Indigenous Artist Erica Lord visits campus

By April Lindala

The opportunity to work with the artist Erica Lord sounded intriguing when I first heard about it. The title of the workshop, "Traditional Storytelling: Image, Text, and Video Production" made me even more interested. I was hopeful that I could be part of the workshop.

I had little experience and knowledge of the dynamics that create effective and appealing photography, video and text art. Now, I believe that I have better understanding and appreciation for this.

During the workshop we learned about identity in correlation with text, image and voice. The environment of the workshop was comforting. After I read my writing out loud (a combination of random journal entries) my peers and Erica, let me know that it's normal to think too much and ponder about the past, present and future. Erica said we students are in our "critical moment of self-discovery." I think I may now try to embrace that. I will not lie, the workshop stressed me out a little, but nonetheless, I learned helpful skills during the workshop.

The opportunity to work with another artist, especially a distinguished, talented artist like Erica Lord, was a fantastic way to help the creative thought process and inspiration. I am now certain I would like to experiment more with video and photography while pursuing my art degree.

(continued on page 10)

NMU Hosted Language Workshop

By Amanda Weinert

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(continued on page 10)
Native American Student Association

Anishinaabe News

Kahurangi Maori Dance Theatre to perform at NMU on March 11.

The NMU International Performing Arts Series announces a performance by the Kahurangi Maori Dance Theatre at the Forest Roberts Theatre on Thursday, March 11 at 7:30pm.

This performance is funded by the Office of the Provost at Northern Michigan University and is part of a weekend of events featuring First Nation performances and celebrations, including the annual “Learning To Walk Together” Pow Wow on Saturday, March 13.

Ticket prices for this concert are as follows:

Students $5 advance/$6 door; NMU Staff/Faculty and Seniors 60+, $13 advance/$15 door; General Public, $18 advance/$20 door. Tickets for the concert can be purchased at the Superior Dome, Forest Roberts Theatre, TCF Bank and the Vista Theatre or by calling 906-227-1032. You can also order on-line at www.nmu.edu/tickets.

The Center for Native American Studies hopes to begin selling Native specific items to help generate revenue for programming for the campus and surrounding community. We are seeking student support. If you are a business major and would like an internship, this would be a great experience in setting up a small, non-profit business or ideas for such a venture. Please contact April Lindala at the Center. Our e-mail is cnas@nmu.edu. We appreciate any ideas for how to make this small business something special.

Here’s one item to think about, a smart alternative to plastic shopping bags. On sale now at the CNAS - 112 Whitman Hall for $12.

Drivers & Volunteers Needed for the
College Prep Medicine Wheel Academy - May 13-15, 2010

Drivers are needed for the transportation of high school students and possibly parents and chaperones. Must be at least 25 years of age (rental company policy) and have a good driving record. Experience with large vans appreciated. Must also allow for background check (as you will be transporting youth). Drivers are paid positions. Some of the required driving will be lengthy as it could be up to three hours one way. Be sure you have the time available for this. Drivers should be viewed as positive ambassadors of NMU as you will be some of the first and last individuals that these students will meet during their campus experience. Drivers must put safety first. Work study will be preferred, but not required (must be currently enrolled at NMU).

Volunteers are needed to serve as mentors (as well as NMU ambassadors) while high school youth are on the NMU’s campus participating in the program. We expect you to engage and spend time with those prospective students while they are participating in the program and various workshops when appropriate. Experience working with youth is appreciated. Experience working with Native youth will be given consideration. Must also allow for background check (as you will be engaging directly with youth).

If you are interested in being a part of this team as a driver or volunteer mentor, please print your information below and submit with a brief cover letter and two letters of reference by Friday, March 26. Thank you!

Full Name __________________________________________

Phone # __________________________________________

E-mail Address ______________________________________

Major ____________________________________________

Minor ____________________________________________

Within your cover letter tell us… What are your academic interests and goals? What type of careers interest you? What about this program interests you? Have you ever worked with youth before? If yes, please expand on this. Let us know if you have ever worked with Native communities, families or youth and in what context. Tell us which position you are interested in. Thank you for your consideration!

If you have any questions, contact Dr. Adriana Greci Green at the Center for Native American Studies at 906-227-1937 or agreen@nmu.edu.

