Three Sisters Garden: Growing into a Native American Center of Excellence

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Once upon a time....

- Scattered programs that support Native American students
  - Scholarships
  - Student Support Services
  - Special Admissions
- Existed until grant money went away.
- Some students graduated, went to graduate school, others did not.
But...

- Some quit with only their research to complete
- Some had family obligations and didn’t return
- Some had to have full time jobs to support their families
- Some did not get internships
- Some did not pass licensure exams

So it was decided to grow a Three Sisters Garden...

- Culture -- The Corn, The Backbone
- Spirituality – The Squash, Chokes out the Weeds
- Education – The Beans, Intertwine with the supports of the corn.
In the beginning...the preparation
2006-2007

Prepare the soil:

- NRCNAA had only Native faculty & students

Projects to work on

- NARCH funded project
- GLS Campus Suicide Prevention Project

Funding to support students

- NARCH GRA (2007)

2007 Native Faculty

Educational Research
Passed 2007
Research Award

Counseling Psychology
Began 2004

Educational Research
Left 2008
CCCC Academic Dean
In the beginning...the preparation

2006
- NRCNAA with 2 Native PhDs grown from GRAs
- NRCNAA with 2 Native GRAs
- NARCH project with 1 Native PhD & 1 doctoral GRA

2007
- NRCNAA with 1 PhD & 1 GRA
- 1 NARCH with 1 PhD & doctoral GRA
- 1 GLS Campus Suicide Prevention doctoral GRA

2008
- 1 GLS doctoral GRA
- 1 NARCH masters GRA
- 1 NARCH Post-baccalaureate RA
- 1 Undergraduate McNair Scholar

Late 2008 Native Staff

National Resource Center on Native American Aging

Director  Project Coordinator  Research Assistant
The Planting
Begin Work with INBRE
Late 2008

- One-on-One teaching & mentoring
- Beginning to build infrastructure at tribal college
  - CREATE Program (Community Research Education and Tribal Empowerment)
- Students begin to bring others
  - Summer Undergraduate Research at UND

Growth
2009-2012

INBRE years

- Tribal College CREATE program
- Summer Undergraduate Research
- Presentations/Posters
  - National & Regional Conference presentations
  - Preparation for graduate school
American Indian Health Research Conference
October 2010

Research Experiences For UND Undergraduates

2010-2012
2010-2011
2010-2011
2009
2009
2012
2008-2009
Presentation
2009
2010-2012
2010-2011
2010-2011
2009
2009
Native Health Research Team
Spring 2011

Mature
2012-Present

- Native American Center of Excellence Grant (Health Resources and Services Administration Bureau of Health Professions) written & funded
- Fills gaps in current programs
- Expands services to Native American behavioral health students
- Begins recruiting high school students & ends with licensed professionals.
The Harvest
2008-Present

- Doctoral Students (38), Masters students (20)
- Undergraduates (24)
- Graduates (10 PhD, 6 MAs, 10 BAs)
- Dissertations, Theses (16)
- Posters at Conferences (140)
- Manuscripts Published (5)
- Chapters Published (3)
- Abstracts Published (29)
PhDs

2011 PhD – Mandaree, ND
Educational Leadership

2011 UND Faculty
Counseling Psychology

2012 PhD – Bad River, WI
Counseling Psychology

2012 PhD – UND
Teaching & Learning-
Research Methodologies

Master’s Degrees

2010

2010

2010

No Photo

No Photo

2012

2013
Senior Thesis/McNair Scholars

- Psychology/Indian Studies Major
- Non-Profit Minor
- Senior
- McNair Scholar
- Senior Thesis: Evaluation of GoodHealthTV

- Community Nutrition/ Indian Studies Major
- Junior
- McNair Scholar
- Senior Thesis: Examination of Native Diets and Activity from 1850-2010

Bachelor’s Degrees

2010
2010
2012

2012
2013
2013
Native Health Research Team
Spring 2011

Native Health Research Team
Fall 2012
Volunteer Post-Docs

Fall 2011
Wendy M.K. Peters, PhD
Transpersonal Psychology

INBRE
North Dakota
IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence

SGCoE Key Components

- Recruiting/Transition/Retention
  - Aazhogan
  - Student Success Program
  - Peer Mentors
- Clinical Integrated Care Placements
  - Red Lake IHS
  - Spirit Lake IHS
- APA Approved Pre-doctoral Internship Slots
- Faculty Fellowships
- Native Health Research Team
  - TURTLE
  - Fellowship, Dissertation, Thesis support
- Spiritual and cultural learning and support
  - Ceremonies, language table, etc.
What is a Three Sisters Garden?

Culture

Education

Spirituality

The Three Sisters
Corn, Beans, Squash
Culture-Creating a Family Environment

- Supportive - I know you can do it! I expect you to do it!
- Nurturing
  - Coffee, tea, water
  - Microwave, refrigerator
  - Fruit
  - Hugs
  - You are not alone in your educational journey!
- Encouraging
  - Together in one space
  - Someone to talk to when discouraged/uncertain
- Help when needed
  - Statistician
  - Reference Librarian
  - Technical Writer
  - Skills training
  - Weekly research team meetings

Spirituality – Chokes the Weeds

- Ceremonies
- Drum & Singing
- Cleansing and Healing
  - Positive activities
  - Fun
  - Family
  - Food
Education

- Classes
- Research
- Clinical Placements
- Internships
- Fellowships
- Licensure Preparation

The Three Sisters

It was said that the earth began when “Sky Woman” who lived in the upper world peered through a hole in the sky and fell through to an endless sea. The animals saw her coming, so they took the soil from the bottom of the sea and spread it onto the back of a giant turtle to provide a safe place for her to land. This “Turtle Island” is now what we call North America.

Sky woman had become pregnant before she fell. When she landed, she gave birth to a daughter. When the daughter grew into a young woman, she also became pregnant (by the West Wind). She died while giving birth to twin boys. Sky Woman buried her daughter in the “new earth.” From her grave grew three sacred plants—corn, beans, and squash. These plants provided food for her sons, and later, for all of humanity. These special gifts ensured the survival of the people.
For more information:

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