Advisory Board Meetings will not include Gloria Aktins, the longtime board representative for the Colville Confederated Tribes. Gloria passed unexpectedly on November 29. Gloria served in the Higher Education Program of the Colville Tribes for over forty years. As Director of the program, she was a positive influence upon countless Colville students and colleagues, and she was a tireless advocate for Indian education throughout the region. Among many other activities, she led the Colville College Internship Program, to which our office has had the great pleasure of contributing. We at WSU offer our most sincere condolences to her family, colleagues, community, and to all who knew her.

I trust all of you will take the time to cherish your loved ones during this holiday season. As always, our offices remain open except during the days between Christmas and New Year’s Day. In the spring, expect more news from us regarding the executive policy, the Center for Native American Research & Collaboration, Native American Undergraduate Student Services, Outreach, and more.

Zoe Higheagle Strong (Nez Perce)
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Native Research Focused on by WSU CNRC

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The Center for Native American Research and Collaboration (CNRC) continues its efforts to promote the importance of Indigenous knowledge and to facilitate collaborative research. While such needs are great, we benefit from the support of the administration and from many faculty members and staff throughout WSU and beyond. We remain committed to our work, and we’re initiating new policies, workshops, and other activities that help us meet these needs.

Dr. Zoe Higheagle Strong listens while Josiah Pinkham discuss research in the Nez Perce community with affiliates of the Center for Native American Research and Collaborations.

Twenty-nine CNRC Affiliates and Associates met on September 27, at the Nez Perce National Historical Park Visitor Center. There, we listened to a presentation by Nez Perce Tribe Cultural Resources representative Josiah Pinkham on research approval processes and the values that inform them. Then, attendees discussed engaging Native students in research, Tribal relations and research, and similar topics. We expect to post a video of the meeting, recorded by the Center for Digital Scholarship & Curation, on our CNRC Resources webpage soon. The information it presents should be a great help to anyone engaged in collaborative research, particularly in Nez Perce country.
On October 2, Affiliates and Associates met a second time on the WSU Pullman campus. In this meeting, the twenty-one attending members each described their research interests with the intent of identifying protentional collaborators, members with similar interest, and so on. This information will also be shared online.

**Affiliate Activities**

On October 25, CNRC Affiliate Dr. Robbie Paul (Nez Perce), retired Director of WSU Native Health Sciences, opened an exhibit, titled “Grandfather’s Trunk,” on the impact of boarding schools upon her family. The opening featured a talk by Dr. Paul, as well as a presentation by Marsha Small (N. Cheyenne), who described her ongoing efforts to locate the graves of students who died at various boarding schools. The exhibit, which is co-curated by Dr. Paul, is located in the Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections section of WSU’s Terrell Library. The exhibit is open to the public between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM until March 16.

CNRC Affiliate Dr. Ben Shors, of the WSU Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, recently directed a documentary film on the flood that devastated parts of the Blackfeet Reservation in 1964. Shors showed his film, titled The Blackfeet Flood, on campus on November 7. Shors was joined in discussions before and after the showing by co-producers Torsten Kjellstrand and Lailani Upham. Upham, who was born and raised on the Blackfeet Reservation, also served as cultural advisor. The showing was sponsored by the Murrow College, Native American Programs, and the Natives in Media student organization. The film premiered on PBS on November 25.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Affiliates and Associates program find information an overview at our [website](#). There, you can read about our mission and values. You can also read about the various types of membership available. WSU faculty and staff, Tribal members, and employees at other institutions are all welcome to apply.

**Indigenous Research**

Recently, in collaboration with the WSU Human Subjects Internal Review Board, the CNRCH drafted a checklist for IRB member reviewing research applications involving Native communities and individuals. We are still in the editing process, but we expect to have the checklist ready for use by IRB members in the spring semester. At that time, we are also happy to share it with other individuals and institutions.

For faculty members and other researchers interested in Indigenous Research Methodologies and conducting ethical research with tribes—whether that research involves Human subjects, material culture, oral history, or the environment—the CRRC will host two training in spring semester. These are tentatively scheduled for January 23 and January 24. Each workshop will follow the same agenda, in order to make this information available to those with different schedules. Further information will be posted on the CNRC Resources webpage. Meanwhile, interested individuals can find a list of academic publications on Indigenous Research Methodologies and related topics on the same webpage.

