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Message from the President

An Honor To Serve

by Grayson Noley, President, Board of Directors

It is an honor indeed to have the privilege of serving as the AIGC Board President. I am a six year veteran of the board and have observed three pretty awesome predecessors in this position beginning with Shenan Arcity, Esq., (Navajo) Elizabeth (Libby) Rodke Washburn, Esq., (Chickasaw) and finally, my immediate predecessor, David Mahooty, (Zuni Pueblo). To each of these and others who came even before them, I extend my appreciation for your leadership and your service to the organization and the students who have been the beneficiaries of AIGC and AIGCS. I also extend my appreciation for the service and commitment of previous Executive Directors and especially the present Director, Sam Deloria and to all those staff members who have lent their expertise to the jobs of acquiring funds for scholarships and administering those funds seeing that they were given for the right purposes to the right people.

As a person who has spent a career in higher education, I have witnessed firsthand the gratitude demonstrated by the recipients of these scholarships. AIGC and AIGCS scholarships have made it possible for thousands of American Indian scholars to attain the levels of education necessary for entry and success in dozens of fields of endeavor. I am a person who believes wholeheartedly in the value education brings especially for our people, our communities and our world.

AIGC now has reached a new benchmark in its nearly 45 year history. We were recently selected to administer additional graduate fellowships from a portion of the $3.4 billion Cobell Settlement. While details are still being negotiated, this new scholarship program represents a tremendous opportunity for AIGC to exponentially expand the reach of AIGC scholarships to American Indian and Alaska Native graduate students across the country.

Joining me in this exciting time for AIGC are Melanie Patten Fritzsche (Laguna Pueblo), as Vice President and Rose Graham (Navajo), as Secretary and Treasurer. Walter Lamar (Blackfeet) and Joel Frank (Seminole Tribe of Florida) are new board members. The other veteran board members include Michael Bird (Kewa and Ohkay Owingeh Pueblos) and Danna R. Jackson, Esq. (Confederated Tribes of Salish and Kootenai).

Together, we have an important role to fill as Board members. I pledge to honor the many great efforts and achievements that brought AIGC to the forefront of American Indian graduate education. I will dedicate significant time and effort to this organization to ensure I meet all my obligations, working closely with the Director and the Board in continuing to move AIGC forward.

Grayson Noley (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma)
AIGC Board President

The American Indian Graduate is now available in electronic form. If you would prefer to receive an email copy of our publication, please let us know at www.aigcs.org
This year, American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) celebrates its 45th anniversary. Prior to the formation of what was originally called American Indian Scholarships (AIS), other than the law program at the American Indian Law Center, there was really no organized national program to help Indian and Native students attend graduate school. The great Sidney Yates, Congressman from Illinois and Chair of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee said, many times, that he feared that the federal government would not support graduate education for Indian and Native students were it not for the presence of AIS (AIGC).

Since its inception, AIGC has awarded more than 16,600 scholarships totaling over $52 million to graduate students in all fields of study. From education and medicine to law and mathematics, AIGC students have spread throughout many fields, often opening the discipline up for succeeding generations — bringing diversity, perspective and talent to campuses throughout the United States and around the world.

In 1969, AIS was established for Indian people needing financial assistance to complete graduate work. In 1974, the Blue Spruce family established a scholarship for American Indian medical students. In 1980, AIGC received $186,000 from the Administration of Native Americans, for a Human Resource Mobilization Project to classify alumni for a job referral service. In 1983, the House of Representatives approved a recommendation, totaling $978,000, to fund the BIA scholarship contract. By 1988, AIGC approved funding for 292 men and women in the fields of law, health, education, business, engineering, religious studies, natural resources and fine arts. In 2000, AIGC Scholars was incorporated to administer the Gates Millennium Scholar Program (GMS) for American Indians/Alaska Natives, and with the creation of AIGC Scholars, Inc., staff and office space doubled. Four years later, AIGC entered into partnerships with Wells Fargo Bank and Accenture, sponsoring two corporate scholarship programs that have already funded over 100 individuals. In 2009, AIGC hosted a 40th anniversary reception during the Gathering of Nations, to become an annual tradition.

The gradual growth of AIGC has been made many possible through the support of federal programs, endowed gifts, tribal, corporate and foundation support and alumni and private donations. Collectively, this support generates the Power of Scholarship. This spirit of education, within the American Indian and Alaska Native community, has benefited thousands of students who have received scholarships and utilized the student services offered through AIGC.
45 years of support — from donors of every category — has made many thousands of careers achievable; careers and credentials, which has improved hundreds upon hundreds of communities, and raised the bar in higher education for the following generations of American Indian students. The Power of Scholarship is very real and yields very meaningful results.

With this in mind, I want to reiterate the important role that AIGC alumni play. I urge you to join your fellow alumni and give back — at any level — to AIGC. AIGC depends on its donors to maintain the level of scholarship support that we are able to provide for graduate students. As alumni, you not only experienced, but also hold the Power of Scholarship. Please consider contributing to a scholarship that once benefited you.

Let us note the death of Charlie Hill (Wisconsin Oneida), who was a pioneer in the field of comedy, made us all laugh, spoke for us, in a sense, by joking for us, and provided a reference point for millions of American people who had never seen an Indian before, let alone a funny one. Also, the death of Forrest Gerard (Blackfeet), who both designed and, as the first Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs, implemented the most far-reaching federal Indian legislation in several generations and made the rhetoric of self-determination into reality.
Forty-five years ago, President Richard Nixon began “Vietnamization” in Southwest Asia. Apollo 11 astronauts, Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, Jr., took their first steps on the moon. The unemployment rate was 3.6 percent and the median household income was $8,389. Space exploration and international affairs aside, 1969 also marked an important milestone in American Indian post-secondary education. That same year, the National Indian Scholarship Program (the American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) of today) opened its doors at the University of New Mexico.

Nearly a half-century later, NASA completed its last mission of the NASA shuttle program; the national unemployment rate is approximately 7.0 percent; the median household income is over $51,000 and AIGC has awarded more than 16,600 scholarships, totaling over $52 million, to graduate students in all fields of study.

While 45 years has brought on a world of change – for better or for worse – one thing has remained constant in the community of American Indian graduate education: a resource to support the educational pursuits of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

“Our history is not marked by dramatic change or sudden developments, rather a constant hunger to improve our American Indian and Alaska Native communities through education and leadership,” said AIGC Director Sam Deloria. “It was the vision and commitment of two pioneers, Robert Bennett and John Rainer that started the movement and the follow-through of thousands of scholars, volunteers, staff members, board members and donors who sustained the life of that vision.”

In 1970, UNM graduate student, Donald A. McCabe, was awarded a $1,200 scholarship to support his studies in Business Administration. He later became President of the Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute. In 1974, the Blue Spruce family established a scholarship for American Indian medical students. In 1980, AIGC received $186,000, from the Administration of Native Americans for a Human Resource Mobilization Project, to classify alumni for a job referral service. In 1983, the House of Representatives approved a recommendation, totaling $978,000, to fund the BIA scholarship contract.

By 1988, AIGC approved funding for 292 men and women, from the fields of law, health, education, business, engineering, religious studies, natural resources and fine arts. In 2000, AIGC was selected to administer the Gates Millennium Scholar Program for American Indians and Alaska Natives, which doubled AIGC office space and staff. Four years later, AIGC received an endowment of $300,000, from Wells Fargo Bank, to implement the Wells Fargo American Indian Scholarships. In 2010, AIGC held its first annual reception during the Gathering of Nations.

The gradual growth of AIGC has been made possible through the support of federal programs, endowed gifts, tribal, corporate and foundation support and alumni and private donations.

Congratulations on 45 years, AIGC – it has been most enlightening!
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The Rainer Fellowship was established in memory of John Rainer (Taos Pueblo), co-founder and first director of the American Indian Graduate Center. When he was sent to boarding school at age thirteen, John spoke only his Native language. Yet, at a time when it was rare to find Indians with any degrees, he persevered, ultimately earning a master’s degree in education from USC in 1951. Holding positions such as Director of the National Congress of American Indians, Chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council, and Director of the New Mexico Commission of Indian Affairs demonstrates his dedication to improving quality of life and creating opportunities for Native Americans. His advocacy for education included participating in a Senate Budget Committee field hearing on science and math education and testifying before the Senate and House Appropriations Sub-Committees on Interior Affairs.

Recipients of the Rainer Fellowship are charged with following John Rainer’s path by using their education and career as tools for giving back to their communities—a logical assignment for this year’s recipients, given their history of volunteerism. They are already following John Rainer’s advice, “Get the best possible training you can.”

Since the Rainer Fellowship is designed to reward the qualities and commitment characteristic of a future Indian leader, a portion of the award is to support participation in a voluntary activity that afford an opportunity to develop leadership skills.

A Continuing Educational and Scientific Journey

by Johnny Poolaw

Hello! My name is Johnny Poolaw and I am from the Chiricahua Apache, Delaware, Kiowa, Seminole, Creek and Comanche Nations. I currently reside in Lawton, Oklahoma, where I have recently taken on the role of Acting Dean of Student Services for the Comanche Nation College, while still teaching in the Department of Natural Science. I was born and raised around the Mountain Scott area and graduated from Elgin High School in 1995. I received my Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology, from the University of Oklahoma in 2000, and received my Master of Arts in Teaching from Cameron University.

After I graduated from Cameron University, I began my professional career, as GED Instructor for the Comanche Nation, which was a very rewarding experience. While working with the GED program, I was invited to be the math instructor for the newly founded Comanche Nation College. I hadn’t thought of working at a tribal college before, but the idea was an exciting one, so I left the GED position to serve my people, in the area of higher education. Because the college was new (it was the first tribal college in Oklahoma), and there were many things to learn about operating and maintaining a tribal institution, I felt that this setting was ideal for me, because I was new to the academic world as well.

Teaching at the Comanche Nation College was, and still is, very rewarding. I have enjoyed the past ten years serving as Science and Math faculty and look forward to more years of educational service. I believe that the College is the best learning environment to hone my skills as a Native American instructor, mentor and an administrator. In field of higher education, I feel that I have the responsibility to empower my students, show them that they can achieve great things and can be anything they want to be, for this is what I was taught by my parents and other role models in my life.
Two years ago, I decided to pursue my academic goal of obtaining a Ph.D., so I applied and was accepted into the University of Oklahoma Adult and Higher Education Ph.D. Program. Handling my full-time position, while attending graduate courses full-time, has been challenging but I hope to receive my doctoral degree within the next three years. I am very blessed to have a job that allows me to apply the learning theories and lessons that I am acquiring in my doctoral program, to my real-life experience at the Comanche Nation College. I think all things in our world are cyclical and believe, one day, something I have taught someone will be taught again and shared with others. That makes me feel very good inside. To share and be a part of someone’s academic journey is a blessing and I do not take this for granted. I was very fortunate to grow up with great parents and grandparents and to understand the importance and value of an education. Now that I am able to be in a position to serve my tribal community as an administrator and an instructor, I want to instill in my students that an education is vital, not only to themselves but, for their children and grandchildren.

I am very grateful for the opportunities that the American Indian Graduate Center has enabled me to have in advancing my career, allowing me to be where I am today. Last summer, I took my seven-year-old niece to a science museum. She loved it and was fascinated by all of the activities there. As a former science major, I hope that she grows up to enjoy and appreciate the science world as much as I have. From this science museum visit with my niece, I saw how the importance of early exposure to the interesting world of science could plant a seed of knowledge and wonder into a child’s mind. I know that our Native STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) numbers are very low and can’t help wondering if part of the reason for this is because many of our Native young people do not have an opportunity to be exposed to this world of science and all that it encompasses. I feel that our young Native people need this important exposure, so I have decided to use my role as an instructor to promote science, to our young Native students, in any way I can. I plan to use a portion of the funds from the Rainer Fellowship to provide these learning opportunities to our young Native students at the college. During the spring semester, I plan to bring our Comanche Nation Daycare center children to the college for a Science Day, so that they can experience the fun and fascinating world of science that, hopefully, they will get to encounter once again, one day, as college students.

(John T. Poolaw is an enrolled member of the Delaware Nation. He is attending The University of Oklahoma pursing a doctorate degree in the adult and higher education program.)

Using Technology to Revitalize the Past

by Shawna Begay, M.F.A.

