

**Monday, March 10, 2025**

**10:30 A.M. – 12:00 Noon**

**We envision a liberated Lakota Nation through language, life ways and Spirituality. A closer look into our organizational approach.**

**Sylvan I Room**

Workshop Strand: Sovereignty

Brief Description: The chanwakan (sacred tree) is what gives life to our people. The roots of the tree provide the foundation and life force to provide growth to the rest of the tree. This life force is the work of our Lifeways and Wellness Equity and is what connects the work our initiatives and our community. Lifeways and Wellness Equity provides the foundation by which our eight initiatives develop their programs and provide the foundation by which our eight initiatives develop their programs and provide services to the community.

The branches of the tree represent our Initiatives. The work of each Initiative branches out into our community but also reminds us of the connections they all hold between their work.

The leaves and seeds represent our program participants, community members, partners and all others who are connected to Thunder Valley.

The leaves and seeds that leave the tree tell the story of our work and plant the seeds of individuals who have begun their liberation journey. Children will grow up in healthy homes that provide healthy boundaries through our wotakuye (kinship) and guided by Lifeways. These are the pathways toward healing which ripple out into our families, communities and nation.

Because we have experienced generational oppression and historical trauma, our model is representative of the time in which our Lakota Oyate (people) will journey toward our ultimate LIBERATION and achievement of our Vision and Mission.

**Presenters: Marlon Kelly (LWE Director), Warren Yellow Hair (Wicase Wicohan Coordinator), Doyle Pipe On Head (LWE Manager), Lynn Cuny (Interim Executive Director) (Microphone and projector)**

**“TCUs to PhDs: Strengthening Future Generations of Health Science Experts” Sylvan II Room**

Workshop Strand & Objectives: Health, Research.

Our workshop objectives will include:

- Introduce educational pathways for current TCU students to progress in their academic journey to a career in health sciences.
- Share testimonials from Indigenous undergraduate, graduate certificate, and PhD students in the health sciences, who can speak to the challenges and rewards of a health sciences education.
- Provide a venue for students to ask questions about the process for applying to a graduate program in health sciences.
- Explore a vision for the future of health sciences built upon Indigenous students' contributions to the field.

Brief description: A panel composed of one current undergraduate TCU student, one participant from the AIHEC/UND Graduate Certificate in Public Health (who is also a TCU faculty member), and a

participant of the UND PhD in Indigenous Public Health program will speak in a panel discussion moderated by staff from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium's Health Initiatives Team. They will share their insights with students on how to apply for and achieve academic success in their degree programs. Students will also engage in a discussion with panelists envisioning how they can uniquely contribute to the health sciences field in the future.

**Presenter: Izzy Burke, Health Initiatives Communications Coordinator, American Indian Higher Education Consortium**

**Strength in Community: Relationship-Based Support for Non-Traditional Women Students at Tribal Colleges**

**Sheridan Room**

Abstract: At the Jeannette Rankin Foundation, relationship building is at the heart of our success in supporting non-traditional Native Women Scholars. These women, 25 or older, face unique challenges as they pursue their degrees, balancing academic demands with personal, cultural and community responsibilities. By recognizing and addressing the social, emotional, and mental health needs of Native Women, we create a space for collaboration and support. We understand that the path to a degree is not just about academics, but also about navigating the complexities of identity, family and culture. Through our focus on building strong, empathetic relationships, we help these Scholars overcome barriers, reduce uncertainty, and stay on track toward completing their degrees while honoring sovereignty and culture.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize and address the unique challenges faced by our Native Scholars.
- Develop culturally grounded relationship building skills.
- Integrate wraparound support to promote mental and emotional well-being.
- Create pathways for academic success and personal empowerment.

Workshop Strand: This session aligns with the conference theme "Strength for Future Generations," because Native Women play a pivotal role in the continuity of culture, language and traditions within their communities. By supporting them in their educational endeavors, we ensure that they are equipped to lead and nurture future generations. The success of Native Women Scholars strengthens the fabric of their communities, creating a ripple effect of unity, resilience, and empowerment. Their education is not just for personal achievement, but a contribution to the collective strength of their people.

