

21st Annual Virtual Conference
**NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN CHILD
WELFARE & WELLNESS CONFERENCE**
FEB 16-17, 2022



ICWA

THE HEALING JOURNEY CONTINUES





FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL TODAY! (701) 255-6374 NATIVE AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE

TRAININGS AVAILABLE

Extending our Families through Unity: Train-The-Trainer (20 hours, 2.5 days)

Native American Foster Parent Training (30 hours, 3.5 days)

Our Native American children deserve to have the best care possible and this training prepares foster parents to do just that. It is one-of-a-kind and user-friendly curriculum based on traditions and culture of American Indian people. The curriculum provides helpful hints and tools for use by foster parents to solve problems in their everyday lives as caregivers. Our Train-the-Trainer workshop trains your staff so that they are able to train your future foster parents. Curriculum includes two (2) trainer manual, one (1) parent handbook, and one (1) poster.

Wraparound in Indian Country: The Ways of the People Are Who We Are

The wraparound concept is both old and new in Indian Country. While the wraparound process is a new way for professionals to work with children and families in crisis, the practice of calling on one's relatives and the community for support has been in Indian communities for hundreds of years. The training module is an adaptation of a national training which incorporates Native American perspectives and best practices learned by tribes. (3.5 days)

WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE

Cultural Competency and Communication

Is cultural competency ever fully achieved or does the mere term bring up feelings of anxiety? No one can be expected to be fully competent in all cultures; it is just not possible. However, we can conquer the anxiety of the unknown by serving our curiosities and reaching across the table to understand those with whom we work. In this session we explore our own cultures and how it impacts our interactions with others, we discuss what it means to be culturally competent, become comfortable with being uncomfortable, and discuss how to nurture a sense of lifelong learning about the people around us. (4 hours)

Historical Trauma in Native America:

Learning and Healing from Historical Trauma

Have you ever wondered why Native American children are over-represented in foster care? Why a disproportionate number of Indian children are being sent to institutions due to behavioral problems? Have you ever wondered why Native American rates of suicide, depression and other health problems are so high? This training session examines the concept of historical trauma and effects on present-day Indian communities. Discussion will address how to best serve Native clients with the understanding of historical trauma. (4 hours)

ICWA QEW Training

The goal of this workshop is aimed at helping Tribally Affiliated individuals become Qualified Expert Witnesses in Indian Child Welfare cases according to the Indian Child Welfare Act. Once you complete the training you would be placed on a statewide Tribally authorized QEW list. We have not had compliance with ICWA in the state regarding QEW's, most cases proceed without them due lack of understanding regarding the law. We are seeking to have Tribal representation in all ICWA cases regarding removal of a child. (2 day)

**“LET US PUT OUR MINDS
TOGETHER AND SEE WHAT
LIFE WE CAN MAKE
FOR OUR CHILDREN.
– SITTING BULL**



21ST ANNUAL
VIRTUAL
**NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN
CHILD WELFARE &
WELLNESS CONFERENCE**

**“THE HEALING JOURNEY
CONTINUES”**

FEBRUARY 16-17, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPONSORS.....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
PROCLAMATION.....	5
WELCOME	6
CONFERENCE AGENDA.....	7
PRESENTERS PROFILE	8-10
SESSION DESCRIPTIONS.....	11-12
GENERAL INFORMATION	14
INDIGENOUS HAIR.....	15

ADVERTISEMENTS

NATI WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS.....	IFC
NATI AD	13

Sponsors / Donations

ND Department of Human Services,
Division of Children & Family Services

ND Supreme Court,
Court Improvement Project



Standing Rock Sioux Tribe,
Child Protection Services



Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa,
Children & Families Services



Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation Social Services



Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services



Baymont Inn & Suites

Acknowledgements



Native American
Training Institute
3333 E Broadway Ave,
Suite 1210
Bismarck, ND

(701)255-6374
www.NATIND.org

A special thanks to the Conference Planning Committee, NATI Staff, and NATI Board of Directors

2022 North Dakota Indian Child Welfare & Wellness Planning Committee Members

Anita Charging, Intake Specialist/Social Worker, Good Road Recovery Center, MHA Nation

Anthony Kozojed, Community Supervisor, ND Department of Juvenile Services

Dereck Stonefish, Training Coordinator, NATI

Andrew Mokena Jr, Tribal Liaison, NATI

Diana Weber, Family Preservation Services Administrator, ND Department of Human Services

