

A circular window in a red brick wall looks out onto a scenic view of a river flowing through a forest. The trees are tall and green, and the water is calm. The window is framed by a thick, dark green wreath of pine needles.

2013

**Nibi and Manomin:
Building Lasting Relationships**

September 25-27, 2013
Mille Lacs Grand Casino
Onamia, MN 56359

2013 Nibi and Manoomin Symposium: Building Lasting Relationships

WELCOME

on behalf of the Symposium Planning Committee

Our focus

To Build Lasting Relationships in the work of protecting nibi and manoomin for future generations.

Our vision of Lasting Relationships

- acknowledging our histories, the injustices
- recognizing the sacredness of our human dignity
- listening with openness to our stories, stories that story us
- moving to the ground of mutual respect and sharing
- knowing and living the learning in bridging worldviews
- taking action together to preserve our humanity and protect the world for future generations.

Nibi and Manoomin: Building Lasting Relationships, is the third in a series of gatherings designed to exchange teachings between Anishinaabeg and Western scientific cultural worldviews.

These symposia bring researchers from the University together with tribal elders, leadership, and community members from across Northern Minnesota to share knowledge about nibi and manoomin, build understanding, strengthen relationships, and cultivate good will between traditional knowledge bearers and Western scientists.

Symposium Planning Committee

Symposium Co-Conveners

Melanie Benjamin **Chief Executive, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe**

Dr. Katrice Albert **Vice President, Office for Equity and Diversity, University of Minnesota (UMN)**

Symposium Planning Committee Members

Dr. David Andow Entomology, UMN
Dr. Mark Bellcourt (White Earth Anishinaabe)
College of Food, Agriculture & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS),
Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)
Dr. Paul Bloom Soil, Water and Climate, UMN
Dr. Jill Doerfler (White Earth Anishinaabe) American Indian Studies, UMN Duluth
Dr. Craig Hassel Extension, Food Science & Nutrition, UMN
Earl & Kathy Hoaglund (White Earth Anishinaabe) In Memoriam
Dr. Emi Ito Earth Sciences, UMN
Dr. Alexander Kahler Agronomy and Plant Genetics, UMN
Dr. Rebecca Knowles Research Reveals!
Teresa Konechne Working Hand Productions
Adam Kokotovich PhD Student, Natural Resources Science & Management Program, UMN
Joseph LaGarde (White Earth Anishinaabe) White Earth RCT
Karl Lorenz (Lummi Nation) CFANS, ODI, UMN
Dr. Louis Mendoza Office of Equity & Diversity, UMN
Dr. Naomi Scheman Philosophy, UMN
Paul Schultz (White Earth Anishinaabe) In Memoriam
Faye Sleeper Director, Water Resources Center, UMN
Dr. Rachel Walker Barr Engineering Company
Deb Zak Regional Director, Extension, UMN Crookston

Support Staff

Emily Ehlinger CFANS, ODI, UMN

Symposium Coordination and Logistics

Renee Gurneau (Red Lake) Symposium Coordinator
Lea Foushee (Cherokee) Symposium Coordinator

Symposium Sponsors

Chi miigwech to our sponsors who, by their generous monetary and in-kind contributions, have made this symposium possible.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, (CFANS) UMN

Office for Equity and Diversity, UMN

The Paul Schultz Sacred Manoomin Scholarship Fund

Provost's Imagine Fund for Humanities, Art, and Design, UMN

White Earth Anishinaabe Nation Donation Committee

**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and University of Minnesota
College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences
Office for Equity and Diversity**

***Nibi and Manoomin: Building Lasting Relationships Symposium
September 25-27, 2013 Grand Casino, Onamia, MN***

September 24:

7:00-9:00: Registration table opens in the **Foyer**

September 25:

7:00-8:00: Registration in the **Foyer**/Breakfast in the **Autumn Room**

8:00-8:30: Invocation: Lee Staples/Little Otter Singers Drum Group in the **SPRING / SUMMER ROOM**

8:30-9:30: *Setting the stage: Building Relationships*
Jill Doerfler, American Indian Studies,UMN Duluth
Lea Foushee, Environmental Justice Director, North American Water Office

9:30-10:30: Welcome
Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Katrice Albert, VP Office for Equity and Diversity, UMN
Brian Buhr, CFANS Dean (Interim), UMN

10:30-11:00: Break/snack in the **Autumn Room**

11:00-12:00: *Indigenous Science: Nibi and Manoomin*
Dorothy Sam and Shirley Nordrum

