“Honoring the Past & Planning for the Future: Indigenous Perspectives on Library and Information Sciences”

November 3, 2023

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQsKZWHlVU0

0:02
>> Anthony Chow: Welcome, everyone to the iSchool's Native American Heritage Month Symposium.
0:07
My name is Anthony Chow, the director of San Jose State School of Information and founder
0:13
and project director Reading Nation Waterfall, an IMLS-funded early children's literacy grant working
0:19
with Native American children and families, including Chief Sneed's Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian.
0:26
Alfredo, could you drop the web link for weeding Reading Nation Waterfall in the chat?
0:34
I'd appreciate it. We're honored to host today's symposium and recognition and celebration of Native American History Month.
0:41
And I want to thank all of you for attending all of our esteemed speakers and I look forward
0:46
to a wonderful symposium. Before I turn it over to our moderator,
0:52
Dr. Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca, let me read our land acknowledgement to the Muwekma Ohlone tribe.
1:00
The San Jose State University community recognizes that the present day Muwekma Ohlone tribe,
1:06
with an enrolled Bureau of Indian Affairs documented membership of over 550,
1:12
is comprised of all of the known surviving American Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region
1:19

who trace their ancestry through the Mission Santa Clara, San Jose, and Dolores during the advent
1:25
of the Hispano-European empire into Alta California, and who are the successors and living members of the sovereign,
1:32
historic, previously federally recognized Verona Band of Alameda County.
1:38
Furthermore, the San Jose State University community recognizes that the university is established within Tamien Ohlone-speaking tribal ethnohistoric territory,
1:47
which based upon the unratified federal treaties of 1851 and 1852, includes the unceded ancestral lands
1:55
of the Muwekma Ohlone tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of the enrolled Muwekma lineages are descended
2:02
from direct ancestors from the Tamien Ohlone tribal territory whose ancestors had affiliation with Mission Santa Clara.
2:11
The San Jose State University community also recognizes the importance of this land to the indigenous
2:16
of Muwekma Ohlone people of this region, and consistent with our principles of community and diversity,
2:23
we strive to be good stewards on behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone tribe whose land we occupy. And certainly, we are honored to be able
2:32
to host today's symposium. So without further ado, let me hand it over to our moderator
2:39
and organizer of today's symposium, Dr. Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca. Tonia.
2:45
>> Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca: Thank you, Anthony. And welcome everybody to today's symposium. I'm excited that you all are here.
2:52
I am an associate professor as well as the chair of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility committee here at San Jose State and worked
3:01
with another -- a number of people to bring this symposium to you all.
3:06
So I'm -- again, I'm excited that you all are here. I am so excited to welcome several of our keynote speakers.
3:15

And they are -- and I'm sorry, I know I'm probably going to say your name wrong, but please correct me.
3:21
But Halena Kapuni-Reynolds, Jennifer Himmelreich, and Chief Richard Sneed.
3:28
Thank you all so much for being here today. And I would like to turn this over to Halena, if you would
3:41
like to go ahead and get started on this symposium.
3:48
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: Sure thing. So let me share my PowerPoint. Right. So [foreign language].
4:10
So greetings, friends and colleagues who are gathered here today on this platform to listen to our panel for Native American Heritage Month.
4:17
I want to thank the iSchool for the invitation to present, especially to Dr. Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca.
4:23
And thank you to my fellow panelists, Jennifer and Richie, for accepting the invitation to join me on this keynote panel.
4:30
When I was first contacted, I was humbled by the invitation and the opportunity to offer a keynote in celebration
4:36
of Native American Heritage Month, but I made it very clear that my work primarily centers around Native Hawaiian history,
4:42
culture, and politics. And that I would have to make this distinction in this keynote, given the different relationships
4:48
that Native Hawaiians have to the federal government from federally recognized tribal nations.
4:54
And like all indigenous communities in the Americas and Oceania, we each have distinct histories. That position is differently
5:00
to various settler colonial governments. We each have different needs and challenges given the unique geopolitical context
5:07
that we live in. And although there are many things that make us different from one another, there are also many similarities that we share,
5:13
things like caring for extended family networks, working to transmit our languages and cultures
5:19

to the next generation of reverence and respect for elders and their teachings, and organizing to protect lands
5:26
and waters from the constant threat of unsustainable development projects and resource extraction. And in the 20th century and the early 21st century,
5:34
we also bear witness to the many ways that Native American communities form relationships with Native Hawaiians and other indigenous Pacific communities
5:42
as we strive to protect our environments and develop better policies and practices for working
5:48
with the federal government while forming coalitions to advance our collective interests. So it is in the spirit of reciprocal care and learning
5:56
that I raise these distinctions, but I hope that today's keynote symposium will model for you what it all looks like to be in productive conversation
6:03
across communities and organizations working to indigenize library and information sciences,
6:10
while creating centers where indigenous knowledge can be cared for and transmitted for future generations.
6:19
There you go. So one of the commonalities that we do share as indigenous peoples is the importance of introductions
6:25
of letting people know who you are and where you're connected to. If you've ever been to Hawaii and had a chance to hang
6:32
out in Hawaiian community, oftentimes, elders will ask you who you or what is your last name because they're trying
6:38
to figure out some kind of familiar connection to connect with you. But today -- sorry, advancing a little bit too far here.
6:47
Sensitive mouse. There we go. So in Hawaii, we refer to this concept
6:55
and practice as ho'olauna. And the root word here is the word launa, which means to treat with kindness and attention to receive in a friendly manner
7:03
and to be intimate with one. So to give a ho'olauna of myself, no Keaukaha a me Ola'a mai au, I am from the island of Hawaii
7:12
from Keaukaha and Olo'a. So here, you see a few stars that gives you an indication of where I'm from.

