

# American Indian Center Quarterly

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY  
*A tradition of excellence and opportunity*

Summer 2008



A place for everyone

## A New Year Brought New Changes

As we finished another school year, we experienced a few staffing changes. Sharon Fineday was hired as the Interim Student Services Coordinator at the American Indian Center. She is an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes of Montana and a descendant of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Ottawa Indians from Michigan. Sharon completed her master's degree in Educational Leadership from North Dakota State University. She was employed at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota as the Director of American Indian Recruiting and Programming for four years. Prior to that, she served as the Academic Counselor at Sitting Bull College in Fort Yates, North Dakota on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. Sharon enjoys spending time with her family and traveling to contest powwows throughout the United States and Canada competing in the jingle dress dance category.

According to the SCSU Admissions Office we had 142 American Indian students enrolled during the 2007 spring semester. We continued our attempts to connect with every one of our returning students as well as our new first year students. Throughout the fall and spring semesters faculty, staff and students took time to stop by the American Indian Center to meet the new staff, new students and old friends.

During the summer, the AIC staff will strategically plan out events and programs for the upcoming year. We will revisit short-term and long-term goals. The purpose of the St. Cloud State University American Indian Center is to respond to the self-defined educational needs and goals of the current American Indian students and communities alike. To this end, the American Indian Center, utilizing both internal and external resources, empowers indigenous people through quality educational programming. The center's outreach activities promote awareness, better understanding, and sensitivity to American Indian

Cultures.

The summer will pass quickly and we are looking forward to a great new year and would like to invite all new first year American Indian students to participate in our 3rd Native Leadership Retreat on September 26th & 27th. This is a time to meet other American Indian students as a community to share in food, fun and culture. We will be gathering together and conducting talking circles to see how the semester is going for everyone. We will also have tickets for all American Indian students to the Lakota Sioux Dance Troupe performance held at the Paramount Theater in St. Cloud on September 26th.

There will be many opportunities to get involved with other American Indian students and to participate in the programs and services that the American Indian Center has to offer. Come to the Center to help make this community your own. I wish everyone a great summer and hope to see you at the Center in the fall. Sincerely,

Jim Knutson-Kolodzne, Director

## Lakota Sioux Dance Theatre Friday, September 26, 2008 at 7:30 p.m.

The renowned Lakota Sioux Dance Theater will perform at the Paramount Theater. Cokata Upo! (Come to the Center!). This work celebrates the culture of the Lakota people and will be performed in three parts: birth, death and rebirth of a nation. The program includes the grass, jingle dress, fancy, traditional, horse, buffalo, eagle, round and inter-tribal dances, juxtaposed with dance interpretations of the Lakota warrior tradition.

Contact the American Indian Center for ticket information. For details about the Paramount Theater go to [www.paramountarts.org](http://www.paramountarts.org)



### Student Spotlight: Crystal Songetay Outstanding Indian Student Award Recipient

Crystal Songetay is a senior at SCSU. She is an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Crystal is a double major in Chemical Dependency Counseling and Community Psychology. She is minoring in Community Corrections. In the future, Crystal plans on working at a treatment facility. She would like to pursue a master's degree and work in couples therapy. She would also like to get her doctorate to become a professor and work in a community college.

Crystal won the acclaimed Outstanding Indian Student Award by working hard in school and involving herself in as many things on campus as she could. Crystal volunteers at a sexual assault center as well as working at the American Indian Center. She helps students with problems they may have with classes.

Crystal offers advice to students when it comes to studying don't set a time limit. "Study until you get it." She also advises students to ask questions.



### Student Spotlight: Evelyn Saxon President's Award Recipient

Evelyn Saxon is a Criminal Justice major at St. Cloud State University. She is minoring in Human Relations. Evelyn is an enrolled member of the White Earth Chippewa Tribe. She is from Foley, MN. Evelyn hopes to work within the state or federal department and directly with people in the future. Her goal is to help others and to be an asset to her community and the world she lives in.