Description of Workshop: Supporting Native Women Scholars requires more than just financial assistance, it demands a holistic approach that honors their identity, recognizing their unique challenges, and nurtures their social and emotional well-being. By focusing on relationship building, we can create a supportive environment that empowers Native Women to succeed academically, personally and as leaders for future generations. This presentation will demonstrate how the Jeanette Rankin Foundation works to remove barriers and embraces cultural strengths to ensure the success of Native Women in higher education.

Target Audience: This session is ideal for tribal college administrators, faculty and staff, Native women Scholars, and tribal education and community leaders who would benefit greatly from learning how the Jeannette Rankin Foundation integrates relationship building strategies and emotional support into the academic journey of Native Women to improve educational outcomes.

Speaker Biographies

**Lori Smoker is the Jeanette Rankin Foundation Tribal Scholar Support Specialist.** Lori previously served as the Library Director at Fort Peck Community College. A graduate of Montana State

University-Northern, she earned her BA in Education in 2021. She graduates with her MA in Education, Instruction, and Learning from Montana State University-Northern, Spring 2025. Lori was honored as Employee of the Year during her first year at Fort Peck Community College Tribal Library, a testament to her commitment to developing a love of learning and discovery among tribal members.

**Latrena Artist is the Jeanette Rankin Foundation Scholar Grant Program Director.** LaTrena has a passion for people and is dedicated to excellence. She has a BA from the University of Georgia in Human Development & Family Science and a BA from Andersonville Theological Seminary in Theology. LaTrena has received a number of awards including GA Woman of the Year Scholar and UGA Amazing Student.

### **TCU Esports Teams and Career Pathways**

**Badlands Room**

Workshop Strand: Technology

Brief Description: Esports 101 for establishing an academic and/or athletics esports program leading to career paths.

**Presenters: Shelly Knight, AIHEC, Cyberinfrastructure Facilitator**

### **What you need to know about Exceptional Students as Future Teachers**

**Bear Butte Room**

Brief Description: A discussion about Special Education and what future teachers, and parents who will work with them, someday need to know for their classrooms. What is good to bring to the IEP meetings? You will learn about your rights and testing of different disabilities for students. Teachers should be able to have items to help in the decision-making process of eligibility for the Special Education Program. Who should be at the meeting? Who is responsible for all the decisions?

**Presenter: Lowell Phillips, ED.S., Oglala Lakota College Education Associate Professor**

### **“Training the Workforce for the Protection of Our Children: Native Child Advocacy Studies”**

**Lincoln Room**

Objective: To share information about a new Program in Native Child Advocacy, and a few tools utilized for training child welfare and other related workers who aim to prevent/address child abuse in our communities.

Description: This workshop will discuss a new program offered through a partnership of Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL) and University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL), that aims to train faculty and students in foundational concepts and tools for child advocacy.

The workshop will share key information on two major tools: The Problem-Based Learning Model (PBL), and the 12 Core Concepts for Understanding the Traumatic Stress Response in Children and Families. Additionally, staff and faculty of TCs will have the opportunity to complete a survey for training and course needs in the area of child advocacy.

There will be some scenario-based exercises to support using the PBL and how this can be incorporated into practice and curriculum. This will help place into context utilization of PBL, trauma informed practice, and discuss how we have used this practice to reach out to tribes and tribal serving institutions.

**Presenter: Manasseh Begay, Lecturer/Research Manager, Washington University in St. Louis**

**1:00-2:30 P.M.**

**“Do What You Love. Love What You Do”**

**Sylvan I Room**

Workshop Strand & Objective: To inspire students to discover their passions and connect them with meaningful academic and career paths through insights and experiences shared by higher education professionals.

Brief Description: Presenter will discuss with participants how to achieve their goals through higher education by discussing their own academic journey and the career path that led them to the role they are currently in. Through this presentation participants will gain knowledge of the importance of education. Another topic of discussion is to motivate participants to become successful advocates for their tribes or communities and how education can play an important role in tribal advocacy. Participants will gain insight into navigating their own pathways toward meaningful contributions in the field of higher education.