7:18
I grew up living a very mountain to the sea kind of existence on my island.
7:23
No Hilo, Puna, Ka'u, Kona, a me Kohala ko'u mau kupuna. My ancestors are from the districts of Hilo, Puna,
7:29
Ka'u, Kona, and Kohala. So these are all five of the six major districts on this island.
7:34
And Hawaii -- o Hawaii ku'u Kulaiwi. Hawaii is where I considered to be my homeland.
7:40
And the word Kulaiwi here is the Hawaiian word for homeland that can be translated as the plains
7:46
in which your ancestors' bones reside.
7:52
So just to give you folks a little bit of a background of where I'm coming from, because I'm getting to, you know, where I am today and the position that I hold,
7:59
I come from a community-based education. I was raised in Ku'u Kahua, also educated
8:05
through our Hawaiian charter school system there. I attended Ka 'Umeke Ka'eo Public Charter School, graduated in 2003.
8:12
Received my high school diploma in 2009 at Ke Ana La'ahana Public Charter School. Here's a picture of my -- the largest graduating class of '15.
8:20
Picture to the right here. Went on to receive a bachelor's in Anthropology
8:25
and Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Hilo where I really studied community-based archaeology.
8:30
I realized that I didn't really like working out in the field and that there was this pressing issue within museums
8:36
to address repatriation, but also I was interested in how do Native Hawaiians work in museum spaces.
8:44
What does it look like to indigenized museums in Hawaii? Which then led me to the University of Denver.
8:50
I received a master's in 2015 after creating a master's thesis examining how Hawaiian royalty
8:59
collections, otherwise known as Ali'i collections, are curated at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu and the Lyman Museum in Hilo.

9:06
And currently, I am a PhD student in American Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa,
9:12
where I've also received graduate certificates in museum studies and nonprofit management. So pictured here to the right are two of my mentors
9:19
in the museum studies program, Karen Kosasa and Noelle Kahanu.
9:25
So when I think about my intellectual foundations, and perhaps this resounds true for some of you as well,
9:31
working in information in library sciences, is that it's not necessarily just coming from my own personal interests, but it's rooted
9:38
in the expectations and obligations that I have as a Native Hawaiian from Ku'u Kahua. And so I broke this up in terms of, you know, where I come
9:45
from into three categories, the first being ohana, the word for family or extended family networks in Hawaii.
9:52
These are my grandparents. My maternal side is from Hawaii Island and my paternal side are settlers from Nebraska.
10:01
And my grandmother -- my mother were the genealogists in the family. So no, I have inherited that responsibility.
10:07
And I'm constantly thinking about the importance of sharing those stories of creating opportunities
10:12
to share stories of elders who have passed with my cousins, who may not necessarily have the time to be able to do
10:20
that in their everyday life. Second is kaiaulu or community. Since I was a young person, I was really interested
10:27
in our community's history. And this is an example of an event that I organized as a young person bringing together elders
10:34
at this site called Hawaiian Village, where we just asked them to bring photographs to help start a digital archive for our community.
10:41
And that was an opportunity for us to also bring members of the Lyman Museum into Ku'u Kahua,
10:47

which sparked a photo identification project that they would later pursue over the next few years.
10:53
And last but not least, a lot of my work is centered around our lahui or the Hawaiian nation or Hawaiian people,
10:59
really trying to think of how can we make museum spaces more accessible, more meaningful, and more critical
11:05
so that we're being more representative of our history and our politics.
11:12
So flash forwarding, I forgot to mention this at the beginning, but I am in the Associate Curator
11:18
of Native Hawaiian history and culture at the National Museum of the American Indian, quite a tongue twister.
11:24
But when I think of my role, these are the main components of what I'm tasked with doing there.
11:30
The first is research and scholarship. So I conduct scholarly, technical, and applied research related to Native Hawaiian history
11:36
and culture in collaboration with Native Hawaiian communities. I perform research on Hawaiian museum collections and tasked
11:43
with producing accessible publications around Hawaiian history and culture, like creating articles,
11:48
monographs, websites with the purpose of disseminating that knowledge to the broader public.
11:54
I'm also charged with advising Smithsonian fellows when they arrive and need assistance in training.
12:01
The second is exhibits and public programs. So in addition to my research, I'm tasked with working
12:07
on long-range, complex museum exhibitions and programs. So if you've ever worked with the Smithsonian or interned there, you know we take quite a long time
12:14
to develop our exhibits. And that has to do with not only internal processes,
12:19
but making sure that we're bringing the right people to the table. So I work on exhibits, program proposals, and different kinds
12:25
of plans in collaboration with our education, design, and other technical teams.

12:31
And on top of this work, you know, community is really centered throughout each of these components is that I'm not just working solely
12:38
as the independent academic or curator, but really trying to figure out ways to engage and collaborate
12:43
with Native Hawaiian community members. The third component of my job, which is my favorite part,
12:49
is public service, which allows me to cultivate collaborations and partnerships between NMAI and other museums
12:55
and cultural centers that supports NMAI's mission. I'm able to conduct the lectures and tours.
13:01
So being able to do this today as part of my job duties. I am tasked with producing popular articles and pamphlets,
13:08
blog pieces, again, for the broader public. And then responding to any kinds of inquiries that I may get
13:15
from community members who are looking for assistance, resources, or even connections to others who may be able
13:22
to assist them in their projects. And last but not least, I'm tasked with collaborating with other units within the Smithsonian.
13:28
So, for example, I work very closely with the Asia Pacific American Center. And last but not least, I have a small fraction of time in my job
13:36
to be able to work on collections. So this, for particular, with NMAI,
13:41
we have a very small Hawaiian collection, about 14 to 17 objects. And so my task is to really consider, you know,
13:48
what would be appropriate for the NMAI to collect around Hawaii, if they will be collecting, but also continuing
13:54
to conduct research on the collections that we do have. So here, I am pictured with Emil Her Many Horses,
14:00
one of our curators at NMAI, when we tabled at the Honolulu Intertribal Powwow in September.
14:10

