

June 5, 2018

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

Dear Dr. Vasquez and the Division 45 Award Selection Committee:

It is with great honor I support the nomination of Melinda Garcia, PhD for the Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Garcia is an esteemed elder of the Society of Indian Psychologists and has over 40 years of service as a role model, mentor, teacher, healer, and humble leader for culturally diverse students, professionals, and consumers.

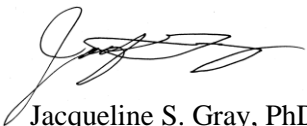
Within the communities of both indigenous and Latinx psychology, Dr. Garcia provides leadership as a representative for the Society of Indian Psychologists to the APA Council of Representatives, as a co-editor of the SIP Commentary on the APA Ethical Code, as a mentor to students and early career ethnic minority psychologists who learn from her wisdom and giving nature, and as a support to other professionals. She is a beacon for social justice and what it means to be an ethnic minority psychologist in the community. Although she is in private practice and not affiliated with a University program, Dr. Garcia has provided culturally based supervision to students who had no one to help them bridge the gap between western psychology and their cultural identities. As Director of the Seven Generations Center of Excellence in Native Behavioral Health, Dr. Garcia spent a week in North Dakota working individually with undergraduate and graduate students, speaking to students in the pre-doctoral internship at the University of North Dakota University Counseling Center, presenting on cultural competence and ethics to the University community, and working in the evenings with students on maintaining their cultural identities. Students past and present still refer to things they learned from her stay with us.

As president of the Society of Indian Psychologists, Melinda Garcia stepped forward to compile comments and prepare a letter from SIP to the Task Force for the DSM5 addressing the lack of cultural awareness in the diagnostics and how this "revised" version would further hurt ethnic minorities. I was proud to sign on to the letter as president with all the work Dr. Garcia did to put the draft letter together. Another example of how she works in the background for the good of The People.

When I attended the National Latino/a Psychological Association Conference in Albuquerque a few years ago she was by my side assisting me with translation when the equipment I had was malfunctioning. She was able to give me the context of the presentation while being respectful of the speakers and unobtrusive to the others listening to the presentation.

These are only a few examples of the distinguished service of Dr. Melinda Garcia and why she is deserving of the Division 45 Distinguished Service Award.

Respectfully,



Jacqueline S. Gray, PhD  
Professor/Associate Director