12:00-1:30: Lunch in the **Autumn Room**

1:30-2:30: *Manoomin Life Cycle and Habitat*
White Earth Academy of Math and Science grades 4-8.
Deb Zak, Regional Director Extension, UMN Crookston
Dr. Stephan Carlson, Extension, UMN
Cassandra Roy, Chelsea Williams, Wayne Greensky, Riley Howes

2:30-3:30: Poster Session 3:00 Snack in the **Autumn Room**
Johanna Abell, Warren Mountain, Zhazha Greensky, Jaelisa Northrup, Willow Johnson Fuller

3:30-5:30: Water Ceremony in the **Theater**
Dorene Day, Renee Gurneau, Dorothy Sam

6:00-7:00 Dinner in the **Autumn Room**

September 26:

- 7:00-8:00: Registration in the **Foyer**/Breakfast in the **Autumn Room**
- 8:00-8:30: Invocation: Lee Staples/Little Otter Singers Drum Group in the **SPRING / SUMMER ROOM**
- 8:30-9:00 Neeconis Women Singers
- 9:00-10:00: *Milpa: Human Rights, Ecosystems and Development: the International Context*
Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Professor Emeritus Sociology, El Colegio de México
- 10:00-10:30: Break/Snack in the **Autumn Room**
- 10:30-11:00: *Mississippi and Ohio Water Walks*
Sharon Day
- 11:00-12:30: Traditional Knowledge
Kathy Bird, Herb Sam, Dorothy Sam, Lee Staples
- 12:30-1:30 Lunch in the **Autumn Room**
- 1:30-2:30: *Building Ethical Relationships: Respect and Reciprocity in Cross-Cultural Cooperation*
Kyle Powys Whyte, Philosophy, Michigan State University
- 2:30-3:00 Break / snack in the **Autumn Room**
- 3:00-5:00 Working Group Sessions
- 1) Memorandum of Understanding: Agreement UMN research/wild rice/ GMO
in the **Bear, Wolf, Bullhead Room**
 - 2) Women and Water: Anishinaabe Perspectives
in the **Winter Room**
 - 3) Manoomin/Wild Rice: Risks, Research, and Restoration
in the **Spring/Summer Room**
 - 4) Water Center: Indigenous Knowledge and Research
in the **Eagle, Lynx, Marten Room**
- 5:00-6:00 Break, Visit vendors/crafts/posters
- 6:00-7:00 Dinner in the **Autumn Room**

September 27:

7:00-8:00: Registration in the **Foyer**/Breakfast in the **Autumn Room**

8:00-8:30: Invocation: Lee Staples, Little Otter Singers Drum Group in the **SPRING / SUMMER ROOM**

8:30-10:30: Working Group Sessions

1) Memorandum of Understanding: Agreement UMN research on wild rice/ GMO
in the **Bear, Wolf, Bullhead Room**

2) Women and Water: Anishinaabe Perspectives
in the **Winter Room**

3) Manoomin/Wild Rice: Risks, Research, and Restoration
in the **Spring/Summer Room**

4) Water Center(s): Indigenous Knowledge and Research
in the **Eagle, Lynx, Marten Room**

10:30-11:00: Break/snack in the **Autumn Room**

11:00-12:00: Working Group Reconnection and Sharing in the **Spring/Summer Room**

12:00-1:00: Lunch in the **Autumn Room**

Restrooms are located in the Convention Center Lobby,
closest to the East exits across from the Small Ballroom.

Speakers Biographies

Obizaan (Lee Staples) Spiritual Advisor



Obizaan is one of Mille Lacs spiritual advisors. He was born and raised in the Aazhomog community in a house that only spoke Ojibwe. Today Obizaan carries on many of the ceremonies that he learned growing up. Obizaan is a drum keeper in the Aazhomog community and runs a Mide lodge in Mille lacs District 1. Obizaan also does many of Mille Lacs funerals today and is frequently called to help neighboring reservations with funerals as well. In addition Obizaan is frequently called on to give Anishinaabe names.

With Obizaan's knowledge of the Ojibwe language, he has recently been sought out by many of the younger generation who wish to speak their language. He reaches his hand to help all the younger teachers who wish to advance in their speaking of the Ojibwe language.