**Student Support**

The CNRC continues to support work beyond its core research mission, including the Native American Pre-Health Program and Graduate/Professional Student Support. Members of the Pre-Health Program meet together weekly in study sessions and biweekly in discussions that focus upon topics relevant to
In October, second year members Emma Stewart (pre-speech and language sciences), Emely Rodas (neuroscience and pre-vet), and Amaya Pelagio (psychology and pre-med) attended the annual meeting of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society in Milwaukee. They were joined by Dr. Lokensgard, undergraduate Breanne Searing (microbiology), and graduate student Tyler Fouty (hydrology). The trip was supported by WSU’s Graduate School and the PNW-COSMOS Alliance for Native American Education and the Professoriate (funded by NSF AGEP-T grant # 1432932).

For more information about WSU’s Center for Native American Research & Collaboration, or any of its activities, contact Assistant Director Dr. Ken Lokensgard.
Native Youth Sports Summit Scheduled for Feb 23

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Save the date! On February 23rd, 2020, all sixth through twelfth-grade students are invited to WSU’s Native American Appreciation Basketball Game and Sports Summit!

Native American Programs and WSU Cougar Athletics are excited to bring Native middle and high school students to campus for the women’s WSU Vs USC game, followed by the Native Youth Sports Summit! Former Seahawk Mack Strong will be the keynote speaker at the Sports Summit.

Then join in on the discussion with a panel of current WSU student athletes. Be sure to bring lots of questions, and get the lowdown on the skills – and grades – it takes to get a college athletic scholarship, along with tips on how to be a successful college student athlete. All students attending the Native Youth Sports Summit will receive a t-shirt and complimentary admission to the WSU vs. USC women’s basketball game.

11:30am WSU vs USC @ Beasley Coliseum
1:30pm Lunch @ Bohler gym
2:30-4pm Sports Summit @ Bohler gym
4pm Optional campus tours
The event is open to students in grades 6-12. Family is welcome too! Pre-register for the event here: https://native.wsu.edu/sports-summit/
Cowlitz Grad Leaves Mark on WSU thru New Native Greek Org

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Shana Lombard

Tribe: Cowlitz Tribe

Hometown: Puyallup, WA

Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor: Journalism & Media Production major, Tribal Nation Building Leadership student

Why did you choose WSU? I chose to attend WSU because of the tribal scholarships that were offered and because of the Communication school here, Edward R. Murrow College of Communication. I also wanted to be closer to home after attending Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, KS.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? I enjoyed being a WSU student through attending Native cultural events put on by Native American Programs and also the various clubs associated with NAP. It made me happy to rep my tribe on campus and share about it and learn about other cultures.

What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? I helped found the first and currently only Native American-based Greek letter organization in all of Washington state, Alpha Pi Omega, on our campus. It made me so proud to be a part of something bigger than myself such as bringing such a
sisterhood to the students WSU has. I also was PR chair for ASWSU Ku-Ah-Mah. It was a big undertaking doing marketing for a powwow. I learned a lot from the experience, the mistakes I made and overcame.

**Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student?** The most impactful program for me on this campus was Native American Programs. Everytime I felt discouraged in class, upset with a racist, microagression comment, I was able to have the space in the Center to feel validated and heard. Also the free printing and activities they have helped kept me going in my studies here.

**What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it?** My biggest challenge that I faced at WSU was having my indigenous identity challenged. As a white and Cowlitz identifying person, I felt I had to try and prove more and more of myself because people didn’t understand the complexity and intersectionality that comes with simply being an indigenous person. After talking with many professors and mentors, I learned how to communicate more eloquently how people needed to grow their understandings of indigenous people, that it was a thing they had to do, not necessarily something I had to do. And to also find ways to be more comfortable with myself.

**What are your future plans?** My future plans are to take some time off from school. I need to regather necessary energy needed to excel in grad school. I want to research journalism and its impacts on Indian Country.