Evelyn was awarded the President's Award this spring at St. Cloud State University. She was thrilled to have been chosen for this honor. Evelyn is highly involved in the SCSU community. She served on the St. Cloud State University Mayors Student Advisory Board, the American Indian Center, St. Cloud Student Sexual Consent Board and the All Tribes Council Board. Evelyn's advice to other students, "You will have ups and downs but the trick is to keep a positive attitude or shall I say turn your negative thinking into a positive thought."

### Employee Spotlight: Sharon Fineday Interim Student Services Coordinator

This month's Employee Spotlight is on Sharon L. Fineday. Sharon is the Interim Student Services Coordinator. She has been at the AIC since last September. What she likes the most about St. Cloud State University is that it has the American Indian Center. SCSU's AIC is only 1 of 2 in the MNSCU System. The other American Indian Center in the MNSCU System is located at Bemidji State.

Two of the job highlights that Sharon enjoys and has been involved in was the Spring Break Service Learning Trip to Lame Deer, Montana (co-sponsored by SCSU's Volunteer Connection) and working on the High School College Visitation Engage Program. She enjoys working with the different departments at SCSU and facilitating student panels. She also enjoys being a resource to the students.

She emphasizes that it is important that students are proactive about their education. She suggests not to be afraid to ask for help. If students need help don't be afraid to ask the staff or instructors who are available to ensure student success.

### Study Abroad Trip to Mexico

A group of St. Cloud State University students traveled to Mexico for the Ethnic Studies Study Abroad Program on May 23-June 6, 2008. The 6 credit Study Abroad program focused on the Tarahumara people history and culture. It also included fieldwork in a Raramuri Community. The students were able to see destinations such as Copper Canyon and Pancho Villa's house. They also were able to visit hot springs, rock formations and petroglyphs.

One of the students that participated in the program was Jason Theisen. Jason is in his second year in the Biomedical Science Program. He was able to see the similarities and differences between American culture and Mexican culture. One similarity that was noted was that both countries are facing similar problems. The culture in Mexico also has a strong tie to the land and the crops. A man told the group, "without corn, there is no country." The train ride on the "Chepe" through Copper Canyon had to be the highlight for Jason. He would definitely like to visit Mexico again in the future and this study abroad program was a great experience.

## Native Voices

Tess Wakonabo, a SCSU graduate student conducted interviews with Indian people from across the Minnesota Indian nations. She asked three questions; 1) What are your feelings about Statehood? 2) Do you have a question for the State? and, 3) Please provide a definition of a Reservation. The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for Indian people and their communities to voice their opinions, feelings and thoughts about the celebration of statehood in Minnesota. It was also to bring awareness and sensitivity to non-Indian people about the history, language and cultures of the tribal nations. A poster was created with statements by tribal leaders, elders, educators gathered from the Minnesota Indian Nations and communities. An event was held on May 7, 2007 that included a welcome from SCSU President Potter, a tour of the American Indian Center, a keynote speaker -Tribal Chair: Floyd Jourdain, a panel discussion and the presentation of the poster. The quotes that follow are included on the poster.

### Voices of Minnesota Indian People

“Talk with us, not about us. If you want to know something about Indian People, ask Indian People. We have not gone beyond 100 years.”

“The Government has strength--A true leader is Pro-Active. Indian Leaders are not allowed the privilege of being Pro-Active, therefore we are reactive.”

“The State should be told we are not all Sioux (clumped into one)--we all have different languages with some similar culture.”

“St. Anthony Falls is sacred to the Lower Sioux People.”

“This State was built on the backs of Indian People. There is an inadequate level of understanding about Indian People because the facts are eliminated from mainstream education. Everyone should know about President Lincoln’s executive order in Mankato.”

“Our education needs an overhaul. We should talk to teachers--the fact that the Dakota People were exiled from Minnesota should be mainstream education right now. This is an ongoing process and the best I can do is to teach my own children, however, I do not want them to feel bitter. Maybe telling my children will slowly bring change.”

“Recognize us as being here and being Indigenous: How life began right here in Minnesota. Acknowledge Indigenous and all that goes with that--not that we are a minority--no one wants to be a minor part of anything.”