Harmony Bercier, ICWA Training Coordinator, UND Children & Family Services

Heather Traynor, CIP Committee Research Analyst, ND Supreme Court

Jessi Leneagh, ICWA Partnership Trainer/Coordinator

Leah McCloud, ICWA Family Preservationist, NATI

Marie Martin, ICWA Director, Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe

Marilyn Poitra, ICWA Director, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians

Gillian Plenty Chief, Director, NATI

Rebecca Grey Bull, ICWA Director, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Sloan Henry, ICWA Family Preservationist, NATI

Vincent Gillette, Director, Sioux County Social Services

Vincent Roehr, Director, Child Safety Center, MHA Nation

NATI Executive Board of Directors

Allyson Bartlett, Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services Director

Danielle Poitra, Turtle Mountain Child Welfare & Family Services Director

Nicole Poitra, Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara Nation Social Services Director

Melissa White Bull, Standing Rock Child Protection Services

NATI Advisory Board

Sandra Bercier

Stephanie DeCoteau

Kathy Felix

Susan Paulson

Don Schmid

Elton Spotted Horse

History of NATI

The Native American Training Institute was established in 1995, through a partnership with the ND DHS Children & Family Services, ND Indian Affairs Commission, Casey Family Programs, and the four ND tribal welfare agencies to address their common training needs and to enhance their capacity to improve outcomes for Native children and families they serve. NATI is a 501(3)(c) non-profit agency and is tribally-chartered by the Three Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation). Throughout their 27 years history, NATI has grown to provide training and technical assistance to tribal, Alaskan and First Nation communities throughout the United States and Canada. Partnerships include statewide, regional and national outreach and technical assistance. For more information about their services, find us on Facebook under Native American Training Institute, @nativeinstituteND

NATIVE AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE
Celebrating 27 Years

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

PROCLAMATION

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT AND WELLNESS WEEK FEBRUARY 13-19, 2022

WHEREAS, North Dakota is blessed with a multitude of children and families — an essential part of the cultural, social and spiritual fabric of our state; and

WHEREAS, strong families are at the core of strong communities; and


WHEREAS, preserving the cultural heritage of Native American families and children is important for the future of our state; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Child Welfare Act, passed by the United States Congress in 1978, emphasizes the importance of Native American families being involved in the decisions and policies that affect their children; and

WHEREAS, it is important for state and tribal agencies to continue to work together to ensure a future of hope and opportunity for all North Dakota children and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim
February 13-19, 2022, INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT AND WELLNESS WEEK
in the State of North Dakota.




Doug Burgum
GOVERNOR

ATTEST: 
Alvin A. Jaeger
SECRETARY OF STATE



Welcome to the 21th Annual North Dakota Indian Child Welfare & Wellness Conference!!!

The Native American Training Institute (NATI) and ND ICWA Conference Committee are honored to welcome all participants, presenters and honored guests to our virtual conference for 2022. As we navigate our way through these unprecedented times, we want to acknowledge the desire to meet in person, however we have a social responsibility where health and safety is paramount, so we will make the most of our current situation, and would like encourage everyone to be as interactive as possible during scheduled events!

Together we continue the work toward improvement and implementation of best practice models through groundbreaking training and state level system changes. The State of North Dakota has invited tribal representation to the table to be sure Indigenous voices and concerns are contextualized, attempting to combat the epidemic levels of Native children in system care. It has been some of these progressive changes that have driven the theme for this year's conference; ***"ICWA – The Healing Journey Continues"*** as we strive at NATI to be a representative voice while engaging forward thinking and design through innovative programs and training.

We would like to wish each and every one of you a very prosperous year looking forward with an abundance of love, happiness, joy and health!! We at NATI hope you find this years information not only insightful, but useful, driving inquisitiveness towards further learning of issues involving Indigenous people and children in all aspects!

Líla Wópila Ečíčiye!

