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For Immediate Release:

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2020 Cobell Graduate Summer Research Fellowship Recipients Announced

Indigenous Education, Inc. is pleased to announce the 2020 recipients of the distinguished Cobell Graduate Summer Research Fellowship administered on behalf of the Cobell Board of Trustees. Annually, Indigenous Education, Inc. seeks fellowship applications from American Indian/Alaska Native scholars who are in the final phases of their graduate/professional programs. The aim of the Program is to support high achieving student researchers who might not otherwise have access to funds for research and related activities during summer months. Each of the five selected research fellows receive a \$5,000 stipend to offset remaining costs associated with their final research projects. During the Fellowship period, scholars receive direct guidance from their faculty research advisor and support from the Director of Research and Student Success at Indigenous Education, Inc. (IEI). Cobell Graduate Summer Research Fellows enjoy opportunities to network with other Fellows across the world and engage in future Fellowship activities as new cohorts are selected. IEI is excited to support this diverse group of Native scholars representing a variety of tribes while working to indigenize higher education in their respective academic fields. Selected from a highly competitive pool of over 100 graduate applicants, please help welcome the fourth fellowship cohort to the Cobell family.

Shining Examples of American Indian Graduate Student Success: Announcing the 2020 Cobell Graduate Summer Research Fellows

The overarching mission and vision of Indigenous Education, Inc. (IEI) is to support American Indian and Alaska Native student success. The Cobell Graduate Summer Research Fellowship was developed to help support graduate students during the summer months of their final research project – a critical yet often overlooked period of a graduate student’s academic career. IEI is excited to share highlights of the newest cohort of Summer Research Fellows and hope their stories bring inspiration. Applications for the fifth cohort of Cobell Summer Graduate Research Fellows opens on September 1, 2020 for summer 2021. Please share with anyone who might be interested in this unique opportunity to shine!



Cobell Fellow: Adrienne Tsikewa

Tribal Affiliation: Zuni Pueblo

Institution: University of California – Santa Barbara

Degree: Doctorate in Linguistics

Research Project Overview

“The ability to speak multiple languages is common for many people. Historically, Indigenous peoples were bilingual or multilingual, speaking their own language as well as neighboring Indigenous languages. In the North American context, colonial encounters resulted in bilingualism or multilingualism with European languages such as English, Spanish, and French. These colonial encounters proved disastrous for many Indigenous languages.

The Zuni language, or Shiwi'ma, is no exception to the consequences of colonial encounters. Shiwi'ma is an isolate language (not related to any other language) spoken on the Zuni Pueblo reservation in western New Mexico. The isolation of our tribe has helped to maintain most of our traditional cultural practices and ceremonies, and the language is still spoken by many on a daily basis and in various contexts. However, there is a noticeable shift to the English language. Linguists classify Zuni as a threatened language, where most adults in the community are speakers, but most children are not¹. As a community member, I agree that most adult community members are fluent Zuni speakers, and switch between the two languages on a daily basis. The case is less so for children, where many are able to understand the Zuni language, and can speak when necessary or at their own sporadic choosing, but their dominant language is English. Bilingualism and multilingualism research has primarily focused on Indo-European languages (e.g. English, Spanish), while the minimal research on bilingualism and Indigenous languages has primarily focused on bilingual education and second language acquisition.

The research project aims to begin a cross-sectional study with two research goals. The first goal is to examine Zuni/English bilingualism through a structural and sociocultural linguistics and the second goal is to document the current usage of the Zuni language in various contexts.”



Cobell Fellow: Candice Keys

Tribal Affiliation: Navajo

Institution: Oklahoma State University - Stillwater

Degree: Doctorate in Counseling Psychology

Research Project Overview

“Research continues to reveal the overrepresentation of Indigenous populations in epidemics driven by behavioral health causes (Gone, 2012). There are significant health disparities between Indigenous people and all races in the United States. Fortunately, some studies have shown the use of traditional language among Indigenous people has been linked to positive self-identity and pride (Hallett, Chandler, & Lalonde, 2007). Even with the encouraging positive evidence indicating the use of the Indigenous language, there has been a gap when looking at Indigenous language knowledge and its role in psychological health. Further, protective factors that are already prevalent in the Indigenous community urgently need to be explored and understood. Studies looking at the use of the tribal language knowledge and its role in psychological health will benefit Indigenous populations in order to help provide services that will alleviate the health epidemics occurring in Indigenous communities.

Language is at the intersection of culture, linguistics, cognitive, social psychology and anthropology. Its potential to significantly impact psychological interventions and practice are tremendous (Karp & Vogele, 2016). There is a dire need to understand the phenomena at work when working with Indigenous clients not receiving services in their native language. Studies show thinking and speaking in a foreign language provides a greater emotional and cognitive distance than the speaker’s native language (Keysar, Hayakawa, & An, 2012). The prospect of such a detachment of cognition is of importance especially for bilingual Indigenous populations when receiving psychological services.”



