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Harvesting Hope Project

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Harvesting Hope: Indigenous Undergraduate Narratives to Enhance Opportunities for College Enrollment and Persistence

Summary

Harvesting Hope is a scaffolded, multi-disciplinary project that aims to engage Native American undergraduate students in crafting and sharing their stories of Indigeneity, belonging and resilience as they pertain to college persistence. Thus far, five students from South Dakota State University have crafted and presented their writings and performances as the foundations to create individual, original mini-documentaries expressing their unique, identity-based personal narratives. These documentaries, which were presented at the National Communication Association annual convention in the fall of 2023, showcase the student creators' Indigenous brilliances, connecting their creative writing to cultural ways of knowing including jewelry making, painting, and dance. Their stories of perseverance create contributions to public discourse echoing the idea that “[t]here is no ‘generic American Indian.’” (WoLakota Project, 2018, p. 3). Currently, this initial cohort are being trained as researchers and mentors, learning and applying Indigenous methodologies to measure the impacts of their work and to pass on their experiences and tools to mentor a new cohort of Native American students. We look forward to showcasing their work more broadly with the general public, discerning and creating the most culturally appropriate ways to archive their work while maintaining their intellectual property rights, and continuing dialogues with a variety of stakeholders within tribal communities as well as those who work to ally with them.

WoLakota Project. (2018). *Oceti Sakowin essential understandings and standards*.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r7B7laATo44lGEEFxaCpnLLGtN2r2iXI/view>

Outcomes to Date

- *Denotes undergraduate student team member
- ** denotes graduate student
- ***denotes SDSU alum
- ****denotes community partner

Student Documentaries (each may be made available for individual viewing with permission)

***Carol A. Glaus**, Wokini Scholar; Lambda Pi Eta member; Undergraduate student majoring in Psychology, South Dakota State University; Member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation

- Documentary Project Title: *Meaning of My Identity: My struggle of being half Native American and half Filipina as a young adult working toward a career* (includes original creative writing and paintings)

Carol Glaus is a Wokini Scholar; Lambda Pi Eta member; and South Dakota State University undergraduate student majoring in Psychology. Ms. Glaus is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, and her film depicts the connections between her intersectional, Indigenous identity and her artistic expression through creative writing and paintings.

***Lindsay Hammer**, Associate of Arts in Marketing; Wokini Scholar; Lambda Pi Eta member; Undergraduate student majoring in Communication Studies, South Dakota State University; Member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate; Fancy Shawl Dancer

- Documentary Project Title: *Passing Culture to Future Generations and Healing through Dance* (includes original creative writing, fancy shawl dancing, and mixed media)

Lindsay Hammer holds an Associate of Arts in Marketing. She is a Wokini Scholar; Lambda Pi Eta member; and undergraduate student majoring in Communication Studies at South Dakota State University. Ms. Hammer is an enrolled member of Sisseton Wahpeton, and her film depicts her personal and intergenerational healing through creative writing as well as her commitment to traditional, fancy shawl dancing.

***Mikayla Janis**, Wokini Scholar; Undergraduate student majoring in Nutrition and Dietetics; Lineal decedent of the Inhonktawan Yankton

- Documentary Project Title: *Finding Myself, exploring my ancestry through bead work and jewelry making despite not outwardly native* (includes original creative writing and bead work/jewelry making)

Mikayla Janis is an undergraduate student and Wokini Scholar majoring in Nutrition and Dietetics at South Dakota State University and Lineal decedent of the Inhonktawan Yankton. Ms. Janis employs the film genre to showcase how she has learned traditional beading and jewelry-making techniques in exploring her ancestry. These depictions of her journey are accompanied by her original, creative narratives.

***Dallas Kelso**, Wokini Scholar; Undergraduate student majoring in English Education and American Indian and Indigenous Studies, South Dakota State University; Oglala Sioux Tribe member

- Documentary Project Title: *Hope for Tomorrow through Perseverance of Tribal Arts* (includes original creative writing, quilling, and painting)

Dallas Kelso is an undergraduate Wokini Scholar majoring in English Education and American Indian and Indigenous Studies at South Dakota State University expresses how her Oglala Sioux Tribe membership impacts her identity and advocacy. Her creative writing and painting skills are showcased.