So given that this is a keynote for library and information sciences, I wanted to brush up a little bit
14:18
on the field -- on this field. As you may have heard or, you know, or have picked
14:24
up in my presentation so far, my background is more so within the realm of museums and the museum literature,
14:31
many parallels with library and information sciences. But I wanted to provide you folks with some resources
14:36
that I found that helped me to better understand the fields of indigenous librarianship.
14:42
So here are two articles that really provided a great perhaps chronology of, you know,
14:47
how folks are thinking in the late 2000s around this issue, as well as an update on the literature from 2021.
14:55
Feel free to download these and to read them if you haven't already. They're great resources as you continue doing your work.
15:03
And so from these articles, you know I pulled out some of the main points that they were making with regards
15:09
to the development of indigenous librarianship specific to the Americas.
15:15
So here, we see that the authors state that Native American librarianship looks very
15:21
different than other cultural groups because of the formal relationship that tribal nations have with the federal government.
15:28
Secondly, we see that library services on reservations did not become readily available
15:34
until the 1970s. And this is simultaneously happening at the same time
15:39
that we're starting to see these critiques of classification systems like the Library of Congress,
15:44
the Dewey Decimal Classification system, and so forth. And as we know, within our communities, the 1970s is also a really prominent time
15:52
in cultural resurgence political, reawakening many different movements within Hawaii
15:58
and the Americas taking place for communities practicing self-determination,
16:03

addressing longstanding issues of racism and prejudice. So all of these things are coalescing around the same time.
16:12
When we think a little bit about the history of that time, you know, there were hearings held by the National Commission of Libraries and Information Sciences in 1974.
16:20
And this was the first attempt to identify a need for library and information services, as well as the lack
16:27
of any formal policies that would guide this process for tribal communities. We flash forward about 30 years into 1992.
16:35
The NCLAS then produces a report titled Pathways to Excellence, a report on improving library and information services
16:42
to Native American peoples, which documented the ongoing issue of inadequate services for Native Americans living on reservations,
16:49
as well as the discrimination that native peoples living in urban areas faced when accessing their materials.
16:55
So these kinds of reports that are generated in the past, as well as in the present, are very important
17:00
for pushing forward indigenous agendas in these institutions. And if we think about creating critical capacity and spaces
17:08
for indigenous librarians to mingle, to get to connect with each other, to network, it's really the Tribal Archives,
17:15
Libraries, and Museum Conference. The first was held in 2003. And that has grown to what we know as ATALM today.
17:22
So if you haven't gone to ATALM, the Association of Tribal Museums, Libraries, and Archives, I got that acronym wrong, but that's OK, you can look it up,
17:31
I highly encourage you to go to meet your colleagues.
17:37
When we think about indigenous librarianship theory, the Gosart article, in particular,
17:43
does a really excellent job of really synthesizing much of the materials and providing these main points.
17:49

The first is that indigenous librarianship is also a political project. It's a form of social action supporting the interests
17:56
and aspirations of indigenous communities. And for some of you who are already working in the fields, you are probably quite aware of this, that when we're working
18:03
in libraries, they aren't apolitical spaces, but that you are dealing not only with, you know,
18:08
educating the broader public, the non-native community, but sometimes even navigating the tense relationships
18:15
that may exist within our communities, you know, differences in terms of how we should be interpreting the past,
18:21
how we should be storing things, and learning how to maneuver through those aspects of our work on a daily basis.
18:29
The second is that indigenous librarianship seeks to understand how specific qualities of knowledge shape the generation, dissemination,
18:36
and preservation of knowledge itself. And unlike the traditional theory of librarianship, indigenous librarianship supplies a conception
18:43
of knowledge as events or processes. And what Gosart means by this is that, oftentimes, when we think
18:48
of indigenous knowledge, it is not something that just lives in books. It is not something that just lives in archives, but that it is a living process.
18:55
It is something that requires relationship building, being able to talk to elders, sharing knowledge back
19:01
that we may learn on our own educational journeys, and treating knowledge as something that is sacred
19:06
and to be cared for in really meaningful ways.
19:12
So blazing through a lot here, but some of the key issues that -- one of the other articles really outlined
19:18
and this is from 2009, right? So maybe some of -- they've updated this a little bit, but it gives you a sense of the work that we do in our fields,
19:26

very similar to what we do in museums as well. Internet access and the digital divide has been an ongoing issue
19:33
for tribal communities. I believe during the COVID pandemic, this was a time when there was a lot of push to develop these resources.
19:41
But I would suspect that there are still some reservation communities that are still challenged
19:46
with getting internet access and those -- that infrastructure in place. There's the ongoing issue
19:52
of challenging what does universal access mean. Within traditional librarianship, the idea of universal access is that the materials
20:00
in our collections is for the public good or that it should be made available to everybody if possible.
20:06
And as we know within our communities, not all information is for everybody, that there are protocols in place that need to be followed
20:13
when we're working with these collections. Indigenous librarianship also works to develop indigenous literacy programs.
20:20
And when we say indigenous literacy programs, we're not just talking about teaching kids how to read, but really creating spaces where our young people can learn
20:30
about their cultures and histories and practices in safe spaces, in ways that create a literacy
20:36
around their environment so that they know the world around them and how to interpret it in ways that are aligned
20:43
with their communities, ways of being and ways of knowing. Some of you may be more familiar with the work
20:50
of creating indigenous knowledge organization systems, essentially indigenizing classification systems
20:56
and library spaces to ensure that they are following, for example, native epistemologies or ways
21:02
of knowing where native ontology ways of being. Cultural and intellectual property rights is another big
21:08
concern within libraries, museums, and archives as well. This gets to the point of who has the right
21:14