The College Prep Medicine Wheel Academy is made possible by the NMU Wildcat Innovation Fund and the NMU College of Arts and Sciences.
3rd annual Indigenous Earth Issues Summit
Scheduled for April

The 3rd annual Indigenous Earth Issues Summit will be held on Monday, April 5, in the University Center at NMU. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with events beginning at 9 a.m. Invited presenters will conduct workshops offering hands-on training in Indigenous environmental activism strategies, sharing information on current Indigenous environmental issues, and engaging participants in activities based on learning from Mother Earth. Eco-vendors and informational tables on environmental issues will be an integral part of the day’s activities.

Ward Churchill, the evening keynote speaker, will offer a holistic perspective on Indigenous environmental issues and will discuss how Indigenous concerns over water issues fit into the context of this bigger picture. “Colonialism equals genocide,” he writes in his book Struggle for the Land. He adds that “colonialism also equals ecocide.” The Native “struggle for the liberation of our homelands,” he writes, is “a struggle to achieve decolonization.” This is not only a Native issue in Churchill’s eyes. “Like it or not, we are all – Indian and non-Indian alike – finally in the same boat,” he points out. “Either Native North America will be liberated, or liberation will be foreclosed for everyone, once and for all.” He argues that “we must take our stand together.”

Gail Small (Cheyenne), executive director of Native Action, has been fighting to protect her reservation from coal companies for over 25 years. She is featured in the film “Homeland: Four Portraits of Native Action.” Her workshop will focus on how to create similar organizations in participants’ own communities. She will also discuss various tribal members doing wonderful work for their tribe, and near nationally renowned, tribal members speak.

I was asked several times to describe the situation I find myself in as the Liaison to the Native American Studies program. I discovered that the CNAS is distinct because it is connected to a state University and yet receives no tribal support.

We have opportunities to reach out to and receive like few other programs can. I spoke with other university faculty who support indigenous language learning without the tribal connection, and they recognize the unique situation that we at Northern enjoy sometimes without realizing how exceptional it is. You can be proud of all that the CNAS realizes as it serves its mission.

By SaraJane Tompkins, MLIS, NMU
I had the privilege of attending the Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums Conference (TALIM) in Portland, Oregon recently. I wanted you the reader, to know how special the Center for Native American Studies (CNAS) is. From my perspective, I was able to attend great sessions, visit with various tribal members doing wonderful work for their tribe, and hear nationally renowned, tribal members speak.

I had the privilege of attending the Summit is hosted by the NMU Center for Native American Studies. Each session will include a day-long field trip to Waswagoning Traditional Village in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin (transportation will be provided).

Two-week intensive course that explores the Anishinaabe uses of local flora in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. The word Kinomaage is an Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) word that translates as “how the earth teaches us.”

Instructor: Aimee Cree Dunn

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Ben Yahola (Quasartte/Tokobutchee) was part of the Anishinaabe treaty rights movement. He adds that “colonialism also equals ecocide.”的原始内容。
Native Languages Attempting to Survive

by Miriam Ross
(reprinted with permission)

The film “Avatar” is a fantasy, a dream set in the future on a far-away imaginary moon inhabited by a blue-skinned, feline- eared tribe, the Na’vi people. They live in harmony with their ancient homeland: a fertile forest of giant palms, floating mountains and luminous moss. The future is threatened, but the survival of their people is threatened by ag- gressive invaders seeking to profit from the mineral deposits that lie under- ground. For the invaders, the indige- nous tribe is nothing but a nuisance: the people are ‘savages’ who are ‘threatening the operation’; they are ‘hostiles’ who have to be exterminated. The Na’vi’s lives and their lands with arrows tipped with poi- son. They must move from their home to make way for ‘builders’. And if they re- sist, the invaders will ‘hammer them hard’. The film is a beautiful but tragic vision of an ecologically- enlightened people fac- ing the decimation of their community and their ancestral lands. They are just days away from being gas-bombed and machine-gunned by greedy, ruthless impe- rialists armed with giant soldier-robots. It is not real. Except it is. In many ways, it is all too real. For the fundamental story of Avatar if you take away the multi-coloured le- murs, the long-trunked horses and warring androids—is being played out time and time again, on our planet and in our age. From the rainforests of the Amazon to the frozen taiga of Siberia, and the snow peaks of Colombia, the world’s last- remaining tribal peoples—who, for many generations have followed ways of life that are largely self-sufficient, and are clearly different from the mainstream and dominant society—are at risk of extinc- tion. The Na’vi’s story is not dissimilar to being hounded from the lands on which they depend entirely for their survival, and on which they have lived successfully for thou- sands of years. Their lands are appro- priated for colonization, logging, mining, oil exploration and any other number of avaricious motives. Like the Na’vi, tribal peoples are rarely consulted, frequently evicted and, at worst, massacred by pow- poww Volunteers Needed

