Christmas Rant

I find myself sighing heavily every time I encounter another person with limited knowledge about American Indians. I realize that not everyone can be an expert on all 560+ federally recognized tribes, and my own learning will be a life-long endeavor. After working in the education field for over twenty years, I am most frustrated at how little information about American Indian history, language and culture is even being taught. You would think that our public school system would at least teach about the 11 American Indian tribes, bands and communities located in our state.

In January, the American Indian Center, the Multicultural Resource Center, the College of Education and the College of Social Science will be releasing information on the first American Indian Studies Summer Institute to be held in June on the SCSU campus. Our purpose of this institute is to offer Minnesota educators an opportunity to receive accurate and authentic information on American Indian history, culture and language.

On one of the local community radio stations this morning, the DJ’s were discussing University of Minnesota’s decision not to play UND in all sports except hockey due to their policy on scheduling games against schools that use Native American mascots and nicknames. (Note: a policy that was loosely enforced in recent years). The DJ’s, both UND alumni, were making insensitive comments and trivializing the mascot issue without recognizing or understanding why this issue is important to Indians.

In The Chronicle of Higher Education (11/9/2001), Springwood & King stated: “Supporters of American Indian mascots think they honor indigenous people, embody institutional tradition, foster shared identity, and intensify the pleasure of college athletics.” “To Indian and non-Indians who oppose them, however, the mascots give life to racial stereotypes as well as revivify historical patterns of appropriation and oppression. They often foster discomfort, pain, and even terror among many American Indian people.” Cochise Anderson visited our American Indian Center on November 15, 2006 and he gave several excellent presentations on American Indian issues to our campus community.

I liked his response to people who say they honor Indians with a mascot or logo, “If you really want to honor Indigenous people; then honor the treaties!”

It would be appropriate if everyone who opposes the use of American Indian mascots and logos, would send a letter to UND that states: I will refuse to play with you and I refuse to acknowledge you as a university that honors Indians until you retire the American Indian logo. Some of the comments I heard on the radio show were that “University of Minnesota didn’t go far enough on this issue, but change in small steps can lead to success” and “I am going to go home and write my own personal letter to UND”.

If you would like to share comments on this issue, please send them to me at: jkolodzne@stcloudstate.edu

Boozhoo (hello),

Spring is just around the corner. As long as the groundhog doesn’t see a shadow. It is really great being back to work. Some of you may know I have been off since last May. First taking a sabbatical and then family leave. We have been blessed with a 7lbs 12 oz little girl named Jordan. Our life will never be the same again!

We have a variety of events happening on campus and at the AIC. Look to our “calendar” to find fun and excitement. The language table and cultural nights are still bringing people in and we again want to invite you to participate. The language table is for people of all skill levels, even those who don’t know any Ojibwe language.

You don’t have to be “Native” to enjoy cultural nights at the AIC. All are welcome. Dreamcatchers, storytelling, and a Hand Drum Workshop are on the agenda.

Don’t forget our Speaker Series. We will be having people speak at the AIC once again spring semester. The American Indian faculty and the staff at the American Indian Center want to wish you all a great spring. Spring is the time for new beginnings and new life. Remember if you are in need of assistance in your academics or other areas, stop by the AIC and speak with one of the staff members. We can help with problems that arise but we need to know about them to help fix them.

Miigwech, Tom
2006 American Indian Student Retreat

The first annual Native Leadership retreat was held on November 17 and 18, 2006 at Camp Friendship in Annandale. Twenty-two attendees—eight SCSU students, six SCSU staff and faculty, six members of the Little Otter drum group, a spiritual leader, and two team-building instructors—participated. The weekend began with sharing a meal, recreational activities, refreshments and a movie. A traditional opening ceremony was provided by George Goggl-eye, Sr. in the woods next to a campfire, while Little Otter provided the songs. Following the opening ceremony, guest speakers were invited to introduce several areas of the campus community: Janelle Leblanc, Advising; Rose Stark, Counseling Center; Steve Casanova, Ethnic Studies; Dana Bultema, Mentoring Program; and Rebekah Fineday, All Tribes Council student organization. Free time included basketball, air hockey, foosball, ping-pong, hanging out with the drum group while they warmed up in the cabin, walking the grounds near the lake, or just chillin’ in the meeting room with unlimited refreshments. After lunch, everyone had a lot of fun with the communication and team building activities led by Colin Wesaw and Lisa Ripken of Lifeskills Center for Leadership. These activities provided much laughter, and a few humbling moments too. During the last few hours before dinner, the Talking Circle brought great depth in sharing, group cohesion, and warm honesty. Asked what their favorite part about the retreat was, students were torn between choosing the team building activities and the Talking Circle. We held a free drawing during the evening meal, gifting the students with gift certificates for the Husky Bookstore, phone cards, and gas/merchandise cards. Amid the somber farewells, the general consensus was that this retreat was beneficial not only for the freshmen students, but also for continuing students, staff, and faculty. Just wait—the second annual Native Leadership retreat will be even better!