to own certain collections, who has the right to speak on behalf of native communities. This is going to be an ongoing issue for us as we move forward
21:22
into the future, but it's great to see that they're highlighting it as a key practice within the field.
21:29
I briefly mentioned as well that part of the work of indigenous librarianship is to create these indigenous protocols for libraries,
21:37
especially around indigenous materials, and how to better work with indigenous communities to ensure
21:43
that there is that representation and access, but also a respect for the concerns that are being raised.
21:51
And last but not least, this is something that I know very much -- very well within the museum space is
21:56
that with -- even within libraries, we're dealing with issues of repatriation and digitization.
22:02
So repatriation, the return of cultural materials and ancestors to their home communities.
22:07
From the Hawaii, in particular, we've been really active within the United States on returning our ancestral remains,
22:16
as well as sacred materials back to Hawaii. Now, we're seeing a lot more folks doing work in the international arena and trying to create the protocols
22:23
and processes to ensure the return of collections abroad. And simultaneously, what some tribal communities have really
22:30
asked is that, you know, for certain objects in particular, that they be digitized, that that 3D models be made available
22:38
so that they can teach knowledge using these objects to pass down different kinds of traditions.
22:45
So this is just a, you know, survey of the kinds of issues that you may be facing within your work in the future
22:51
as you continue this career path. So a quick case study, again, coming from Hawaii,
22:59
which is what I know, is that in June, I was honored to be able to facilitate a conversation
23:06
for a two-year IMLS National Leadership Grant for Libraries Program. It was titled Ka Wai Hapai:
23:13

Co-Creating Controlled Vocabularies for Social Justice. And it was led by Dr. Shavonn Matsuda,
23:19
who is the head librarian for my Maui College, and Marie Paikai, who is the Hawaii Pacific Resource librarian
23:26
at Leeward Community College and Keahiahi Long, who's the librarian at the Lono me Laka Resource Center
23:32
of Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies. So these are all University of Hawaii librarians, you know,
23:38
peers that have gone up through the LAS world and have worked really hard in Hawaii to create spaces for Hawaiians within the library field.
23:45
This is Annmarie, this is Shavonn, and this is Keahiahi. I know that someone in the audience was also
23:51
at this event, so aloha to you. And, you know, at this -- through this project,
23:56
they worked to create a framework to organize information according to Hawaiian epistemology, you know, thinking about students
24:02
and scholars in the ways they access their libraries in the University of Hawaii and trying to make them more accessible and meaningful
24:11
as they do their research. They also work to increase and improve intellectual access to indigenous Hawaiian collections and materials,
24:18
as well as to support indigenous and other marginalized communities and related work. So when we think about these initiatives, you know,
24:24
I think oftentimes the expectation is that you get the grants and you finish the project in your two-year period.
24:30
But when you're creating something like this, it takes more than just a single grant project to do so because you are, you know,
24:37
reaching out to these multiple stakeholders and really trying to develop something from the ground up. And so at this gathering, my task was to help facilitate kind
24:46
of an end-of-grant conversation to determine the next steps, you know, who is going to continue working towards creating this controlled
24:53
vocabulary, who has the capacity, which institutions can commit resources to be able to do that.

24:58
And so I was really humbled to be able to join our librarians across Hawaii for this conversation.
25:04
And on that note, I'm going to hand it over to my co-keynote presenters, Jennifer and Richie,
25:12
who will be able to talk more about their experiences. You know, when I think about the work of indigenous librarians,
25:19
it's -- there's three things that really come to mind for me, and this is also true for folks in the museum world, is that we work to honor the past and those
25:26
who came before us and to do that in ways that are really sensitive, but we also work in the present, and that we're faced with so many challenges and struggles,
25:34
but we have to tackle them head on if we want to create the change that we desire. And last but not least, you know,
25:39
we have to also find the time to dream and to plan for the next seven generations because the work
25:44
that we do today sets the foundation for those to come. So on that note, I will hand it over to Jennifer.
25:54
>> Jennifer Himmelreich: Thank you, Halena. I just always love listening to you. And you're so well -- you know,
26:00
that you're so well read and well thought out. And I just appreciate it.
26:05
So if you will give me a second, I will share my screen.
26:18
Can everybody see it? I can't see you. So is there a yes?
26:24
>> Not yet. >> Not yet. >> Jennifer Himmelreich: You can't see it. OK. >> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: So we'll try to --
26:32
once you choose it, hit that share and see what happens. There we go. Now something's happening. OK. >> Jennifer Himmelreich: OK.
26:37
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: I can see presenter mode. We should be good. Thanks, Jennifer.
>> Jennifer Himmelreich: All right. Wonderful.
26:42
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: What's good? >> Jennifer Himmelreich: Hi, everybody. Yeah, everybody, [foreign language]. My name is Jennifer Himmelreich.
26:50