Larry Amik Smallwood Master of Ceremonies



Amik was born in Washington, D.C. and raised in Aazhoomoog (Lake Lena District of Mille Lacs) from the age of six months by his mother's aunt and uncle. The family spoke only Ojibwe. He attended an all-white country school as the only native student. In

1968, he was drafted into the US Army, and after serving in the military, moved to Los Angeles, California after enrolling in the Urban Indian Relocation Program. Amik returned home in 1971, and worked primarily as a language instructor for the Minneapolis Public Schools, Nay Ah Shing School, UMN, Duluth, and Leech Lake Tribal College. Since 1999, he has served as the director of language and culture for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.



Melanie Benjamin Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe a federally recognized tribal government located in East Central Minnesota Chief Benjamin is currently serving a four year term. The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe is one of six constituent bands of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT), and has become one of the largest employers in Minnesota with more than 3,000 employees. The Band's executive branch implements Band laws and administers programs and services.

Benjamin was first elected to the position of Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in 2000. Her programs stress financial independence and self-determination through:

- Home ownership program;
- Business loan program;
- Band members in leadership roles; and,
- Commissioner positions in the Band government held by Mille Lacs Band members.

Benjamin received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Bemidji State University and a Master's degree in Education from the UMN, Duluth. She serves on many Boards of Directors.



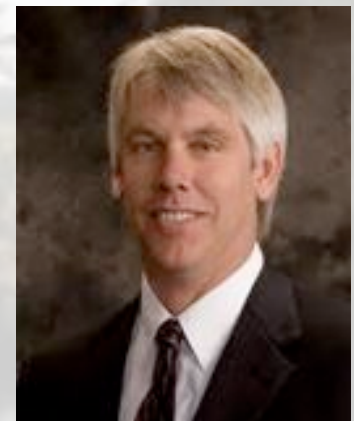
Dr. Katrice Albert
Vice President for Equity and Diversity, UMN

Dr. Katrice Albert provides leadership for strategic positioning efforts in the area of equity and diversity, including the continuing implementation of a diversity plan, for the University of Minnesota system, and also provides leadership on issues relating to faculty, staff, and student diversity on the Twin Cities campus, including the administrative oversight of departments that provide direct service to its diverse population.

Dr. Albert began her tenure as Vice President for Equity and Diversity on June 14, 2013. She came to the UMN from Louisiana State University where she served since 2005 as the institution's chief diversity officer. Previously, she held positions at Boston University and Auburn University. Dr. Albert holds a Ph.D. in counseling psychology and has a strong background in teaching. Dr. Albert has also written, presented, and consulted on issues of cultural competence, corporate social responsibility, educational and workforce diversity, gender, and the complexities of diverse populations.

Dr. Brian Buhr, Dean (Interim),
CFANS, UMN

Dr. Buhr is an Iowa native who's been part of the applied economics faculty since 1992 and head of applied economics and agricultural education in the college since 2008. He's well-known for his expertise in risk management and commodity markets. He's been recognized for his excellent work in research and teaching through numerous national, university, and college awards.



Current research includes analysis of the economic value of traceability in agribusiness and the incentive mechanisms that can improve product quality and conduct of market participants. Dr. Buhr is also conducting policy research on issues of animal welfare, the impacts of biofuels on the livestock and meat industry and the economic impacts of animal diseases in livestock. Recent publications have appeared in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, *Agricultural Finance*, and *Review of Agricultural Economics and the Journal of Food Distribution Research*.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Rodolfo Stavenhagen

Dr. Stavenhagen is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at El Colegio de México, and was formerly a United Nations Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He was Assistant-Director General for Social Sciences and their Applications at UNESCO. In Mexico, he founded the Mexican Academy of Human Rights. He has been visiting professor at the universities of Chicago, Harvard and Stanford. His research interests include social development, agrarian problems, ethnic conflicts, indigenous peoples and human rights.

Among his books in English:

Pioneer on Indigenous Rights; The Emergence of Indigenous Peoples; Peasants, Culture and Indigenous Peoples: Critical Issues (3 Vols., 2013, Springer); Making the Declaration Work: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2010), Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-State (1996), The Ethnic Question: Development, Conflict and Human Rights (1990), Between Underdevelopment and Revolution: Essays on Latin America (1980), Social Classes in Agrarian Societies (1975), Agrarian Problems and Peasant Movements in Latin America (1970)

Kyle Powys Whyte

Dr. Kyle Powys Whyte is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Michigan State University and affiliated faculty for Peace and Justice Studies, Environmental Science and Policy, the Center for Regional Food Systems, Animal Studies and American Indian Studies. He is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Shawnee, Oklahoma.