Over the past academic year, I have begun to define the subject for my college dissertation. In a broad sense, what I want to do, ultimately, is create educational media for tribal communities, focusing on language and culture revitalization. I recently wrote a literature review, for one of my classes, related to the process by which educational media can benefit Native American efforts to revitalize dying languages. With the continued recommendations and support from my colleagues and professors, I have begun to define my goals, in a clear and concise manner, as my dissertation proposal will be due in about a year.

Currently, I also have a graduate assistantship, in the Teaching and Instruction Department, at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV). I teach an online course entitled, “Teaching Teachers How to Use Technology in the Classroom”. This is a required course for undergraduate students, who wish to become teachers. With my major, I am required to learn how technology can make a difference in grade school. Through learning and teaching technology, I always try to relate my studies to Native American communities, whether it is on the reservation or in an urban setting. I am, usually, the only Native American in the classroom; therefore, I am able to bring
I have been in Las Vegas for the past two years and feel I am connecting more and more to the local Native American Community. It is my hope to continue to filter and define my dissertation research on Educational Media for Native Americans, as well as continue to work with Vegas PBS. Along with Vegas PBS, we recently applied for a grant, through Vision Maker Media (formerly Native American Public Telecommunications), to produce another American Graduate video, to promote graduation in Native American communities.

Currently, as part of my CIT 778 Class (Instructional Design), I am developing a training workshop, for tribal communities. This class requires that I develop a training or instructional guide, for any type of project that I would like to implement; therefore, I am working on a training and instructional guide for tribal revitalization programs.

This instructional/technological tool will assist tribal members in developing a “Wiki” site, to create an online dictionary of their respective Indigenous languages, including the specific Indigenous word, the English translation and a ‘sound file’, which allows the user to hear how the spoken word sounds. This is an interactive site, which allows several designated members of a tribal community to add to the site. Although the site will be somewhat similar to Wikipedia, this site will be geared solely toward language revitalization. Training will provide knowledge, to respective tribal members, of how to control and maintain the site. Once I have completed the site design, I will be utilizing some of my Rainer Fellowship funding to implement training, travel to tribal locations, supply printed material and anything else that I discover I will need. I am also hoping to collaborate with UNLV’s Diversity Initiatives, Clark County School District’s Equity and Diversity Department, the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe and the Moapa Band of Paiutes, for this training.

Thank you, again, for the Rainer Fellowship. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to share my efforts in Indigenous language revitalization.

(Shawna L. Begay is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. She is attending the University of Nevada Las Vegas pursuing a doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction.)
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Recently, the American Indian Graduate Center and one of our 2011 AIGC Honorees, Choctaw Nation Scholarship Advisement Program (SAP) collaborated to create the AIGC Choctaw SAP Fellowship. In part, this effort is to help AIGC learn how to develop a true fellowship with students and institutions. The main purpose of the program is to create more opportunities for Native students to conduct research in any discipline, and have the financial support to do so. The Choctaw Nation SAP provided $20,000 to AIGC to fund the program. AIGC proposed the criteria and processes for several fellowship programs. The final product is a 2-year research support fellowship that provides money toward the full cost of attendance to the institution, with the student able to direct a percentage of the funds toward research. A student may request up to $3,000 to attend a conference, travel for research-related purposes, purchase specific technology or tools, subscribe to industry journals or access needed databases. After consultation with American Indian faculty and mentors across the country, it was determined that this was the best use of funds for Native researchers. AIGC opened the application on the AIGC Online Application System, marketed the opportunity and recruited applicants via websites and social media. While this particular program is currently only available to Choctaw Nation members, it is our sincere hope that other tribes, companies or organizations will see this successful program and help us create more opportunities for Native student researchers.

The AIGC team repeatedly reviewed the applications and narrowed the pool to a handful of finalists. Although it was a very close and difficult decision, we chose to award Mr. Sawyer Stone, a Choctaw Nation member, the very first AIGC Choctaw SAP Fellowship. Mr. Stone is studying Biomedical Engineering at the Louisiana Tech University, in Ruston, Louisiana. Among his many responses, we were highly impressed that Sawyer indicated that he hopes to impact technology used in the detection of markers associated with cardiovascular disease. Mr. Stone wrote, “Native Americans tend to be more predisposed than the general population to a range of diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease and substance abuse.” We were further impressed that Sawyer not only saw his work as having implications for Native people, but he knows it will have significant impact on the larger population, in that more effective treatment can be instituted

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I don't remember the incident, but the story has been told over and over by family members. When I was about nine years old, I was at my great-grandparent’s home, playing with my cousins. My great-grandfather, Ben Horseman, while watching his grandchildren, foretold of a bright future when he exclaimed, “She will be the one to make a difference!”

As I look outside today, at my beautiful home, I see all my blessings and am ever so grateful. I have four children, six grandchildren and many nieces and nephews to whom I am very close. It is said I am a preeminent Native American educator, politician, rancher, mother and grandmother. I have gained that recognition for my commitment and leadership to Native American education and politics. Sometimes we forget, or other people forget, how we started, so I am going to step back in time.

I was born in 1949, to Henry and Ruby Horseman Brockie. Both of my parents are Aaniiih (Gros Ventre) and I was given my tradition name, “Watsi”, by my great-great Grandmother Coming Daylight in November. She died in December 1949. She was a well-known Gros Ventre elder and died at the age of 104. When I was four years old, we relocated to Los Angeles, California and were there for four years. When we returned home, the only place available to live was a place called “Longguns”, in Hays, Montana, at the southern end of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. We had moved home and it was a two room place, with plastic windows, and the home had to be “banked.” Older people will know what this means: no running water and no inside toilets. We all stayed in one big room, with a wood stove in the middle. My folks had a big bed and we had bunk beds. My older brothers slept on the top bunk and my two sisters and I slept on the bottom. It should have been a cultural shock to us, coming from California, but it wasn’t. My brother and I would have to haul water for my mom to wash clothes. We only stayed there two years, but I remember it well. I later wrote about it: one short story for my English class and the other a poem about our time there. My parents and brother wept when they read the poem. It was called “Roaming the Hills of Hays” and the last verse was, “Oh whatever happened to the days when little brown children roamed the hills of Hays.” It was a happy time.

We moved into another place within a couple of years and it was then that I got my first job, selling Saturday Evening Post, when I was 11 years old.

At the age of 13, I was sent to Flandreau Indian School, along with many Indian youth from Montana reservations. At that time, there was no public high school on the reservation. I spent nine months without seeing my family. I was a skinny 99-pound girl, immature, but smart for my age. I made lifetime friends from my experience there. When I was a senior, I, along with six other students, decided we were going to the public school adjacent to the reservation, as every year I went to Flandreau I got lonely for my family. We all traveled the forty miles one-way in a station wagon to attend the local public school. Years later, a bus was established and went half-way out to pick up the students who wanted to attend that public school. The bus route is still there.

I continued my education at Haskell Institute, in Lawrence, Kansas, where I received a Certificate in Business Technology. Years later, I became a Board of Regents member for Haskell Indian Nations University and, after 18 years, I am still a board member.
In 1977, I was selected, by Indian Health Service, to attend an Administrative Management Training program in Tucson, Arizona. I received an Associate of Science Degree in Health Administration, from Central Arizona College, Coolidge, AZ in 1978, not knowing that, many years later, I would return to complete my Master’s degree in Tucson. Before I graduated, I was promoted to the Administrative Officer at Rocky Boy Clinic and, at the age of 28 years old, I was the youngest executive in the Rocky Mountain Region for Indian Health Service.

I left Indian Health Service in 1978 and moved back to Fort Belknap, with the idea that I would complete my bachelor’s degree. I left a secure position, with a great salary, to pursue a dream. As fate would have it, I took a job working with Dr. Robert Swan, the Fort Belknap Education Department, where I worked for over 15 years. During that time, I went to Norway as a chaperone; was selected for Outstanding Young Woman of America; Presidential Classroom for Young Americans and was the 1988 Montana Indian Educator of the Year. In addition to being the Vocational Education Coordinator, I was the in-kind Director for the Women’s Educational Act Project and served as acting Director many times.

By 1995, I had gained professional and personal experience that enabled me a bit of security. I was attending classes at MSU-Northern and working full-time. This was the same year I was asked, by then President of Fort Belknap College, Margaret Campbell, to manage the construction of a public radio station, including staffing and meeting all the requirements of the FCC and FAA and CPB. Having no experience in radio I was reluctant but, after four requests, I accepted the job, based mostly on my motivation and my organizational skills. I had two requests; to be able to continue my classes to finish my bachelor’s degree and keep the same salary. I left a job of comfort; a big office with a secretary, for a job in one small office (shared) a small desk and no secretary. Nevertheless, KGVA 88.1 Public Radio Station went “on air” in October 1996.

On a beautiful day in May 1996, I lined up with all the graduates to accept my diploma. After ten grueling years of driving 90 miles one-way and working full-time, I graduated from MSU-Northern, receiving my Bachelor’s degree in Business, with a minor in Native American Studies. During that period, I had two sons, Daniel and John, adding to two older children, Michele and Andrew.

It was shortly after that I started looking at graduate school. As a member of the Haskell Board of Regents, I attended meetings on a regular basis. The wife of the President of Haskell was working at KU and recommended I attend Kansas University and major in American Indian Studies. In the early nineties, I was invited to attend the accreditation review for the Haskell Board of Regents. One of the commissioners for the Higher Learning Commission was Dr. Jay Stauss. He was a faculty member at the University of Arizona and recommended I attend the University of Arizona, where I could complete a combined Masters and Doctorate degree in American Indian Studies. Excited, I sent for and received a packet for graduate school at UA. One day in early 1997, my youngest son, John, who was 9 at the time, told me, “Mom, if you go to Arizona, can I please go with you?” Overcome with passion for my son, I made my mind up that I wasn’t going to school until all my children were out of the home.

Soon after the radio was on air, I was moved into the Development Office to write grants for Fort Belknap College. One of the grants funded was the “Speaking White Clay” grant and I coined the title of the grant, not knowing, years later, I would stand and testify on the floor of the Montana Legislature, defending a $2.0 million dollar Native American Language bill.

In the summer of 1997, I was asked by political candidates, Joseph McConnell and Ben Speakthunder, to be Secretary Treasurer of the Fort Belknap Community Council, if they were elected. In November 1997, the first order of business President McConnell and Vice-President Ben Speakthunder had was to appoint me as the Secretary-Treasurer; a job that would require monitoring millions of dollars. I kept the graduate school application, to the University of Arizona, in my left desk drawer and, every so often, I would look at the application to remind me of my dream.

In November 2000, I announced to the Tribal Council that I was leaving to accept the position of Dean of Students at Fort Belknap College. Working with students is so rewarding and, thinking about my own struggles, I felt I had a lot of experience that could help students.

My youngest son, John, graduated from high school in 2006 and enrolled at MSU-Northern with a football scholarship. In 2007, I took a hiatus to complete my graduate degree in American Indian Studies. A few years before, I attended “College Horizons” in St. Louis, where I met Dr. Theresa Velez, who offered me a tuition waiver at UA. When getting ready for graduate school, I first worked on getting accepted, making sure I had good recommendations and spending a few hours each week working on fellowships.
I arrived in Tucson, in August 2007, my Jeep hauling a U-Haul, with just two bedroom sets, paintings and a television. The only person I knew was fellow tribal member and lodge sister. My first impression was how big the university was. I got lost a couple times. I realized in graduate school you have no free time, school is your life. Every semester, when classes were difficult, I thought, “what am I doing here, I should be home watching my grandkids.” But, two or three weeks before the semester was completed, I would be elated when I knew I getting good grades and would say to myself, “I love grad school”, as I walked across campus. One day, in the early morning of February 2008, I received one of those dreaded calls. My son had been in an accident and someone died. My life shattered. My first thought was to leave school and return home. I called home and had my family sponsor a “sweat” immediately, as I knew he would also be shattered. On August 11, 2009, my son was sentenced to the state penitentiary. On August 12, 2009, I returned to my job as Dean of Students, with a heavy heart and a conviction that my family was going to get through this. I received my degree, from the University of Arizona, in 2012.

I was recognized for my scholarship at UA and accepted the following: The American Indian College Fund—Vine Deloria Scholarship; the American Indian Graduate Center Scholarship; the Arizona Scholars Fellowship; Betty B. Chastain, Helen Roberts Scholarship; National Indian Education Scholarship; Eva Tulene Watts First Peoples’ Scholarship for Indigenous Americans and awards to attend the Indians for the Southwest Oral History Association Conference and American Indian Language Institute. I received $42,000 my first year and $38,000.00 the second year of graduate school. The title of my thesis was, “Aaniiih Oral History: stories of the way of knowing and being of the Aaniiih Nin.” These are stories of the Aaniiih, beginning with the Creation Story to stories of the Trickster, “Nee ott” and the Social and Religious life of the Aaaniih. Many of these stories have never been published, but were told orally by grandmothers, grandfathers and now her mother, Black Hair. I was invited to the National Oral History Conference, in Denver, CO in 2010, to present some of my stories.