And I am [inaudible] and Senior Program Officer with the Institute of Museum and Library Services,
27:00
as well as a producer for the Native America Season 2
27:09
that is currently on PBS. So really would love to thank Halena for inviting me
27:17
to be a part of this great discussion and to share a little bit about where I come from,
27:24
how it is that -- you know, the little bit of the journey that I came on in order to do some
27:29
of this amazing work that's -- that I'm able to support and take part in.
27:36
So where am I from? I am from -- originally from the Navajo Nation and specifically
27:44
from a little town called the Beclabito, New Mexico right near the Four Corners.
27:49
So where the -- where east and southwest, the Four States we call, where those four meet the four corners.
27:55
And Navajo Nation is the largest tribe on the United States. Our land is roughly the size of West Virginia.
28:03
And we cover three states primarily in Arizona and I live
28:10
in my community that I'm from, is about five miles from that.
28:15
And this is a great picture of the Cristo Mountains which is right behind our community.
28:22
The community is about 300 people in size. I'm related to everybody by clan, marriage,
28:30
or somehow some way so grew up there. And the beautiful thing about my community is that we are --
28:40
our community is built around familial clusters in that the -- our -- my home back on the Rez is surrounded by eight homes.
28:48
Those eight homes are my aunties and uncles, my mom's, brothers and sisters. The next familial cluster is a half mile, mile away.
28:56
And that's how we sort of expand and grow out our communities.
29:03
And I grew up surrounded by such abundance and love.
29:10

My -- I came along unexpectedly and my family came and,
29:16
you know, surrounded me with lots of love, and I was really lucky.
29:22
My grandfather was a medicine man, I think, or I think that's sometimes the bastardization of the word.
29:29
He was a hatalii. And in Navajo, the correct translation for that is a singer.
29:36
So he would sing folks back to health and I always grew
29:42
up with him singing songs. These -- what I love -- it was that we grew up with such happiness
29:51
and such culturally rich, and I now see is what a privilege
29:59
to have grown up in a bubble, in the Navajo bubble, on my lands surrounded by folks that spoke Navajo.
30:09
My local schools were featured Navajo teachers. The -- there was staff at all levels around me and it was
30:18
such an incredible privilege to grow up that way. My grandmother was a weaver,
30:23
a daughter of a hatalii, married to a hatalii. My grandfather was a son of a hatalii, who apprenticed
30:32
under my grandmother's dad. And he was such an amazing person that was always
30:40
so incredibly warm and just kind and compassionate.
30:46
And I was really lucky to have that. My mom met my dad when I was around nine months old
30:52
and they married and my little sister came along, and it was just this great childhood
31:00
where I was surrounded by lots of family. And everybody was trying to make a living, you know,
31:08
out there on the reservation. And my grandfather often told stories around --
31:17
in winter, we tell stories of our creation story. And I love this imagery because it shows here
31:24
in this round image at the bottom is really the story of how we came into being.
31:30
And Navajos believe that we came out of -- we -- sort of our existence happened
31:38

in this first world, the black world. And I think of this often as pure energy.
31:44
We were just sort of a consciousness that existed. Strife happened and we had to ascend to the next world,
31:51
which was the blue world. And then as we ascended into the blue world,
31:56
we encountered new ways of being and doing that required us to have to be agile and flexible and learn.
32:06
And again, strife hit us, we had to move to the next world. And again, the same thing, we encountered new beings,
32:12
ways of thinking and doing. And we had to adjust and modulate until we came
32:18
into this world, fourth world, which we call the glittering world. And we took pieces, you can see the colors there,
32:25
of the worlds before us in order to figure out how to move in the world.
32:30
This mindset is so incredibly central to myself and the way
32:36
that I view the world and the current changes that we're having to address and work towards
32:44
in our tribal communities. So this is really for me is the foundation of everything
32:50
that I am, the way that I move in the world is -- really comes down to these lessons learned as we've --
32:56
as we continue to ascend, right? Things changing, the world is changing all around us.
33:02
And I think these lessons are pathways to remember who we are as we move forward.
33:11
When I finished school or when I finished college, I attended Fort Lewis College.
33:17
And what was fantastic about Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, which is just on the Colorado side of four --
33:23
the Four Corners, is it's one of the schools that still honors its treaty to tribal people
33:32
in that it offers free tuition for its students. And currently, the number of native students
33:39
at Fort Lewis is almost at 50%. So it's a different thing -- I had started initially
33:46

at Colorado State University and really struggled. I felt lost, I was the first of my family to go to college.
33:55
It was so big. I had no idea how to manage the system. And when I had to go back and sort of reset,
34:04
I ended up choosing Fort Lewis because of this larger native population and it ended
34:11
up being a wonderful place. It was a small school in a small Colorado town that --
34:18
where there was so many -- there was native professors, there were folks engaged in indigenous issues.
34:26
I felt like I was seen and heard and the way that folks were talking about the work that we wanted
34:34
to do was really important and I really loved that.
34:43
Let me -- I ended up taking -- started working at -- I had started -- I was doing retail work and I ended
34:50
up working at the Durango Public Library as a staff member. I thought -- I think it would be interesting to work
34:58
at a public library and picked it up while I was going to school. Then once I was able to get work study, I started working
35:05
at the academic library and then I worked at my art department slide library, and just really had this wonderful experience.
35:13
I was also picking up different sorts of -- I initially thought I was going to school
35:19
to be an art and math teacher. And it wasn't until a professor --
35:25
one of my art teachers have told me, you know, art plus math equals architecture, and asked --
35:32
you know, asked if I would be interested in attending a program around architecture.
35:38
I didn't know what that was. I had no -- I had never heard of it. And I ended up going for summer
35:45
to Harvard's Graduate School of Design. And what I really loved about that experience is it gave me this whole new language
35:53