American Indian Studies Summer Institute

An American Indian Studies Summer Institute (AISSI) will be held at SCSU on June 11-15, 2007. The AISSI is sponsored by the St. Cloud State University Ethnic Studies Department, the Multicultural Resource Center and the American Indian Center in partnership with the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and the MN Historical Society of St. Paul, MN. Funding for this program is provided by grants from the MnSCU Center for Teaching and Learning and the SCSU School of Graduate Studies.

The American Indian Studies Summer Institute is designed to increase the knowledge, sensitivity and awareness of Minnesota educators, administrators and employees on the histories, cultures and languages of the federally recognized tribes and bands in Minnesota. By providing a high-quality professional development opportunity that focuses on accurate and authentic information, the goal of the American Indian Studies Summer Institute is to facilitate learning among teachers, administrators, and student service providers in order to increase the effectiveness of working with American Indian students and to incorporate the use of culturally appropriate materials into the curriculum.

The American Indian Studies Summer Institute will offer sessions throughout the week that include: Minnesota Indians 101; Understanding Tribal Sovereignty; Dakota History, Culture and Language; Stereotypes and Cultural Misinformation; Urban American Indian Centers, Schools and Organizations; Incorporating American Indian History and Culture into the Curriculum; Treaties and Trust Responsibilities; American Indian Philosophy; American Indians in the Media; Talking Circles; Language Classes; Field trips to Urban Indian Communities and the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation.

The American Indian Studies Summer Institute is designed to provide a professional development opportunity for 32 participants. Undergraduate and Graduate credit will be available. Applications will be made available in the spring of 2007. More information contact Jim Knutson-Kolodzne, American Indian Center director at: 320-308-5447 or jkolodzne@stcloudstate.edu

The AIC gets a new sign

This fall the AIC posted a new sign painted by David Tree Top. (left) Together with the previous sign painted by Mr. Wakonabo, the AIC is better represented to the campus.

The AIC would like to thank everyone who participated in the 2006 pumpkin carving contest. This year there was a tie, therefore four students received prizes.

Congratulations to:
Nick Bad Heart Bull
Marco Gonzalez
Elizabeth Hoes
Amanda Peterson
Ojibwe Language Table

Ojibwe Language Table began on September 20th and has continued every Wednesday evening at 6:30pm. Most nights there were as many as eight learners in attendance, with fluent speakers who participated more than every other table. Ojibwe Language Table is an informal gathering of people who wish to learn or practice the Ojibwe language. There are no paid instructors; therefore each participant is both a teacher and a learner. To date, we have covered 14 lesson worksheets, a food list, a verb list, and a numbers list. To encourage understanding of the various dialects, we have also listened to guest speakers who are fluent, worked with Pimsler tapes and the “Mahjee Ojibwemodah” cassette, and watched two language videos. It’s not all work and no play however; we have enjoyed language specific games, good food and of course, good humor.

Ojibwe Language Table will continue at the American Indian Center on Wednesdays at 6:30pm throughout spring semester. All learner levels are welcome!

All Tribes Council Educational Mascot Rally

Once again, the St Cloud State University’s All Tribes Council took a stand for social justice and awareness. ATC held an Educational Rally during a football game with the University of North Dakota. The purpose of the Educational Rally was to bring awareness to the harmful effects of using Native American people and sacred items as mascots, logos, images and nicknames in any kind of sporting environment. The University of North Dakota adopted the nickname the “Fighting Sioux” and while they do not have a mascot, their logo/image is an “Indian warrior” with paint and feathers. The numbers at this event were not high, but the support that was there showed that this is still a topic of interest and concern for students and faculty at SCSU. During the Educational Rally, various signs and posters were displayed explaining the activist’s voices concerning this issue. Different types of literature were also available which described and explained why the use of Native American peoples and items in sports environments is a blatant form of discrimination, racism, stereotyping and cultural misappropriation that has become socially acceptable. It is a disgrace in education that institutions of higher learning are teaching and promoting discriminatory behaviors.