***Whitley Olinger**, Wokini Scholar; Undergraduate student majoring in Interior Design, South Dakota State University; Lineal Descendant of Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe; 8th Generation descendant of Chief Little Crow

- Documentary Project Title: *I've got Questions: Exploring through writing questions I've asked myself the last year leaving home and finding my identity as someone who is passionate about my ancestry but is not outwardly native* (includes original creative writing).

Whitley Olinger is a South Dakota State University undergraduate Wokini scholar, a Lineal Descendant of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, and an 8th Generation descendant of Chief Little Crow. Through Ms. Olinger's documentary, she grapples with the questions and frustrations she has experienced in her exploration of her Indigenous heritage.

Refereed Conference Presentations

Hunter, K. M., Jensen, A. I., ****Barondeau, T. (Lakota writing mentor), Daily, R., Barber, H., ***His Horse Is Thunder, W., *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., *Hunter, S., *Janis, M., *Kelso, D., & *Olinger, W. (2023, November 17). *There is no "generic American Indian": Student*

documentaries exploring personal journeys of Indigeneity, belonging, and resilience.
[Documentary/Performance panel]. National Communication Assoc., National Harbor, MD.

Hunter, K. M., Jensen, A., *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., *Hunter, S. L., *Janis, M., *Kelso, D., & *Olinger, W. (2022, November 18). *Place, place, and PLACE: Indigenous undergraduate students' performative explorations of their connections among Indigeneity, belonging, and resilience.* [Performance panel]. National Communication Assoc., New Orleans, LA.

Durkin, L., Hunter, K. M., **Berndt, V., *Catlett-Ausorn, M., *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., ****Moore, E., & ****Okroi, S. (2021, November). *A transformational journey toward Indigenizing community-based participatory scholarship.* [Pre-conference workshop]. National Communication Assoc., Seattle, WA.

Invited Presentations

Jensen, A., *Hammer, L., *Janis, M., *Kelso, D., & Hunter, K. M. (2023, Sept.). *No Generic Indian.* [Performance panel]. South Dakota Festival of Books, Deadwood, SD.

Hunter, K. M., Jensen, A. I., *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., *Janis, M., (2023, July). *Enhancing culturally responsive teaching.* [Conference workshop] Speech Communication Association of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD.

Jensen, A., *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., *Janis, M., *Kelso, D., & *Olinger, W., & Hunter, K. (2023, March). *What our students wish we knew about culturally responsive teaching.* Workshop delivered for faculty through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at South Dakota State University.

Jensen, A. I., *Glaus, C., *Kelso, D., & Hunter, K. M. (2022, Sept.). *Place, place, and PLACE: Indigenous undergraduate students' performative explorations of their connections among Indigeneity, belonging, and resilience.* [Performance panel]. South Dakota Festival of Books, Brookings, SD.

Hunter, K. M., Jensen, A. I., ****Barondeau, T. (Lakota writing mentor), *Glaus, C., *Hammer, L., *Hunter, S., *Janis, M., *Kelso, D., & *Olinger, W. (2022, Sept). *Enhancing culturally responsive teaching: Engaging with students' narrative and performative expressions of Indigeneity, belonging, and resilience.* [Conference workshop] Speech Communication Association of South Dakota, Brookings, SD.

Invited Showcases:

Wokini Challenge Grant project showcase event, November 2023.

Wokini Challenge Grant project showcase event, January 2024.

Externally-funded proposals:

Jensen, A., Folsom, J. J., Lounsbury, N., & Hunter, K. M. *Harvesting Hope: Indigenous Undergraduate Researchers Measuring Impacts of their Self-Narrative Documentaries on Peers' College Enrollment and Persistence Beliefs*. National Science Foundation EPSCoR RRI Track 1 Undergraduate Research Experience Grant, National Scope, \$117,555. Fully Funded. (2024).