around spaces, and particularly intentional spaces. And it got me to thinking about what intentional spaces
36:01
in -- are in our community. You know, I had grown up following my grandfather. I was sitting in the back of his truck wherever he went.
36:08
Our local governance centers chapter houses, where we would meet and where they would announce whatever was
36:17
happening and our community members would gather in -- a lot of times around my grandfather to understand
36:24
like how do we take what we're learning about the world and fuse it with the way like our core values.
36:31
And he -- they would sit in discussion. I would just sit in the back of his truck, watching these men have these discussions.
36:38
And I really love this thought of thinking about like what are these new spaces? And the first thing that I thought of were libraries
36:46
and museums because they weren't traditional to our communities. So my senior year, I designed a study, a course of study
36:54
where I traveled to museums and libraries around the Four Corners area in these tribal communities to find
37:00
out what was their mission and vision and did they succeed, had it changed, had it -- how had it -- what had happened,
37:07
and it was really fascinating. I also got an Artist Fellowship, where I got to travel
37:13
around the country for over the course of the year to urban centers and I was introduced
37:21
to tribal communities in urban spaces. And what the work that they were doing there.
37:27
So it was really fascinating to me to engage with this work and talk more about, you know, what is this, what are we trying
37:34
to do in these spaces. I ended up getting a job with --
37:40
at the Ak-Chin Indian Community just south of Phoenix at their Him Dak Museum.
37:45
And this was really pivotal to me. I had worked in libraries, had done some gallery work,

37:53
but the Ak-Chin Him Dak was an eco-museum, is the first of its kind in the United States.
38:01
And this is the best explanation for that that I found is
38:07
that museums typically focus on the building, a collection, visitors, and I think what's missing key out of this chart is
38:20
that a curator is very essential to it. They're -- the folks that sort of gain the expertise
38:27
and knowledge in order to interpret this collection, right? The -- there's -- and older models
38:34
where it was everything sort of rested on a curator. But what I really loved about the eco-museum was it was --
38:43
focus was on the place, not a building. And at the Him Dak,
38:49
the community members were the curators. I was just an exhibit technician facilitating conversations.
38:56
The collections wasn't something held in museums. It was what was in their home. We engage with processes in the building, but we also engage
39:06
with the land surrounding it. And we -- our goal was
39:12
to get the community engaged in the space. And it sounds a lot like decolonization, right?
39:18
That's where that theory that popped up and what the reality is tribal-looking spaces.
39:24
Museums and libraries have been doing this work long before that word came about. And I'm really appreciative have --
39:32
to have gotten my museology training at the Him Dak, where it really reminded me a lot of what I saw growing up
39:41
and the importance of community in the work that we do. And I ended up moving home and my grandmother who had cared
39:52
for me as a child, my grandfather had passed. She had said, you know, that we needed to go back home.
39:58
My sister was in need of me and care. And I ended up having my girls at home.
40:05
And I often talk about this as being my -- like truly my degree because I went home

40:13
to learn our processes. My grandmother only spoke Navajo
40:18
and we were raising my daughters together in the way that I had grown up.
40:25
And it was so crazy -- it was so amazing to be -- I think what contrasted was, I was learning in universities,
40:35
there was a continual narrative around how, you know, desolate our reservations were, how they were sort of prisons
40:43
that we were forced into and herded into. And when I was back home, I found that there was
40:52
so much abundance of culture, language, community of --
40:57
if I put some elbow grease into the land, it would give me what I needed to survive.
41:06
I had a sheep, I was gifted a sheep, pregnant sheep, and we had a whole herd of sheep.
41:12
We started planting fruit trees and it was such a revelation
41:18
to me and a reminder of all the stories that I had heard of that we needed to remember, again,
41:25
this abundance that we had. It was so different than what I was, you know, had heard at a university level and I loved it.
41:33
I began working on my language, you know, was able to center my kids in the way that I had grown up.
41:41
It was such a gift to be able to do that. I began thinking about sort of what career I could do
41:48
and I went back to my great mentor at the Him Dak
41:54
and said, "What do I do?" And she had said, "You know, if you're really smart, I think you should get an MLIS degree.
42:01
And so, she guided me in this direction
42:06
and I was briefly at SJSU. And I think what that gave me was this strong --
42:12
I was with the circle of learning cohort and really enjoyed learning from my colleagues
42:17
who are doing now just amazing, fabulous things but I found that the -- at the time, the curriculum was just the way

42:29
that I thought was connecting based on my museum experience and the -- what I was interested.
42:34
I found a lot of supplement out of internships and fellowships and this was something my mentor had guided me to.
42:43
And I took on any opportunity and the way that my brain worked, you know, we were talking about this
42:49
as we were planning this talk, was -- it always felt a little off and different, I think. Even trying to find me a Mentor was hard
42:57
because nobody had done what I was thinking of doing, trying to meld the fields, connect it, you know,
43:03
be super community-oriented. And so, I ended up finding opportunities,
43:09
creating them for myself. And one of the key experiences I had was
43:15
with the Peabody Essex Museum's Native American fellowship program. They placed me in the -- you know, I told them what I wanted
43:23
to do and gave them this vision for this work and they said, "You know, it sounds amazing.
43:29
You're going to need to know how to write for grants because that's all the great projects right now run
43:36
on soft funds," and I had no clue. I had never even encountered the world of that.
43:41
So, I got a fellowship in the area of development and grants administration and this really opened
43:47
up a whole new world for me so that when I started doing coursework at SJSU
43:53
and I was doing research, I would, you know, really try to find these grants, look at them
43:59
to understand what was the -- what were they being -- what was being proposed, how were they implementing,
44:05
and what did that look like and it was really fascinating to me. When I was ready to start work again,
44:13
I ended up going back to PEM. They offered me a job as the program manager