In 2011, at the encouragement of fellow politicians, I ran for House District 32 and won. I was a member of the Montana House of Representatives. In my brief tenure, I sponsored or co-sponsored the following: a bill that provides tuition and fee waivers to tribal members; a bill that establishes a pilot program on the preservation of Montana Native American languages and a bill that names a portion of Highway 2 after slain Blaine County Deputy, Josh Rutherford, a former student at Aaniiih Nakoda College. I am a member of the Montana Native American Caucus and have testified on a variety of bills, including the Violence Against Women bill and against those that negatively impact the rights of voters. I will run again in 2014.

I have remained steadfast in my commitment and dedication. My greatest accomplishments have been shared with friends, family and tribe. I remain traditional and true to the values taught me by my grandmothers.

I am the recipient of numerous awards and acknowledgments. I was recognized as the Montana Indian Educator of the Year (1988), participant of the White House Conference on Indian Education (1992), Keynote speaker for the Fort Belknap College Graduation (1996) and Mistress of Ceremonies, Governor’s 2013 Tribal Relations Training. In 2013, I was appointed, by Governor Bullock, to the Montana Committee on Disabilities. In 2006, I was appointed, by Governor Schweitzer to the Governor’s Best and Brightest Students Advisory Board and have been a Board of Regents of the Haskell Indian Nations University since 1985, as well as past president. I was recently selected as a panel presenter for the 40th American Indian Higher Education Consortium Conference, from Student to Leader, helping to Shape Public Policy.

I have remained steadfast in my commitment and dedication. My greatest accomplishments have been shared with friends, family and tribe. I remain traditional and true to the values taught me by my grandmothers. I continue to live on my ranch in Hays, Montana.

My story to students is, “Along your path you will face many obstacles, some small and some that will shatter part of you. However, you are a Native American. We have survived many tragedies and that is just it, we have survived to help others overcome those obstacles. Get to know people well in the various supportive offices, such as financial aid offices, library and American Indian Studies office: don’t be afraid to ask for help.” You should be the one who makes the difference! ✦
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Thinking about my Dad

by Debbie Reese

I have lots of stories and memories about my dad, George J. Yates. He passed away in June. Which stories shall I tell you? What should I emphasize? Family? Education? His childhood? I’ll start with the audience for AIGC and make my way, as the story takes me.

People reading AIGC publications are involved in higher education and know all about doing a database search to find articles in their area of study. If you Google Scholar search, using “George J. Yates”, you’ll get over 100 results. In fact, he had over 150 research articles published. Not many Native people can point to a record of scholarship that deep! His articles are scientific, published in journals, such as IEEE Transactions on Nuclear Science and Optical Engineering. If you study the results of the search, you’ll see that one of the projects he worked on was high speed imaging, the outcome of which was a series of cameras with his initials GY-11, as part of their patented names. His work was of such significance that he was awarded the Harold E. Edgerton Award, by the International Society of Optical Engineering, and accepted that award at their annual conference in 1994.

Based on the titles of his articles and their content, you might think he had a doctorate in physics or engineering. Certainly, many of his colleagues called him Dr. Yates, but he did not have a doctorate. Here’s where I tell you about him as a husband and father.

When we were growing up, at Nambe Pueblo in the 1960s and 1970s, our dad was always proud of us when we brought home a good report card. Doing well in school and getting an education meant a lot to him. So much, in fact, that many nights, when we kids sat down to do our homework, my dad was doing homework, too. He was helping us with ours, but he was also doing his own.

My dad graduated from Santa Fe Indian School in 1957. He started his undergraduate studies at St. Mikes College in Santa Fe, but soon transferred to UNM in Albuquerque. On May 10th, 1958, he married my mom, Andrea Marie Calvert, of San Juan Pueblo. In addition to being a full-time student, he got a job working in Santa Fe, at the Eberline Instrument Division of Reynolds Electric Company. In 1965, he went to work, as an electronics technician, at Los Alamos National Lab.

I was born in 1959. Twelve years later, the youngest of George and Andrea’s five children was born. During my high school years, particularly, I remember my dad doing his homework for UNM classes. Almost twenty years had passed, since he first started to work on a bachelor’s degree, and he had not given up on completing college. As he bid me goodbye, when I started out at UNM in 1977, he wondered if he and I might possibly graduate at the same time. As luck or fate would have it, we did! In May of 1984, my dad and I participated in the same commencement exercises at the Pit. I received a Bachelor’s of Science in Education and he got a Bachelor’s of University Studies.

Taking courses at UNM was only one part of his relationship with the University. He also taught math and electronics classes, at UNM’s Los Alamos Branch, and worked closely with a small group of people who wanted to establish a program at UNM that would recruit and support Native students who wanted to go into engineering. Titled the ‘Native American Program in the College of Engineering’, it received initial funding from the Sloan Foundation and still exists at UNM, serving Native students.
employees. In the 1990s, he was a driving force in establishing the Nambe Pueblo Development Corporation. Since its incorporation, he served as the President of the Board for 15 years and was still serving on the Board when he passed away in June.

Commitment to family, youth, tribal community and education were at my dad’s core. He accomplished a lot in his lifetime.

When we were kids, my dad spent a lot of time with us. He taught my brother how to hunt and he took all of us camping and on vacations. We had some fierce basketball and football games in our backyard! One winter, after a heavy snow, he hooked a barrel onto the back of his truck and pulled us around the snow-covered fields.

He also used his electronics and design skills to do special things for us. One year, on Halloween, he turned a plain plastic pumpkin into a jack-o-lantern, with blinking light bulb eyes. When the Family Feud TV show was made into a board game, he made an electronic board for us to use when we played at home. We, like the players on TV, had a buzzer so that we could ‘buzz in’ with our answers. Those are some of the special things he did for us, but he did those kinds of things for other kids, too.

He was deeply committed to the cultural and social well-being of young people beyond his own children. His desire to serve others was part of what he did, as a student at Santa Fe Indian School, in the 1950s. My dad was among the group of students at SFIS that established the first All Indian Key Club in the United States (the first Key Club was started in Sacramento in 1925; it is now an international service organization). He was also President of the Student Council and, as the photograph shows, he was “Governor for a Day” for the State of New Mexico. In the 1960s, he established a Boy Scout Troop at Nambe and took his troop camping. Several of the boys looked up to him as a father figure or role model.

While working at Los Alamos National Lab, he served on a committee to recruit and advocate for Native

(Debbie Reese is Pueblo Indian, from Nambe Pueblo in northern New Mexico. The focus of her research is on the ways in which Native Americans are represented in children's books. She is a book reviewer for Horn Book Inc. and Multicultural Review, and has taught children's literature at the University of Illinois, College of Education. Debbie conducts workshops designed to help participants gain awareness about issues such as stereotyping, insider/outsider perspective, and appropriation of stories. Her website, American Indians in Children's Literature, and her book chapters and journal articles are widely used in teacher education and library school classes at universities in the U.S. and Canada. Debbie's daughter, Elizabeth Anne Reese is an AIGC Alumna and attended Yale University. George and his wife, Andrea, traveled by train from Lamy to see Elizabeth receive her diploma. After graduating Yale, Elizabeth received a scholarship to Cambridge University in England, one of the top universities in the world. After completing her degree at Cambridge, Elizabeth started law school. She is currently a first-year law student at Harvard.)
Urban Indian. That’s what I am. It means that, somewhere along the line, my family was displaced from the boundaries of the reservation. It doesn’t faze me; all the United States was Indian Country at one point. I’m home wherever I go, as long as I take my culture with me. My name is Brianna Carrier and I’m Mohawk, Turtle Clan, from Niagara Falls, NY; enrolled in the Six Nations reserve in Ontario, CA. Though I didn’t grow up in the confines of my family’s reservation, I was raised the longhouse way, our traditional way of life. I’m Onkwehonwe and proud.

Just as Native people don’t need to be confined to a reservation, Native history shouldn’t be confined to November. It should be incorporated as an integral part of this country’s history year-round. So, why is it that all of a sudden November rolls around and we remember there are Native people out there and we should probably give thanks? After all, Native women are sexy, right? We have Halloween, with all the Pocahotties and Chief-What’s-His-Faces. We have the great feast and put feathers in our hair and cheer for the Redskins (don’t even get me started) on Thanksgiving and then, the next day, we trample each other for sales because, of course, money means love.

I brace myself during this time of year. Not because I feel honored, but because I feel forgotten. During my time at Syracuse, from 2008-2012, I traveled on internships in American Indian Policy and met brilliant students from tribes all over the country and saw that these stereotypes are rampant.

I don’t want the next generation of Native college students to feel what we are still feeling. I want them growing up immersed and proud in their culture and educating those around them, as my friends and I had to do while I was at SU. I want non-Native people to recognize and respect the sovereignty of Native Nations, but where to begin?

Cue Teach For America.

What’s happening out there in Indian Country? I joined Teach For America (TFA) and became a 2nd Grade teacher, at Chi Chil’Tah Jones Ranch Community School, on the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. Teach For America is dedicated to increasing the force of education leaders who, along with our community partners, Native organizations and governments, are working to advocate for Native education equity. As a Native teacher, I connected with my students, as tribes do across Indian Country, but my students continue to teach me. The camaraderie in my TFA 2012 Corps demonstrates the dedication to culturally-responsive teaching in a non-responsive world.

Native students face challenges of poverty on a daily basis, but they can kick butt in subtraction with regrouping. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 49 percent of Native students graduate from high school and only 11 percent obtain a college degree. That’s an injustice, when you compare those numbers to the national average of 86 percent of all students who earn their high school diploma and 29 percent who do the same at the undergraduate level.

With the gift of a great education, our youngest generation of Native students will be poised to build on
these contributions and lead from inside and outside their nation.

While I started my professional life in education by making a two-year TFA commitment, the experience has a lasting impact. As a member of my school community, I have the privilege of working alongside other teachers, parents and tribal community members, in the pursuit of excellence for our students. I can see the difference I am making in the lives of my students and know the transformational impact they are having on me.

Knowing that we can offer Native students the breadth of opportunity they deserve, I simply can’t walk away from this work. It is more urgent than ever that we give all our children the kind of education that will allow them to reach their full potential. As we look back at Native American Heritage Month and reflect on the importance of fostering the next generation of diverse leaders, I hope you will consider joining me in these efforts. While you’re in school, consider tutoring students from nearby elementary schools. As a teacher right now, I can tell you, this is never unwelcome and you’ll never look back and say that was a waste of time. Get to know the different groups around campus and diversify yourself. And go get some insomnia cookies for me. ✦

(Brianna Carrier is a 2012 Teach For America Corps member teaching in New Mexico and a 2012 Policy Studies and Geography graduate of Syracuse University.)
I n March 2008, during a major operation, my heart stopped. I had a NDE [near death experience]. I met the Creator and was told, ‘You’re not finished. You still have work to do.’”

An AIGC alumnus, Dr. AC Ross (Sichangu and Santee Sioux) asked himself the question, “Why did I return?” When separated, the words in this question stand alone as simple, versatile and common. Yet, when combined, they form something profound.

Why am I here? It is an awakening question; one that begets an individual to ponder his or her own meaning or purpose. The response to “Why am I here?” might change for some, as life experiences drive new motivations and wisdom awakens dormant passions. It is an introspective question demanding an equally thoughtful answer.

For Dr. Ross, the answer to that question began long before his first breath. His mother was a scholarly trailblazer. After high school, she attended Haskell Institute and, in 1930, obtained her two-year teaching degree. She advanced to a bachelor’s/master’s program, completing her graduate degree from Northern Arizona University. Her doctorate was received from Oglala Lakota College.

“She taught for 28 years on Rosebud and Pine Ridge reservations. She was instrumental in getting the Oglala Lakota College started,” Ross proudly recalls. “When she retired from the school system, she became the first woman tribal chair person in modern times. She had four sons and inspired all of us.”

And inspire she did. Each of his three brothers hold advanced degrees. Dr. Ross has a doctorate in Education Administration, from Western Colorado University, a Master of Arts in Education, from Arizona State University, and a Bachelor of Science in Education, from Black Hills State University. “Her influence has permeated down and spread,” he explains.