Cobell Fellow: David Dry

Tribal Affiliation: Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma

Institution: University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

Degree: Doctorate in American History

Research Project Overview

“In an August 1955 Indian Affairs subcommittee hearing held in Muskogee, Oklahoma, Ottawa Chief Guy Jennison complained, “Every time we have a change in the United States administration they change our Indian policies. It has been sort of a shell game with us, now you are under the blanket, now you ain’t, until it has got to where we have not got any blanket whatsoever, and we are perfectly ready to be terminated as soon as possible and relieve the United States Government any obligation whatsoever.” Just over two decades later, in a September 1977 congressional hearing, Ottawa Chief Lewis Barlow disavowed termination and called for the restoration of federal recognition, maintaining “We are not asking for a handout. We just want to be recognized as Indians.” My dissertation will examine the Ottawa Tribe’s pursuit of these seemingly opposing endeavors and how tribal members responded to changing cultural and political discourses to leverage the American political system for their own ends.

Belying static tropes of Native people, the Ottawas engaged in a complex remaking of their political identity through termination and restoration. Amid the assimilationist and racial egalitarian ideals of the early Cold War, Ottawas wrestled with a tangle of tensions between tribal and American identities. For Ottawa leaders, exiting the colonial system of recognition through termination offered a solution for advancing both. In their pursuit of restoration, Ottawas drew on the promise of pluralism and rhetoric of decolonization abroad to assert their right to be recognized as Indians. Despite divergent aims with regard to federal recognition, a thirst for tribal self-determination links both periods. Ottawa leaders deployed their sophisticated understanding of their identity as Americans and as Indians to forge their own path through the federal government’s capricious attitude towards Indian affairs. Ottawa termination and restoration provide an entry point for grasping an Indian perspective on the paradoxes and entanglements of post-World War II American democracy.

To access protean Ottawa identity, my research employs ethnohistorical methods and oral history. Drawing on my existing community relationships and informed by my archival research and previous interviews, extended fieldwork in Oklahoma promises to generate a wider corpus of interviews and deeper conclusions.”



Cobell Fellow: Joshua Brown

Tribal Affiliation: Salish and Kootenai Nation

Institution: University of Montana - Missoula

Degree: Doctorate in Anthropology

Research Project Overview

“Often an individualistic, consumerist strategy is promoted as the solution to growing diet related diseases. Unfortunately, this logic is ahistorical and apolitical, privileging individualism, capitalistic consumerism, and prevalent American diets. It fails to recognize diets are constructed across time by ideologies, policies and practices. This outlook misses the reality that many people are unable to escape the grip of the modern, ultra-processed food system. North American Native American populations are plagued with high rates of diet related diseases. A common mantra shoulders these communities with the responsibility for their plight, framing the discourse as one of personal responsibility and failed willpower, instead of focusing on policy and systems influences.

A core element of anthropology is observing and analyzing cultures, which can also be thought of as systems. Utilizing the tools of this discipline and the general approach of observing and gaining emic views from a community through extensive interviews, I will document the dietary transition from an exclusively traditional Salish diet to contemporary diets within Salish communities and the prevailing health outcomes associated with dietary patterns within this community. Additionally, I will utilize systems thinking to further analyze the current food system of the Salish people within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation to elucidate feedback loops and levers along with political and economic drivers that transformed and continue to shape current Salish people’s diets within the CS&KN polity. Also, I will examine the prevalence of diet related chronic diseases of the Salish population within a political and economic context, which was constructed over the course of a century and is continuously maintained by powerful actors.

This research approach is fitting to understanding conditions effecting health outcomes of individuals embedded in social, cultural, political and economic structures, stretching from the local to the international level, situated in a context where these factors intersect. The purpose of this research is to gain qualitative and quantitative insights about Salish people’s dietary patterns, local food systems, and produce community informed analysis that can guide dietary policy and programing intervention recommendations.”



Cobell Fellow: Melinda Adams

Tribal Affiliation: San Carlos Apache

Institution: University of California - Davis

Degree: Doctorate in Ecology

Research Project Overview

“Storytelling Through Fire: The Revitalization and Socio-Ecological Importance of Northern California Cultural Burns.”

Since tending and gathering is a key component of Patwin cultural preservation, I’d like to document the cultural and ecological revitalization of cultural burns through digital storytelling. Presently there is no such research being conducted at the University of California, Davis. My work will not only relay the importance of Native American land stewardship, it will also streamline the importance of including Native American ecological cultural practitioners in university spaces, and the power of intergenerational storytelling.

The Tending and Gathering Garden (TGG - Woodland, California) is two acres of Patwin land, The TGG serves as a collection site for Indigenous plant gatherers and is used to hold public demonstrations on the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Indigenous Peoples of California and their relationship to flora and fauna. In an effort to build public awareness of the garden and of Native Peoples, I will conduct summer research by interviewing Patwin cultural fire practitioners, basket weavers, ethnobotanical staff and TGG executive committee members. Using information gathered from these interviews, I will construct educational materials to be disseminated to the general public.”

IEI

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION, INC.



About Indigenous Education, Inc.

Created in 2016 for the express purpose to administer the Cobell Scholarship Program, Indigenous Education, Inc. provides elevated opportunities for Native college students through empowering them with an impactful scholarship experience designed to support their success in higher education. Since the program's beginning, it has supported nearly 3,000 students with more than \$20,000,000 in scholarships. To learn more about IEI and the Cobell Scholarship, visit cobellscholar.org.

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