



# Four Winds

## Indigenous Education Institute

February 2009  
Volume 3, Issue 1

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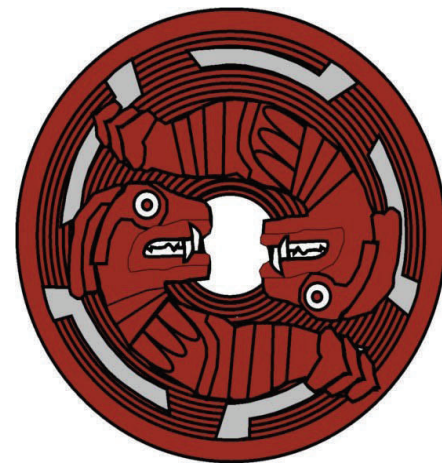
- Dr. Henrietta Mann
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### IEI Awarded NSF Grant: Cosmic Serpent

The Indigenous Education Institute has been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation, called the Cosmic Serpent. Principal Investigators (P.I.s) are Dr. Nancy C. Maryboy and Dr. David Begay, IEI, and Dr. Laura Peticolas, University of California, Berkeley, Space Science Laboratories.

Cosmic Serpent is a professional development project funded by NSF to increase the capacity of museum practitioners to bridge Native and western science learning in informal settings.

Cosmic Serpent will explore common ground between Native and western science taking into account that each knowledge system informs the practice of science and its role in society in a fundamental way; and providing a framework for developing learning experiences in science, math and technology.



*Cherokee Uk'tena, Cosmic Serpent,  
image by Joseph Erb, Cherokee Nation*

### IEI Awarded NASA Grant for Digital Star Show Prototype



IEI was awarded a grant from NASA IDEAS, to develop a prototype of a digital star presentation for use in a dome planetarium. IEI is working with Dr. Phil Sakimoto, University of Notre Dame, and former Acting Director of NASA's educational programs. Dr. Nancy C. Maryboy and Dr. David Begay are working with Dr. Sakimoto to transfer digitized images of Navajo Constellations to the dome. They presented their first look at the Thunderbird constellation in the Adler Planetarium dome theatre as part of a presentation for the International Planetary Society annual meeting in Chicago, in July 2008. They also presented the Navajo skies star show to a very enthusiastic audience at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education at the Melbourne Planetarium, Australia in December 2008. In addition they gave a presentation called "Coyote and the Astrophysicist: Learning Together," at the WIPCE conference to an overflowing audience.

## IEI News

### IEI Faculty

Dr. David Begay

Dr. Roberto Gonzalez-Plaza

Dr. Mimi Lam

Dr. Nancy Maryboy

Dr. Philip Sakimoto

Dr. Polly O. Walker

IEI has printed a third edition of **Sharing the Skies**. The National Museum of the American Indian purchased a substantial amount of books, enabling us to do a third printing. The book has a new section on the Navajo Thunderbird constellation. Christopher Teren did most of the editing, assisted by Nancy C. Maryboy. Our sales are now being handled by Ashley Teren, Jacksonville, Oregon. Ashley is selling the book, CD, poster and tee shirts through our website: [www.sharingtheskies.com](http://www.sharingtheskies.com). Proceeds from our educational materials go back into Indigenous communities.

IEI has added a new headquarters in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This enables us to work with people in New Mexico and provides a more central location for our members and staff.

IEI had a good representation at WINHEC (World Indigenous Nations' Higher Education Consortium) annual meetings. Claire Pruet organized a very successful meeting at Chaminade University in Honolulu in 2007. Board Members Verlieann Malina-Wright, Nancy C. Maryboy and Lynn Morgan attended the meetings. Verlieann Malina-Wright completed a most successful year as President of National Indian Education Association, culminating her term with the NIEA annual meeting 2007 in Honolulu. Nancy Maryboy gave a keynote speech at the NIEA meeting.

The WINHEC and WIPCE meetings were in Melbourne, Australia in December, 2008. The WINHEC meeting took place at La Trobe University. Many IEI members attended including Verlieanne Malina-Wright, David Begay, Nancy Maryboy, Ashley Teren, Phil Sakimoto, and Tjalaminu Mia. They continued to the WIPCE annual conference at Rod Laver Complex, and were joined by Jill Milroy, Polly Walker and Marie Battiste. The WIPCE participants were able to take some field trips out to Aboriginal arts and crafts centers and visit the south Australian coast. Some of this area was later burned in the tragic Australian wildfires that occurred in 2009.

