

Native American & Indigenous Studies



Traditional Native Dancing at the 3rd Annual Health and Wellness Dance (Photograph courtesy of Ye Wang/IDS)

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FNECC hosts 3rd Annual Health and Wellness Dance

On Saturday, April 11, the First Nations Educational Center (FNECC) hosted its 3rd Annual Native American Health and Wellness Community Dance at the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. With approximately 200 in attendance, the goal of the event was two-fold: 1) to celebrate Native cultures with dance, art, and music, and 2) promote Native American health by providing access to health education and health care. With these two goals in mind, the event not only included an intertribal dance, but also a health fair with free

screenings and a healthy community lunch provided by Bloomingfoods.

In addition to FNECC, which is a unit of the Office of the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs, the American Indian Center of Indiana and the Native American Graduate Students Association sponsored the event. Among those organizations that participated in the health fair, the American Indian Center of Indiana provided free health screenings for blood sugar, glucose, blood

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Dr. Brian Gilley, FNECC Director, participates in the Dance (photo courtesy of Scott Brings Plenty)



Left: Artist Bunky Echo-Hawk and IU grad student Nicky Belle lead others (including Terri Miles and Davina Two Bears) at the Health and Wellness Dance. Right: Echo-Hawk's live art performance finished painting (photos courtesy of FNECC)

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pressure, and body mass. Also represented at the dance was IU's Positive Link that promotes awareness for HIV prevention as well as the IU Health Center, IU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), and the Indiana Indian Movement Food Pantry, which collected canned good donations. On the dance side of the event, the host drum was the Stony Lonesome Singers and the arena director was Tom Johnson. As arena director, Johnson detailed and explained the various dances.

The dance also featured several Native American artists who sold everything from jewelry to prints of original artwork. Among the Native artists in attendance at this year's dance was renowned painter Bunky Echo-Hawk, a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma and an enrolled member of the Yakama Nation. Echo-Hawk, who participated in the day's dancing, was on campus as part of the Graduate School's Getting You Into IU Program (GU2IU). GU2IU is a campus visit program designed to attract prospective underrepresented and minority students to Ph.D. and M.F.A. programs here at IU.

In addition to participating in the Health and Wellness Dance, Echo-Hawk gave an interactive live art performance on Friday, April 10th. During this performance, Echo-Hawk solicited suggestions from the audience and produced a large canvas painting. This painting is now on display at the FNECC's offices. At his performance, Echo-Hawk testified to how art can be an extremely powerful means to make an impact and share one's ideas. He also advocated for Native Americans to use art as a means of telling their own stories and to not leave the storytelling to someone else. According to Echo-Hawk, non-Natives write ninety-two percent of the written history of Native Americans. As Echo-Hawk phrased it, "We have a story to tell" and he emphasized the importance of Native American artists to become active in that storytelling.

When asked about the outcome of the dance, Mary Connors, FNECC's Program Assistant, said, "I thought it went great. It was good weather and good attendance and everyone had a great time." Both Connors and Echo-Hawk were honored at this year's dance. With its objective to promote health and wellness, this year's dance was unquestionably a success.



At left, Davina Two Bears participates in a past FNECC event. Above, Two Bears at the Petroglyph National Park in Albuquerque, New Mexico (photos courtesy of Two Bears).

Graduate Student Spotlight: Davina Two Bears, Anthropology

In the fall of 2010, Davina Two Bears traveled to Bloomington to begin her studies as an Archaeology Ph.D. student. Since that time, Two Bears has found her place at IU, both on campus and off. Two Bears' attraction to IU's Archaeology Program, which is a subfield of the Department of Anthropology, was its emphasis on community-based field research. In particular, Two Bears' Ph.D. concentration is Archaeology of the Social Context. This concentration bridges the subfields of Social/Cultural Anthropology and Archaeology. Instead of focusing completely on empirical scientific archaeological questions, students of this concentration also address how archaeological issues apply to contemporary communities. For Two Bears, the opportunity to study Archaeology of the Social Context was one she could not pass up. "That is why I actually came to IU because this program is different from other archeology departments which mostly focus purely on the science of archaeology."

For her dissertation, Two Bears is conducting archival research on an important archeological site found on the Navajo reservation. As a member of the Navajo Nation herself, Two Bears believes it is important to develop understanding of such sites not only for academic purposes but also for the Navajo community. This particular site sits on the border between the Birdspring

community, Two Bears' home, and the Leupp community on the Navajo Nation reservation in Arizona. Two Bears is researching a Navajo boarding school that was in operation from 1909 to 1942. With her research, Two Bears is looking for instances of Navajo culture at the school and how the students may have expressed their Navajo culture and language within the boarding school system. She is also looking at the ways Navajo culture and language may have been expressed and incorporated into the school's curriculum.

In addition to her research, Two Bears is a local DJ on WFHB 91.3's *Native Spirit* – a radio program dedicated to contemporary Native American music and news. Since childhood, Two Bears has loved listening to Native American music. "I love all genres and all kinds of artists. I especially love Native American music. I think because they often sing about issues that resonant with me as a Native American, like protection of the environment, protection of sacred places, fighting for our rights as Native peoples." Although she never dreamed of becoming a DJ, Two Bears has found the experience a rewarding one. "I never, ever thought I would be a DJ, but I enjoy it so much

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The Navajo Nation Student Teaching Program

For over 40 years, IU's School of Education has offered a cultural immersion program for student teachers on Navajo reservations in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Now known as the Navajo Nation Program, this unique student teaching opportunity is part of the School of Education's Global Gateway for Teachers program. In addition to the Navajo Nation Program, the Global Gateway program also offers placements overseas and in the Chicago Public School system. Although the Global Gateway consists of three programs today, it initially started with the Navajo Nation in the 1970s.

