Interview with April Lindala: Interim Director for the Center of Native American Studies

By: David Anthony

Anishnaabe News interviewed April Lindala earlier this semester. She is the interim director of the Center for Native American Studies. April has been active on the NMU’s Campus for the past twelve years in various positions she has held. She is also a NMU alumna is currently working on a grad- uate degree in Fine Arts. She is of Mohawk and Arabic lineage. She has been active in the Native American community and has been the head female dancer at Pow wows across the state.

Nish News: So April where are from and tell us about yourself.

April: I grew up in the Detroit area, and graduated in the Lutheran High School North. My Mom is originally from Oshweken, Ontario which is Six Nations reserve, and my dad grew up his entire life in Detroit as an Arab-American. I chose NMU in an unorthodox manner. It was a far away place from mom but still in the state of Michigan. I could still get the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver and still go to Northern.

Once I got here, I really fit in well with my ideas and that was one that certainly one that was more risky than others So I admire Dr. Tibbetts for going out on a limb and doing that. After that, I applied for a position as the Director of Diversity Students.

Nish News: Now that you are in the Center for Native American Studies, how has this experience changed you as a person, and what are the changes you brought to this position?

April: It is a really unique position to be in because it is a transitional, temporar- y position. However, with that being said, one of the initiatives that I hope to bring to the table is the idea of bringing Nish News back. In essence to really serve as an agent of change, I don’t know if I am really in the driver’s seat to do that without the advice and counsel of others being that this is tem- porary. Bringing it back to a truer sense of its orig- inal form, it is student-driven, in print as well as online and serves a broader audience a broader news base. While I appreciate the efforts that were put forth in reviving Anishnaabe News, I think things that stu- dent-driven have a real special energy to them. I hope the alumni are excited about it as they learn about its return. I hope that other communities outside of the campus community will be excited to learn about it as well.

April: And how have I changed?

Nish News: Yes, how have you changed?

April: I recently just watched an interview with Jamie Foxx. I really admire him after this interview because he had such a deep respect for his grandmother. His grand- mother shared with him, everything you do in life is going to be adding to your own tool belt. In a sense the education you get in high school, the education you get in col- lege, the education you get wherever, you are adding to your tool belt. You never know what kind of house you are going to build on the other side, and what kind of tools you need. When he very, very young he took classical piano and he actually went to college on a classical piano scholarship. Lot of people don’t know this fact about Jamie Foxx. They know him as comedian or slick dude of whatever (laughter). When he was in high school, he was a football player. These are very natural things for young peo- ple who have the means and the ability and affor- do to that. Those were tools in his tool belt, and he has been able to use them in the film industry and had received won- derful accolades as a result of that. That is why he was hired to do Ray because the director could use him as a piano player. So what has that to do with me. I think for me, I just adding to my tool belt. I am adding to all my learning experience I am garnering. I hope we will be able to assist the students, the campus of Northern in the future.

5th Annual Ojibwe Food Taster

The Native American Student Association (NASA) of Northern Michigan University will be hosting their 5th annual Ojibwe Food Taster. This unique event will take place on Sunday, November 6 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm at the Dy Jacobsen Center on the campus of NMU in Marquette.

Admission for the event is $5.00 for NMU students and $10.00 for the general public. Organizers are planning to have a full menu of venison, wild rice dishes, corn soup, potatoes, fry bread and much more. The event is planned as a fundraiser for the annual "Learning to Walk Together" traditional pow wow generally held in March.

Maryanne Brown, a NASA member states, "It felt really good to be a part the event as a server. Different cultures of people together for one purpose. And people were really excited about it."

"The food is good and it will be fun," states NASA member Yolanda Hazen, coordinator for the event. "Cooking was a lot of fun and I liked it when people came back for seconds."

"I'm excited to take part for the first time," adds NASA member Steven Knauf. "Because of all the positive things I heard about it from last year and other peoples' positive experience from last year."

To help promote a healthy environment, the members of the Native American Student Association have promoted this event as a “dishbag” event. "We are asking the public to bring their own dish- ware,” states Hazen. “Our group does not want to use too much Styrofoam which is harmful to the environment.” For those individuals who bring their own dishware, a drawing will be held for some wonder- ful prizes. For more information contact the Native American Student Association through the NMU Center for Native American Studies at 906-227-1397 during business hours.

Nish News: What did you do for the
By: David Anthony

Do you ever wonder how certain student activities are financed at Northern Michigan University? Magicians, Comedians, Speakers, Experts, Bands, ... the list of different student-spon-
sored events can go on and on. Many times student groups have to raise funds through doing an assortment of activities like car washes, book sales, cookie sales, private contributors, door-to-door begging (okay I am going off the deep end, but I get the idea. One of the more competitive and beneficial ways to raise funds for student groups on campus is to present their idea for an event in front of the Student Finance Committee (SFC). The SFC receives its funds from the Student Activity Fee. Every student pays this $30.00 fee along with other fees with their tuition. Some student groups are earmarked and have direct access to the funds while the rest of funds goes through a review process of the SFC.

Now let’s look at the nuts and bolts of the SFC and its review process. The SFC committee is comprised of ten students who during the course of the semester review the various student groups’ proposals. The student groups present their activity and the budget, and usually they find out immediately if their proposal is a success or not. The SFC votes on the proposal after some questioning and answering with the student group. The student group either leaves elated or rejected. The next group comes in to present their ideas.