Dr. Ross spent the majority of his career serving a range of capacities in the education industry and watched as his mother’s influence continued to spread through three generations. “My siblings and I have 12 children in education. We have five teachers, a counselor and one principal. One wrote a grant and started her own program – The Coalition for Healthy and Resilient Youth – to prevent high school dropouts. Another is head of Indian Education at Oglala Sioux Tribe. One of my granddaughters just started teaching school. Three granddaughters are currently seniors in college majoring in education,” Dr. Ross declares. “We are a family of educators.”

“Education is the answer. Don’t give up,” he says. “You’ve got to have some sort of education, no matter what it is in.”

His words are spoken with fortitude and insight. There is depth and appreciation behind his and his family’s accomplishments. As Dr. Ross explains, his path was not so straight and narrow; he had his share of struggles along the way.
“Six weeks ago, I received my 35-year sobriety medal,” he states matter-of-factly. “I’ve been sober for 35 years. I had to battle that, plus going to school, plus working. I used to think I was just having fun for the weekend. But then, one night became all weekend, then it was every weekend and on and on. It was my wife, Dorothy Brave Eagle, who helped me gain sobriety through Lakota spirituality.”

His wife, who is a member of the Oglala tribe, also had a distinguish career. She was recently selected as 2013 Denver Native elder of the year, by the American Indian College Fund, for her contributions to the Denver community. Dorothy has been a counselor, program administrator, the Denver Indian Center Director, Denver Region Eight Contract Specialist, a BIA Administrator Officer in Denver and an Agency Eight Superintendent. In 1992, Dorothy was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease and took medical retirement from the federal government. Dr. Ross states he admires his wife’s perseverance in battling the disease for 21 years.

The women in his life, his mother, his wife, daughters and, now, granddaughters, have provided him with his unique outlook on life. Dr. Ross relates that, according to the Mayan calendar, which is five times more accurate than the calendar we use today, mankind has entered a new age in which the feminine energy will be prominent. Native people are a step ahead, he says, because they come from matrilineal families/societies.

Through his sobriety, Dr. Ross became an author, an international lecturer, a historian, a CEO and an educational leader. His life has taken the course of a U.S. Army paratrooper, an Education Superintendent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a college professor, a principal and a teacher, among other roles. He has written six books. His first book entitled, *Mitakuye Oyasin: We Are All Related*, won a top book award at Europe’s largest book fair in 1992.

*Continued on page 27*
The Accenture American Indian Scholarship program was established, in 2005, to build personal and lasting relationships with students who will are the future leaders in the American Indian communities and could be employed with Accenture. The scholarship seeks the very brightest American Indian and Alaska Native undergraduate students seeking degrees and careers in engineering, computer science, operations management, management, finance, marketing and other business-oriented fields. The Accenture scholarship program is sponsored and funded by Accenture LLP and administered by the American Indian Graduate Center.

Each academic year, Accenture selects students who demonstrate character, personal merit and commitment to the American Indian community locally and/or nationally. Merit is demonstrated through leadership in school, civic and extracurricular activities, academic achievement and motivation to serve and succeed. This year’s selection of the very brightest Accenture scholars includes:

- **Damon Clark (Navajo Nation)** graduated from the Navajo Preparatory School in Farmington, New Mexico. He is attending Harvard University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in economics.
- **Danielle Dockrey (Cherokee Nation)** graduated from Dale High School in Dale, Oklahoma. She is attending Oklahoma State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business.
- **Kylie Keener (Cherokee Nation)** graduated from Locust Grove High School in Locust Grove, Oklahoma. She is attending Oklahoma State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business.
Congratulations to the AIGC 2013-14 Accenture American Indian Scholarship Recipients! ✦

For more information on the Accenture program, please visit aigcs.org.

(About Accenture - Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 275,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world’s most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US$28.6 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2013. Its home page is www.accenture.com.)

• Rebekah Lester (Osage Nation) graduated from Mount Sinai High School in Mount Sinai, New York. She is attending Wake Forest University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business.

• Nolan Nez (Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation) graduated from Nixyaawii Community School in Pendleton, Oregon. He is attending Oregon State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering.

• Dianne Numkena (Hopi Tribe) graduated from Xavier College Preparatory High School in Phoenix, Arizona. She is attending Arizona State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering.

• Karissa Trebizo (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians) attended Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She transferred to Oregon Institute of Technology to pursue a bachelor’s degree in renewable energy engineering.

Stories of AIGC Alumni through Time

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Now, in his current role as a Lakota elder and lecturer, Dr. Ross takes his message to smaller groups around the country. His most recent passion is astronomy. “I have just finished a lecture, which was put on a DVD entitled, ‘American Indian Star Connections.’ I really feel the future is in the stars,” he says. “There are so many opportunities in astronomy – astrobiology, astrophysics, astrophysics. These areas are our future.

An older man now, with long grey hair swept back behind his shoulders, Dr. Ross is focused on the future. Through his voice – wavering with both time and experience – he explains that the future of all children is what is most important. Not surprisingly, Dr. Ross makes education the center of his advice for young people today. “Education is the answer. Don’t give up,” he says. “You’ve got to have some sort of education, no matter what it is.”

Why am I here? For Dr. Ross, that question might best be answered by his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and the many hundreds of past students he has influenced through his passion for education. Case in point: “One of my great-grandsons, who is 12 years old, said to me, ‘Grandpa, when I grow up, I want to be a teacher.’ ✦
What started as an idea to bring friends and colleagues together over a meal of traditional American Indian and Alaska Native foods from across America, amounted to much more than I could have ever hoped.

As a requirement to receive my Masters of Public Health and Masters of Social Work, from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis, I acquired an internship with the Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies, in May, 2013. The Buder Center, originally founded to provide scholarships for American Indians, has grown into a renowned organization developing future leaders who will serve in Indian Country.

Earlier in the year, the Director of the Buder Center, Dr. Molly Tovar, was approached by Risa Zwerling, the wife of the Chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis. She charged Dr. Tovar with the task of holding a traditional American Indian and Alaska Native meal for the campus to enjoy. Dr. Tovar thought this the perfect opportunity for the interns, Jonelle Battise (Alabama-Choushatta), Joe Masters (Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians) and me to gain practical experience in program planning and implementation.

Background research was gathered through literature reviews, informal informational interviews and evaluations of existing programs. While this piece of program planning is often overlooked, it was necessary in order to demonstrate the need for the program and gain support from potential collaborators.

With seemingly perfect timing, the Mighty Mississippians, a team of individuals from Christner Inc., an architectural firm in St. Louis, won a two-year lot lease through the Sustainable Land Lab competition. Their proposal featured an approach rooted in St. Louis history, to re-imagine the vacant lot in Old North St. Louis as an asset for sustainability. The Mighty Mississippians sought cultural assistance from the Buder Center and, in return, offered their traditional crops for use throughout the program.

I will be able to make a difference in Indian Country. The painstaking group projects and sleepless nights of my graduate school career suddenly seemed meaningful.

In addition to collaboration with the Mighty Mississippians, we were extremely fortunate to receive unwavering support from members of Bon Appetit, Washington University’s dining services. Seeing the
value in a program that brought awareness of the Native people and foods of this country, they offered to assist in the programming. Their generous donation allowed us to invite Executive Chef of Sunrise Park Resort and founder of the Native American Culinary Association, Nephi Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo), to not only assist with menu development, but to transport him to St. Louis.

With the expansion of the program, from a meal of recipes determined by the students, to a multi-day event with a prestigious guest list, there was no time to waste. The top priority of the program was to ensure it remained traditional with American Indian culture. We received blessings from our Osage Elder, Jim Duncan, throughout the process. He shared his vast knowledge on the traditional ways of the Osage peoples and guided the Mighty Mississippians efforts. Additionally, Lakota artist, Tina Sparks, brought culturally appropriate imagery to our marketing materials, with her painting “Albuquerque Soil and Sky”.

After six months of planning, it was finally the weekend of the event. It all came together on Sunday, November 4, 2013, as Chef Craig shared his experiences of being a Native chef with over 80 students, faculty, staff and community members. He discussed how he decolonizes the culinary history of the Americas in an effort to strengthen shared resiliency, while demonstrating his cooking techniques at a free event, open to the public. Additionally, Chef Craig provided culinary consultation to Bon Appetit chefs, while preparing a multi-course meal for select honorary guests.

The outcome of the Sunday demonstration and Monday dinner exceeded our expectations. There were obvious benefits for the attendees, but I never expected to gain so much, personally, from Chef Nephi Craig.

In all, Chef Craig was in St. Louis for about three and a half days. Seemingly endless, (not accustomed to the chef lifestyle of having dinner at 10 pm) each day ended in physical exhaustion; however, I was mentally rejuvenated. I picked Nephi’s brain at every opportunity and connect-ed his drive and rationale, for what he does, to mine. Listening to Chef Craig’s experiences and future goals gave me affirmation that I will be able to make a difference in Indian Country. The painstaking group projects and sleepless nights of my graduate school career suddenly seemed meaningful.

What began as an idea to bring friends and colleagues together, over a meal of traditional American Indian and Alaska Native foods from across America, amounted to a life-changing experience for which I am forever grateful.

(Jamie Ishcomer is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and attends George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University in St. Louis. She is a MPH, MSW Candidate, December, 2013)
After growing up being in trouble myself, I wanted to help others who have been in similar scenarios as I have. More often than not, the help I received was not from programs, court mandated or not, rather it was mainly from likeminded people who offered the most assistance. In the fall of 2010, I was awarded the Ronald E. McNair scholarship. From there, I teamed up with Professor Timothy Hilton and we began working on a project, of Native American Indians transitioning to community life after leaving prison.

The research was conducted on Native Americans transitioning from prison to communities, both on and off reservations, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (U.P.). The goal of this research is to understand subjective experiences with reintegration, identify common barriers and challenges associated with the return to community life and uncover processes associated with successful and unsuccessful reintegration, while identifying unique opportunities and challenges for Native American ex-offenders. Data suggests Native American communities and families often ease the transition from prison to civilian life. Ex-offenders often reported feeling reassurance through their tribal membership, as they view this status as a pathway to securing housing, employment, healthcare and other services. Tribal affiliation, many reported, also gives them a sense of belonging and general comfort.

However, those returning to reservations often face substantial barriers to housing, employment and education, in large part due to the tribes’ relationships with federal and state agencies that restrict tribal sovereignty and abilities to help members returning from prison. As a result of the Major Crimes Act, many Native American offenders serve sentences in federal prisons, far from their families, which can complicate transitions back to their home communities. In addition, many Native American ex-offenders are hampered by racism, geographic isolation and increasing competition for jobs.

Women with children related that they secured housing and explained that “living on the rez” had advantages and disadvantages. Close access to family and friends was seen as a major advantage, as it allowed them to secure childcare more easily, as well as other social supports. Access to jobs was seen as a major disadvantage, as the reservations on which these women lived were geographically and economically isolated. When asked whether they would choose to be on the reservation, if they had a choice to live elsewhere, both of these women said they would, because of the importance of tribal resources, both formal services, like health care and housing, and informal social supports.

Increasingly, tribal jobs that are available to ex-offenders are low-wage, less than full-time and do not
offer health benefits other than tribal healthcare. The tribe, several explained, was viewed much like a family and even the act of applying for a tribal job was fraught with emotion. One participant described the process of applying for tribal jobs and, ultimately, successfully landing a position:

‘When I applied for positions, the application itself was a resurfacing of the wounds. You could pay your debt to society, yet they still judge you for it. I was very lucky that the tribe was willing to overlook [his crime]...As you know with a tribe, we are all related, it’s more of a family than a business.’

While families were always described as important, family members were not always able to support participants, especially during incarceration. Seventy-five percent (75%) had served federal time, as opposed to state sentences and therefore, spent several years hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of miles from home. All explained that the only family contact they had, during their sentences, were emails, letters and phone calls, because their families lacked the financial resources to visit.

In some cases, incarceration meant losing custody of children. When possible, Native American children in CPS are placed with other Native Americans, as per the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and benefitted from ICWA during their incarceration; and in some cases, placed with extended family members. Placement with Native American families is not always possible, however. One woman explained her frustration with both losing custody of her daughter, after her arrest, and her fear that her daughter will lose her cultural identity before they are reunited:

‘I had not seen anyone from my family for almost 6 years and it was pretty hard. Two of my kids are currently with family, one is incarcerated and my oldest is in a Caucasian home, a white home. She is off the reservation. I don’t like it, it takes away from the way that we live, they don’t have stuff for her the we have here and it’s going to be a different transition for her coming back (to the reservation). She still goes to pow wow’s and ceremonies, but she doesn’t ask questions when it’s over because she just goes right back to that house.’

