

Understanding Historical Trauma in Native American People and the Path to Healing

Executive Summary

Summer 2023 on the Lac Du Flambeau Reservation with the Ojibwe Waaswaganing – Original People

“Boozhoo. Boozhoo”, hello, hello was the first greeting 18 Medical College of Wisconsin students, faculty, and staff experienced on the Lac Du Flambeau Reservation within the Lakes of Torches Casino Convention Center July 11-12, 2023. In partnership with the Indigenous Institute Teaching Learning and Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLNARCH) the Medical College of Wisconsin’s Division of Epidemiology and Social Sciences and the Office of Global Health hosted and provided a Family Circles Professional Development Training with the Ojibwe Community.

“Every human being wants to be understood and appreciated.”

The professional development experience was facilitated by Assistant Professor, Dr. Brian Jackson and enriched by Dr. Alton Sonny Smart, Doreen, GLNARCH CEO Bryan Bainbridge and Director Amy Poupart and, an outdoor evening Indian Bowl of teaching through drumming, singing. Sustainability, health and environment indigenous connection to the earth and the importance of living in balance with the environment led by tribal Elders was emphasized. It was a culturally immersive opportunity to engage with Ojibwe tribal members and to take a step toward establishing respectful and trusting relationships and learning

indigenous ways. It provided experiences and information that assisted with techniques to understand Indian country deeper that stressed the importance of Ojibwe history, culture, traditions and language and paths towards healing.



“I gained a much deeper understanding of the historical and current context of the Ojibwe people in Lac du Flambeau. As a lifestyle and cancer disparities researcher, the experience made me reflect on how this context contributes to mental and physical health. I also greatly appreciate learning about the family circle program and understanding the tremendous impact of cultural identity, family, community cohesion and health. In my role as a faculty member, I want to continue to learn to have the capacity to support the strength and resilience of the Ojibwe people.”

Learning Objectives

1. Define and recognize historical trauma and aftereffects in Wisconsin Native peoples.
2. Reflect on their own history regarding the trauma installed on Wisconsin Native peoples.
3. Learn about the power of cultural restoration to promote resilience and healing among Native peoples.



“I am reflecting on collectivism and mutual sharing/mutual benefit. I think applying this approach can help further better questions and better solutions. I intend to use this concept to push myself to be a better collaborator and partner. This is just the start of the overall impact on me.”



What was Learned

History

- [Historical trauma](#) of the Ojibwe people and the use of boarding schools where children were taken from their homes and families to be taught how to be white, not allowed to speak their native language, wear their native clothing, or practice their beliefs, they were bullied, punished, and lost their identify as a people, leading to a generation of people who didn't know their language and Ojibwe ways which led to a loss of their identity
- Racial injustices continue through today
- Fishing is a primary food source and while the fish via spearing they replenish the fish via fish hatcheries. This is a fact vs misunderstanding from many during the "Walleye Wars"



Characteristics

- Proud of their identify as Native Americans and their Ojibwe tribe and ways
- Great respect for their elders and young children
- Teach through storytelling is important for them to teach their children their language and beliefs so they will know who they are and their identify
- Relationships are important to their cultural structure, family is extended beyond blood relatives and all members of the tribe are uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters
- "we/community" vs "I"
- Always offer first before asking for something
- They are a resilient people, have endured much historically and still experience today

Values, Beliefs

- *"Every human being wants to be heard and understood."*
- Partnerships must have this as foundational to solving problems and supporting them
- Best to approach and ask them what they believe are the pressing issues and work together on solutions vs coming to them with a solution before hearing and understanding
- A spiritual people with belief in the Great Spirit and that belief in power that is received from the spirit in dreams in visions
- Spirits represent different characters (i.e., bear is protection and related to medicine, fish represents leaders, deer is gentle and kind)
- Great respect for the earth and land
- Celebrate with song and dance and music is a healing power
- Harmonious balance of individual, community, and nature as well as body, mind and spirit
- Elders are teachers of the Ojibwe ways, they are perceived as wise and respected as the teachers on the school of life
- Tobacco is spiritual



Participants

Facilitator: Brian Jackson, MEd, PhD, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology & Social Sciences, Institute for Health & Equity

Bruce Campbell, MD
Professor, Member, Faculty Pillar; Kern Institute

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Melinda Stolley, PhD
Center Associate Director, Professor; Hematology and Oncology

Agenda

Day 1 – July 11, 2023

8:30 a.m.

Coffee & Teatime

9:00 a.m.

Opening with the Philosophy and History of the Lac du Flambeau, Honoring Mother Earth: Sustainability, health and environment indigenous connection to the earth and the importance of living in balance with the environment

11:00 a.m.

Training Overview to provide experiences and information that will assist the trainee with techniques to understand Indian country deeper and Edward T. Hall's Cultural Iceberg Model & Activity

12:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m.

Why is traditional Ojibwe Culture and Language important to the road to healing with Elders

1:30 p.m.

Demonstration- Family Circles Team

2:30 p.m.

Closing with Chi Ayaabe

3:00 p.m.

First Visit Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council with GLNARCH and Tour of Community will be outside with opportunity to experience nature

5:00 p.m.

Dinner and Indian Bowl: teaching of singing and dancing outside

Day 2 – July 12, 2023

9:00 a.m.

How can facilitators incorporate traditional culture and language

11:00 a.m.

Understanding the concept of the Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual Self

12:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m.

GLNARCH engagement and efforts to collaborate

2:00 p.m.

Final Circle and opportunity to share the experience with Family Circles Team

3:00 p.m.

Closing Prayer with Elders