

## **Honoring the Ancestors, Strengthening the Future**

Almost five decades ago, in 1971 in Oklahoma City, two American Indians who were involved with the American Psychological Association met to talk about how American Indian psychologists could come together for support, discussion of treatment and scholarship, and to better serve the Native American people. Those two people had each started this journey on their own, but came together for the beginning of the Network of Indian Psychologists or NIP. Carolyn Attneave, a Delaware and Cherokee psychologist, thought that a Network of Indian Psychologists could better serve American Indians' need for culturally competent psychological services and Joseph Trimble, a Lakota psychology student at Oklahoma City University, began an American Indian Interest Group in cooperation with the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), Division 9 of APA. Later the name was changed from Network of Indian Psychologists to Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) since the acronym NIP reinforced the stereotype of the drunken Indian. Under the guidance of Carolyn Attneave, SIP grew from a handful of psychologists and students to nearly one hundred fifty at the time of the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of American Indian Psychologists and Psychology Graduate Students in Logan, Utah in June of 2012.

During the 2012 Conference we were reminded of those who have gone before that the current generation has never heard about; including, the three American Indian graduate students who began the Robbers Cave experiments on social norms that are credited to Sherif and Sherif. Very few knew that there was an American Indian theorist, Carolyn Attneave, who developed Networking Theory as it related to families in the 1970s. It was also unknown by many that Logan Wright, president of APA from 1986-1987, was American Indian from the Osage Nation. During the 2016 APA Convention presentations were highlighted on the Blackfeet philosophy that served as the underpinning of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, that Erik Erickson's observation of Lakota parenting at Pine Ridge contributed to his theory of development, and that Carl Jung traveled to the Hopi to learn about dream interpretation. How much of our history of psychology has omitted these indigenous pioneers from the knowledge of our next generation?

The Society of Indian Psychologists initially met during the APA Convention, however, the cost of attending prevented many of our number who were providing services in Indian Country from attending. In 1987, Dr. Damian Vraniak (McShane) brought together the first meeting of American Indian Psychologists and Graduate Students at Utah State University in Logan, Utah with about 30 participants. Over the past 30 years, the conference has grown to be the home of indigenous psychologists and graduate students who may be working in isolation on reservations, in academic institutions, or as students in programs. This conference continued to grow and develop through the nurturing guidance of Dr. Carolyn Barcus and add the retreat before the conference as a time of coming together and rejuvenation. It has become known as the SIP Conference and is the annual gathering of indigenous people in psychology. Many have participated along this road.

Indigenous peoples of the United States make up less than two percent of the population, but over half of the diversity in this country. Since 2012, SIP has become more active in social justice issues impacting indigenous people.

- 2012 SIP participated in the amici briefs regarding Baby Veronica Case
- 2012 SIP also sent a letter to the Task Force on the DSM 5 addressing concerns about the diagnostic categories.
- 2013 SIP published its ethics commentary on the APA ethical code
- 2015 SIP published a position statement on the Indian Child Welfare Act
- 2015 SIP updated the statement on Retiring Native American Mascots
- 2016- 2017 Many SIP members helped to support the Water Protector Camps at the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota providing resources and information for those going to the camps
- 2017 SIP members received an apology for American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Peoples from a number of division of the American Psychological Association at the National Multicultural Conference and Summit in Portland, OR.
- 2017 The training manual to accompany the Commentary on the Ethics Code was published.
- 2017-2018 SIP adopted a paper on the Use of Counterterrorism Tactics on Native Peoples and Allies
- 2018 SIP EC adopted a statement on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in the United States.

SIP has grown from those two American Indians in psychology in 1971 to a thriving organization with a voice to support the best interests of Native peoples in North American. Our membership is continually infused with new Native students working to become the future of indigenous psychology and SIP. Some of the trailblazers of those early days can still be seen at occasional SIP, APA, and NMCS meetings: Joseph Trimble, Candace Fleming, Teresa LaFromboise, Jeff King, Paul Dauphinais, and Dolores Subia BigFoot.