NASA is still seeking volunteers in the kitchen for the feast and prep on Wednesday, March 10 from 3 - 6 pm, Friday, March 12 from 10 am - 5 pm and Saturday from 10:30 - clean up. The feast and prep will take place at the D.J. Jacobetti Center kitchen. If you have experience in a professional kitchen or experience with dish- washing please consider volunteering a few hours of your time to ensure that the NASA powwow feast is a success!
Student Spotlight: Amanda Weinert

Where are you from?
Garden, Mich., A little over 80 miles south of Marquette. It’s a peninsula on the peninsula.

What is your tribal affiliation?
Anishinaabe/Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

Why NMU?
I wasn’t sure if I wanted to leave the U.P. yet and it had the major and minor I was interested in.

Year and major/minor?
Freshman - Art & Design (thinking about Education)/Native American Studies

Interests?
The arts, cultures, learning, quality time with friends and family...shortly sums it up.

What classes are you taking/have you taken?
This semester: Drawing, Visual Structures, Mythology and Storytelling by Native American Women.

What do you think about NMU so far? What are some highlights?
I really enjoy it here. I think NMU is a comfortable learning environment. I’ve made a lot of great friends and there’s really cool organizations around campus to keep me busy.

Seeking summer employment?
Mentors/Lifeguards Needed

Dates are June 19 - July 2, 2010

Contact April Lindala at alindala@nmu.edu about working as a mentor or lifeguard for the annual Native American Summer Youth programs hosted by the NMU Center for Native American Studies and the Hannahville Indian School.

Chi miigwech miinwaa baamaapii Terri Williams miinwaa Jean Paquette!

The Center for Native American Studies (Center) says chi miigwech baamaapii (thank you very much and see you later) to Terri Williams. Terri was the CNAS Senior Secretary for a year and a half. We will miss Terri around our Center. She moved to the McNairs Program in West Science with the new year.

Good luck in your new position Terri!!

Jean Paquette arrived in mid January as a temporary secretary. Some people may think that two months isn’t a long time to make an impact, however Jean contributed a great deal; not only the organization of the office, but also passing on helpful office skills to others! Chi miigwech Jean, miinwaa baamaapii!

Kahurangi (Cloak from Heaven) is New Zealand’s only full-time Maori Dance Theatre of professional caliber to maintain a consistent presence in North America, as they have for the past thirteen years.

Kahurangi was formed in 1983 to provide cultural, recreational, educational and employment opportunities for graduates of Takitimu Performing Arts School, based in Hastings, New Zealand, which has established itself as a pioneer in the field of Maori Performing Arts and was the first tertiary institution to offer a full-time undergraduate degree in Maori Performing Arts. Since 1985, Kahurangi has presented over 2000 performances in New Zealand, Australia, China, Singapore, Mexico, India and Malaysia along with the United States of America and Canada.

The company has appeared in many festivals, conferences, public and private schools presenting unique cultural performances, demonstrations, lectures and workshops relating to the Maori and Polynesian Cultures and ways of life.

A performance by Kahurangi brings to life the “ihi” or life force of the Maori, through the songs and dances that are part of the history and fabric of Maori life. They bridge the past and the present with genealogical chants, martial arts techniques, powerful songs and pride in being Maori. Each presentation engrosses and excites the audience and imparts a wealth of cultural and tribal knowledge to foster a greater understanding of a very unique and exciting indigenous culture.

Members of Kahurangi are graduates of Takitimu Performing Arts School. In order to provide an in-depth learning experience for its members, Kahurangi performers are brought to North America to tour for a full year. Personnel are rotated every 12 months to enable many young Maori to tour North America and gain valuable artistic and performance experience. Kahurangi performers bring with them the stories and heritage of their individual tribal areas and enjoy the support of their family, sub tribe and tribe as they represent Aotearoa New Zealand as Cultural Ambassadors.