“This is a very very painful question. Our history is greater than 150 years and the Minnesota Sesquicentennial came at the expense of Native People. The State has all the facts, historically, and chooses to interpret them their own way for their own convenience. At Pipestone lies the blood of our ancestors and the land does not belong to us. My Official Stance: We will not be celebrating the Minnesota Sesquicentennial.”

“I will not support any event of the sesquicentennial--and why would I? I want to protect Dakota History. Why would I celebrate the Battle of Wood Lake (1862) where the Dakota were kicked out of Minnesota? The Army beat the Indians--Minnesota has nothing to be proud of, nothing to celebrate. This happened a long time ago and there is still pain involved. The State should acknowledge the true history of Minnesota.”

“I want the Government (State) to know that the Ojibwe and Dakota people get along with each other--We are friends.”

“IT IS POINTLESS TO PRETEND WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH THE STATE.”

“If the US President and State Officials would apologize to all Indigenous People and other people of color, it would change the world. Accurately depicting history (Indians writing their own history) would allow Indigenous people to heal.”

“There are only 4 countries in the world who will not apologize to their Indigenous people: The United States, Canada, Great Britain and Australia.”

“The State is always attempting to erode our Sovereignty.”

“American Indian Week--or Month--or Day leaves an inadequate level of understanding about Indian People.”

“Red Lake made the very first Indian Reservation License Plate.”

“Let Indians tell their own history. If you look at what is written about Indian People and the Treaties, it is a Pollyanna View--Look at what has happened after Treaties were made--not what was said.”

“We must educate ourselves and keep up politically--the State and Federal Government are always attempting to take away our Sovereignty. Without sovereignty we have nothing. We have to keep up with current legislation and constantly use the court system to maintain this sovereignty.”

“Casinos have not made us rich. We have 10,000 enrolled members and any money that we do make goes right back into the community. We all go to work. We have a hospital, clinics, churches, schools, etc.”

“Study the 1863 Old Crossing Treaty--we had a much larger land base than now. Study the 1889 Land Agreement and you will see that Red Lake history will differ from State history. Red Lake resisted the Allotment Act keeping land ownership as communal property. No one owns any track of land in Red Lake--we have a shared land base for future generations. We have been called Communists because of this.”

“I love this country and this land. We are grounded at birth (born into clans) already knowing who we are. Indians are the first to respond to the call to fight for our Country. If all people would have responded during WWII like the Indian People did, there would never have been a need for the draft.”

“I believe in education. Take a look at the Japanese, ever since WWII they have embraced education, physical fitness and prayer and are now a leader in the world with technology. We can do the same.”

“When I am out and about and I feel and see people looking ‘down on me’ or staring at me, I wish I had a sign on my forehead that said, my sons have served altogether 5 tours of combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan--fighting for your freedom. They have both received medals--one Purple Heart and 3 Gold Stars. This means they even go above and beyond the call of duty to serve you. To serve MINNESOTA and the United States Marine Corps.”

“I want everyone to know that because of Casinos we are NOT rich.”

“The No Child Left Behind Act is a large scale National effort to assimilate Indian people. The MCA II's (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment Testing) were established by middle class white students--not Indian kids. You cannot compare the differences and I believe this is a set up for failure for our Indian students. There is a tremendous stigma attached to failure and right now, weather we like it or not, our Indian students are affected by the declining economy and some live in extreme poverty, come from broken homes and are exposed to alcoholism, etc. I want individual assessment testing for American Indian learners. The No Child Left Behind Act is institutional assimilation.”

“Compare historically the treatment of Indian people to the Jewish, and now the Muslims. At one time there were 10 million Indian people living in the United States and now there are less than a million. The sad piece of this is the number of Indian People in our country that do not even know they are Indian. We must look at history and see the true effects of Boarding Schools, extermination, relocation, and now the MCA Testing.”

“The Sesquicentennial has eliminated Indian contributions to the State. What about art, dance and culinary contributions? Why can't contributions of Indian People be embedded in education. The norm for all teachings? Once again, we are invisible.”

“Teacher prep should receive more training of American Indian learning styles.”

“Poverty is huge on our Reservation.”