All participants listed tribal membership as the single most important factor in their community reintegration. One ex-offender described his “tribal number” or the identification number on tribal membership cards as his “greatest asset”. Loss of community, several participants explained, was the most difficult part of being in prison. All participants reported having lived on a reservation, prior to their imprisonment and all explained that help from the tribe, in the form of access to housing, jobs and employment, were critical resources.

Being a tribal member gave many participants a sense that there was help available, no matter what difficulties they faced. One participant had been prevented from returning to his reservation after this prison ban-

Being a tribal member gave many participants a sense that there was help available, no matter what difficulties they faced.
being Native American was not too cool and now, without that spirituality and the family of the tribe I wouldn’t have pride. I do now...All I need in my life is my family and my people. A lot of times the courts mandate you to attend AA or other programs, which don’t fit everybody. Some of the programs meant nothing to me. The spirituality just felt right, you know. I started going to sweats, going to ceremonies and started being proud of being Native American. That spirituality is every day. I was lucky to have that choice where I did not have to attend mandated programs that are a lot more rigid with the steps... to go back into society, to be a productive person. For Native people, we understand it that this way of life is here for you when you are ready.’

Policies like the Major Crimes Act, HUD housing restrictions and parole conditions, restricting parolees from fraternizing with other ex-felons, create disadvantages for Native American parolees. In addition to creating disadvantages at an individual level, these policies also limit tribal sovereignty and their ability for self-determination by placing severe limits on tribes’ abilities to help members returning to their communities. Whereas non-Natives leaving prison typically return to their families and home communities, many Native Americans often do so at great risk to themselves, their families and their tribes.

Federal, state and tribal governments should critically evaluate these policies and remove those that create systematic disadvantages for Native Americans. If Native Americans are subject to the provisions of the Major Crimes Act and receive federal sentences, for crimes in which others would receive a sentence in a state prison, efforts should be made to allow prisoners to serve time closer to family, in the nearest federal prisons. Tribal and criminal justice systems resources should be devoted to helping families remain connected to members serving prison sentences, especially those in prisons far from home. Requirements that restrict parolees from associating with other ex-felons should be removed on reservations, to allow Native American parolees to live fully as tribal members, participating in tribal events and mentoring others facing similar difficulties.

Federal, state and tribal government agencies should collaborate in creating programs for returning parolees, to address their housing, employment, education and other service needs. Developing housing on reservations, for those
exciting prison, should be created to house those without other housing resources. Programs should also be created to help those in prison maintain contact with family and other tribal members during incarceration. This will help make the transition home an easier one post-release. Additional resources should be created for families with members serving prison sentences, to allow children to remain with other family members or, at least, remain in the tribe. This may require outreach to create more foster care options within tribes. Whatever programs are created to assist Native Americans transitioning from prisons to communities, services should respect Native American cultures and build on, rather than compromise, traditional methods of helping by tribes and families. Policies that prevent families from taking in other family members, after being released from prison, and restrict ex-felons, who successfully reintegrated into tribal communities, from mentoring new parolees should be reconsidered. These policies not only make community reintegration difficult, they also undermine traditional values and basic tribal sovereignty.

Finally, reentry programs should be designed to foster reintegration, in every sense of the word. Existing programs designed around reducing recidivism and promoting employment and housing stability are valuable, but they do not fully reflect communities’ nor parolees’ interests and values. The concept of reintegration encompasses more than just having formal employment and an official residence and staying out of prison. It also includes reestablishing meaningful roles within communities and families, contributing to community and family life and becoming immersed in cultural and spiritual aspects of an area. For many Native Americans, reintegration is as much, or more, about living as a member of a tribe, giving to others in the community and engaging in cultural and spiritual activities, than having formal employment and an official residence.

(Joseph S. Masters was born in Munising, Michigan and is a member of the Sault Ste. Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians. He has a 14-year old daughter named Liliana Loonsfoot Masters. In 2009, Joe returned to school, at Northern Michigan University, and graduated with his BSW, with a minor cluster in Human Behavior and American Indian Studies. During that time, he was the recipient of the Ronald E. McNair Scholarship. Joe partnered with Dr. Timothy Hilton and conducted research on American Indians returning to the reservations after being in prison. Joe has been a Kathryn M. Buder scholar, at the George Warren Brown School of Social work, since fall 2012. Joe’s concentration is Mental Health and Administration. He is currently conducting is concentration practicum, at the Buder Center, under Dr. Tovar, on Hunting, Fishing and Gathering and also on the Two Spirits Project.

New AIGC-Chocotaw Scholarship
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before serious symptoms arise from untreated or currently undetected disease.

Mr. Sawyer Stone, like many graduate students, has a family with him in Ruston. This award will help alleviate some of the common stresses associated with full-time education and other financial obligations. AIGC was privileged to meet and award Mr. Stone with a check and certificate, at the Annual Choctaw Scholarship Advisement Program’s Ivy League and Friends event, in Durant, Oklahoma, on November 11, 2013. Mr. Stone was accompanied by his parents and grandparents, who beamed with pride, as they watched him accept the award in front of many dignitaries from the Choctaw Nation, his fellow students, representatives from colleges and universities across the country and tribal royalty.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Scholarship Advisement Program was created in late 2006 to increase college graduation rates among Choctaw students. SAP now serves over 10,000 Choctaw students nationwide, ranging from high school through graduate school. Services include college counseling, admission test preparation and fee payment, summer programs, college fairs, peer mentoring, competitive scholarships and much more.

For more information about SAP please visit www.choctawnation-sap.com.

AIGC would like to thank the Choctaw Nation SAP for this opportunity and for additional funding to investigate how to similarly impact Law and Master’s students, as well as another Ph.D. student, in 2014.

(Melvin Monette, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, is the Director of Graduate and Special Programs at AIGC)
The Keys to Success: Grit and the Growth Mindset

by Nichole Prescott

There is a wealth of information out there on college access—how to write winning essays, scholarship databases, advice on common applications, never-ending (yet valuable) advice on FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)—but much of the current programming is designed to serve only the logistics of college-going. There is less focus in the general public discourse, however, on the soft skills students build that help to ensure college persistence. Success should not be defined by college matriculation. Success should be defined by college graduation. The key to that kind of success, real college success, is the development of grit and a growth mindset.

Our kids (they are OUR kids in a communal sense) face many obstacles graduating high school, entering into and, ultimately, graduating from college. So much of the solution to the problems plaguing educational attainment of Native students is, or at least feels, beyond our direct control, but there is much we can do every day to improve the chances of our kids’ and students’ educational success. The school districts, state and federal governments must do their part to remove barriers to quality education and find effective ways to holistically support our Native students. Though we must advocate for positive change at the macro-levels, we also have a unique opportunity at the micro-level to infuse every day with positive change for our kids. We must not overlook the role we can play in building strong foundations, so that our students can thrive when opportunities are presented and persist even in the face of obstacles. These lessons of grit and the growth mindset begin at home. They should flow seamlessly into the classroom and then onto the college campus.

Grit is a word that often conjures up notions of John Wayne, the down-on-his-luck guy with a heart of gold, pulling himself up by his bootstraps to start anew in his quest of the American Dream. A man who does it all on his own, with no help from others—he doesn’t need it. He finds his strength somewhere deep inside, where it laid in wait to be released. I believe this type of grit rarely exists. For most of us, grit needs to be midwifed into existence. The seeds need to be planted, with the young plant tended and nurtured until it gains a solid, autonomous existence.

Grit is, simply put, finishing what you begin and working hard, even after experiencing failure. The idea is that you learn from your “failures” and become better, wiser and more resilient. These lessons are not always immediately obvious to the student. Sometimes students need support to withstand the setback and then help understanding the lesson that was nestled inside. This goes for setbacks in life, but also in a school setting.

The growth mindset, a concept developed by Stanford psychologist, Carol Dweck, is a powerful weapon in our educational arsenal. Dweck reminds us that the mind is a muscle. That muscle can be built and

Nichole Prescott
strengthened, when we work hard at it. A growth mindset means that you believe your abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Conversely, a fixed mindset means that you believe your basic qualities, like your intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. You are either born with it or you aren’t. Results from her studies indicate, if a student has a fixed mindset, they usually have a desire to look smart to others and, therefore, have a tendency to avoid learning challenges where they might make mistakes. Students with a fixed mindset may also try to hide mistakes, rather than correct them, and believe that needing to apply themselves to a task means that they are dumb. Fixed mindset students tend not to deal well with setbacks and often give up in the face of obstacles. Students with a growth mindset tend to care less about how smart they look to others and, instead, care more about the learning itself. They believe that effort is a positive and exciting thing that increases their intelligence. These students tend to try hard in the face of frustration and bounce back from failure; learning lessons that help them improve.

Grit is closely tied to the growth mindset. If you believe intelligence and talent are fixed, then you will never endeavor to persist in your efforts to improve. Indeed, you may never even try.

Michael Jordan is a perfect example of the importance and intersection of grit and a growth mindset. Jordan was cut from the varsity basketball team his sophomore year of high school, because he was not “good enough”. Angry and embarrassed, he began to get up early each morning to practice with the junior varsity coach. He believed that if he just worked hard and persisted (grit), he would get better (growth mindset). Eventually, he not only made the varsity team, but became one of the most popular athletes in the world. Michael Jordan sums it up best, “I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions, I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Let’s look at someone a little closer to home—Jim Thorpe (Sac and Fox). Thorpe did not become America’s greatest athlete and win Olympic gold medals in the decathlon and the pentathlon, by talent alone. He became a legendary athlete because he devoted his life to practicing and perfecting his art. Does this mean that if I put in as many hours of diligent practice as Thorpe, that I could also become a Jim Thorpe? Well, no, that is highly doubtful. Talent does have a role to play, in becoming the absolute best at something, but I would become a darn fine athlete in my own right.

Wilma Mankiller is another example, outside the world of sports. Mankiller overcame enormous personal and political obstacles to become the first female chief of the Cherokee Tribe. Grit doesn’t have to be about winning or being the absolute best in the world. It also doesn’t mean becoming chief. It’s about being the best you can be, by working hard to achieve your goals. This includes knowing what resources you have at your disposal and, at times, asking for help. Even Michael Jordan needed help to bring out the talent he had within and he did it through working hard and never giving up.

Grit and the growth mindset are qualities I think Native America has in abundance, yet we tend not to operationalize them in certain areas. For example, the fact that we are still around in recognizable communal units (whether federally-recognized or not), we still speak our languages or have begun language revitalization programs, is proof that we have grit. Our history was one fraught with challenges that we’ve had to work through and, often, overcome. Yet, we still struggle in many areas of life; because we struggle does not mean that we have lost. It means we need to survey the landscape, take another track and try again. Grit and Growth Mindset.

We must learn from what didn’t work. Using the previous examples, a student-athlete can learn that hard work and dedication on the court has allowed them to succeed in a sport and take from this the belief that they are a hard worker, who has the ability to succeed in school when they apply the same effort. That student has to believe they can get better, though. In other words, they must employ grit (their hard work) and the growth mindset (belief they can become better). One way to do this is to praise effort, not intelligence. Praise process, not outcome.

We must not overlook the role we can play in building strong foundations, so that our students can thrive when opportunities are presented and persist even in the face of obstacles.

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by Jennifer Jones

My name is Jennifer Jones and I am a college freshman at Barrett the Honors College in Arizona State University, studying Mechanical Engineering. I have lived in Tempe, Arizona the majority of my life but my cultural roots are based on the reservation north of Flagstaff, AZ (i.e. Cameron, Gray Mountain) and Chinle, Arizona. Residing in the metropolitan area of Phoenix, I have been given multiple academic opportunities.

I began my journey to higher education the summer of 2009 when I started the Hoop of Learning Program. I was introduced to Hoop by a family friend who told me I could start taking community college courses before I enter high school. It was that summer I began attending Chandler-Gilbert Community College and continued every fall, spring, and summer, taking classes on Saturdays or during the week after finishing the day at Marcos de Niza High School. I started meeting friends and professors who strengthen my desire to go beyond the standards set for high school students. As a result, I graduated not only from Marcos de Niza High School last May but also from Chandler-Gilbert Community College with my Associates in Arts and a grand total of 65 credits completed.