Respectfully,

Gillian Plenty Chief - Native American Training Institute Director
Native American Training Institute Staff
ND ICWW Conference Committee

Conference Agenda

Conference Day 1 – Wednesday, February 16, 2022

8:30am - 9:00am	Welcome, Opening Prayer, Drum Flag Song
9:00am - 11:15am	Opening Keynote Address: ICWA 101 - Judge William Thorne
11:30am - 12:30pm	PERSONAL STORY: - Susan Paulson
12:30pm - 1:30pm	LUNCH
1:30pm - 3:00pm	CHILD WELFARE: Motivational Interviewing: Supporting Reasons to Change - Melanie & Todd Sage
3:15pm - 4:45pm	WELLNESS: Reawakening Warriors - Dereck Stonefish
4:45pm - 5:00pm	1st STAR QUILT DRAWING (<i>must be present to win</i>)
6:00pm - 8:00pm	ETHICS: Many Layers of Child Welfare - Deb DeWitz
	2nd STAR QUILT DRAWING (<i>must be present to win</i>)

Conference Day 2 – Thursday, February 17, 2022

8:30am - 9:00am	Welcome and Opening Prayer
9:00am - 10:30am	CULTURE: Truth, Justice, and Healing: Indian Boarding Schools and ICWA - The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition - Deborah Parker and Dr. Samuel Torres
10:45am - 11:45am	CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES UPDATES: CQI Program, Quality Assurance and Kinship ND Program - Lauren Sauer, Leanne Miller & Christiana Pond
11:45am - 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm - 2:30pm	JUVENILE JUSTICE: Resilience: A Better Approach to Juvenile Justice - Judge William Thorne
2:45pm - 4:45pm	CLOSING KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Actualizing ICWA in ND, From Ideal to Real - Matt Gebhardt Casey Family/ND ICWA Partnership
4:45pm - 5:00pm	ICWA Champion Award
5:00pm - 5:15pm	Closing Remarks & Drum Group
	3rd STAR QUILT DRAWING (<i>must be present to win</i>)

Presenter Profiles



Deb DeWitz, LICSW is a social worker and family therapist who spent the first half of her career providing direct service to children and families in various child welfare settings. She has a BSW from UND, and MSW from University of Nebraska-Omaha and she attended Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH, where she completed coursework toward

a Ph.D., but she remains ABD. The second half of her career, she taught social work at both undergraduate and graduate levels for UND, Minnesota State University-Moorhead, and Minot State University. She is attempting to retire to spend more time with her two daughters and her grandchildren.

Mathew Gebhardt, MA, MSW is a Senior Director with the Joan B. Poliak Seattle Field Office for Casey Family Programs - with responsibilities for overseeing direct practice in King County, WA and Strategic Consulting in ND and WA state. Matt has more than 25 years working in - and with - Public Child Welfare as worker, supervisor and curriculum developer. As a State Administrator in the state of Wisconsin, and as a county Child Welfare Director in California, Matt has supported and implemented a wide range of child welfare improvement initiatives; including improving the implementation of ICWA training and compliance activities. As a Senior Associate with ACTION for Child Protection, Matt has spent years implementing safety framework strategies in multiple jurisdictions both rural and urban. Matt has two adult daughters and is currently working from Napa, CA.

Leanne Miller, LMSW, is employed as the Quality Assurance Manager with the Children & Family Services Division of the North Dakota Department of Human Services. She has been with CFS since November 2019. She manages the Quality Assurance Unit responsible for conducting the QA Case Reviews, which supports the state's federal Child and Family Services Review process. Leanne has over 30 years of experience in the child welfare field. Her experiences include three years with the Children Family Services Training Center, three years with CFS as the Child Welfare Infrastructure Administrator, and fourteen years with the AASK (Adults Adopting Special Kids) Program as the AASK Director. Leanne received her Master of Science of Social Work from the

University of Texas at Arlington in 1994 and her Bachelor of Science degree from Southern Nazarene University (Bethany, OK) in 1988. She resides in Grandin with her husband, Dale, and furry family member, Mayzie (5 yr. black lab).

Deborah Parker “tsicyaltsa” (Tulalip Tribes) is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition. Deborah joined NABS as the Director of Policy and Advocacy in May of 2021 and had previously served to coordinate our 2019 2nd Annual Conference and helped organize the “We Love You” Elders care packages for U.S. boarding school survivors and descendants. She holds over 25 years of national and international legislative, policy, and advocacy experience. Deborah served as the Vice Chair of the Tulalip Tribes and was the Executive Director of Residential School Healing in British Columbia, Canada. She has also served as Government Affairs Senior Policy Analyst for the Tulalip Tribes and was the Director of Equity, Diversity, and Indigenous education in the Marysville school district in Washington. Deborah has been instrumental in passing state and federal legislation, including the Violence Against Women Act in 2013. Deborah has been leading NABS's work in collaboration with the Department of the Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative and advocating for a federal bill for a Congressional Commission on U.S. Indian boarding schools—introduced as H.R. 5444 and S.2907 in September 2021. Additionally, Deborah was also instrumental in passing state and federal legislation including the Violence Against Women Act passed in 2013. She is a Board Member for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and a frequent keynote speaker on the restoration of tribal law and sovereignty, education, safety for Indigenous Nations and environmental protections. Her work has been recognized and acknowledged across the globe notably in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.