IEI board members and Advisory Council members gave presentations at the Astronomical Society of the Pacific Annual Conference in St. Louis in 2008. They also presented at the International Planetary Society in Chicago in 2008. The presenters included Chad Baybayon, Isabel Hawkins, Phil Sakimoto, David Begay and Nancy Maryboy.



*Coyote Tosses the Stars and Creates Chaos, one of the original paintings from "Sharing the Skies"*

### Notes from IEI Chair, Evelyn Conley



2008 has been a very challenging yet very rewarding time for IEI projects and personnel. I had the honor of attending the Cosmic Serpent Strategic Planning Meeting in Santa Fe in October, 2008 and I do believe we are in the right place at the right time to foster promising relationships with key practitioners who will ensure success in the CS Project. Our special thanks to Stephen Wall, Indigenous Studies Dean and Faculty Member at the Institute of American Indian Arts and support staff of IAIA for their courtesies. I am so enthused about the future of IEI projects. New connections are being made everyday. WADO. *Evelyn*

## International Advisory Council

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*N.Maryboy, C.Baybayon, P.Huichim, I.Hawkins at the International Planetary Association Annual Meeting, 2008*

### ***Meet Our Board Member: Dr. Polly O. Walker***

*Polly is Cherokee and lives in Brisbane Australia. She is the Vice President of IEI*

Osiyo. I am honoured to be on the Board of IEI and look forward to working together with all of the people involved in IEI's endeavors. In December, Dr. Nancy Maryboy, Dr. David Begay and I gave a presentation at WIPCE on transforming conflict through interparadigmatic dialogue. We had a full session, and good feedback from a number of the participants. A major focus of my research is on reducing violence toward Indigenous peoples and their ways of knowing and being, and I am involved in research projects in Australia, Vanuatu, The Solomon Islands and the United States that explore ways that Indigenous and Settler peoples dialogue respectfully and build respectful relationships across differences in ontologies and epistemologies. I am working with two senior Aboriginal Australian women on creating workshops and a book on 'learning from place,' addressing climate change through Indigenous science. *Polly*



*Polly Walker (right) with Ashley Teren (Advisory Council member) in Melbourne, Australia*



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### **Thank you!**

IEI Board of Directors take this opportunity to thank the World Hope Foundation of Denver, CO for a generous donation of the total rights to the book Sharing the Skies, the CD “Stars Over Dine Bikeyah,” and the poster of the Dine Universe to IEI. It has been a great pleasure for Dr. David Begay and Dr. Nancy C. Maryboy to work with WHF administrators Paul Soderman and Cathie Quiqley-Soderman. The WHF Kellogg grant “Space Science for Seven Generations” funded the work. The book is now in its third edition and is highly praised by Navajo educators and western scientists. The original paintings were done by Navajo artist Melvin Bainbridge.

IEI would like to acknowledge and thank Theresa Breznau and Gene Stevenson of Living Earth Studios in Bluff, Utah for the generous donation of a Celestron telescope to IEI. This will be used for stargazing gatherings around the Four Corners. Theresa also designed the beautiful hand holding the Universe image for the third edition of Sharing the Skies.

**IEI Mission:** The Indigenous Education Institute was created for the preservation and contemporary application of traditional Indigenous knowledge.

The fundamental **goals** of the institute are:

1. To initiate global networking and collaboration involving traditional knowledge holders, honoring native languages and traditional ways of knowing;
2. To organize, articulate and develop strategic and realistic application of traditional knowledge to Indigenous education in order to provide cultural values and empowerment to succeeding generations;
3. To enhance recognition of native science, in juxtaposition with western science, in a way that respects the honor and integrity of both ways of knowing;
4. To research origins and effects of climate change in relation to traditional ecological knowledge and provide application of Indigenous knowing to heal imbalances of people and place;
5. To assist Indigenous communities in the research of their own systems of knowledge and needs, enabling capacity building with community-based responsibility, in order to effect positive transformational change;
6. To research and develop a relevant system of Indigenous strategic planning and evaluation, in order to advance organizational effectiveness among communities;

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[www.cosmicserpent.org](http://www.cosmicserpent.org)