Looking back at the last four years, I experienced a lot of challenges but I began developing an understanding of the world beyond high school. In a college environment I developed my speaking skills, something that was a challenge before. A lot of American Indian students have difficulty speaking up, but in the Hoop of Learning Program that was something students had to overcome to be successful. Being a student from a minority group, I discovered I had the power to share my culture with other student nearly twice my age. With this, I began speaking openly in my classes sharing my cultural experiences and the impact of living in the city verses on the reservation. I devoted myself to making an impact by presenting the American Indian story.

After my time as a student with the Maricopa Community Colleges, I was offered an internship opportunity through the Arizona Dream Builder Foundation, where they placed me with the Maricopa Community College’s District Office. It was during this internship I worked with the head director of the American Indian Outreach Programs, Hoop being one of them. I had an amazing experience sharing my opinions but also to give back to the program that gave me the past wonderful years. Upon my departure from the District I applied to a job posting with South Mountain Community College as a tutor. And as a result, I am currently working with the TRiO Program, tutoring at two high schools. I have enjoyed my time with the students and great to be able to help students who are driven like I am for a higher education defying the limits.

This past semester, I was getting back into the college studying habits once again, but also having to work was a new experience as well. Overall completing this semester has been great. I got to live in the Barrett Honors dorms where I made new friendships. Additionally, I got involved

I advise high school students to never give up.
It has been an excellent and exciting start to my university beginnings and it is all thanks to Rose Bogus and the American Indian Graduate Center. I could not have done it without the opportunity to apply and accept such a scholarship. I have great plans coming up, and this scholarship will help make my university experience worth wild.

I advise high school students to never give up. Before I was notified of my Rose Bogus Scholarship I was looking for money anywhere I could find it. The internship offer was something I took up immediately because I was getting experience and money to put towards my finances for school. I kept applying to scholarships even the small ones were something that could help in anyway. But in the end, everything paid off and now I am at Arizona State University paying only with scholarships.

Scholarships
$8,000 per year Arizona State University’s Provost Scholarship
$7,500 per year Navajo Nation’s Chief Manuelito Scholarship
$110,000 from AIGC Rose Bogus Scholarship Fund

The Keys to Success
Continued from page 35

These two highly predictive character traits cultivated in our children will help them be successful in education and in life. If these two related character traits take root, the other highly predictive character traits like self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and social intelligence will grow alongside them. Many parents and educators alike try to instill persistence (grit) into kids by using external factors (financial rewards, i.e. salary differences between high school diploma and a BA). Research shows, however, that extrinsic rewards alone will not result in college success and can actually make kids less likely to succeed in the long term. Internal motivating factors are what lead to persistence. High school students, who are intrinsically motivated for college and career, will have longer lasting, more meaningful success in those areas.

The sense of confidence and competence that kids derive, from their success in one area, can be transferred to new tasks, giving them the persistence to develop the skills needed to succeed. They first have to stick with it and overcome all obstacles through hard work. Then, they have to believe they have the ability, talent and intelligence to become better. Grit and Growth Mindset. Adults—parents in particular—play an important role in helping kids draw those connections. Doing so may prompt kids to take healthy risks, move beyond their comfort zone or challenge themselves in an unfamiliar arena.

Grit and the growth mindset are characteristics that are already embedded in the fabric of Native cultures. We persist. We adapt. We can still honor our fundamental values and culture, even as we adapt to and embrace our changing landscape. We show grit and the growth mindset with our very continued tribal and cultural existence. Now, we must intentionally approach our kids’ journey to and through college, with the same level of persistence and resilience and with a firm belief that they are capable of and will achieve a college diploma.

If you would like more information on grit and the growth mindset or if you have other college related questions, please contact Nichole at nichole@prescottEDstrategies.com.

See also:
Angela Duckworth. Duckworth Lab. https://sites.sas.upenn.edu/duckworth

(Nichole S. Prescott is a citizen of the Miami Nation of Oklahoma and is honored to serve as the Director of the Miami Women’s Council. She has over 15 years of professional experience in education, specializing in college access and persistence for at-risk populations.)
The American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) recently elected officers and new board members. Grayson Noley (Choctaw Nation), will serve as Board President; Melanie Patten Fritzsche (Laguna Pueblo), as Vice President and Rose Graham (Navajo), as Secretary and Treasurer. Board members include Michael Bird (Kewa and Ohkay Owingeh Pueblos) and Danna R. Jackson, Esq. (Confederated Tribes of Salish and Kootenai). Walter Lamar (Blackfeet) and Joel Frank (Seminole Tribe of Florida) are new board members.

Grayson Noley is Professor Emeritus of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Oklahoma. He holds a master’s and doctorate degree in education from Pennsylvania State University and a bachelor’s degree from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. He has authored more than two-dozen journal articles and book chapters and served for 13 years as Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at University of Oklahoma.

Melanie Fritzsche is a staff attorney with the American Indian Law Center. Formerly, she was an Assistant Attorney General for the New Mexico Attorney General’s Office in the Civil Division and an Attorney-Advisor for the Solicitor’s Office of the Department of the Interior. She received her Bachelor of Arts in history and government from Adams State College and a J.D., with a Certificate in Indian Law and Natural Resources, from the University of New Mexico School of Law.

Rose Graham is the Director of the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance in Window Rock, AZ, which serves more than 10,000 Navajo students pursuing post-secondary education. Prior to this, Graham worked with the Navajo Nation Council for nine years as Legislative Services Director, Legislative Advisory and Interpreter. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in humanities from Fort Lewis College.

Michael Bird has over 25 years of public health experience in the areas of medical social work, substance abuse prevention, health promotion and disease prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, behavioral health and health care administration. For 20 years, Mr. Bird was with the United States Public Health Service (USPHS), Indian Health Service (IHS). Mr. Bird has previously served with ValueOptions-New Mexico (VONM), National Native American AIDS Prevention Center (NNAAPC), American Public Health Association (APHA), New Mexico Public Health Association (NMPHA) and was a fellow in the USPHS Primary Care Policy Fellowship. Mr. Bird earned his Master's in Social Work (M.S.W.) from the University of Utah and Master's in Public Health (M.P.H.) at the University of California, Berkeley.
Danna Jackson is the Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Montana. She also serves as a Visiting Professor to the University of Montana Indian Law Summer Program, teaching Indian Gaming, Contemporary Issues in Indian Policy and Indian Education Law. Prior to Danna’s employment with her current firm, she served as Legislative Assistant to Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) and advised the Senator on all legislative issues relevant to the Indian Affairs and Judiciary committees. Danna has also worked with the National Indian Gaming Commission, serving as advisor/attorney to the Commission regarding all Indian gaming issues. Ms. Jackson received her J.D., from the University of Montana in 1996, and is a member of the bar in both Montana and Washington, DC.

Walter Lamar currently serves as President and CEO of Lamar Associates, a Native American-owned consulting and professional services company specializing in law enforcement, security and emergency preparedness. Prior to starting his own business, Lamar had a 25-year career as a Special Agent of the FBI, a Deputy Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Law Enforcement and a Senior Advisor to the Department of the Interior’s Office of Law Enforcement and Security. His wife, Dr. Cynthia Chavez Lamar (San Felipe Pueblo) is an AIGC alumna.

Joel Frank is the Director of Grants and Government Relations with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. He is a founding member and former President of the National Indian Gaming Association and volunteers his time as an economic development adviser for the National Center for Tribal Economic Development. He also serves on the board of the AMERIND Risk Management Corporation.

“The American Indian Graduate Center is proud to have a distinguished, diverse and dynamic group of board leaders to guide our organization,” said Sam Deloria, Director of AIGC. “As a national organization, we represent American Indians and Alaska Natives with a range of interests and study areas. All of the AIGC Board Members offer a tremendous value to AIGC through their decades of collective experience.”

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The AIGC Annual Report

Now available on the AIGC Website!

aigcs.org
Strong, Brave and Intelligent

by Robbie Paul

My name is Robbie Paul. I was born and raised on the Nez Perce Reservation in Craigmont, Idaho. I am a wife, mother, grandmother and auntie. My life’s journey has been full, challenging and rewarding. I was the 4th of 5 children and lived with my family on a ranch on the Camas Prairie. My mother was Maxine S. Paul, a non-Native of Irish, English and German descent, and my father was Titus J. Paul, a full-blooded Nez Perce. Their mixed race marriage, for that time period, was unusual. They met in 1929, married in 1931 and remained married for 71 years.

I always knew I was Nez Perce. I also thought that the Nez Perce were the only Indians until, one day in school, the teacher was talking about other tribes. I was so surprised by this that I can remember going home that night and asking father, "Dad how come you didn’t tell me there were other Indian tribes?" He just shrugged his shoulders and said, "I knew you would figure it out someday."

My parents always encouraged me to pursue higher education. My mother, at the age of 50, started college the same year that I did and graduated the day before I did. My father attended Chilocco Indian Boarding School, from 1922 -1927. His class was the first to have a four-year high school curriculum. Both my parents had the attitude that we are always learning. No matter how old you are, there are opportunities to learn. The journey was not always easy; I did have to overcome imposed stereotypes. I had an elementary teacher tell me I was a dumb Indian and that message stuck with me for a long time. Even though I had parents tell me to be proud of who I was and do the best I could, that teacher sent a powerful message, which caused me to not believe in myself. Even though I graduated from high school with a 3.0 GPA, I was still hearing the message that I was a dumb Indian.

I began my higher education journey at the University of Idaho and it was a challenging time for me. I changed my mind several times, enjoyed my independence but, because I enjoyed it too much, I was put on academic probation after failing two semesters. I had to plead my case before the Provost and was readmitted. In essence, I had to grow up and take personal responsibility for showing up to class, turning in homework and learning how to study. I did manage to graduate from the University of Idaho, with a B.S. degree in Home Economics in Clothing, Textiles and Design, but with a 2.0 GPA. I was still hearing the message that I was a dumb Indian.

Scholarships received during my educational career included my tribes Nez Perce Tribal Scholarship, which I received for five years while obtaining my BS degree.

In addition to funding from the American Indian Graduate Center, I also received an Eastern Washington University Native American Scholarship. These aided me in obtaining my goal of a Master’s. In addition, I took out financial aid loans and received help from my parents. I was a single mother, worked full-time and went to school full-time.

For my doctoral program, I received some scholarship aid from the Nez Perce Tribe, Graduate Assistantships and financial aid. I did apply to the American Indian Graduate Center for a scholarship, but was turned down, because I did not demonstrate significant financial need. I was working, at that time, for Washington State University College of Nursing, as the Native American Coordinator for Recruitment and Retention. It took me 7 years to complete my Doctoral program. During that time there were four close family members who died: my youngest brother, my mother, my father and my oldest nephew. Each time, I took a semester off to help with family rituals and mourning.
I went through the life-changing experience of a divorce. I knew I needed to go back to college and obtain a new career that would provide for my family and my future. I was admitted, with conditions of bringing up my GPA with some undergrad course work, to get into the Master's Program at EWU.

My father knew I was struggling and took me for a walk, which we used to do when I was a young child. On this walk, I began to listen again to my father's wisdom. He would never lecture me, but would tell stories. On this walk, he began telling me about the wild rose bush, how spiritual and cleansing it is, then talked of the ponderosa pine trees, saying they have been here thousands of years, their roots go down deep, they are strong, much like out people, the Ni Mii Puu. He continued to tell of other uses of plants and animals and then said, "I used to walk on the streets of Lewiston, Idaho, and I would see signs that said NO INDIANS or DOGS ALLOWED."

Then my father went on to describe more of the powers of the plants and animals. I knew my father would eventually come back to the rest of his story and, sure enough, he did. He said, "I thought I was just as good as they were and walked on by." As we returned to the house from our walk, there was one more lesson I needed to learn. My father said to me "Brr Bear (only my father can call me this), what is your creation story"? I thought and said, "Well, Father, you tell me." He gave me a hand gesture of shooing me away, which means I needed to go find it for myself. I obeyed and went to look for the Nez Perce Creation story I had heard as a small child and did know that our tribe has produced a book of Ni Mii Puu Legends. I found the book and the story called, "Coyote and the Monster of Kamiah." I brought the book back to Dad and he said, "Now go and learn the story here" (he was pointing to my heart). I went to learn the story. I have since come to realize that my father was teaching me a lesson I should have learned a long time ago, but had not learned. Within the story, there are many lessons to be learned and father always said that no matter how many times you hear a story there is always a lesson to be learned. I learned the story of how Coyote kills the Monster of Kamiah and, after Coyote has slain the Monster, he says, "Come let us cut up the monster and fling to the four directions and, where a body part lands, a new nation shall be born. As he was flinging the body parts, his friend, Fox, came to Coyote and said, "Coyote you have given everything away and forgotten here." Coyote answered, "Well, why didn’t you tell me this before? Very well then, bring me some water to wash my hands." Then Coyote washes his hands and sprinkles the bloody water around saying, "You may be small, but you will be STRONG, BRAVE and INTELLIGENT, for I give you the Heart. Thus, the Ni Mii Puu Nation was born in Kamiah, Idaho.

