



SOCIETY FOR CULTURAL ASTRONOMY
IN THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST, INC.



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Call for Native Presenters

Land and Sky in the Cultural Sciences of the Greater Southwest

Native American Cultural Center, NAU, Flagstaff, AZ April 24-27, 2019

Dear Cultural Preservation Office,

We have been given your name and contact by Ann-Marie Chischilly, Mansel Nelson, Dr. Ora Marek-Martinez, Dr. Chad Hamill, Dr. Karen Jarrett-Snider, Dr. Robert Brunig, Mr. Jim Enote or another respected native person. With their help, we are planning a conference on “ways of knowing” in historic and current native society. By working with native programs at Northern Arizona University (NAU), we are searching for people who have cultural knowledge that involves basic science concepts recognized by your ancestors and that could be passed on to your grandchildren. Science concepts are universal, applications are cultural, and understanding is improved when students have a cultural connection with the basic concepts. We ask for your help in identifying and supporting “practitioners” within your culture who may apply to participate in this conference.

Our effort focuses on people of different native cultures sharing their practice and the way of knowing that enables their success. Their practice may relate to plants, farming, astronomy, pottery, basketry, water management, tool-making or geometric pattern design. If chosen as a presenter, they would have a large table for materials, a computer complete with power-point and video, and an audience seated in a horseshoe shape around them. As a presenter, they would be responsible for all needed materials. *Products related to their presentation* may be sold during specified times. This conference is directed to the science within cultural knowledge and presenters control the discussion of topics that may be culturally sensitive and/or seasonally restricted.

SCAAS has a small amount of money that can be used to support presenters; and, financial support from their tribe will likely be necessary particularly if they are staying overnight in Flagstaff. We are working with local native organizations and businesses to help reduce the cost to presenters and we cannot guarantee financial help *at this point in time*. We will provide additional information when we contact those applying to present in the February- March 2019 time period.

Native college students, cultural teachers from native schools, native university professors and non-native SCAAS members interested in cultural science will listen and learn. We anticipate the majority of people attending will be from a southwestern native culture. Native students may ask to learn more from the presenters and then transcribe that information into articles that may be considered for inclusion in the conference publication by SCAAS, available approximately one year after the conference. Those native people who are referenced in these writings will be asked to review the articles prior to publication. Native cultural teachers may ask for assistance in identifying concepts and culturally appropriate methodologies for teaching those cultural heritage concepts to their students.

The application form is attached, due by Jan 28, 2019, after which a native NAU student will contact you to follow up. Please provide a clear description of your presentation with its relevance to the basic principles of science. Selection of presenters will be made by a predominantly native committee based on cultural diversity, clarity of presentation description, and presentation “fit” within the conference purpose. April 27 will be the day for native presenters, *except* those native people applying to share about their cultural astronomy in which case the date is April 25, 2019.

In exchange for an accepted presentation, the conference will provide:

- a) A letter to your employer requesting that you be paid for the day you are presenting.
- b) Lunch and refreshment snacks at the NAU Native American Cultural Center.
- c) Native students who may ask to interview you.
- d) Connections with other native practitioners who may have knowledge of value to you.
- e) A special registration fee for the remainder of the conference.

What we expected from you if accepted as a presenter:

- a) Your attendance for the entire designated day at the conference.
- b) To agree to be interviewed while at the conference and thereafter to assure that collected information is accurate and culturally appropriate.
- c) Continued attendance at and engagement with the conference, as best possible, per applicable registration fees.

The conference's daily objectives are:

- a) April 24, Flagstaff area native experts share their practice in traditional science and how that information was/is used in their traditional and contemporary culture. Presentations are limited to 20 minutes, including questions and answers.
- b) April 25, native sky-watchers and other researchers present their knowledge of the cultural astronomy of Southwestern peoples. A public presentation by native sky-watchers will be hosted by Lowell Observatory that evening.
- c) April 26, following a panel discussion by native educators; native cultural teachers and principals from native schools, education oriented NAU native students, native experts and SCAAS members learn and discuss how cultural knowledge evolved and the best practices for that knowledge to be passed to K-12 students.
- d) April 27, Southwest *regional* native experts attend and present their practice at the NACC with April 26 participants continuing work on best practices in educating their students.

The conference is supported by Dr. Chad Hamill, NAU Vice President Native American Initiatives; Dr. Ora Marek-Martinez, Director Native American Cultural Center; Dr. Karen Jarrett-Snyder, Director Applied Indigenous Studies and NAU President Rita Cheng. Director Ann-Marie Chischilly and Coordinator Mr. Mansell Nelson of the Indigenous Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) are helping recruit presenters as well as native student workers engaged in learning from conference presentations. Dr. Jeff Hall, Director of Lowell Observatory, has agreed to facilitate two native astronomers to give a public presentation on their tribal astronomy on the evening April 25. The NAU Center for Science Teaching and Learning is helping review objectives and speakers for the April 26 teacher and principal day.

Melodie Lopez, (Hopi/Navajo/Pueblo/ Mexican) will be keynote speaker Apr 26 and has held/ currently holds leadership positions in Native Education Alliance, Indigenous Strategies, American Indian Education Assoc. and numerous other native education efforts. The GeoFamily Foundation has provided some financial support for the conference. The Museum of Northern Arizona is considering supporting this conference.

Bryan C. Bates, SCAAS Board President

President@scaas.org (return application to present by January 28, 2019)

Total of ten years as a science educator at Rough Rock, Little Singer and Leupp Schools.

Had Navajo students ask elders about cultural astronomy instead of reading about dead Europeans.

24+ years teaching science and cultural astronomy, Coconino Community College, Flagstaff, AZ.

Naturalist for adventure travel programs and wilderness educator for "at-risk" youth programs.

NAU Professor: Southwest Native Lands Institute, Applied Indigenous Studies program (AIS).