Susan Paulson, Skuunuxkata: Yellow Bear Woman is a member of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara (MHA) Nation. Susan has two children: Jasper Young Bear and Jennifer Young Bear and she has ten grandchildren.

Susan was a previous director of the Native American Training Institute in Bismarck,

Continued on page 9

Presenter Profiles (Continued)

ND at which time NATI contracted with the North Dakota Department of Human Services to develop and write the Native American Foster Parent Training Curriculum: “Extending Our Families Through Unity”.

Currently, she serves as the President of the Board for the Medicine Lodge Confederacy a 501c3 non-profit organization. The mission of the organization is ...to provide opportunities to build cultural and spiritual knowledge and awareness for all generations through the sacred teachings of Mother Corn that connect us to our Creator and the divine universe”. She is busy being grandma and supporting the work of her children Jasper and Jennifer and the Medicine Lodge Confederacy.

Christiana Pond, MA is the Kinship Navigator for the State of North Dakota with Children and Family Services. She has a unique understanding of the needs of kinship families as a former foster parent and has family members who have been kinship caregivers. She has a Master of Arts in Human Services and a Bachelor of Arts in Cross Cultural Studies. She previously worked for the TRIO Student Support Services grant at Dickinson State University for 8 years. She is married and has a fur baby corgi.

Melanie Sage, PhD, MSW, is an Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. She studies family-centered engagement in child welfare, and also researches the use of technology in child welfare settings. She trains child welfare and mental health staff in trauma-informed motivational interviewing. Learn more at traumainformedMI.com

Todd Sage, PhD, MSW, MINT, CASAC MAC, is an Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. He studies well-being in child welfare systems and the use of Motivational Interviewing as a trauma-informed practice approach. He is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers and a certified substance abuse counselor.

Dereck Stonefish is Oneida from the Iroquois Confederacy and has been involved in a plethora of education, research, & an “Indian Way of life”. Through; internships, research appointments, teaching & the Public Health arena, he has crafted his expertise with a new way of thinking when it comes to addressing issues in modern Indian Country. Throughout his life, like many Natives, he’s witness abuse

in multiple variations and degrees, but realized through his own healing journey & traditional knowledge, that unresolved trauma is a driving force contaminating the healing processes of Indigenous communities (Urban & Reservation) exponentially. The improvement & implementation of new culturally based curriculum and training has been a need for many years. Dereck has identified this need and become an innovator working for the betterment of ALL people creating curricula and training that are innovative and effective. Dereck is currently the Training Coordinator at the Native American Institute and CEO of Indigenous Forward Consulting where he provides training and technical assistance to strengthen partner’s capacity to work with and within Indigenous Communities.

Lauren Sauer is the Assistant Director of the Children and Family Services Division and oversees the development of the Continuous Quality Improvement Program for the Division. He received his Master of Public Administration degree with certification in Health Administration from the University of North Dakota and Master of Education degree in Clinical Counseling from North Dakota State University. Lauren is also a Leadership Everywhere Certified Manager. He has worked for the North Dakota Department of Human Services for 29 years in various direct-service and administrative positions. Lauren and his wife Tammie have three sons: Alex is a police officer and twins Elijah and Gabriel are in second grade.