**Presenter: Ann Turi (AIEF Higher Education Coordinator), American Indian Education Fund/ Partnership with Native Americans**

**“Rebuilding a Local Food System on the Pine Ridge Reservation”**

**Sylvan II Room**

Brief Description: Makoce Agriculture Development is a place based and native led organization operating on the homelands of the Oglala Lakota and inside the traditional territory of the Oceti Sakowin. We will share the innovative work of our organization and our strategic 5 initiatives that we have developed as we regenerate our traditional and modern food system. We invite you to come learn about our amazing and passionate work and the opportunities we have been able to create through the process of indigenous led and community-based work.

**Presenter: Nick Hernandez (President/CEO) Makoce Agriculture Development, Inc.**

**Ochetic Shakowin Txamaxowapi: Dakota-Lakota Geography**

**Sheridan Room**

Strands: Geography, History, Native American Studies

Objectives: Participants will be introduced to the Ocheti Shakowin relationship between geography, time, and Native American culture and history.

Description: The earliest historical record of first contact between Europeans and Ochetic Shakowin people began at the turn of circa 1740 CE on the banks of the Niagara River, and so most history begins with the non-native record. This presentation reaches back to what archaeologist and anthropologist call the Late Woodland period and explores the pictographic and remembered histories of the Ocheti Shakowin and their relationship with the landscape by way of an interactive online map.

**Presenter: Dakota Wind Goodhouse, Instructor/Graduate Student, United Tribes Technical College.** Goodhouse is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. He holds a B.A. in Theology and currently a graduate student in history at NDSU. Goodhouse is the editor of the history and culture blog The First Scout. He teaches US History and Native American Studies at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND.



**Owoju Oyate (Garden For The People)  
Featuring Bees with Purpose**

**Lincoln Room**

Objective: Traditional plants, Food Sovereignty, bee keeping, and the importance of traditional pollinators.

*The Oyate Owoju Project* established in 2023 was initially a project for our students and staff to provide a safe, healthy, learning environment on our He Sapa College Center Campus. Our interactive 13 raised garden beds allow for ease of access, functional structure, and manageable observation. The project's main focus is traditional plants that hold medicinal value. Some such plants and herbs are Sweet Grass, Sage, *Ceyaka*, Ground cherries, just to name a few. These important traditional plants are used for ceremonial purposes and/or prayers. This project will also be utilized by our community members during community events. The name of our project and green space area is *Oyate Owoju*; "Garden for the People."

Furthermore, over the past year the project has grown to accommodate our insect relatives (Italian Honeybees Spring 2024, Native Bumble Bees FOREVER Indigenous, Monarch Butterfly ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST/FOREVER INDIGENOUS, Dragon Flies, *Iktomi* and all other biodiverse insects), and our four-legged relatives have a safe and organic habit to dwell. As well as, different species of birds and snakes, rabbits and squirrels, and cats and dogs. We truly have become a thriving ecosystem in our Urban World. Our future goals include Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary and a Coy Pond.

Now, Oglala Lakota College, USDA and NIFA would like to incorporate our local community members to join us. We are inviting your organization to think of us when planning your next field trips or when you just want something educational and inspiring.

We want to inspire the youth to interact with their food, where and how it is grown. From seed to fruition and expanding their knowledge and importance of being good relatives to *Unci Maka* and how we are all connected - The Circle of Life. Building a better ecosystem for generations to come through permaculture.

The cultural significance of this project is to learn hands-on about our culture and the significance of each herb and plant that holds medicinal value, whether it is through prayer or through consumption. By each person learning the value of gardening, this creates an important ripple effect because they will in turn, teach this to their children and family members. This project is important for the members of our community because they are an essential part of learning as a whole. In our culture, we are all related. When we work together, we empower each other. This whole process creates sustainability.

**Goals**

To plant and nourish the growth of traditional plants and herbs that are native to our area. By creating a garden area for our students and community, we are creating food security. Sharing the importance of food sovereignty to our students and community members will promote medicinal benefits as well as aiding in a positive, healthy lifestyle for the generations to come.