Dr. Whyte writes on climate justice, environmental justice, and American Indian philosophy. His most recent research addresses moral and political issues concerning climate change impacts on Indigenous peoples, especially in North America. His articles have appeared in journals such as *Climatic Change, Ecological Processes, Synthese, Human Ecology, Journal of Global Ethics, American Journal of Bioethics, Journal of Agricultural & Environmental Ethics, and Environmental Justice*. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Spencer Foundation. He is a member of the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, Public Philosophy Network, and planning committee of the annual Everybody Eats: Cultivating Food Democracy Conference.



Jill Doerfler (White Earth Anishinaabe)
Associate Professor, Department of American Indian Studies, UMN-Duluth

Jill Doerfler joined the Manoomin working group in September 2010 and is currently co-chair of the Nibi and Manoomin Bridging Worldviews Committee. She served as the Master of Ceremonies for the Nibi and Manoomin: Bridging Worldviews Symposium hosted by the White Earth Nation, August 22-24, 2011. Dr. Doerfler’s research examines the diverse ways in which Anishinaabeg have resisted pseudo-scientific measures of blood (race/blood quantum). She has been involved in constitutional reform efforts with the White Earth Nation since 2007. She coauthored *The White Earth Nation: Ratification of a Native Democratic Constitution* (University of Nebraska Press, 2012) with world-renowned Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor. Dr. Doerfler co-edited *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories* (Michigan State University Press, 2013) with Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiiik Stark.

Renee Gurneau (Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians)

Renee’s Native identity informs and is the base of all of her beliefs and actions. She is actively involved in the revitalization of indigenous spiritual and cultural life of her community. A longtime activist, she has been involved in many peace and justice initiatives. Renee earned a Bachelors degree in Indian Studies with a minor in Ojibwe language at Bemidji State University and Masters in Anishinaabe Philosophy and Indigenous Knowledge with the Seven Generations Education Institute in Fort Frances Ontario, Canada. She is a former Kellogg Fellow in the prestigious Kellogg National Leadership Program. While a fellow, she traveled extensively in the Western hemisphere, studying spiritual leadership and community development in Indigenous communities. Renee is also a former Bush Fellow.



Renee is a mother of three, grandmother of one, a jingle dress dancer, writer/poet and is a proficient bead worker in the Ojibwe tradition. Renee strongly believes in the power of traditional Native ways as a means of healing the historical trauma of her people and in fact, as a means of living well in general. She is a co-author of *Sacred Water, Water for Life*.



Lea Foushee (Cherokee)
Environmental Justice Director, North American Water Office (NAWO)

Ms. Foushee received her Bachelor of Science Degree in the *Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Human and Natural Resource Management* from the University of Minnesota. She graduated *summa cum laude* June, 1990. Her life long community activist work provided the basis for her self-designed degree on the linkage between energy development, social strife, economic disparity, environmental contamination, and the resulting disproportionate impacts on Indigenous Peoples, other People of Color, and those who are economically disadvantaged.

Ms. Foushee was awarded the UMN Dean J. W. Buchta Merit Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement. She was awarded the Ford Foundation Leadership Award to attend the 1985 United Nations Non-Governmental Organization Conference on the Status of Women in Nairobi Kenya, and the 2007 UMN, School of Public Health Community Partners Star Award. Ms Foushee is co-author of *Sacred Water, Water for Life an educational curriculum and teacher’s guide*.

Traditional Knowledge Panel

DOROTHY SAM *Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe*

Dorothy was born in the Aazhoomog community in District 3 of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe Reservation. She began her career at the Indian Neighborhood Club, the first chemical dependency program created in the Minneapolis Indian Community. She returned to northern Minnesota to attend the University of Minnesota, Duluth for Chemical Dependency counseling. Dorothy spent thirty years in Alcohol and Drug programs integrating the cultural ways she was brought up with into the healing of countless individuals. She spearheaded the integration of cultural ideologies within the protocol of the 12 step philosophy to better serve the needs of her clients. She served as the Chief Justice for the Mille Lacs Band for seven years. Dorothy recently received an award from the Mille Lacs Area Human Rights Commission for her dedication to helping others overcome addiction and her leadership in preserving the Ojibwe language and culture. Today, she works one day per week with the Mille Lacs Band Behavioral Health and the Alcohol and Drug programs providing counseling and as an advisor.

Herb Sam *Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe*

Herb is a spiritual advisor and healer. He works with the Secondhand Smoke Project. Teaching Mille Lacs Band members to return to the use of traditional tobacco, kinnikinnick made from the red willow tree.