44:19
for the Native American fellowship program right after they had won a Mellon grant and that I looked
44:26
at as really my master's program because it really gave me the opportunity
44:31
to learn how money works at an institution. I studied PEM in-depth, watched --
44:36
worked with their development department, and really understood what's it like to work with grants
44:43
and funding, and then began working on advisory committees helping other programs,
44:48
fellowship programs, and internship programs be developed and start up.
44:54
And so, it was just this amazing opportunity to help other programs grow and I'm really --
45:00
I love seeing this growth of now and there's so much funding coming towards that. In December 2021, I got an interesting call from the --
45:11
from a production company for a opportunity.
45:17
He had heard me do a presentation on some research I did as a PI for a grant
45:22
around tribal libraries and love the way that I was storytelling with data and asked if I would be interested in serving
45:32
as a producer for a PBS series and I ended up saying yes. I said I don't know what any of that means but I'm --
45:39
I'll ask a lot of questions, I'll learn, I'm -- I will do what I need to and we started that work.
45:46
And Native America is premiering -- has premiered on,
45:52
oh gosh, October 23rd. Last week was our second episode. There's four episodes in total, it's on --
45:59
available on PBS but what was interesting was it was a non-native production company that wanted to work with tribal
46:09
and indigenous communities and we were -- but they were bringing in Native staff. So, all this experience that I had
46:16
around the fellowship program and trying to make indigenous people feel safe and supported

46:23
in non-native spaces, work with engaging with community, that all came to the forefront in this work and we were able
46:31
to create this amazing series. Soon after that, I also got -- found out that IMLS was looking
46:39
for somebody to -- for their -- a program officer for their Native American programs
46:45
in the Office of Library Services. And this was really a great opportunity
46:51
because the position, nobody -- a native person had never been hired in to lead these programs
46:58
that fund native communities and IMLS is a small, independent federal agency within the executive branch
47:06
of the United States government and our mission is to advance and support museum and library information services in order
47:15
to empower them to meet the needs of communities and individuals. And we carry out this mission primarily
47:21
through grant making research and policy development focusing on our three main strategic: goal areas of lifelong learning,
47:29
community engagement, and collections, stewardship, and access. And I work in the Office of Library Services
47:36
and the discretionary program and my portfolio includes the three programs
47:42
that fund indigenous libraries in the United States. So, this has been a wonderful opportunity to see grant making
47:49
from the other side to understand sort of the in intricacies and the complexities that need to happen
47:55
and to work directly back with communities which I was so incredibly happy to do.
48:00
But landing what's really struck me was this -- how these stories that we see --
48:07
that I'm seeing across narratives are often based in the deficit mindset.
48:13
And since I've landed, I've been working behind the scenes to try to move the needle from a deficit way of thinking
48:21

and grant writing to a more asset-based. And what I appreciate about these asset-based approaches is it doesn't deny
48:29
that work needs to be done. It just simply affirms that the resources and resilience already exist and I'm thrilled to do
48:37
that with tribal communities. Because when I think back to these stories that I grew up with, right, these --
48:44
the things that I went back into my land, there was never a thought about how little we had.
48:51
We might have not had a lot materially. I mean, these were some of the leanest years of my adulthood raising my kids back home but there was
49:01
such amazing richness to being back with my community and being back in my land.
49:07
And I really am thrilled to be in a space now where I can share out these stories and -- both through funding and support
49:19
to these tribal libraries but also through production work outside into these communities.
49:25
So, I'm really excited about this work. Here is my information and I'm happy to connect with folks
49:34
if you'd like to learn more and -- about any of the topics discussed
49:40
but thank you very much.
49:49
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: Perfect. Thank you so much, Jennifer, for that wonderful presentation. We're going to um switch up our order here just for a little bit
49:56
and we're going to go straight into Chief Sneed's presentation.
50:02
But if you -- if any of you have questions or comments for either my presentation or Jennifer's,
50:08
please put that in the chat or the question and answers tab. And when we get to a -- we'll do a collective kind
50:14
of response to those questions. We'll do that then. So, I'll hand it over to Chief Sneed now.
50:20
>> Richard Sneed: All right. Thank you, Halena. [Foreign language]. My name is Richard Sneed and I'm the 20th principal chief
50:28
of the Eastern band of Cherokee Indians, recently retired less
50:36

than a month ago, so getting used to not having a ton of responsibility which I thought would be an easy
50:43
adjustment but it really isn't. So, I'm going to share my screen here.
50:49
OK. And before I begin, I want to say first to Halena
50:55
and Jennifer both amazing presentations. I -- you know, oftentimes, I say, "Well, we save the best for last."
51:01
I feel like I should have been the opening act after the -- after those two amazing presentations.
51:06
But I want to share with you today a talk called Culturally Deliberate in the 21st Century.
51:14
It's actually -- these are actually excerpts from a larger lecture that I've been doing
51:19
for the last few months around the country and at a couple different universities. The purpose of my discussion today is
51:25
to highlight the importance of culture to every civilization and how museums and libraries can play a pivotal role
51:32
in preserving and proliferating culture. I'm going to use indigenous history to demonstrate the importance and the magnitude of culture
51:40
and tradition that they play for the livelihood of any civilization. And lastly, I'm a firm believer that history, if we know,
51:47
it informs the present and the future and our ignorance thereof does not fail
51:52
to diminish history's power over how we're living today. So, my first slide, this is just to look
52:00
at Federal Indian Policy through 1934. The -- if you can see in the corner there, Stephen L. Pevar,
52:07
his book, The Rights of Indians and Tribes is a great reference book. So, looking at, first ,1492.
52:13
Keeping in mind, the main objective of colonization is the acquisition of resources. That has not changed from the beginning of time until now
52:22
and we still see that happening in the present day. 1492 to 1787 was tribal independence.
52:28
This is when tribal nations in -- at the time of contact, there were over 500 tribal nations in North America.