**Presenter: Tina Conroy, Oglala Lakota College MST Student**

## **Coming in a Good Way: Building Relations the Native Way**

**Bear Butte Room**

Workshop strand & Objective (Attach additional pages if needed):

This workshop is intended to stimulate how our Native ways of building harmonious relationships can help us as we move into jobs, partnerships, and service opportunities. It is based on a model called "Coming in a Good Way".

Brief description of workshop:

Our traditional ways of networking and establishing partnerships can bring honor and deeper trust to our interactions with other tribal people as well as with non-Natives, leading to greater harmony and flourishing. This workshop presents the "Coming in a Good Way" philosophy common to many tribes, and discuss ways in which this approach can help us as we pursue good relations in our jobs and service

**Presenter: Rashawn Ramone, Assistant Director, Focused Ministries, Native InterVarsity**

**2:45-4:15 P.M.**

## **Decolonizing Your Mind: Resilience and Tribal Identity Formation**

**Bear Butte Room**

Workshop strand & Objective (Attach additional pages if needed):

Drawing from various sources both tribal and academic, this presentation will outline a pathway to deeper identification with one's tribal tradition. The intent of the presentation is to help students understand why their tribal identity is important, and how it can help them be resilient, avoid manipulation, and successfully develop a meaningful philosophy of life while interacting fruitfully with the ideas of others.

Brief description of workshop:

Those who draw from the strengths of their family and tribal traditions will have greater resilience in the face of adversity and a solid foundation from which to build their own personal mosaic as they navigate a lifetime of professions and ideas.

**Presenter: Richard Ackley, Elder and Retired Tribal Judge, Resident Elder for Native InterVarsity**

## **Introduction to Peace Corps**

**Badlands Room**

Strand: Student development

Objective: Learn about opportunities to serve in the Peace Corps.

Description of workshop: Founded in 1961 with a bold vision, the Peace Corps bring together skilled committed Volunteers with welcoming communities in more than 60 countries. Peace Corps Volunteers live and work side by side with community members on locally prioritized projects in education, health, agriculture, environment, community economic development and youth in development.

Peace Corps offers support and benefits for Volunteers before and after service, including a stipend, travel, vacation time, medical and dental coverage, transition funds, professional skills, federal hiring benefits, graduate school benefits and more. In this info session, participants will learn about the Peace Corps, the application process, and how to become a competitive candidate.

**Presenter: Erica Ward, Recruiter, Peace Corps**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2025**

**9:00-10:30 A.M.**

**Indigenizing Medical Education: Opportunities & Best Practices for Pursuing Health Careers**

**Sylvan I Room**

Abstract: The colonization of Native people, as we know, has devastated Indigenous communities in many ways: separation of children from their families, loss of property, racist treatment, and the vanishing of tribes through unjust policies. These factors are the roots of many of the challenges Native communities experience, including their access to health care and high-quality education. Native people face immense challenges in the U.S. health care system and experience some of the worst physical and mental health outcomes in the nation. For example, Native individuals live with higher burdens of chronic, preventable diseases and die much younger. 25% of deaths occur before age 45, compared with 15% of African Americans and 7% of Whites.

During this education and career preparation workshop, we will discuss the state of healthcare and medical education in Indian country. We will also simulate a few skill development activities for the students such as writing a resume and/or personal statement and integrating storytelling into an interview. Students can expect to develop skills such as professional communication and faculty/staff will learn more about culturally relevant pedagogy in the decolonization of learning. We will also present on educational and career opportunities and scholarships at Mayo Clinic. Learn how your Indigenous identity is an asset and why the field of medicine needs you!

This workshop will present on the topics using data and literature. We will also simulate a few skill development activities for the students such as writing a resume and/or personal statement and integrating storytelling into an interview. Data from the 2023 and 2024 summer programs will show why this type of education is critical to developing well-rounded healthcare providers of the future. We will also present on educational opportunities and scholarships at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine & Science.

