Native American Relations and Programs
Faculty Senate Update – March 23, 2023

Zoe Higheagle Strong, PhD
Vice Provost for Native American Relations and Programs
& Tribal Liaison to the President
Director, Center for Native American Research and Collaboration
Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, College of Education
First, we found that according to state law, the income derived from WSU’s land-grant trust is restricted to retiring building bonds, or capital improvements or maintenance. We have attached the Agricultural College Permanent Fund and the Scientific School Permanent Fund back to 1987, which is the data we’ve been able to verify thus far.

More importantly, as a system we take seriously our responsibility to the Native Peoples of the region, and are taking a number of steps to both acknowledge our responsibilities to tribal groups but also to foster strong relationships and programs that we hope will benefit tribal students and nations. These include:

Recap: Letter from Kirk, Elizabeth, & Zoe

Nov 21, 2022
1) We continue to expand the MOU with federally recognized tribes. We recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of our original MOU, which now has 13 tribes as signatories. We will add the land-grant revenue and spending to the agenda for the Spring meeting of the MOU signatories to solicit their feedback.
25th Anniversary of the signing of the MOU between WSU and signatory Tribes
October 14, 2022

Spring MOU NAAB Meeting
April 28, 2023
2) We have elevated Vice Provost Zoe Higheagle Strong’s position to report directly to the President as Tribal Liaison. She is working with leaders across the system to ensure strong tribal community engagement and services to tribes across the region.
Some examples of systemwide collaboration:

- NY’EHE camps expanding to the Vancouver, Tri-Cities, and Everett Campuses
- Coordination between all Native American Advisory Boards and Committees
- First annual Indigenous Research Conference

10:00 am – 2:30 pm, March 24 2023
Elson S. Floyd Cultural Center

KEYNOTE: Dr. Theresa Jean Ambo (Gabrieliño-Tongva), *Realizing the Possibilities of Research Partnerships in Nation Building.*

https://native.wsu.edu/cnrc/cnrc-indigenous-research-conference/
3) We are supporting efforts to provide tuition waivers and/or assistance to tribal students, either as part of a state-wide program or WSU-wide.
Update: Native American Scholarship Fund

- HB 1399 did not pass
- Rep. Lekanoff submitted 1.5 million proviso request for WSU to start a scholarship program
- President Schulz submitted a letter of support for this proviso
4) We are currently assessing our levels of support for Native American student organization, programs, community events (e.g., annual pow wow), and facilities.
The President’s Office will cover facilities costs for Native American student and tribal community events on the Pullman campus.

- 10 events
- Events such as pow wow, NAAB meetings, round dance, Indigenous research conference, back to school barbecue, youth outreach camps, etc.
- Approximately, $10,800 in facility costs

And... please join us at the next Pah-Loots-Puu Powwow!
5) We continue to explore ways to recruit, retain, and support tribal students from across the state and region.
6) We are in the process of hiring five new tenure-track faculty members with expertise in Native American and Indigenous studies in the area of social inequality and social justice. We seek scholars who are integrated into the communities they study as a way to continue to build strong relationships of mutual benefit between the university and tribal nations.
Thank You!
Questions?
Creative ideas?