I have personally seen the SFC process and it can be quite heated. The Native Student Association (NSA) has not found itself in good graces with the SFC. Every year NASA has put on a Pow Wow that happens in the Spring. The Pow Wow was a huge undertaking for a student group, but NASA does it every year. The record keeping is a huge undertaking and takes months for students to dot every i and cross every t for the SFC. The SFC wanted the budget for last year’s Pow Wow, however, the student who coordinat- ed the Pow Wow is not on the SFC campus. Her leaving the campus had noth- ing to do with the Pow Wow, but the records are still not in order for the SFC’s liking. Okay let’s stop right here and look what other campuses are doing with their Pow Wow.

Other campuses and their Student Finance Committees seem to promote the Pow Wow and work with the respective Native student groups who coordinate it. When I was at a University down state we put on the Pow Wow at a local hockey rink. It was a successful and well-attended event. NMU’s Pow Wow is also for the local community and NMU’s student. The Interim Dean of Students told me directly that she did not feel that the Pow Wow is a student event. The Dean of Students is the advisor for the SFC, and she is quite vocal in these proceedings. It is too bad that the Dean for some way sometimes one cannot see the forest through the trees. University of Michigan, Michigan State, Western, Central and a host of other campus groups put on an annual Pow Wow. Michigan Tech and LSSU put on Pow Wows on their campuses for their student body and community. The point is that NMU’s Pow Wow is not going away. NASA will present their project before the SFC and hopefully we can find funds and support for their campus to do the upcoming Pow Wow.

The SFC and the process for selecting the proposals that it wants to fund needs to be changed. It’s that simple. The SFC appoints its members when a student leaves for whatever reason. The Supreme Court cannot even appoint its own nomi-
nees. By doing this, the same thoughts get perpetuated year after year. Where is the diversity thought? Thought, itself, becomes homogenized. A diverse SFC is needed. Student groups are more fluid and mem-
bers change year after year just like the SFC should not hold grudges year after year. SFC members need to be trained in diversity. They should know the substance abuse. The AICC building is located at 119 Baraga Avenue next to the U.P. Children’s Home. The AICC is responsible for running all other events for the community and a gift shop. The gift shop offers a variety of products such as beads, CDs and jewelry. The store is open on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. The community at large can also utilize the building for events. NMU has also offered classes in the AICC building. Council member, Peggy Derwin, has been appointed the part-time Youth Activities Coordinator. She was appointed on November 30th, 2005 and that event will be, Snow show decoration making. The remaining activities for November and December are still being planned. If you are interested in attending any events, you may email Peggy Derwin at pherderwin@chartermi.net. If you are interested in contacting AICC, you may call (906) 226-5044 during open hours or leave a mes-sage or visit the website www.charterin-
ternet.com/aicc/.
Native American Students Association

What is N.A.S.A About?

By: Molly Meshigaud

The Native American Student Association (NASA) serves to promote their heritage and way of life through activities. They also strive to be a supportive and interactive group for Native American students. Composed of both Native and non-Native American students, NASA is known for advocating the education of Native American culture. Throughout the years, NASA has been active in hosting multiple events such as the annual Pow Wow and Food Taster.

Everyone is encouraged to join and welcomed to attend their weekly meetings. This year there are no forms of hierarchy within the Association. There is equality throughout the decision making. Everyone has a voice and they are continuously searching for ideas for new events. So far this semester NASA members built a float for the homecoming parade. They have also been making plans to host fundraisers throughout the community to raise funds for future activities.

Initially NASA was known as the Anishanabe Club when it began in 1992 and changed the name to Native American Student Association in 1997 to include all Native American Nations in the name. NASA’s awards include: recipient of the 2000-2001 Organization of the Year Award as well as the 2000-2001 Diversity Program/Project of the Year Award for the “Learning to Walk Together” Pow-Wow.

If you are interested in joining NASA, you can either email Steve Knauf or attend their weekly meetings.

Contact person: Steve Knauf
Email: sknauf@nmu.edu
Meeting time: Every Friday at 12:30pm
Meeting place: Center for Native American Studies or Room 142 Whitman
Website: http://nasa.nmu.edu/
Advisor: April Lindala, Interim Director, Center for Native American Studies

Student Showcase:
Dana Picard

By: Molly Meshigaud

Dana Picard is a tribal member of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. Majoring in Sociology with a minor in Native American Studies, Dana is residing within the Native American Experience House for her third year at Northern Michigan University. Before moving to Marquette, Dana requested the Native American Experience House as her preference, but was put in another house due to lack of open space. Dana was interested in living the Native House because she wanted to be around other Native American students so she contacted the Housing and Residence Life office and requested to be moved. Halfway through her first semester she was switched into the Native House and has stayed there since. As a third year resident, her decision to stay in dorms another year was affected by several reasons. The accessibility that on campus housing provides as well as her freshman sister who is now her roommate were important factors. It is much easier to just walk to class than drive and Dana feels that it is her responsibility to be a constant support as well as a mentor to her sister. Dana says that living with other Natives within the house made it easier for her to be away from home. Coming directly from a reservation, she felt at ease knowing that there were other Natives within the house. The activities put on by the Community and Cultural Advocate such as movie night, Indian taco dinners and study groups also helped her become more comfortable. Dana recommends other Native students to choose the Native American Experience House as their preference because she feels it helps students transition into college life especially coming from a small community. West hall is the only dorm up campus which makes it secluded. Many might see this as a disadvantage, but for Native Students coming from the reservation, the small community of West Hall makes the changes less intimidating.

Dana included that she came to college to further her education for so she can eventually return to the Keweenaw Bay Indian reservation to be a positive role model. She would like to bring her experiences back to the community and encourage more kids to do the same as she has.

For those interested in helping with Anishnaabe News, please stop by the office at the Center for Native Studies in Whitman Hall, or call us at 227-1397.

Wade Wiartalla
(NMU Student)
made copper bowls at the Title Seven picnic.