Judge William A. Thorne, Jr. (ret.), a Pomo/Coast Miwok Indian from northern California, was appointed to the Utah Court of Appeals in May 2000 by Gov. Michael O. Leavitt. He retired in September of 2013. He was a judge in the Third Circuit Court for eight years, having been appointed by Governor Norman Bangert in 1986, and

then served in the Third District Court for six years, having been appointed by Governor Leavitt in 1994. Judge Thorne received a B.A. from the University of Santa Clara in 1974 and a J.D. from Stanford Law School in 1977. Judge Thorne has served for over 34 years as a tribal court judge in Utah, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Nevada, California, Nebraska, and Michigan. He is the former president and current vice-president of the National

Continued on page 10

Presenter Profiles (Continued)

Continued from page 9

Indian Justice Center (a nonprofit that trains tribal court and other personnel around the country), and a former member of the Board of Directors for National CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates, a nonprofit group that provides volunteer representation for abused and neglected children in court). He was formerly a member of PEW Commission on Children in Foster Care, the Board of Directors for the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute (a nonprofit seeking to improve the level of research and practice related to adoptions), a former member of the Board of Trustees for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, a former board member for NACAC [North American Council on Adoptable Children], former Chair for the board of WestEd Inc. (a non-profit focusing on excellence and equity in education) and a former member of the ABA Steering Committee on the Unmet Legal Needs of Children. He is also a former member of the Utah Judicial Council, the Board of Circuit Court Judges, and the Board of Directors for the National American Indian Court Judge's Association, and most recently ended his term as Chair of the Board for Child Trends, Inc. (a non-profit devoted to research dealing with children and families). He is also a former chair of the Utah Juvenile Justice Task Force of the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, former vice-chair of the Utah Board of Youth Corrections, former co-chair of the Judicial Council's Committee on Improving Jury Service, former chair of the Judicial Council's Bail Bonding Committee, former chair of the Court Technology Committee, former member of the Salt Lake County Domestic Violence Advisory Committee, and a former member of the steering committee for the Judicial Council's Task Force on Racial and Ethnic Fairness. He is currently a member of the board for the Center for the Study of Social Policy, a member of the board for WestEd, Inc., a member of the Advisory Council for the Capacity

Building Center for Tribes of the U.S. Children's Bureau, and a member of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and a member of the advisory board for the National Child Welfare Workforce Initiative. In 2016 the National Center for State Courts recognized Judge Thorne with their Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Samuel B. Torres (Mexica/Nahua), Ed.D., is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and has been a fundamental part of the team since 2019. Dr. Torres first joined NABS as the Director of Research and Programs where his contributions have included leading research teams through several projects such as the Indian Child Removal Study with the First Nations Repatriation Institute and the University of Minnesota, as well as the development of Indian boarding school profiles and coordinating with the US Department of the Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. Samuel has a doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from Loyola Marymount University and his work encompasses the impacts of colonization on historical and contemporary education methods, particularly the legacy of boarding schools. With his extensive experience as a researcher, writer, educator, and leader, Samuel holds a deep passion for decolonizing knowledge systems and centering ancestral knowledge and histories. As a bicultural human being, Dr. Torres is a descendant of the Mexica/Nahua people from the lands we now know as Mexico. In addition to actively learning and practicing Nahua language and traditions, he belongs to the Mexica kinship community, Kalpulli Yaocenxtli, in St. Paul, Minnesota.



ICWA 101 – Judge William Thorn

A presentation to answer the questions: Why is there an ICWA? And What Do I need to do to be in compliance. Judge Thorne will discuss the lessons learned over 40 years of experience, including safety, resilience and the essential nature of keeping families together. (2 hours)

Personal Story - Susan Paulson

Susan will share her personal story of how she survived her childhood through multiple living environments and what she learned and how she applied these teachings to her life work. She lived with her grandparents Joseph and Mamie Packineau in the summers when not in boarding school. Susan attended Catholic Boarding School along with many other MHA tribal members on the Crow Creek Reservation in South Dakota: Immaculate Conception Indian Mission School. She was here six (6) years until she was ex-spelled at age 12; she then attended school in New Town for 1 year. Her grandparents were both deceased when she was 14. She transferred to Fort Yates Community School in Fort Yates ND and lived in the Dormitories graduating at age 17. When she was 14 years old, she was informed by the Mountrail County Social Services that she was going to be placed in a Foster Home in Stanley North Dakota and would be living on a Farm. At this point, she escaped this placement by running away and applying to school in Fort Yates., ND. Susan has had many people that helped her throughout her life and has been adopted (culturally) by several people in her youth. Susan placed herself at University of Mary at age 17 so she would have a living environment. She went on to earn her B.S degree in Secondary Education at U of Mary and MPH from the University of California, Berkley in Policy, Planning, and Regulation. As an adult, Susan has (culturally) adopted many youth and young adults. She provided short-term foster care (30 days) for the MHA Nation, predominantly for teen age girls until more permanent placements could be found. She also provided foster care for relatives.