**What advice would you give a freshman?** My advice for underclassmen is to learn how to advocate for yourself in times of feeling like no one else is going to help you, in ways you need to be a successful student. It is your hard work that you complete on your own that gets you to the commencement stage.
Niimipuu Student, ‘my Indigenous intellect is my strength’

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MyKel Johnson

Tribe: Nez Perce Tribe (Niimipuu)

Hometown: Lapwai, Idaho

Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor: Communication and Society major, and Tribal Nation Building Leadership student

Why did you choose WSU? I chose WSU because I received the Plateau and MOU scholarships from Native Programs. I also fell in love with our community and the endless support from the faculty.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? I enjoyed participating in the opportunities for activism and social justice. I also loved being a member of clubs like Native American Women’s Association and the Native American Alliance.
What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? I was involved in a lot of the Native American clubs and served as a student ambassador for Native Programs as well.

Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student? Native American Programs was fundamental to my success at WSU. The Native Center was my home away from home. I could always count on the faculty to help with any issues I had. It was because of Native Programs that I stayed in college and remained resilient.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? The biggest challenge to achieving my education was feeling inferior to those around me. It was difficult coming from a school on the reservation to an educational institution like this. I overcame this when I reclaimed my identity and realized my Indigenous intellect is my strength. I realized that my peers were not superior. Rather, they were taught they were and society reinforced that.

Future plans: graduate school.

Advice for underclassmen: Take advantage of all the resources and opportunities you can while in college.
Haskell Transfer Student Finds Success at WSU

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Rachel Whiteside

Tribe: Narragansett Indian Tribe, RI

Hometown: Washington DC

Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor: Bachelors of Social Sciences with my primary concentration being Anthropology and my secondary concentration History

Why did you choose WSU? I originally chose WSU because of their communications major but my first semester there as a transfer I took an Anthropology class and I fell in love with that major and what Anthropology covers so I switched.
What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? The Native Center at WSU definitely was my favorite part of WSU, Faith and Joelle and Shana. The center made it very friendly and home like and reminded me of my old college Haskell Indian Nations University.

What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? While at WSU, I think the most activities I participated in were the events held by the Native Center such as celebrating Indigenous Peoples’ Day and attending First Friday Feeds.

Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student? With the help of the Native Center and their free printing to all Native students was probably my favorite part about WSU. Printing is expensive and being an upper class student I have to write a lot of papers.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? My biggest challenge was my advisor leaving mid-semester and not knowing who was there to help me. By asking an advisor in my major’s department, I was able to explain my situation and she was able to help me and still be able to graduate on time.

What are your future plans? My future plan is to hopefully attend grad school. I would definitely like to continue my path with anthropology. My career end game is to be a curator in a museum or to restore historical landmarks. I am hoping to apply to the University of William and Mary or the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

What advice would you give a freshman? My advice is to make sure your advisor is end game. That they aren’t there to just get paid and do the bare minimum. I’ve seen some good and bad advisors and the good ones are the ones who are committed to helping you achieve your goals and not belittle you. I would also take huge advantage of the writing center at the CUE and ALWAYS talk to your professor if you’re confused.
Animal Science Major Has her Sights on Vet School

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Jeanie Hamby

Tribe: Tlingit

Hometown: Othello, WA

Degree(s) received from WSU, and major and/or minor: Animal Science

Why did you choose WSU? It’s my dream school and close to home.

What did you enjoy most about being a WSU student? WSU is known for being a good animal science school, so being able to learn from some of the best professors and of course the cougar pride everyone has.
What activities/programs were you involved with while at WSU? Native American Women’s Association and ASWSU Ku-ah-mah.

Did any particular WSU program make an impact in your success as a student? NAWA for sure. I made some lifelong friends through that group, which I am forever thankful for.

What was your biggest challenge to achieving your education and how did you overcome it? Being able to balance school, work, and a social life. The main thing that helped me was getting ahead in some school work so I could go out and with friends.

What are your future plans? Vet tech school and then hopefully vet school.

What advice would you give a freshman? Don’t be afraid to get involved, but make sure your school work always comes first.