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Jbarrett@potawatomi.org

Lcapps@potawatomi.org

Dtrousdale@potawatomi.org

CITIZEN POTAWATOMI NATION

June 5, 2018

Enedina Vazquez, PhD

Division 45: Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Distinguished Career Contribution to Service Award

RE: Nomination of Melinda A. Garcia, Ph.D. for the APA Division 45: Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Distinguished Career Contribution to Service Award

Dear Dr. Vazquez and Division 45 Awards Selection Committee:

Bozho (Hello),

It is my absolute pleasure to nominate Dr. Melinda A. Garcia for the Division 45 Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Distinguished Career Contribution to Service Award. Dr. Garcia is an esteemed elder in both Native and Latina communities. She has worn many healing hats in her career that spans over 40+ years. I am happy to provide the selection committee with information to demonstrate why I am writing this letter of support for my colleague. As you surmise from her Curriculum Vita you can see how Dr. Garcia's contributions align very well with this award. She is a role model, licensed clinical psychologist, one of our community's biggest advocates, and has been very active in both the American Psychological Association, Society of Indian Psychologists, licensure board, and local organizations. She also works to get students and early career psychologists more involved. As an example, she has been very welcoming, supportive, and encouraging of me. Her words of wisdom have helped me often throughout my early career. I know many other colleagues who would echo these sentiments. She is inspiring and truly has a lasting impact on the world. She truly lives to be the change we wish to see the world. Her dedication to ethnic minority communities is evident professionally and personally. Dr. Garcia strives to improve conditions and has taken steps to ensure culturally relevant and appropriate services are offered throughout the Indigenous and underserved communities she works with. She also has taken steps throughout her various leadership positions to bring about positive, effective change on a broader level. Her voice is strong and she represents us well!

I will highlight a few of her distinguished achievements and contributions. In private practice, she has not only maintained a full practice but at the same time remains active with an APA CEMRRAT funded program, Reservation to Graduation (R2G), which has provided mentorship to Native graduate students and early career psychologists. She has also served as Director of Behavioral Health and Community Services with the Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos Behavioral Health which serves three Native American reservations as well as urban Natives in Sandoval

County. She has been instrumental in broadening the department's role in public health and was successful in obtaining State and Federal competitive grants for Zia Pueblo (\$1 million of services for 5 years), instituted electronic medical records, helped resolve a budgetary shortfall in a short period of time, and successfully advocated for funding programs that integrate Pueblo Core values, increased staff salaries to market value, and finalized transfer of additional funding from Indian Health Services to Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos Behavioral Health on top of other duties that include supervision and direct clinical care. This is crucial as funding continues to get slashed throughout Indian Country.

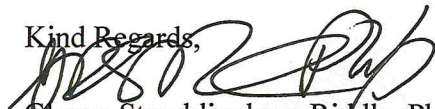
She has been active in APA and been a member for 35 years. Dr. Garcia has served in different leadership roles. A few of these notable appointments include: Delegate from the Society of Indian Psychologists to the Council of Representatives of the American Psychological Association, Executive Committee, Society for the Psychology of Women (Division 35), Chair, APA National Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA), Newsletter Editor & Member, Board of Directors, Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues of the American Psychological Association (Division 45), Co-chair, Committee on Women of Color for the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues of the American Psychological Association, (Division 45).

Additionally, Dr. Garcia is also very active in the Society of Indian Psychologists helping bring about *The Society of Indian Psychologists Commentary on the APA Code of Ethics*. Her CV outlines a plethora of presentations, workshops, consultation, academic contributions and publications, and beyond. A few additional leadership roles have consisted of: Advisory Board Member, Comadre a Comadre (serving Latinas with Breast Cancer), Chair, New Mexico Psychological Association Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, and Member of the Board of Directors, Member, Expert Working Group for the development of a proficiency exam in The Treatment of Alcohol & Other Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders, APA College of Professional Psychology, Member, Organizing Committee for the National Conference of the National Latino Psychological Association, Albuquerque, NM.

In closing, Dr. Garcia's quote from her email captures her dedication and commitment to our field and beyond. "We will meet in the center, form a circle. We will meet, all of us, women of every land. We will weave a web to entangle the powers that bury our children." Analuisa Espinosa. Dr. Garcia is a respected, knowledgeable, and authentic psychologist, which many seek guidance and direction. She is an elder, colleague, leader, mentor, and advocate who is very deserving of APA's Division 45 2018 Distinguished Service Award.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at gstumblingbear@potawatomi.org or 405-214-5101. Ah-ho (thank you) for your consideration.

Kind Regards,



Glenna Stumblingbear-Riddle, Ph.D. (Kiowa)
2018 Chairperson, APA Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs
Licensed Health Service Psychologist
Director of Behavioral Health
Citizen Potawatomi Nation Health Services
2307 S. Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, OK 74801