Kathy Bird *Cree and Nakota*

Kathy is originally from Norway House MB, but lives in Peguis, Manitoba. She is a Community Health Nurse working in the Peguis Traditional Healing Program, Peguis Health Services, through Matootoo Lake Medicine Lodge. She has worked and learned about aboriginal medicines and healing ceremonies for 30 years. She set up the Traditional Healing Program. Cree is her first language. The traditional healers and knowledge keepers have given her direction to begin to share the knowledge of the medicines with aboriginal people. One of Kathy's responsibilities is to ensure there are enough medicines to last the coming year and with the help of 2 harvesters, the summer months are spent harvesting, drying, preparing and storing approximately 80 different earth medicines. In 2003, along with traditional healer, teacher and knowledge keeper, Edna Manitowabi, she helped to set up a 4-year aboriginal medicine program to teach and share the sacred medicine teachings with 30 aboriginal apprentices. On June 21, 2005, **Aki Maskiki Na Na Da Wii Way Win** (Earth Medicine – Healing), was recognized by receiving a Spirit of the Earth Award that was sponsored by Manitoba Hydro. In 1997, Kathy was recognized by her colleagues in the provincial nurses organization, the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba, with an award of excellence in the Clinical category for the dedication and work done in the Traditional Healing Program.

OBISAAN Lee Staples *Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe* see above

Neeconis Women Singers

Dorene Day ~Waubanewquay:
Native Life Ways Singer/Practitioner



Dorene Day has dedicated over 30 years of her life to singing in the native spiritual life ways ceremonies. She carries the responsibility of song keeper for her lodge, and is first and foremost a singer of spiritual song.

Day is an Artist by profession, but has also worked a colorful wheel of trades; A Mother, Grandmother, Midwife, Bead and Textile Artist, Activist, Teacher, Writer, Counselor, and Trainer, and has spent much time working in a spiritual capacity for her people.

Waubanewquay is Waubizayshee O'dodaym (Marten Clan), a 3rd Degree Midewiwin, and Lead Woman singer for Center Fire in the Three Fires Midewiwin (*Heartway*), Lodge. She is a Midewanniquay ~Water Line Woman. She is a practicing midwife. Much of her work is related to spiritual practices and assisting in the connection and re-connection to spirit, and our spirit journey in life.

Sharon Day

Executive Director of the Indigenous Peoples Task Force.

Ojibwe Elder Sharon Day was born and raised in Minnesota. As a Midewin, part of her spiritual practice is to care for water. In 2003 Sharon Day, Josephine Madamin and other Anishinawbe women began Mother Earth Water Walks to bring awareness about water issues. By walking long distances with water and praying for it with each step, the women raise awareness about how water is connected to our lives. The Mother Earth Water Walkers hold a large annual Water Walk, inviting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to participate. On March 1, 2013, Sharon Day led the Mississippi River Water Walk from the river's headlands to the Gulf of Mexico.



Student Presenters:

Wayne Greensky
Riley Howes
Cassandra Roy
Chelsea Williams

Student Posters:

Johanna Abell
Willow Johnson Fuller
Zhazha Greensky
Warren Mountain
Jaelisa Northrup

Deborah Zak

Regional Director, Northwest, for the UMN Extension, Crookston.



Ms. Zak works with counties in the northwest region of Minnesota and the White Earth Nation. As co-chair of the Extension American Indian Task Force, she has been involved in hiring several American Indian educators to work with youth development and natural resource programs in northern Minnesota. Since 1999, Zak has partnered with the White Earth Nation and the UMN to design and deliver the White Earth Academy of Math and Science that reaches youth in grades 4 - 8. The 2013 Academy focused on nibi and manoomin including the life cycle of manoomin and the habitat that nurtures healthy growth. Students in the Academy explore the natural resources of the White Earth Nation and learn about the traditions associated with those resources along with threats that may impact the quality of water, forest and wildlife for

future generations. The summer Academy classes are taught by White Earth natural resource managers and faculty from the UMN along with local and regional Extension educators.

Stephan P. Carlson, PhD.

UMN Extension

Dr. Carlson has worked for UMN, Extension for 22 years. He has 30 years of experience in the field of environmental education and has developed a number of publications and curriculums on the topic. He has been instrumental in developing the original "A GreenPrint for Minnesota; State Plan for Environmental Education" and the Teacher Preparation Project both reports submitted to the Office of Environmental Assistance as an LCCMR project in 1997. He teaches university courses on environmental education/interpretation/tourism at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. His research over the last few years has focused on measuring the impact of environmental field day programs throughout Minnesota. He has developed an observation tool that reflects the "Best practices of environmental field days" and is being used through the country to assess informal out-of-school science learning experiences. He also works with three STEM initiatives with the College of Education and Human Development on the White Earth Reservation bringing hands-on science to K-12, after-school and summer school programs. He also has trained Head Start educators on science and math throughout the year on the White Earth Reservation.