**Learning Objectives**

- Understand the state of healthcare and medical education in Indian country.
- Discover education and career opportunities at Mayo Clinic.
- Students: develop skills such as professional communication.
- Faculty/Staff: Explore culturally relevant pedagogy in the decolonization of learning.

**Presenters: Sharon Torres and Heidi Forebes, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science**

**Structure of the Lakota Tiospaye**

**Sylvan II Room**

Workshop Strand and Objective: The Tiospaye system in the four hocokas of the Oceti Sakowin. This PowerPoint presentation of the the 3 dialects of the Oceti Sakowin, and 49 sub-bands call reservation, and the sopyaye of each reservation, and finally the tiospaye of each reservation. Each of the 7 circles has a fire in the center, thus 4 hocokas. The Pine Ridge is composed of 49 tiospaye that settled here in 1910. In 1934 Pine Ridge had 7 sub-bands called districts. Each of the 7 sub-bands is composed of 12 or more immediate families with fires. The structure of the tiospaye forms the foundation of the Titunwan band that speaks the L dialect, from the Okaspe yamni of the Oceti Sakowin. This is our structure since the beginning of time. 7 ways of life govern each of the circles, these circles are also reflected above us in the star world.

**Presenter: Edward Starr, Elder, Faculty for Lakota Studies, Oglala Lakota College**

## **Walking the Good (Red) Road of Life Towards Adulthood**

**Badlands Room**

Brief description: Talking through how to stay on the red road during trials of life, making decisions, overcoming bad decisions, and choosing the right path.

**Presenter: Bruce Plummer, Elder (from Montana) from Frybread Connections**

**10:45-12:15 P.M.**

## **Law School 101: How to use a law degree to protect tribal sovereignty and Future Generations.**

**Sylvan I Room**

**Objective(s):** This session will discuss how law school teaches students how to navigate systems of power, the need for Native attorneys and judges, the legal degrees available, and resources available for law school admission and success. We de-mystify the law school admissions process and break it down into smaller achievable goals.

Participants will learn about law careers, paths to the bench, and the varied journeys to law school.

### **Description of Organization:**

The American Indian Law Center, Inc. (AILC) was established in 1967, and is the oldest existing Indian-managed and Indian-controlled legal and public policy organization in the country. The AILC assists in the continued development of tribal self-determination and systems that support tribal sovereignty. AILC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation housed at the University of New Mexico School of Law, despite it being a legally separate entity. As a 100% Indian-controlled organization, AILC has a unique, in-depth knowledge of tribal institutions, including tribal courts and their place in tribal government, and of tribal, state, and federal relations. AILC administers the Southwest Intertribal Court of Appeals (SWITCA) and conducts the Pre-Law Summer Institute (PLSI), which is an intensive two-month program, with a 90% success rate, that prepares American Indian and Alaska Native students for the rigors of law school by replicating the first semester. For more than five decades, AILC has remained dedicated to training pre-law students in the skills required for the study of law. PLSI's services reach beyond the pre-law summer to support Native law students in summer and semester clerkships, judicial clerkships, professional development opportunities, and the bar examination. Our alumni include many prominent leaders including the first Native cabinet secretary, the first two Native congresswomen, law school deans, professors, practicing lawyers, and judges. AILC's distinguished history of facilitating access to legal education for Native students and providing crucial resources to Indigenous communities positions it as a vital contributor to the project's objectives.

Since its inception, the Pre-Law Summer Institute has made significant progress by narrowing the divide to enhance the academic achievement of native students in law school. Over a thousand students have attended PLSI since 1967 and successfully graduated law school and became practicing attorneys. With our 90% success rate, PLSI has assisted in the increase in number of Native American lawyers from 25 to over 2500 nationwide. Since 2016, 32 judicial clerks in state and federal courts were PLSI alumni.

