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Wokini Initiative: The New Beginnings Newsletter

2-2022

The New Beginnings Newsletter, February 2022

Wokini Initiative

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THE NEW BEGINNINGS NEWSLETTER



SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

**WOKINI
INITIATIVE**
A NEW BEGINNING
South Dakota State University®



Tanyáŋ Yahí: Welcome, Sarah Bad Warrior-Vrooman!

The Wokini Initiative at South Dakota State University is excited to welcome Sarah Bad Warrior-Vrooman as the Larson Family Endowed Director of Wokini and Tribal Relations. Having served previously as the Coordinator for American Indian Student Recruitment at SDSU, Sarah is ready to take on her new role.

[Read about Sarah](#)

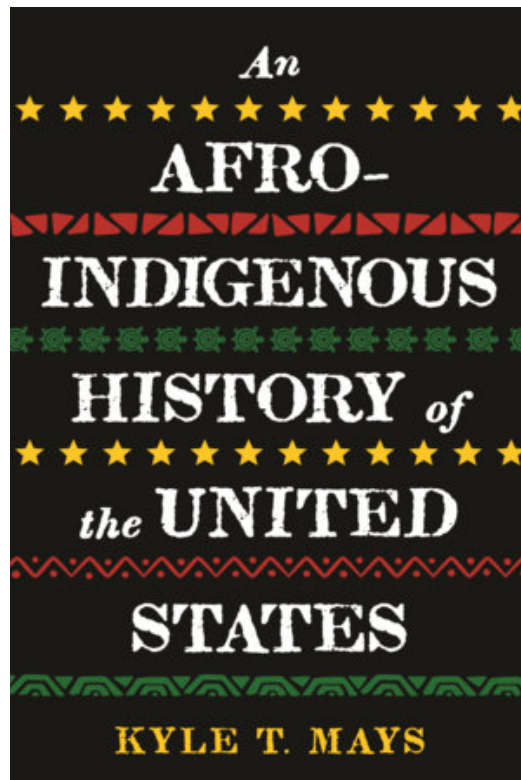
[Read about Wokini](#)

Upcoming Events

- AISES Meetings: Every Tuesday, 7:00 PM, AISC Lounge

- AISA Meetings: Every Tuesday, 5:00 PM, AISC Lounge
- Wahanpi Wednesday: March 9 & 23, April 13 & 27, May 4, AISC
- AISC Popcorn Fridays: Every Friday, All Day, AISC Lounge
- Midterms Week Activities, February 28 - March 4, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, AISC
- AISES Regional Conference, March 18 - 20, AISC
- Wokini Scholars Meetings, March 22, April 19, 7:00 PM, AISC Classroom
- Philosophy of the Lakota Bow & Arrow with Joseph Marshall, 5:00 - 7:00 PM, AISC Classroom
 - March 30 - 31
 - April 20 - 21
- J.White Exhibition, February 25 - April 4, Brookings Arts Council
- Jerry Fogg Exhibition Native Soul Art: 11 Degrees of Tatanka, November 24, 2021 - April 14, 2022, South Dakota Art Museum
- AISA Annual Wacipi, April 9 - 10, 2022, Frost Arena
- Elder-in-Residence - Beverly Warne, April 11 - 13, AISC
- Joseph Marshall Keynote & Workshop Presentation, April 21, Woster Celebration Hall
- Native Graduate Honoring Ceremony, May 6, AISC

Book of the Month



"Beginning with pre-Revolutionary America and moving into the movement for Black lives and contemporary Indigenous activism, Afro-Indigenous historian Kyle T. Mays argues that the foundations of the US are rooted in antiblackness and settler colonialism, and that these parallel oppressions continue into the present. He explores how Black and Indigenous peoples have always resisted and struggled for freedom, sometimes together, and sometimes apart. Mays compels us to rethink both our history as well as contemporary debates and to imagine the powerful possibilities of Afro-Indigenous solidarity."

--Penguin Random House

Dakota Word of the Month

waciŋtaŋka | perseverance

Lakota Word of the Month

wówakiš'ake | resiliency



**Big Eagle Awarded
F.O. Butler Award
for
Excellence in Service**

Valeriah Big Eagle of the Ihanktonwan Dakota Oyate was awarded the F.O. Butler Award for Excellence in Service during the annual Celebration of Faculty Excellence on February 22, 2022. Big Eagle serves as the Diversity Outreach and Engagement Coordinator for SDSU's Native American Nursing Education Center (NANEC).

Big Eagle was nominated for the award by Kathy Labonte, NANEC Mentor.

According to Big Eagle, her work reflects her traditional way of life. Big Eagle says, "It's helping our indigenous relatives heal using our ceremonies, our traditional healing modalities, and so it's different because most of the time when it comes to treatment programs or anything it's evidence-based practice. And for us it's practice-based evidence. Our relatives have been using our way to heal us and to guide us for centuries. So that's what I try to do daily. It's just being a good relative as best as I can. A lot of that power comes from our ancestors, my ancestors, and being with Bev [Warne, NANEC Mentor,] and Kathy daily. They definitely have an impact on me. I'm being empowered, and I know that and acknowledge that. I am very blessed and honored to have that privilege and to be in the Sacred Black Hills. I feel that constantly. You can feel that power just being here in the Black Hills. It's for our children who may not have voices yet and for future generations to come. And for those children who passed away at the boarding schools who never got their voices heard. That's where all of my energy comes from to do this work. That's why I'm not afraid to speak up and do this work."

According to Big Eagle, she hopes that her receiving this award helps give hope to young indigenous people. She says, "A lot of it is people need to see themselves represented in those spaces that weren't necessarily made for us. To get that award and be in that space, at first it felt like imposter syndrome. But then I remembered, and I pulled on my ancestors all of the teachings and all the spirits of the past and for our future generations. I was like I do deserve to be in this space. It wasn't made for me but I'm here so that others feel like they have a sense of belonging in this space, and they can see themselves receiving those types of prestigious awards. I hope to inspire and give hope to other indigenous scholars and people. These spaces are made for us as well."

Congratulations, Val!

Wokini Challenge Grant Spotlight

Wokini Challenge Grant Request for Proposals FY2023

The Wokini Initiative at South Dakota State University seeks proposals for innovative research and/or practices that will enhance American Indian student recruitment and/or retention on campus, promote leadership development for American Indian students, and/or develop collaborations with tribal community members. All SDSU employees are eligible to apply for these highly competitive challenge grants.

Grant proposals are due March 14, 2022 by 11:59 PM CT. Refer to the RFP, which is available on InfoReady, for the application guidelines and timeline:

<https://sdstate.infoready4.com/>.

Please contact Nicole Biever, Wokini assessment and grants specialist, with any questions via email nicole.biever@sdstate.edu or phone (605) 688-4690.

Read the RFP



Wokini Initiative, South Dakota State University, Morrill Hall 119, Brookings, SD 57007, 605-688-4030

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