A workshop with these performers will be held at 10:00 am in the Whitman Commons on March 11.
Indigenous Language Teacher Workshop

By Tina Moses

Recently on a Wednesday evening, the NASEI brought some folks together for appliqué beading workshop. It was my first time with this type of beading and I believe it showed. I decided to make a turtle and my first stitch left my beads on the back of my project and me wondering where they went. We laughed at my blunder.

Charlene Brissette showed us her projects from the beading class offered last summer with April.

This was a great way to visit with other students and friends from the community. We were able to share stories and life events. Trystan helped us out by entertaining little Lilli so her mother, Mavis Farr, could work on her own beading project. Having this opportunity to relax with others was a great way to spend an evening during the snowy winter days.

We are very fortunate to have April in the Center to share her knowledge and passion for beading. She commented that an important aspect of this was for us to learn how we can create our own regalia items.

Liz Monske, a faculty member from the English department shared how she was only going to collect enough beads to fit into a box “this big” and how she needed to get to the store to purchase a bigger box now. If we ever need some way to relax in the office or have some free time during the day, we can now work on our projects.

(For more on NASEI workshop and photos, see page 11).

Native American Student Empowerment Initiative

By Joe Masters

February has been a busy month for the Native American Student Empowerment Initiative (NASEI). On February 5, the Center for Native American Studies held a snow snake stick making class in the art workshop at the Peter White Library. Some of the students went with Levi Tadgerson and harvested some small trees off his land necessary to make the snow snakes. The snow snake is a game that we do in the winter time. We sculpt the stick and smooth it down so that it will slide down a long track that is made of snow and ice. In the very near future we will be building the snow snake track on campus, and hopefully another one around the powwow so that kids can participate in the fun as well.

On February 12, the Center hosted a hand drum making workshop at the Peter White Library. There were well over 20 participants who attended the workshop. The drum rings were made by Howard Masters who also provided the cedar sticks. He made sixteen 10-inch and two 14-inch hand drum rings. We would like to say chi miigwech for donating his time and resources.

On February 24, April Lindala held an applique beading workshop for eight participants at the center. The purpose behind the workshop was to announce the kick off of a community beadwork project that will be housed in the center. The inspiration came from the Art and Culture road trip in 2008 when the Saginaw Chippewa had a community beadwork project at the Zibiwin Culture Center.

NASEI is presented by the Center and made possible by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.

1. Participants look forward to getting outside to try out their snow snakes.
2. A student shows Kenn his handy work with his new hand drum.
3. Joe Masters with an ax to grind.
4. Holly Barkstrom and Trystan McKee show off their hand drums.
5. Pat Anthony getting started at the hand drum workshop.
6. Mavis Farr, Charlene Bressette and Tina Moses at the beading workshop.
7. Arlie Alderete focuses on her beadwork.
Continued from front page. Those who participated in the Erica Lord workshop were from Northern Michigan University or Keweenaw Bay Ojibwe Community College. NMU students, Amanda Weinert, Levi Tadgerson, Cory Fontaine, Christina Moses and Leora Tadgerson, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwe Community College students were Roxanne Carlson, Anita Chosa, Celil Dowd and Debbie Parish.

DeVos Art Museum Director and Curator Melissa Matuscak commented on Erica’s exhibit: “It was a really unique opportunity for us to host Erica in Marquette for so long. When an artist can interact with people first hand, rather than just putting their work up on the walls and leaving, the experience becomes more dynamic and valuable. Especially when an artist’s work such as Erica’s provokes so much dialogue. The way she presents issues of identity, race and culture naturally makes people ask questions and allowing the artist to answer those questions first-hand allows for a shared experience between the artist and audience. It is not only valuable for those asking the questions but it is also an opportunity for the artist to reflect on their own work. To me, dialogue is a necessary component of contemporary art and it is the job of the museum to give the space and time for these types of interactions to happen.”

By Tina Moses
The workshop entitled “Traditional Storytelling: Image, Text, and Video Productions” consisted of us bringing in our own pictures and telling the story about what was going on in the picture. Our story was captured in video and sound. Each of us had the chance to share our dialogue with the group and allow others to critique or ask clarifying questions. We got to know one another through the sharing of stories and images as well as our interaction throughout the workshop.