Hunter, K. M., Jensen, A., Daily, R., His Horse Is Thunder, W. *Harvesting Hope: Decolonizing Research on Native American Students' College Persistence*. Waterhouse Family Institute for the Study of Communication and Society, Private Foundation, International Scope, \$10,000.00. Fully Funded. (2023-2024). 12% Acceptance Rate.

Hunter, K. M. *Harnessing Hope: Decolonizing Research on Native American Students' College Persistence*. Waterhouse Family Institute for the Study of Communication and Society, Private Foundation, International Scope, \$9960.00. Fully Funded. (2019-2020). 19% Acceptance Rate. Completed.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=542703717861405&set=a.129406719191109>

Internally-funded proposals:

Hunter, K. M. *Harnessing Hope: Decolonizing Research on Native American Students' College Persistence*. Wokini Challenge Grant, \$6600. Fully Funded. (2020-2023). Completed.

Jensen, A., *Collaborative Indigenous Student Panel Presentation*. Griffith Award, \$2655. Fully Funded. (2023). Completed.

Funding Sources to Date

Thank you to our generous funding sources!

Listed in chronological order of funded proposals/requests from oldest to newest

- 1) The Waterhouse Family Institute
 - Provided our initial seed grant (\$9960, 2019) which bought us our first digital videorecorder and paid student wages.
 - A subsequent Waterhouse grant to develop documentaries from the students' narratives and creative presentations (\$10,000, 2023).
- 2) SDSU's Wokini Initiative (\$6600, 2020)
 - Second funder to help fully launch the project, making vital contributions to student wages that empowered our relationship building in recruitment and fair compensation for students.
 - Funds allowed us to provide additional equipment.
- 3) The SDSU College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
 - Provided over \$25,000 toward student travel for these students to present at state and national academic conferences in 2022 and 2023
- 4) The SDSU School of Communication and Journalism

- Provided thousands of dollars toward faculty and student travel beginning with the 2021 National Communication Association annual convention and through two additional NCA conferences (2022 and 2023).
- 5) The SDSU School of English and Interdisciplinary Studies
 - Contributed to faculty and student travel for the 2022 and 2023 National Communication Association annual convention.
 - 6) Griffith Foundation
 - Ensured all involved faculty could travel to the 2023 National Communication Association annual convention.
 - 7) National Science Foundation
 - EPSCoR RRI Track 1 Undergraduate Research Experience Grant (\$117,555; 2024)
 - Enabling the current phase of our work (Funding period: February-August, 2024)
 - Centering the five original student documentarians as mentors for a new cohort of Native American undergraduate digital storytellers.
 - Teaching them skills of Indigenous research methodologies to test the impacts of their work.

Additional Funding Sought:

SDSU RCSA Challenge Grant (submitted 2024, pending decision)

Karen McComish Foundation (submitted 2024, pending decision)

Harvesting Hope Project Mentors and Co-Investigators

Within South Dakota State University

Karla M. Hunter, Correspondent, Karla.Hunter@sdstate.edu, Professor, School of Communication and Journalism

Amber I. Jensen, Senior Lecturer, School of English and Interdisciplinary Studies

Rocky Dailey, Associate Professor, School of Communication and Journalism

Hayden Barber, Assistant Professor, School of Communication and Journalism

Jamie Folsom, Assistant Professor of American Indian and Indigenous Studies, School of American and Global Studies

Wiyaka His Horse Is Thunder, Director, American Indian Student Center

Paige Cain, Program Coordinator, American Indian Student Center

Sirrina Martinez, Graduate Assistant, School of Communication and Journalism

Nicole Lounsbery, Director, Graduate School

Community Mentors and Resources

Tasiyagnunpa Barondeau, Oglala Sioux Tribe member; Writer, Consultant and Cultural Interpreter

- Executive Director of Oceti Sakowin Writers Society
- Oglala and Itazipco Lakota (enrolled OST) and 6th generation South Dakota settler descendant

Morgan Catlett-Ausborn, tribal mentor and licensed therapist

- Provides culturally relevant mental health resources for the students including equine therapy.

LaRoyce Batchelor, Faculty, University of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

- Indigenous scholar and Indigenous scholarship mentor