CHILD WELFARE: Motivational Interviewing: Supporting reasons to change - Melanie Sage & Todd Sage

Motivational Interviewing is an evidence-based intervention for evoking people's own reasons to make positive changes in their lives. In this session we will talk about how Motivational Interviewing works, with a specific focus on reinforcing the desire to change through strategic reflective listening. We will also discuss hyperarousal and hyperarousal, and trauma-

informed approaches to discussing change with people who have trauma activation.

WELLNESS: Reawakening Warriors and Indigenous Hair - Dereck Stonefish

Reawaken Warriors is a curriculum that addresses what it means to redefine what a warrior is to indigenous people when we embrace a culture of healing. Indian country has a unique set of issues that are in varying degrees as a direct result of historical and generational traumas. When acculturation of Indigenous people took place and indoctrination was implemented many pieces of the family structure were lost, along with identity social structure. The indigenous values were hidden and eventually lost. To date very few programs, attempt to redefine how the old indigenous values can fit into our modern society. Reawakening warriors provides a curriculum designed to reshape and rethink how we should be interacting within our communities, exploring what "warriors" were originally and what would make and "honorable warrior" in modern society. This session will give some context as to the state of our warriors and how we ALL play a role in healing our communities, and where even in the type of words we use make a difference! Please join us in this discussion and see how these techniques may fit into your family or community at large!

ETHICS: Many Layers of Child Welfare Ethics – Deb DeWitz

If you have a passion for children, then you must have a passion for the need to critique our work. Ethics presentations must not only tell us how we should be doing our work, but take a hard look at where we may be falling short. Many of us know that child welfare work is done with too few dollars, too few staff, too few services for families, and too many clients. We do the best we can, but we often have to cut corners. We don't like to think about that, but we must. We will look at the Code of Ethics and why it is not as simple as it sounds, how "the system" sees child welfare problems, why some of the "solutions" don't work, and some of the new changes in the North Dakota system, as it relates to ethics. (2 hours)

CULTURE: Truth, Justice, and Healing: Indian Boarding Schools and ICWA The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

- Deborah Parker and Dr. Samuel B. Torres

American Indian/Alaska Native children continue to be

Continued on page 12

Session Descriptions (Continued)

Continued from page 11

disproportionately represented in state foster care systems nationwide. Though the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 sought to address the systematic removal of American Indian children through foster care and adoption, disproportionality rates of AI/AN children in foster care continue to rise in recent years. This session will examine the role of Indian boarding schools as the federal government's first Indian child removal policy and the impact to Native communities across the country. U.S. Indian boarding school policies lasted more than 150 years over the 19th and 20th centuries and removed thousands of American Indian children from their homes and families. Structured through the policy "Kill the Indian, Save the Man," these institutions sought to destroy Indian languages and cultures, ultimately attempting to dismantle Indian Nations and enable the U.S. government to acquire more Indian land. This effort would be effectuated by utilizing education as a weapon. Despite their far-reaching impacts, the history of these schools remains largely missing from U.S. education curricula and under examined in social and political discourse.

Fundamental to individual and collective healing, is confronting the truth in history, validating its effects, and addressing its impact. The work of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) has been to center survivors and descendants of Indian boarding schools by advocating for truth, healing, and justice for Native communities. This session will explore the various initiatives that NABS has been working on including: the Federal Boarding School Initiative partnership with the Department of the Interior, the National Indian Boarding School Digital Archive, a fully interactive Digital Map, and a Congressional Truth and Healing Commission Bill that is active in both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. Ultimately, attendees will learn about how they can help support various truth and healing initiatives that we are working on.

Children & Family and Services Update:

Administrators from Children and Family Services will share information related to the following:

- **CQI Program:** The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Program is ready to launch in the upcoming year. Lauren Sauer, Assistant Director will share an overview of where we've been and where we're going related to supporting child welfare practice improvement in North Dakota.


- **Child Welfare Quality Assurance:** Leanne Miller, QA Manager will talk about her QA Unit's efforts in assessing child welfare practice as we wrap up the state's Round 3 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and Program Improvement Plan (PIP) work and look forward to preparing for the upcoming 4th Round federal CFSR.
- **Kinship-ND Program:** The number of relatives and fictive kin raising children is on the rise in North Dakota. Christiana Pond, Kinship Navigator will share about Kinship-ND and the supportive assistance this program can offer to kinship caregivers across North Dakota.

