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11-17-2003

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Lee, Mary Jo Benton; Giago, Doris; Three Irons, Valerian ; and Branum, Allen, "SDSU-FIS Success Academy: Preparing Native American Students for College and Preparing a College for Native American Students" (2003). *Eighth Annual National Conference, POCPWI (2003)*. Paper 3.
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SDSU-FIS Success Academy:
Preparing Native American Students for College
And Preparing a College for Native American Students

Abstract
South Dakota State University-Flandreau Indian School Success Academy is an early and intensive college preparatory program for Native American high school students.
The panel members---students, faculty, staff, and administrators---will explain how this unique K -16 *partnership is working to help more Native Americans prepare for and succeed in college.*

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The South Dakota State University-Flandreau Indian School Success Academy is an early and intensive college preparatory program for American Indian students. Success Academy has two goals and both are equally important:

.to help more American Indian students prepare for and succeed in college; and .to make SDSU into the kind of place where that can happen.

Following is an outline of the SDSU-FIS Success Academy program:

Freshmen: All 70 FIS freshmen come to SDSU for seven full-day visits throughout the academic year. Students rotate through hands-on workshops in all seven ofSDSU's academic colleges (Engineering, Pharmacy, Nursing, Arts and Science, Education and Counseling, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Agriculture and Biological Sciences). FIS students have dinner with SDSU presenters and Native American Club members.
After dinner the entire group attends a campus event together (like a basketball game or a theater production).

Sophomores: All 70 FIS sophomores come to SDSU for four full-day visits throughout the academic year. These visits focus on areas identified by the students as being of particular interest to them. The visits include a Focus on the Arts Day, a Focus on the Military Day, a Focus on American Indian Studies Day and a Focus on Health, Physical Education and Recreation Day. Sophomores also stay for an evening meal and a campus event after the hands-on workshops.

Juniors: The junior year program is designed for those students who consider themselves college-bound. (When asked, of the 75 juniors attending FIS last year, 61 said they planned on attending college and wanted to continue in the Success Academy program.) The juniors come to campus for four daylong sessions in April. Topics are Making the Decision to Attend College, Paying for a College Education, Choosing Your Path and So What's Next. Staff from the Student Affairs Division are instrumental in planning and presenting the junior-year program. In addition, about 20 faculty, retired faculty and staff members from SDSU work one-on-one with juniors from FIS as "academic parents," discussing with students their plans for higher education and going with them on visits to the academic departments of their choice.

Seniors: This fall for the first time 10 FIS seniors are enrolled in a special section of SDSU's Introduction to Astronomy course. All these American Indian students are enrolled as concurrent high school/SDSU students. The class meets twice a week, once at SDSU and once at FIS. Students will earn three college credits when they complete the course. Another course, this one in Mathematics, will be offered to the same 10 FIS students during Spring Semester 2004. Thus these 10 FIS students will have six credits finished by the time they complete high school and enroll in college. A grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration pays for these courses.

During the three years of Success Academy's existence, 144 faculty and staff from throughout the university planned and presented Success Academy programs. It should be noted that many of these individuals involved their undergraduate and graduate students in their presentations.

Success Academy is now in its fourth year of operation. This is the first year the program has served all four cohorts of students (freshmen through seniors) that attend FIS. During the past four years, those involved with Success Academy have experienced many triumphs-and also some obstacles-as they have worked to prepare more American Indian students for college. The panelists will discuss Success Academy and its impact on SDSU from the different but overlapping perspectives of students, faculty and administration.

Presenters

MaryJo Benton Lee is the co-founder and the coordinator of the South Dakota State University-Flandreau Indian School Success Academy, an early and intensive college preparatory program for Native American high school students. MaryJo has bachelors and master's degrees in journalism from the University of Maryland-College Park and worked for five years as a reporter and copy editor for two Washington, D.C. area newspapers before moving to South Dakota. During her 20 years at SDSU she has been, faculty member (part-time), research assistant, graduate student and most recently diversity coordinator for the College of Engineering. She spent a year at Yunnan Norma) University in southwestern China, first as an exchange professor

and then as a visiting scholar. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology, with a minor in Asian studies, from SDSU. In addition to her book, *Ethnicity, Education and Empowerment: How Minority Students il Southwest China Construct Identities,* she is the author of numerous papers and articles on issues relating to race and ethnicity, sociology of education and Asian studies.

Allen R. Branum is Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Acting Director for Divers: Enhancement at South Dakota State University. Al completed his Ph.D. at the Univers: of Montana and then served SDSU for 30 years as a faculty member. During these thr(decades, Al held appointments as Head of the Department of Psychology, Director of University Honors Program, Assistant Dean for the College of Arts and Science and Director of Sioux Falls Programs. He retired in 2000 but returned to SDSU in 2002 to serve in his present position. Al works to promote diversity enhancement across the university. This includes promoting recruitment and retention of minority students an minority faculty members, facilitating extracurricular diversity experiences for stude: and staff, integrating diversity information and themes into university curricula and pedagogy, and providing direct diversity education for faculty, staff and students.

Doris Giago is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at South Dakota State University. She is an Oglala Lakota and is enrolled at Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Doris has a bachelor's degree in journalism fj SDSU, and a master's in journalism from the University of Kansas. She is one ofth founders of the Lakota Times, which later became Indian Country Today. She also as managing editor of the Lakota Times. After graduation from SDSU, she was a r for the Argus Leader in Sioux Falls. She was awarded a Bush Foundation Leaders) Grant and chose Kansas for her graduate work. Doris is director of the South Dak(High School Press Association as part of her work in the journalism department. ~ teaches reporting and advanced reporting. The advanced reporting classes have ta projects that take reporting and photography students to South Dakota reservatior such project-a tabloid on the five tribal colleges in South Dakota-won a national) F. Kennedy award. She has won the minority recruitment award presented by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Valerian Three Irons is the Diversity and Service-Learning Associate at South State University. In that position, he delivers Native American cultural presenta' the SDSU faculty and staff. His topics include family dynamics, spirituality, the school era, and traditional herbs and healing. Valerian's other responsibilities at include being an instructor in the American Indian Studies program and servin! advisor to the Native American Club. Valerian is also SDSU's on-site coordina International Partnership for Service-Learning. In that role, he works with trib~ to develop service sites and coordinates host families for student home stays 0: reservations. Valerian lectures throughout the U.S. and abroad on Native Ame culture. He has spoken at tribal middle and high schools and at tribal Boy's an Clubs. He is also a speaker for the South Dakota Humanities Council.