### **Description of Presenters:**

Rodina Cave Parnall (Quechua), JD, became the Executive Director of the American Indian Law Center, Inc. in July 2022 after serving five years as the Director of the Pre-Law Summer Institute for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Rodina served as Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior. Before that, she practiced law in New Mexico and



Arizona representing Indian tribes and tribal entities in legal and administrative proceedings and on several large breach-of-trust cases in federal courts. In addition to her Indian law practice, she is experienced in complex litigation and appeals in federal and state courts. Previously, Rodina served as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico School of Law and an Associate Judge on the Southwest Intertribal Court of Appeals (SWITCA). In 2014, she received the New Mexico State Bar Indian Law Section Outstanding Achievement Award. She graduated in 2001 from the Arizona State University College of Law with a Certificate in Indian Law and the Outstanding Law Graduate Award for 2001. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Rodina clerked for the Honorable William C. Canby, Jr. on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Scott Willie (Diné), BA, serves as the PLSI Project Manager at the American Indian Law Center, Inc. They bring a strong dedication to assisting pre-law American Indian and Alaska Native students. With nearly eight years in academia, Scott has focused on enhancing the representation of healthcare providers in Indian Country. At AILC, they drive outreach efforts and support incoming law students at the Pre-Law Summer Institute.

### **Workshop flow of information and points of discussion**

- Presenters will hand out printed Pre-Law College Timeline, which will be relevant to the presentation to help the audience visually follow along with the discussion.
- Examine the shortage of Native American lawyers and emphasize the necessity for increased representation of indigenous attorneys. Describe the benefits of the Pathway to Law Initiative and the Pre-Law Summer Institute for Native American law students, emphasizing how these programs can equip them for success in law school and their future legal careers.
- We will start with a discussion on the meaning of sovereignty and how to protect it. This will lead to a discussion of how a law degree can help. Law degrees are helpful to analyze and navigate power systems.
- We want to learn about what the students want to change – what is motivating them and how can a law degree help?
- Examples of law degrees and law careers, including judicial careers.
- Next – how do you get there? Is it do-able? Where do you start? Attendees will be encouraged to start planning out their academic portfolio by taking on skills that will expand their critical thinking and logic skills. Additionally, expanding their knowledge on reading and writing, which are essential for law school and any academic and professional place.
- Describe the benefits of the Pathway to Law Initiative and the Pre-Law Summer Institute for Native pre-law students, emphasizing how these programs can equip them for success in law school and their future legal careers.

**Presenter:** Rodina Cave Parnall, JD, and Scott Willie, BA,

**PNWU is a university with a mission of educating and training healthcare professionals emphasize service in rural and medically underserved areas. Throughout the Pacific Northwest states of Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and beyond. Sylvan II Room**

Strand and Objective: Recruit students to health care professions in rural and underserved areas.

**Presenter: David Warner, Manager of Student and Alumni Recruitment, Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences.**

## **The Enduring Importance of Tribal Sovereignty and Treaties in Uncertain Times. Sheridan Room**

### **Brief Description of Workshop:**

Elaine Yellow Horse and attorneys from Cedar Tree Native Law have collaborated to prepare this workshop, which will center on Tribal sovereignty and treaties. We will discuss their continued relevance and importance with respect to recent events, such as the issuance of Executive Orders affecting or with the potential to affect Indian country. This workshop will provide the audience with a broad overview of the dynamics at play and is intended to contextualize but not necessarily resolve the questions many of us have.

**Presenters: Elaine Yellow Horse – Tribal Law and History Professor, Oglala Lakota College  
Josey Johnson and Jillian Smith, Cedar Tree Native Law Group**

## **Coming in a Good Way: Building Relations the Native Way**

**Bear Butte Room**

### **Workshop strand & Objective (Attach additional pages if needed):**

This workshop is intended to stimulate how our Native ways of building harmonious relationships can help us as we move into jobs, partnerships, and service opportunities. It is based on a model called "Coming in a Good Way".