We were provided a guided tour of the museum exhibit and were allowed to ask questions about her displays. Erica uses a contemporary style all her own. A reporter from The Mining Journal was there for a write-up on the exhibit and to interview the workshop participants. My own experience was beneficial because I had never had a chance to work on a video-stream of my own choosing. Each one of us had our own style of storytelling. My idea was to put together family pictures for my daughter and explain the importance of family and culture. As I spoke with other participants, I realized that this workshop provided us the opportunity and the time to put together a piece of our history that we may never have had the chance to otherwise.

We were on a time limit which, according to Erica, was necessary or we would never have completed it. Her theory—if we are given unlimited time, we would procrastinate or keep finding other things to add or change. I would agree since I changed my whole presentation from the first day. I also learned, the hard way, about the importance of saving your materials every so often.

On the final day of the workshop, Erica and I were putting together my video and made it halfway through when her computer locked up. We had to start all over again with choosing the correct photos and timing the video with the dialogue.

The final product was on display at the DeVos museum from January 14 until February 14 and will be archived on the museum’s Web site. Each of us will receive a copy of the final project.

Photo above left: Erica in action.
Photo above right: Erica works with Celil Dowd.
Photo below: Roxanne Carlson records herself.
Photo below left: Erica speaks to the group.

This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support provided by the Friends of the DeVos Art Museum.

By Rich Sgarlotti
The Native American Experience class was created as the only required course where other courses were parts of other departments, such as the literature class in English and some of the history classes. Dr. Jim Spresser was the first person to teach the NAS 204 class (UN 204 back then), and he and Melissa were the first co-directors for the Native American Studies minor. When Dr. Spresser became ill, I was asked to teach the course as an adjunct, and I have been teaching it ever since.

More on Erica Lord’s Workshop

Where are you from / what is your tribal affiliation? I am originally from Ironwood, Michigan, but have now lived in Marquette for 22 years. I am an enrolled member of the Keweenaw Bay Tribe of Chipewa Indians.

Why did you choose NMU? I completed an associate’s degree at Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, but couldn’t find work. This was also the same time that I was going through a divorce, so I decided that moving to Marquette and coming to NMU would give me a bachelor’s degree and a new beginning in a new city.

What was your major/minor? What degree did you earn? I have a bachelor’s degree in business administration with a minor in accounting. I have also earned a master’s degree in English writing and a master of fine arts in creative writing.

Were you part of the NAS minor? What was the program like back then? Who taught, what classes, etc. Academically, I was a student member involved in the creation of the NAS minor. I did take what was then EN 315: Native American literature with Dr. Melissa Hearrn, the driving force behind starting the minor. Other than that I have not taken other classes that are currently in the minor, because before long, I was teaching the classes in the minor! The NAS minor was started with a grant from Phillip Morris. The Native American Experience class was created as the only required course. Other courses were parts of other departments, such as the literature class in English and some of the history classes. Dr. Jim Spresser was the first person to teach the NAS 204 class (UN 204 back then), and he and Melissa were the first co-directors for the Native American Studies minor. When Dr. Spresser became ill, I was asked to teach the course as an adjunct, and I have been teaching it ever since.

Alumni Spotlight—Shirley Brozzo

Cultural activism is to ensure the Anishinaabe culture and traditions through educational collaboration, coordination, networking and strengthening.” I hope that this is what I have been able to do in my career at Hannahville.”

Dr. Martin Reinhardt states, “Our dedication to the children of our Tribes, our future leaders, is a shining example of how one person’s actions can positively impact a whole community for generations to come.”

For more than twenty years Native youth from all over the country have attended free programs of leadership and academics thanks to the tireless efforts of Rich Sgarlotti. Having served as a co-director with him on the annual summer program for Native middle school students, he easily balances humility and grace. One can often find him in the kitchen cooking the meals for up to sixty mouths while balancing the duties that are required of a program director.

Sgarlotti continued, “Even though I am sort of retired, I also hope that I can continue to contribute to that mission in the Hannahville school and beyond.”

Ultimately, he has been driven by the culture he has worked to share with and Native youth. “The Seven Grandfathers are wonderful teachings to live by, and I have tried to do that in my professional and personal life. The tradition of giving to others and respect for Mother Earth are goals that everyone should achieve.”

— April E. Lindala

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Kenn is teaching spring and summer language courses. Visit www.nmu.edu/nativeamericans for more information on how to sign up!