Later, a couple of ATC members were able to travel to Grand Forks, ND to support Indigenous students of UND during the UND vs. NCAA hearing. We traveled late and arrived in Grand Forks around 3 am. We were greeted warmly and welcomed with enthusiastic hospitality (even at 3 am!) at a student’s house to sleep for a few hours before rallying at the Grand Forks courthouse. There were quite a few people in attendance so early with signs, posters, coffee, hot chocolate and doughnuts. It was very cold, but we braved the weather with warm clothing, warm hearts and a purpose for social justice while supporting the NCAA was taking in our defense. There were plenty of television news reporters as well as various newspaper reporters.

We gathered on the courthouse lawn and cheered when the NCAA team arrived and walked up the sidewalk to the courthouse. Some people started to boo the UND defense team (me included, I admit) when they arrived, but other protesters with us reminded us to be respectful. It was amazing to me how the Indigenous students of UND and their supporters had the frame of mind to be respectful to the ‘opposing team’ at a time like that. I was reminded of a valuable lesson that day of what my parents have tried to instill in their children. No matter what awful things people do or say to you, it is the stronger person who remains respectful, and that a soft answer can turn away wrath.

ATC will continue to take actions in the name of social justice for our culture, ancestors, family and friends. We hope you will be able to join us in our events, or visit with us to learn more about what we do and what we hope to accomplish.

Alternative Spring Break

The American Indian Center is co-sponsoring with the Volunteer Connection Office an alternative spring break trip on March 4th-12th, 2007, to the Lame Deer Reservation, MT where SCSU faculty, staff and students will be working with the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation. This community service trip will provide a unique opportunity for students and faculty/staff to interact as partners in social change. The goals are to foster personal growth through raised awareness of social and environmental issues and injustices, a better understanding of the relationships between group participants, the community, people at the host sites, and an provide experiential learning environment that is fun and educational. Co-leaders Tessa Scheffler and Katie Hill will be working with Dr. Jeanne Lacourt, Ethnic Studies Chair and Jim Knutson-Kolodzne, AIC director in planning and facilitating the trip. The leadership team will be recruiting up to 14 participants during the spring semester.

Interested SCSU students can obtain an application from the CSOLD office in the Atwood Memorial Center or on-line from: http://www.stcloudstate.edu/volunteer/programs.asp
**AIC Mentorship Program:**

This fall the American Indian Center’s Mentorship Program has gotten together as a group a couple of times. In October we had our first meeting at the SCSU Atwood Recreation Center where we went bowling before coming back to the Center for pizza and conversation. For the second meeting we got together at the AIC for dinner and a movie. The mentorship program is still in its infancy, but with time we hope that more students will take advantage of the opportunity to participate in this program. This is a student mentorship program meaning that we have continuing American Indian students mentor incoming first year American Indian students. We want first year students to know that they always have someone available besides staff and faculty to talk to regarding any concerns or questions about their time here at St. Cloud State University.

![Image of June Sayers]

My name is June Sayers. I am Red Lake Ojibwe and Ho-Chunk. I am from Duluth, MN where my family still lives. I am working on my second bachelors, majoring in meteorology and hydrology. My first degree is in General Studies with a minor in German from the University of Idaho. I want to continue on to graduate school in either hydrology or atmospheric sciences. I would like to work for a private environmental company that will give me the flexibility to help the local and Native community. I enjoy both meteorology and hydrology, and feel that I can contribute to my Native community as a student, and in the future, as a professional earth scientist.

I love bicycle racing, road and mountain bikes, I have been racing for 8 years. I enjoy maintaining a healthy lifestyle through bikes. I enjoy other outdoor activities like fishing, swimming, and cross country skiing. Other hobbies are watching baseball, drinking black coffee, and writing.

This is my second semester here at St. Cloud State University. I am enjoying it so far. I am involved with All Tribes Council, a Native American student organization. We put on a pow wow every spring, attend conferences, hold an Indian taco sale, and deal with issues related to Native Americans such as the Indian mascot. It is a great group to be a part of and very rewarding. We have good laughs, work hard and we do what’s right.