Cultural Practices and Appropriate Protocols

In honor of Anishinaabe tradition, each day will begin with an opening prayer and blessing. Women are the caretakers of the water and it is appropriate to wear skirts below the knee. It is one's choosing to adhere to this practice. During these times we ask participants not to take pictures or film and to remove headgear. We would like to share the Seven Teachings/Values of the Anishinaabe as a guideline for building partnerships and forging working relationships.

1. Dabasendizowin (humility)

- ◆ To recognize oneself as a sacred and equal part of the Creation
- ◆ To demonstrate sensitivity to others
- ◆ To be respectful of the thoughts and ideas of others
- ◆ To develop and practice good listening and observation skills

2. Debwewin (truth)

- ◆ To speak the most honestly one can, according to his/her perceptions
- ◆ To be loyal in all our relationships, avoiding hypocrisy

3. Zoongide'iwini (courage)

- ◆ To face difficult situations with bravery
- ◆ To acknowledge one's personal weaknesses and develop the strength to combat them
- ◆ To demonstrate the ability to take initiative and to speak forthrightly

4. Gwayakwaadiziwin (honesty)

- ◆ To maintain truthfulness, sincerity, and fairness in all one's actions
- ◆ To communicate with others and transmit information fairly and truthfully

5. Manaaji'idiwin (respect)

- ◆ To accept cultural, religious, and gender differences
- ◆ To maintain high standards of conduct at all times
- ◆ To safeguard the dignity, individuality, and rights of others

6. Zaag'idiwin (love)

- ◆ To work cooperatively and harmoniously with others
- ◆ To show kindness and compassion
- ◆ To demonstrate acceptance and the empowerment of others
- ◆ To offer hope, encouragement, and inspiration

7. Nibwaakaawin (wisdom)

- ◆ To acknowledge the opportunity to learn from others
- ◆ To take time to reflect on all our experiences
- ◆ To persist in acquiring knowledge and improving skills
- ◆ To practice ethical behavior at all times
- ◆ To seek guidance from Elders and qualified advisors

TALKING CIRCLE OVERVIEW

September 25-27, 2013

The traditional talking circle is a very old Indigenous way of bringing people of all ages together in a quiet, respectful manner for the purpose of teaching, listening, learning, and sharing. The talking circle is a traditional way for Native American people to solve problems. It is a very effective way to remove barriers and to allow people to express themselves with complete freedom. For this reason it is becoming more and more popular in mainstream society. The talking circle is making its appearance in schools, corporate board rooms, and conferences around the world for the simple reason that the technique works very well.

The talking circle gives people an opportunity to interact around the key ideas of the Symposium away from the formalities of the plenary sessions. They are places for the cross-fertilization of ideas where cycles of conversation begin and relationships and networks are formed.

HOW THE TALKING CIRCLE WILL WORK

Each table will choose a facilitator. The facilitators will introduce themselves. There will be notetakers. Facilitators will pass a stone or other ceremonial item clockwise to the first person. As each person receives the item, they may speak as they wish. When they have finished, they pass the stone along. If someone does not wish to speak, they simply pass the stone to next person. The stone may go around several times providing everyone the opportunity to speak as many times as they wish, or until the facilitator ends the talking circle.

GUIDELINES

There are a few very simple guidelines that allow a talking circle to function:

1. Only one person speaks at a time. Only the person holding the stone may speak. Dialogues are not part of the circle, as they can become confrontational.
2. Introduce yourself. It is polite to introduce yourself in the first round. Use your spirit name, if you have one; otherwise, use your given name.
3. Speak from the heart. The speaker should address the circle from the heart, and may speak for as long as they need to, with respect for the time of others.
4. Listen with respect. All people except the speaker listen attentively and give support to the speaker. Listening with the heart allows you to hear the true intent beneath what the speaker is saying. Listen in the way you expect others to hear you.
5. What is said in the circle stays in the circle. Never repeat anything that is said within the circle, unless you have the permission of the speaker.

So, in this old way we come together to share, to learn, to find strength to live in these two worlds; so that our people may live.