Resilience: A Better Approach to Juvenile Justice – Judge William Thorn

When I started as a judge in 1979 we interfered in families when, in our opinion, we knew what was in their best interest. Most often this resulted in sending kids out of the home until the problems were 'fixed.' This mistaken approach resulted in families being unnecessarily traumatized and disrupted. I recognize today that was a mistake and there is a better approach. Instead of removing children, I should have been more focused on building strengths into the family. Instead of requiring adherence to a predetermined plan, I should have been listening and adjusting plans as necessary. Instead of simply relying upon "experts," I should have been partnering with the families. I should have been building resilience instead of demanding compliance. Building on my mistakes as a judge, and as part of a "system," this session will be a discussion of a better approach....what I should have been doing. (1.5 hours)

Actualizing ICWA in ND, From Ideal to Real - Mathew Gebhardt, MA, MSW

Session Description: In this session we will be exploring ICWA as the gold standard in child welfare practice, exploring its relationship to the practice principles of safety framework practice model. Taking a much deeper look at the meaning of "active efforts" and how to practically implement efforts that prevent family separation. Also, we will broaden the discussion to include a dialogue around recent program interventions to improve ICWA compliance and tribal/state cooperation and coordination.



Celebrating 27 Years! **NATI**

NATIVE AMERICAN TRAINING INSTITUTE (NATI)
3333 E. BROADWAY AVE, SUITE 1210
BISMARCK, ND 58501

PHONE: (701) 255-6374 • FAX: (701) 255-6394

WWW.NATIVEINSTITUTE.ORG



General Information

CEU's

NATI is an approved provider for the North Dakota Board of Social Work Examiners, our provider number is #P-104. There will be 13 hours of continuing education available if you attend all approved sessions. In order to receive credit you must have your camera on throughout the conference. Attendance will be randomly taken during each of the sessions.

CERTIFICATION OF ATTENDANCE

Certification of Attendance will be sent out once we receive your completed evaluation which will be sent out via email following the conference. Please do not share the link, also it is very important that your first and last name is shown on your zoom as this how attendance will be taken.

STAR QUILT DRAWING

There will be star quilt drawing which will be played at the end of the day each day by spinning the wheel. You must be present to win.



Must be Present to Win



INDIGENOUS HAIR - DERECK STONEFISH

Through oral history and ancient cultural beliefs, Indigenous people hold tremendous value in our long hair. Although individual tribes respectively have differing views, practices and cultural knowledge of hair – in a collective sense, long hair is highly regarded in different ways among all tribal people. Our long hair represents life, it carries memory, it carries sadness, but can also carry strength. When we see a relative and notice they have cut their hair, sometimes it is assumed this individual is mourning the loss of a loved one. For some tribes, cutting our hair is part of the mourning process. In the Lakota way of life mourning occurs over a years' time, 13 moons, so an estimated years' worth of hair is cut. This signifies that we will remain in mourning until the length returns.

When forcible removal of Indigenous children into “Indian Boarding schools” had taken place, where the children were indoctrinated and forced assimilation was the model of “care”, the children’s hair was cut. If the cultural practice of that child was to cut hair during mourning, grieving a close relative, a cherished loved one, what was going through their little minds when their hair was cut and their identity was removed?

Did they think their entire family was wiped out? Did they think their tribe was totally gone? This concept alone can be assumed was detrimental historically to our ancestors. From oral history passed down, we know that this was in fact the case, and the mindset of some of those children was to totally just give up. Children grew into adults thinking they were alone in this world! Pseudo orphans!

You see our hair is medicine, we protect it, it is sacred to us, even today. Only certain people are allowed to handle, touch or fondle our hair. Our hair must be respected, which means if it is not invited, touching an indigenous persons’ hair can be extremely offensive! That is how much we believe in its power, it is a part of us. Some tribes believe that the braid running down our back is the extension of our spine, connected directly to the brain where memory is stored in our hair. In this manner of thinking, who wouldn’t protect their hair.

In our modern world and mainstream society, hair can be considered “dirty” or seen as a fashion accessory, but for indigenous people, hair is sacred, hair is strength, hair is resilience, hair is our identity!



ICWA

THE HEALING JOURNEY CONTINUES

21st Annual Virtual Conference
**NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN CHILD
WELFARE & WELLNESS CONFERENCE**
FEB 16-17, 2022