I am also part of the American Indian Center’s Mentorship Program. It’s a program where Native students here at SCSU mentor other new and/or younger Native students. It is a great opportunity for these students to utilize the knowledge of another student who’s been through similar situations and utilizing the resources of the American Indian Center.
SCHOLARSHIPS
For American Indian students at St. Cloud State University
All applications should be sent to the American Indian Center at SCSU

AMERICAN INDIAN ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP
($500 Annually)
For students enrolled at St. Cloud State University with a minimum of 12 credits and in good standing with a GPA of 2.5 or better. Preference will be given to St. Cloud State University American Indian Students. American Indian alumni of St. Cloud State University support this scholarship. It is their interest to collectively build the principle to create an endowed scholarship.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP
($500 Annually)
This is an active, annual scholarship. The American Indian Center accepts applications and determines awards. Selection criteria for applicants: Must be an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe and an entering student at St. Cloud State University; may be a new entering student at any class year level; must be intended to major in teacher education; may intend to teach at any level- pre kindergarten through high school. Preference will be given to those who plan to teach in schools with high populations of American Indian children.

HENRY M. & J. ELEANOR MEYER/JOSEPH M. & THERESA L. HELTEMES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
($500 Annually)
This is an endowed scholarship founded by a first generation college graduate. Preference for this scholarship is given to persons with financial need, who are of American Indian ancestry and who are involved with campus organizations.

THE JOYCE AND MARVIN HOLMGREN SCHOLARSHIP FOR NATIVE AMERICANS
($500 Annually)
This is an endowed scholarship. The Financial Aid Office determines awards. Selection criteria require that the student: verify enrollment in a tribe or is at least one quarter Native American and is from either the U.S. or Canada (there are no other tribal restrictions); must be eligible for unconditional admittance to St. Cloud State University; must maintain scholastic average of “C” or better; must carry at least 12 credits per term. It is the donors preference that the award be given to a first year student and that the award follow that student as long as s/he is enrolled in good standing at St. Cloud State University and is in accordance with the criteria defined in the scholarship.

JAMES MARSH SCHOLARSHIP
($500 Annually)
This is an active annual scholarship. The American Indian Center accepts applications and determines awards. Selection criteria for applicants: must be a descendent from a federally recognized tribe, must be a student enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits in good standing with a GPA of 2.5 or better. This scholarship honors the American Indian Center director’s grandfather.

All applications are due April 2nd, 2007

Applications for scholarships may be printed off the AIC website: www.stcloudstate.edu/aic or picked up at the SCSU American Indian Center.
Winter
2007 Calendar

January (2007)
11th, Thursday: Tribal Education Directors Meeting
(1-3 pm, Atwood)

February (2007)
8th, Thursday: American Indian Advisory Board Mtg.
(1-3 pm, Atwood)

March (2007)
5th - 9th: Alternative Spring Break (Lame Deer, MT)
March 19, 2007 - Monday: AIC Art Show Reception
(AIC, 5 pm - 7 pm)

Ojibwe Language table: Every Wednesday at 6:30 pm (AIC: unless SCSU is on a holiday or break)

Cultural Project Night: (events available on the website and subject to change)
Jan. 8th (Sat.) 10:00 am: Dreamcatchers and keychains
Feb. 26th (Mon.) 2:00 pm: Storytelling (venue TBA)
March 17th (Sat.) 10:00 am: Tobacco Pouches

“Upcoming” Minnesota Tribal Education Summit

In an effort towards self-reliance, this call within Indian country, is for a task force/planning committee for the 1st Minnesota Tribal Education Summit. Ideally, 20 people are needed to serve on the planning committee. There is need to achieve participation from all 11 tribal communities and to obtain a contact from each tribe of those who would like to participate. In addition a “call for teachers” (both American Indian educators & non-native teachers) who are successful in working with native children, to share their best practices. Ideas for presentations can also be submitted that will keep the summit exciting, interesting, and provide hands-on, interactive learning, sensory & physical activities. To submit ideas, contact information or to request additional information contact:
Joan LaVoy, Education Director,
White Earth Tribal Council P.O. Box 418 White Earth, MN  56591

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
http://www.stcloudstate.edu/aic