As I came to this part of the story, I realized, for the first time, I was hearing "I am Nez Perce, I am INTELLIGENT", I am not a dumb Indian. With this lesson learned, I was able to enter my Master’s program and, during my first semester, I obtained a 3.7 GPA. I had let go of the self-imposed stereotype. The other lesson I learned, from my walk with my father, was I do not have to be what others perceive me to be. Stereotypes are projected by others and are not a reflection of who we are as Native American people. As you can tell, I had a very wise father and there are many more lessons I have learned and am continuing to learn from him. His example of living life and being true to self has helped me in my journey of life.

The program I choose to study for my master’s program was psychology. As I was healing from my divorce, I realized I was also dealing with unresolved grief in my Native family. The issues of unresolved grief in my Native family history were a calling, from both within me and from my ancestors, to begin to look at how to heal the grief and understand history. The course work was both healing and challenging.

In 2000, I entered the Gonzaga University Leadership Studies doctoral program and, after 7 years, was finally able to graduate in May of 2007. I chose Gonzaga University because of their leadership program, which was designed to be interdisciplinary. This allowed me to incorporate my psychology background and continue to develop the healing journey of telling the family story. The program also allowed me to further research the concept of historical trauma and the effects this can have over several generations. Also, due to my doctoral research on five generations of Ni Mii Puu leaders, I was invited to submit a proposal for a conference sponsored by the University of Cape Town, titled, "Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness: Reflecting on the Ten Year Anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Honoring Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s 75th Birthday". I had the honor of having a private audience with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and heard him give the opening address to the conference.

During my time at Eastern Washington University (EWU), I was hired, through a grant, to work with teens from seven rural eastern Washington high schools, where I helped develop summer coursework and leadership skills, which aided the students in becoming successful, both academically and socially. This also prepared Continued on page 48
I never imagined I would work so hard picking up wildlife poop and talking to people in my community about how they feel about wildlife, nor did I suspect the journey to, and completion of, these events would be some of the most rewarding and meaningful achievements of my life. Several years ago, a few of my loved ones gathered for dinner and offered prayers, as I contemplated applying to a PhD program. I can still see the prayer root smoke, upon the swirl of a feather, whisking up from the abalone shell, as those prayers made their way to Creator. Frightened and excited, I asked the Yurok Tribal Council, Natural Resources Committee and Culture Committee, if they would support my endeavor to work with the Yurok Tribe for my PhD. My heart was touched when they all did. Then it was time to gear up and get to it. I applied to The University of Arizona and was accepted as a UA/Sloan Indigenous Graduate Fellow. The fellowship provides tuition and a stipend to Native American graduate students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields; I am majoring in Natural Resources Studies and minoring in American Indian Studies.

Upon entering my PhD program, I knew that I wanted to work with the Yurok Tribe and wildlife. Through an American Indian Studies course entitled, “Native Communities and the Environment”, I had recently learned that many scholars have worked toward using both Western Science and Native Science in natural resources management. I made this my overarching goal: I wanted to conduct a culturally-sensitive wildlife study, instead of pursuing a solely Western Science approach. I was naïve about what it was really going to take to make it happen, especially with no research topic or funding. But I had to make it happen! Thanks to the fellowship I received and other funding programs, such as AIGC, I was able to develop my research. I have collaborated and consulted with the Yurok Tribe, a private timber company, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, National Park Service and The Wildlife Conservation Society to design and implement my fieldwork. These efforts, along with completing required coursework, took nearly four years.

One component of my research involves Yurok peoples’ beliefs and values toward wildlife, for which I am conducting oral interviews. This Traditional Ecological Knowledge, often referred to by Native peoples as a “way of life”, is important to consider in management. The other component involves a wildlife survey, where an environmental technician and I collected scat samples along road transects within Yurok ancestral lands. We also classified forest stand age along transects and geo-tagged photos of the scats and transects in ArcGIS. I will use genetic analyses to identify the scat depositor species and mammalian diet composition. Focus species of the research are mesocarnivores, such as fox (Yurok: wer-gers) and bobcat (chmuuek), as they tend to have dietary overlap with the at-risk Humboldt marten.
are, it’s about perseverance and persistence.” Sometimes, instead of taking an extra day off, I stare at my computer and think to myself that each task I complete is one step closer to graduation and less time I will need to spend in school. When it comes to how I prioritize my time, I try to remember balance and evaluate what my body, mind and spirit need at the moment and what I can do to keep myself healthy, while also making progress.

I have found it interesting that people have commented that I refer to both school and my part-time job as “work.” I learned this from other graduate students. We work as though we have regular 8-hour (or longer) per day jobs, even though we are not always paid. School is “work” and, until everything is completed, we will not graduate. Keeping this mindset can help us maintain focus.

Continued on page 48
Positive Changes in Higher Education

by John Garland

A CPA-College Student Educators International is one of Higher Education’s largest professional associations, with over 7,000 members. It consists of higher education administrators, faculty, counselors and student affairs practitioners. I have been involved with ACPA, for over ten years, across varying leadership positions. The Governing Board is the highest level of leadership in the Association and it is quite an honor to be elected by the membership.

The Director of Equity & Inclusion works to help the Association, its membership and higher education institutions become more inclusive and equitable in their interactions with students, faculty and staff. The Director also serves as the Affirmative Action Officer of the Association. My three-year appointment begins in March 2014, at our Annual Convention in Indianapolis; the first year as Director-elect and two years as Director.

ACPA is home to the Native American Network (NAN), which consists of Native Americans identifying higher education, faculty, counselors and student affairs staff/administrators. In the spirit of inclusion, NAN includes non-Native allies in higher education who work to support the success of Native students. This collaborative and diverse membership provides support and continuity for NAN, as Native identifying faculty, staff, and administrators are often few in numbers.

With the support of organizations like AIGC, I believe we are entering an exciting new time of Native higher education leadership development and Native student success.

I believe that being elected, by the membership of ACPA, for this important Governing Board position, presents a wonderful opportunity to continue the work of building a truly inclusive and diverse national higher ed organization. I can honestly say that, with the support of AIGC (I was an AIGC Graduate Fellow while working on my doctorate at the University of Maryland) and the support of my NAN colleagues (some of whom were also AIGC Fellows), my opportunities in higher education have been wonderfully enhanced.

When I was working on my dissertation, exploring the involvement experiences of Native students at predominately white institutions of higher education, I recall drawing examples of resilience from Native and non-Native colleagues I had met through ACPA and NAN. This network, along with my supportive faculty and colleagues at Maryland, helped to create a successful graduate experience. It’s precisely this type of experience that I hope every Native student might enjoy during college.

With this in mind, I focus my energy, as a faculty member, to make sure that students, not just Native students – but all students, experience a learning environment that is developmentally and culturally supportive. Through the work of AIGC, ACPA, NAN and many other Native higher education organizations, we are making positive changes on campuses throughout North America. Although there remains much work to do, I have been very impressed with emerging Native higher education leaders within the past ten years. Their leadership in ACPA, NIEA, NASPA, The College Board, etc., is both groundbreaking and inspiring. I have no doubt that higher education will continue to experience the positive effects of their work, at Native and non-Native institutions alike, for many years to come.
As a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, who happens to live in Montgomery, Alabama, I am surrounded by reminders of the Civil Rights Movement and the ongoing struggle for equality. Regardless of the location – the Deep South, Indian Country or Appalachia, the work we do in college student affairs is among the most important, for supporting the success of Native students. I am very optimistic about the future of Native Student Affairs and the progress being made in higher education. With the support of organizations like AIGC, I believe we are entering an exciting new time of Native higher education leadership development and Native student success.

(John Garland is an Associate Professor at Alabama State University. He is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and received his Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Science in College Teaching/Student Development degrees from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. John received his Ph.D. in Counseling & Personnel Services with an emphasis in College Student Personnel Administration from the University of Maryland – College Park.)

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**AIGC Scholarship Opportunities - Online Application**

American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) applications are available online for the 2014 - 2015 academic year.

**Attention High School Seniors!**
- The All Native American High School Academic Team application deadline is April 4, 2014.
- The Accenture American Indian Scholarship application deadline is June 15, 2014.

**Attention College Juniors and Seniors!**
- The Wells Fargo American Indian scholarship application deadline is April 25, 2014.

**Attention Graduate Students!**
- The Wells Fargo American Indian scholarship application deadline is April 25, 2014.
- The AIGC Fellowship application deadline is June 1, 2014.
- The Loan for Service application deadline is June 1, 2014.
- The AIGC & Choctaw Scholarship Advisement Program (SAP) deadline is June 6, 2014.

_all application materials must be submitted through the AIGC Online Application System (OAS) - visit the AIGC website at aigcs.org. To enter the Online Application System, click the APPLY NOW button, found in various places on the AIGC website._

_email all inquiries to: fellowships@aigcs.org._
The University of New Mexico Health Science Center’s (HSC) commitment to addressing health and educational disparities is evidenced by the creation of HSC-wide Office for Diversity (OfD). The Office for Diversity is responsible for a full panoply of programs addressing faculty diversity, linguistic and cultural competence, K-20 educational pipeline, research data and analyses, family involvement/community engagement, and leadership, on issues of inclusion and equity.

“Diversity in thinking, race and ethnicity, cultural backgrounds, socioeconomics and life experiences, as well as other factors, enriches our academic programs and is critical to the quality of education for all students and to the strength of America’s democracy and economic health. Diversity, as a core value, seeks to cultivate better outcomes through the use of different collective narratives and histories, heuristics, perspectives, world-views and belief systems”, says Dr. Valerie Romero-Leggott, Vice-Chancellor for Diversity.

Diversity is key to excellence in health care for our nation. A diverse health workforce is a strategy for eliminating health disparities, enriches our educational and work environments and improves access to health care for vulnerable populations. In New Mexico, we are a minority-majority state, with 32 of 33 counties designated as Health Professions Shortage Areas. Health workforce data show that, for rural and tribal communities, “growing one’s own” health workforce increases the likelihood of creating a culturally and linguistically-competent workforce, more likely to return and be retained in rural, tribal and underserved urban communities.

In order to produce a diverse and competent workforce, the Health Sciences Center, in partnership with community entities, offers an array of programs, from middle school through post baccalaureate. This pipeline introduces and strengthens interest in health careers for students underrepresented in the health professions and supports academic enrichment to help them obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a career in healthcare or the biomedical sciences. As one example, at the undergraduate and medical student level, the combined BA/MD program, 100% funded by the New Mexico State Legislature, addresses physician shortage needs by accepting and graduating diverse students who come from rural communities, two of the predictors for practicing in a rural community. In its 8th year of the program, over 2/3 of combined BA/MD degree students are from rural, underserved areas, with over 60% being underrepresented minorities (URM) and 14% being American Indian.

As another example, the UNM HSC Office for Diversity educational pipeline programs, H.E.A.L.T.H. NM (Hope, Enrichment And Learning, Transform Health in New Mexico), provide a developmental sequence of programs, ranging from middle school to graduate professional school, that aim to provide our underrepresented, underserved students the opportunity to realize and enrich their abilities, opportunities and potential for success in the health professions or biomedical sciences. In addition to the academic health training component, the curriculum promotes awareness about students’ cultural identity and the assets of “home”, as well as the value of diversity, culture and self-identity, in becoming a future health professional. Over the past 11 years, the HEALTH NM programs, in partnership with schools, families and community health providers, have...
reached nearly 1,400 youth from across the state, of which 84% are minorities with 14% being Native American.