“I participate in Sweat Lodge Ceremony's as often as I can-- which is a natural cleansing process and provides a natural high. Some of the guys that I was in the military with thought we smoked dope, peyote, or other drugs in the pipe during the ceremony. I told them the truth, that we do not use drugs and that this is sacred.”

“Why don't you support us-our sovereignty? Indians should be at the forefront of any Minnesota celebration, and, as usual, we are not included.”

“We are going ‘middle of the road’ with this project.”

## American Indian Graduates 2008

### Undergraduate Students

Colicia Barnes - Criminal Justice  
Tyler Bogda - Management  
Misty Durham - Special Education  
Bethany Fuchs - Marketing/International Business Minor  
Dustin Goslin - Geography  
Tiffany Hegberg - Social Work/Human Relations Minor  
Tiffany King - Marketing  
Conrad LaDoux - Recreation & Sports Management/Athletic Coaching Minor  
Carmen Lizee - Psychology/Community Psychology Minor  
Jennifer Nelson - Marketing/Human Relations Minor  
Vanessa Opheim - Athletic Training/Athletic Coaching Minor  
Danny Prue - Management  
Austin Riehm - Criminal Justice  
Geralynn Ryckman - Social Work  
Traci Sorenson - Social Work

### Graduate Students

Jennifer Johnson - Master of Business Administration

## American Indian Students with a 3.0 or higher GPA

### Student Honor Award Recipients

**Students who maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 honor points or higher during their academic semesters at SCSU**

Rebecca Adams  
Summer Austin-Guevara  
Nicholas Beaupre  
Jacqueline Brooks  
Kerrie Brown  
Frank Burton  
Patricia Christofferson  
Christina Cottier  
Brandi Erickson  
Rachel Fashing  
Rebekah Fineday  
Raunn Finley  
Brody Fuchs  
Thomas Hackey  
Harrison Hancock  
Devyn Holubar  
Amanda Kass  
Heidi Kempin  
Timothy Kindel

James Kunesh  
Lynette LeGarde  
Judy MacDonnell  
Krystal Malisheske  
Paula Marozas  
Emily Ortler  
Ythan Pratt  
Cari Robertson  
Nikki Roundtree  
Geralynn Ryckman  
Evelyn Saxon  
Kateri Skunes  
Cory Smallwood  
Anthony Smith  
Crystal Songetay  
Zane Sullivan  
Amanda Wilkens  
Lucas Winskowski  
Heidi Zwack

American Indian Center

St. Cloud State University

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## Summer 2008 Calendar

Intersession 2008:

Monday, May 19th: Intersession begins

Friday, June 6th: Last day of intersession

Summer Session I 2008:

Monday, June 9th: Summer Session I classes begin

Friday, July 11th: Last day of Summer Session I classes

Summer Session II 2008:

Monday, July 14th: Summer Session II begin

Thursday, August 14th: Last day of Summer Session II classes

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/aic>

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## The 2nd Annual AISSI

The 2nd Annual American Indian Studies Summer Institute (AISSI) was held on the Mille Lacs Ojibwe Reservation at the Nay Ah Shing School in Onamia, MN on June 9-13, 2008. There were approximately 20 participants in attendance and they consisted of directors, administrators, faculty and educators throughout Minnesota.

The AISSI was sponsored by SCSU Ethnic Studies Department, the Multicultural Resource Center, the American Indian Center (AIC), the Office of Student Life and Development and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

The AISSI began in hopes of promoting knowledge, sensitivity, and to raise awareness of Minnesota educators, administrators and employees about the cul-

ture, histories and languages of federally recognized Native American tribes in the state of Minnesota.

Some of the highlights included a presentation by Bruce White, a historian who told a story about a photograph taken in a Native American community and years later he was able to find the family of the person in the photo. It was an inspiring story and showed the strong sense of community and familiarity of a region.

There were also presentations about the Ojibwe and Dakota languages, history and cultures. Support staff of the AIC received positive feedback from the participants and it was a very successful week. Plans for next years AISSI are in the planning stage and it hopefully will be as successful as this years AISSI.

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