Each Global Gateway program is different in nature. With the Navajo Nation Program, the student teachers not only teach Indigenous youth in the classroom, but they also live in the dormitories with the Navajo students. According to Eli Lev, Associate Instructor for the Navajo Nation and Overseas Programs, it is the living in the dorms that is vital for the student teacher experience. "To get a really good idea of the culture it is important to be in the dorms and be involved with the community after school for the cultural immersion program." Lev, who participated in the program during his undergraduate career at IU and stayed on in the community another three years after his student teaching, recalls the experience as a positive one. "It was a really comfortable community. Probably the most welcoming people I have ever met, and the students I taught there were the best students I have ever taught."

The Navajo Nation Program is a two-year program that is offered to both undergraduate and graduate students. There is an intense preparatory phase before students begin their last semester as a student teacher on the reservation. In the preparatory phase, academic assignments and lectures explore the history and culture of the Navajo Nation. As part of this preparatory phase, the Global Gateway Program asks speakers to come to the classroom to bring insights about the Navajo Nation and teaching on the reservation. These speakers include: a Navajo elder, past Navajo Nation

Program participants, and IU Native students, including Davina Two Bears. According to Dr. Laura L. Stachowski, Director of Global Gateway for Teachers, the program started, "Due to a need for teacher educators to develop opportunities for candidates to learn from and work with people with different cultural backgrounds so they could begin to understand more about diversity." For many of the teacher candidates, their experience is solely with a suburban school system that lacks diversity. This lack of a diverse experience could hinder the success of the student teachers. Stachowski believes that "If they (teacher candidates) are not equipped by having had first-hand experience where they have really had to explore below the surface of that cultural iceberg its going to be difficult for them. That's what we try to do here. If you think of that iceberg analogy of culture where on the surface are the obvious things such as fashion, food, festivals, and then what lies below are all those underlining cultural values that really inform a particular culture and that's what we want them to do, look below and not always just scratch the surface but understand deeply why things are the way they are."

Although misconceptions and stereotypes of Native Americans continue to inundate American society, the Navajo Nation teaching program is an opportunity for student teachers to not only experience the inaccuracies of those depictions in reality, but to also teach others about the contemporary, vibrant, and meaningful contributions of Native communities. As put by Stachowski, "They (student teachers) are going to teach differently after their experience. They will not perpetuate those stereotypes due to their real understanding of Native peoples and cultures as not being static but ever-changing." Any IU student (including undergraduate and graduate), no matter her major or minor, can be part of the program and obtain her Indiana teaching license. For more information go to

<http://education.indiana.edu/immersion/index.html>

(Two Bears, continued from page 3)

and love finding these artists.” *Native Spirit* can be heard every Sunday 10 am to noon.

Even with all her academic pursuits (including her position as a graduate assistant with Indiana University’s Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Program) and her DJ career, Two Bears still finds time to be an active member of the First Nations Educational and Cultural Center. She volunteers and attends many (if not all) FNECC events throughout the year. Speaking on her experience at IU, Two Bears said, “I’ve really enjoyed my time here at IU. I love to volunteer at the First Nations and recently I was asked to do some recruiting (for IU) on the Navajo Reservation.” Not only is Davina Two Bears an exceptional scholar, she is also a dedicated advocate for Native issues and continues to help promote Native peoples’ contributions at the university.

A Note From the Editor

It has been a pleasure to serve as the NAIS fellow for this past academic year. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some amazing IU faculty, staff, and students that are doing incredible work in Native Studies. I am very lucky to have had this rewarding experience. Thank you to my countless interviewees and a special thanks to Dr. Christina Snyder for her help and guidance.

As the out-going fellow, I want to introduce Nicky Belle as the newly selected 2015-2016 NAIS Fellow. Belle, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Anthropology, studies powwow culture. In particular, how men’s dance clothes are used as symbols of identity. When asked for his reaction to being named next year’s fellow, Belle said, “I am very happy and honored to be offered this fellowship. It is giving me another opportunity to meet and work with other Native Studies scholars across the IU campus.” Congrats Nicky!

Below, a participant in the Health and Wellness Dance. Right, Sheena Brings Plenty participates in the Dance. Far Right, IU Ph.D. student Nicky Belle dances at the day’s events (all photographs courtesy of Scott Brings Plenty)



Upcoming Events

- ❖ **Indiana University's Fifth Traditional Powwow. Indiana Memorial Union – Alumni Hall, November 7-8, 2015.**
- ❖ **Visit Indiana University's** Native American and Indigenous Studies program on [facebook](#) for updates on upcoming talks, workshops, events, and more!

Links

- ❖ [IU First Nations Educational and Cultural Center](#)
- ❖ [Past NAIS Newsletters](#)
- ❖ [The American Indian Studies Research Institute](#)
- ❖ [Mathers Museum of World Cultures](#)
- ❖ [The Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology](#)