We know that it is imperative to reach students as early as possible. One program within HEATH NM, the Dream Makers Health Careers Program, aims to stimulate interest in the health professions, within under-served and underrepresented populations in New Mexico, and to increase awareness of the urgent need for healthcare workers in our state. These programs introduce middle and high school students, from urban and rural communities, to health career paths and are situated throughout NM in our rural and tribal communities. Dream Makers is currently serving many schools, including the following schools, with high numbers of Native American/Indian American students: Pojoaque Middle School, Pine Hill High School and Bernalillo High School. “We’re also very excited that we are on the cusp of beginning our program with the Pueblo of Jemez and reestablishing programs with Santa Fe Indian School”, says Dr. Romero-Leggott. “These programs integrate resources in a unique, community-responsive manner engaging families, schools, communities (including tribal communities), community health providers and programs such as Area Health Education Centers, in activities to improve educational outcomes and ultimately to improve the health and well-being of our communities.”

Ms. Ericka Charley, a Navajo student from Shiprock, New Mexico, participated in a six-week, academically rigorous program that provides MCAT Test Prep, mock interviews and other resources and skills-training, to enhance participants’ applications to medical school. “The MCAT Program gave me the tools necessary to study, improve my test taking skills and perform to my best ability. I gained knowledge about the medical school application and how to prepare for future interviews,” she says. Ericka Charley is now a first year medical student at the UNM School of Medicine.

For the last several years, the Office for Diversity has been a partner in the Four Corners Alliance that includes University of Arizona, University of Colorado, University of Arizona-Phoenix and the University of Utah. This Four Corners Alliance partners with the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) to rotate between institutions and host the Pre-Admission Workshop (PAW). The PAW brings together AAIP member physicians, American Indian/Native American college pre-med/health students, traditional healers, public health professionals and other interested individuals with the goal of networking, learning and discussing the current state of Native health and health education.

The University of New Mexico Center for Native American Health (CNAH) was awarded the Indians into Medicine (INMED) grant in 2010. The purpose of INMED is to augment the number of Native American health professionals serving Indians, by encouraging them to enter the health professions and removing the multiple barriers to their entrance into the Indian Health Services IHS and private practice among Indians. The Office for Diversity partners with UNM Center for Native American Health to host BA/MD Workshops at the Santa Fe Indian School. These workshops were formed through a partnership with the Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) and the UNM Health Sciences Center. The Office for Diversity also provides UNM HSC Tours and partners with CNAH and other HSC entities to host schools and communities in New Mexico and Arizona. In a new initiative, the Office for Diversity is partnering with CNAH and the UNM BA/MD Program to host the UNM CNAH-INMED Spring Tour, a four-day tour created to engage and provide information to American Indian/Native American high school students interested in pursuing a career in the health professions. The goal is to provide an overall view of the requirements needed for applying to health science programs, advice on how students can begin building a competitive application and information about the several colleges, schools and programs at UNM HSC.

“Growing our own” will help address our health professions shortage needs, prepare a workforce that is culturally and linguistically competent and prepare effective health providers for multi-cultural environments, as we work to improve the health and well-being of the communities in New Mexico.

*(For more information on the program and the tour, please contact University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Office for Diversity - hsc.unm.edu/programs/diversity - diversity@salud.unm.edu - 505.272.2728)*
me for future work in developing pipeline programs at Washington State University.

In 1995, I began my career with Washington State University (WSU), at the College of Nursing. I was hired as the Native American Coordinator for Recruitment and Retention. Initially, part of the job was to create a pipeline program, which was the beginning of the Na-ha-shnee Health Science Institute. This is a two-week, hands-on, learning summer camp for Native American high school students. The first several years focused on nursing, but the students wanted to learn about other healthcare professions. This led to expanding the camp, to include workshops on different health careers and bringing in Native healthcare providers to be teachers and role models for the students. The summer of 2014 will be the 19th Annual Na-ha-shnee Health Science Institute.

I became the Director of Native American Health Sciences (NAHS) in July 2007. WSU has a designated Health Science Branch campus in Spokane, Washington. I have helped form a Native American Health Science Advisory Board to the WSU Health Science Leadership Team. The main goal of the program is to increase the number of Native Americans entering WSU’s Health Sciences programs and assisting students to help retain them in the program. NAHS does this by connecting the students to resources that will assist them such as tutoring, providing them with scholarship information and monthly advisory meetings.

I serve on the WSU Native American Advisory Council to the Provost and serve as PI on several grants. I also serve on the WSU Institutional Review Board, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board IRB and the Southwest Tribal IRB. I have a strong interest in making sure that research in Native Communities is done ethically, with respect and is good research that will benefit the communities.

In my tenure here at WSU, I have helped graduate fifty-four (54) Native American nurses, seven (7) Masters of Nursing, two (2) pharmacists and assisted many other Native students getting into medicine and dental schools. The Na-ah-shnee Health Science Institute helps with the pipeline of getting students into WSU and on to healthcare professions.

Pursuing an education is an equalizer. Knowledge is power. Education is not only the process of learning 'how to learn', but also how to continue learning. I believe that by obtaining a higher education, Native youth will not only challenge their personal growth but gain the skillset they need for jobs in which they are interested. Gaining an education is also a part of our heritage. Just as I learned from my father, we are intelligent human beings. I was taught to always do the best that I can and, if you don’t know how to do it, study the problem, ask the questions and then try it again.

(Robbie Paul, PhD is currently Director of Native American Health Sciences at Washington State University, in Spokane, Washington.)

So far, I have shared several ways I manage time while in graduate school. Of course, everyone will need to find what works well for them; I hope that my story will help other students in some way. As a final note, on maintaining in graduate school, I would like to say that I count my blessings. To be quite honest, my personal life has been a bit rocky during my PhD program and I am committed to doing some deep work on myself so that I can be emotionally and spiritually healthier and happier. So, I try each day to reflect on the good. I think about all of the people who have supported me, listened to me vent and provided guidance and direction. I think about all of the people I have been able to help in various ways. I reflect on days of hiking and conducting fieldwork with my environmental technician, who became a dear friend. I reflect on the interviews I have conducted and how each individual has touched my life in a profound way. Their willingness to share their thoughts speaks volumes to their trust and support. For all of these things, I am immensely grateful. I remember the smoke from the prayer root and find a renewed sense of determination.

At this time I am preparing for my comprehensive exams, data analysis and writing. My hope is that my dissertation will serve as an example of one approach to pursuing Traditional Ecological Knowledge in the wildlife field. And, I hope that my story provides something helpful to whoever reads this and that you will be able to find the support you need in pursuing your goals and dreams.

(Seafha is a Yurok tribal member and of Karuk and Latina descent. She is from the Yurok villages of Ahpah, Err’r and Weitchpus. She received her B.S. from Missouri Southern State University in 2005 and an M.S., in Wildlife Conservation and Management, from The University of Arizona in 2009.)
On March 23rd, 2010 President Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, more commonly known as “ACA.” The ACA offers opportunities to increase coverage and access to care for American Indians and Alaska Natives. For all Americans, the ACA seeks to reduce the number of uninsured through an expansion of Medicaid and new Health Insurance Marketplaces with sliding scale tax credits to help purchase coverage. Nine in ten (94%) uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives have incomes in the range to qualify for these coverage expansions. Moreover, the ACA permanently reauthorizes the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, extending and authorizing new programs and services within the IHS.

The Marketplaces and Medicaid expansion provide new coverage options for many American Indians and Alaska Natives, but only members of federally-recognized tribes will receive certain consumer protections and not all states have expanded Medicaid. Members of federally-recognized tribes who purchase coverage through the Marketplaces will receive special protections, including the ability to change health plans on a monthly basis and some exemptions from cost-sharing. Members of federally-recognized tribes are also afforded certain Medicaid protections.

Tax Exemption (One Time Application): Starting in 2014, every person needs to have health coverage or make a payment on their federal income tax return called the “shared responsibility payment.” However, American Indian and Alaska Natives are exempt from the requirement to purchase insurance if they are members of a federally recognized Tribe, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) shareholder status (village or regional), or eligible to receive services from an Indian Health Service (IHS) facility/Tribal Clinic/Urban Clinic. To qualify for this exemption, Alaska Native and American Indian people will have to apply for the exemption through a paper application process or during the 2015 tax season. This paper application can be printed at:

Students Contract Health Services (CHS) Form: To find out more about Health Care Coverage contact your local IHS, Tribal Clinic, or Urban Indian Clinic and notify the Indian Health Service Unit-CHS Office local to your tribe if you will be a full time student living away from home for more than 180 days.

For more information, please call 800-318-2596, 24 hours day, 7 days a week (TTY: 1-855-889-4325) or visit the following sites:

- www.healthcare.gov, use the “Get state information” menu to get your state’s existing rules.
- www.tribalhealthcare.org
- www.urbanindianhealth.org
- www.ihs.gov

Make sure your family, friends, and tribal community are informed about the Affordable Care Act Health Coverage Options!
The Alumni Connection

by Susan Duran

Class of 1993
Dr. Kathleen B. Herne (St. Regis Mohawk) M.D. – Medicine – University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (received with a donation)

“With gratitude for your assistance with my medical school education, in 1992 and 1993. Thank you!”

Class of 2001
Michelle L. Sauve (St. Regis Mohawk) M.A. – Public Policy Analysis – Harvard University

“Receiving the AIGC Fellowship helped defray my cost for attending Harvard. I wouldn’t have been able to go without your financial support. Thank you!”

Class of 2003
Jennifer D. Barnes (Chickasaw) J.D. – Law – University of Houston

“I really feel that the funds that the AIGC provides go to a good cause. Without them, I would have had a really rough time my first year of law school. American Indians are becoming more educated by the minute, and the glory goes to organizations such as AIGC.”

Class of 2003
Roian Matt (Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes) M.S. – Environmental Studies – University of Montana

“I have finished with my course work and am planning to defend my professional paper in the fall. Thanks to AIGC for all the assistance that they have provided for me, both financial and for moral support. I hope to work with you again, when I pursue my Ph.D.”

Class of 2003
Patti J. Pitcock (Cherokee) M.Ed. – Educational Leadership and Administration – Oral Roberts University

“I used my AIGC fellowship to pay for my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership. Without this funding, my studies would not have been possible. I was recently named ‘District 5C Elementary Administrator of the Year’, in Oklahoma.”

Notes: To insure that we have all your current information, please take a minute to visit our website (aigcs.org) or send an email to (susan@aigcs.org) to update your information (be sure to include your previous address so we know we have the right individual).

We’re very proud of all our alumni, so…. while you’re updating your information, please let us know what’s been going on with you. Also, if you would like to submit an article, for our magazine, about your educational experience(s) and/or how education has changed your life, we would welcome your story.

Thank you.
The Online Master of Jurisprudence in Indian Law (MJIL) degree is designed for college graduates who are interested in learning about Indian law but may not wish to become lawyers. It is also for lawyers who wish to gain additional expertise or expand their practices.

The MJIL is a 30-credit hour program offered entirely online by The University of Tulsa College of Law. The MJIL program offers students the opportunity to learn from world-renowned Indian Law experts from a recognized leader in Indian law education.

Attend a webinar to learn more about the Master of Jurisprudence in Indian Law and see how easy it is to attend classes from the office, home, or anywhere an internet connection exists.

**START DATES**

**Summer 2014:**
Application deadline: May 1, 2014
Term start date: June 2, 2014

**Fall 2014:**
Application deadline: August 1, 2014
Term start date: August 25, 2014

**CONTACT US**

indianlawmj.org
Tel: 918-631-3991
Email: mjil-director@utulsa.edu
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Scan code with your smart phone or visit http://signup.indianlawmj.com
Educational dreams start early...

AIGC needs your help to provide scholarships to American Indian and Alaska Native Students

Give Now @ aigcs.org!

BUILD, PROMOTE, AND HONOR SELF-SUSTAINING AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP—AIGC MISSION

Cost of a college degree

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*Average estimated undergraduate budget for a public four-year, out-of-state, on-campus student, 2011-2012.
**Reflects estimates for additional expenses.
Source: The College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges

Ways to give

- Online donation at aigcs.org
- Contact the office directly at 505.881.4584
- Corporate & event sponsorships
- In-kind donations
- Combined Federal Campaign #11514
- Planned giving
- Advertise in American Indian Graduate

Your contribution to AIGC may be tax-deductible under Section 501 (c)3 of the IRS code.

Please mail your check today to:
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Albuquerque, NM 87110
505.881.4584  aigcs.org

Attention Federal Employees #11514

The CFC gives federal employees an opportunity to donate to eligible charities through payroll deductions. Thank you for your CFC pledge to AIGC, CFC #11514.

Thank you for supporting Higher Education for American Indian and Alaska Native Students!