### **Brief description of workshop:**

Our traditional ways of networking and establishing partnerships can bring honor and deeper trust to our interactions with other tribal people as well as with non-Natives, leading to greater harmony and flourishing. This workshop presents the "Coming in a Good Way" philosophy common to many tribes, and discuss ways in which this approach can help us as we pursue good relations in our jobs and service

**Presenter: Rashawn Ramone, Assistant Director, Focused Ministries, Native InterVarsity**

## **Renewable Energy Education: A Pathway to Tribal Energy Sovereignty**

**Lincoln Room**

### **Workshop Strand and Objective:**

The primary objective of the presentation will be to introduce opportunities for building Tribal energy sovereignty, highlight some of the innovative work that is being conducted within Indian country and discuss potential career pathways. We will invite students and audience members to participate in practical skill building activities related to project development and introduce some of our upcoming Leadership Program opportunities for further learning.

### **Brief Description of Workshop:**

This interactive session will explore the transformative potential of renewable energy and workforce development for achieving resource sovereignty in tribal nations. Through the National Tribal Program, GRID Alternatives partners with tribal nations to deliver solar power projects that provide hands-on training and career development for tribal members. Attendees will learn how locally sited and controlled renewable energy empowers tribes to take control of their energy resources, retain local dollars, and long-term environmental and economic benefits. Audience members will be invited to participate in a practical skill-building activity with prizes.

**Presenters: Angelica Wright (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma), Danita Ordaz (Jicarilla Apache), Elias Her Many Horses (Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma) and Cassandra Valandra (Rosebud Sioux Tribe)**

**1:00-2:30 P.M.**

**Telling Your Story to The Masses; How to Prepare A Book Proposal**

**Sylvan I Room**

Workshop strand & Objective: Student Retention, what you can do with a TCU degree.

Description of presentation: The purpose of this presentation, which will fall within the student retention strand, is twofold. First, it will provide information about a specific practical skill likely to interest many students who may be considering sharing their stories but not be familiar with the publication process or where to begin. Second, more broadly, it will inspire students to think creatively about how to put their TCU degrees and unique stories into service. I will share information about how to craft a book proposal and what that process was like for me. Along the way, I will weave in my relevant experiences as an OLC alumna and professor and soon-to-be-published author and my perspective on why I want to share my story. I view my book as an extension of our tradition of storytelling and this presentation as an opportunity to inspire our students to take intellectual risks.

**Presenter: Elaine Yellow Horse, Tribal Law and History Professor, Oglala Lakota College**

**Rooted in Culture: Culturally Sustaining Strategies for Student Engagement**

**Sylvan II Room**

Workshop Strand - Student Retention

Learning Objectives: By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Define culturally sustaining student engagement and its impact on retention.
2. Identify barriers to student retention related to cultural disconnection.
3. Apply hands-on strategies such as community mapping and storytelling to engage students in meaningful ways.
4. Develop a culturally responsive action plan for their own classrooms, programs, or institutions.
5. Collaborate with peers to share best practices and solutions for student engagement and retention.

Workshop Description: Student engagement and retention increase when learning environments reflect students' identities, cultures, and lived experiences. This interactive session will explore culturally sustaining strategies that foster meaningful student connections and academic success. Participants will engage in hands-on activities to integrate cultural knowledge into their teaching and support systems. Through real-world examples, discussion, and practical application, attendees will leave with ready-to-implement strategies that build inclusive, relevant, and affirming learning spaces for diverse students.

**Presenter: Dr. Whitnee Coy, Faculty, Oglala Lakota College  
1868 Treaty, a Lakota Elders Perspective**

**Sheridan Room**

Brief Description: The Workshop will be multi-dimensional. It will include a lecture on historical antecedents, including events that led up to the treaty and events that transpired after it. A question-and-answer session will conclude with the session.

**Presenter: Richard Iron Cloud, Ph.D., Elder, Researcher at Makoce Agriculture**

## Practical Uses of AI: Presentation and Idea Sharing

Bear Butte Room

Workshop strand & Objective (Attach additional pages if needed):

This workshop is intended to help students and others use AI more effectively, emphasizing sound practices and ethical use of AI. The focus will be on using AI to learn and enhance our abilities in various kinds of projects.

Brief description of workshop:

AI has great promises as well as some pitfalls. This workshop will address some best practices for practical uses of AI tools by giving examples of various projects, then invite audience members to share their own experiences and successes using AI.

**Presenter: Tim Webster, Resource Specialist, Native InterVarsity**