52:34
At that time, tribes still had numerical superiority over colonizers and the capacity for war.
52:42
So, at that time, tribes still had the upper hand. 1787 to 1828, you can think of this as the treaty period.
52:49
This was agreements between equals. It was also at a time when the founders of the United States regarded Indian tribes as sovereigns,
52:58
as nations, and having the right to govern their people as they saw fit; 1828 to 1887, the relocation of the Indians.
53:06
This is a time that really as a direct result of President Andrew Jackson signing
53:13
into law the Indian Removal Act. There -- we began to see the -- history shows us the movement
53:20
of tribal nations forcibly, removing tribal nations from east of the Mississippi to west
53:25
of the Mississippi in Cherokee history. At this point now, we have three federally recognized tribes.
53:32
Historically, there was only one tribal nation with a land mass that was in seven states but, as a result of some treaties,
53:41
Treaty of1817, you had the first group of Cherokees leave on their own trading millions of acres for land --
53:49
of land for land in Arkansas which they were then forcibly removed from there into what was then called Indian Territory.
53:56
You had the Treaty of 1819 which were my ancestors, we were able to stay. That's why we're still here today in Western North Carolina.
54:04
And then, of course, the Treaty of New Echota which then saw the forcible removal of Cherokees to Indian Territory.
54:10
Again, a very violent area -- era in tribal nation history. What I want to focus on, for the purpose of our discussion today,
54:17
is that the 1887 to 1934 era. This was allotment and assimilation.
54:22
If you've seen -- there's the new Scorsese film out, Killers of the Flower Moon, you see that, again, resources.

54:30
It's always about getting resources. The Allotment Act was to get land back and then assimilation was what do we do with all
54:37
of these Indians now that we have them reservations. My father was a tribal council member for many years
54:43
and I remember growing up around tribal politics and the discussions around that.
54:48
And I remember my father saying one time around the dinner table, he said -- he come back from Washington,
54:54
DC and he said, "The federal government wants out of the Indian business," and I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "It's too damn expensive."
55:00
And so, assimilation was the federal government's attempt essentially to indigenous people into the greater White Society.
55:11
And by 1887, there were already 200 Indian schools under federal supervision with over 14,000 children in custody,
55:19
if you can imagine that. Assimilation - the boarding school era.
55:24
Captain Richard Henry Pratt famously stated in a speech, "Kill the Indian in him and save the man," and his thinking was
55:34
that if we could -- if the federal government could assimilate Indians into the greater White Society, it would be for their betterment, their own good,
55:41
and more importantly, it would open up land for more White settlers.
55:46
What the policymakers understood was that the foundation of any people and any group is its culture. If you can destroy the foundational components
55:53
of any people group, you destroy that civilization. What are those components? You know, I thought it was really amazing
55:59
in Jennifer's talk when she talked about -- when she went back home and, you know, she's correct.
56:05
Every indigenous community is its own little bubble and -- but there's this whole other way of living
56:12

and this whole other way of life there that has been there from time immemorial. And those components are language, religious beliefs,
56:19
ceremony, ritual, values, community, food, traditional clothing, and I think Jennifer mentioned just
56:26
about every one of those in her talk and how powerful those were to come back to and then to be able to, you know,
56:32
learn that from her grandmother and then pass that on to her children. What we know now, as a result of a recent Department
56:40
of Interior investigation, found that children were exposed to "systematic militarized
56:46
and identity alteration methodologies". Now, if you're like me and you're a veteran, you understand
56:51
that because it's the same methodology that's used when you go to boot camp. If you're a Marine Corp vet like me, you definitely know it.
56:58
The whole point is to strip you of your identity, to break you down, to make everybody the same,
57:05
and then to rebuild you or to program you into the person that they want you to be.
57:10
The methodology that was used on children, indigenous children, removal of traditional clothing, the cutting of hair,
57:17
this third bullet point is the one that really breaks my heart and that is renaming.
57:24
Your name matters and, you know, I was -- Halena, when he was doing his talk and talking about the importance of genealogy and knowing
57:31
where you come from, renaming somebody is -- it's criminal.
57:36
The banning of religious practice, corporal punishment, solitary confinement, starvation, physical, sexual,
57:43
and emotional abuse and, of course, disease. Indigenous people, children being exposed to diseases
57:50
that their immune systems could not handle, and there were many, many deaths from that and we know this now.
57:56

You know, this really came to light a few years back when the -- I think it was in Canada when they discovered,
58:03
you know, a mass grave with I think 20 children's bodies in it. And so, now, the rest of the world knows that this went on.
58:12
The finding said, "This report confirms that the United States directly targeted American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian children in the pursuit
58:19
of a policy of cultural assimilation that coincided with Indian territorial dispossession." Again, it was all about resources.
58:26
When things like this happen or when things like this -- I shouldn't say happen because it was deliberate,
58:33
there are long-term negative outcomes that still plague tribal communities today.
58:39
Addiction, tribal communities generally will have higher rates
58:45
of substance use disorder. Physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental health issues.
58:51
Tribal communities generally will have higher rates of suicide, diabetes, all of these under the --
58:58
can go under the heading of historic trauma
59:04
and that is a cycle that you have to deliberately break. When I do this talk live, I always ask the audience,
59:11
"How does this information make you feel?" And the responses I have gotten are angry, sad, disgusted,
59:19
and it should make you feel that way. If you have a heart, if you have a conscience,
59:24
it will make you feel that way and it should but I want to say there is hope.
59:29
There's a path to healing and it's important that we note that we cannot change the past on an individual level.
59:36
My wife and I talk about this all the time. My wife is a United Keetoowah Band Cherokee from Oklahoma.
59:44
She had rough coming up and so she ended up going
59:49

to boarding school, very different from the assimilation boarding schools but she grew up in most of her childhood in boarding schools and we talk
59:58
about how we can't change the past, we can only learn from it. And one of the things that I think is very troubling
1:00:04
that we have to avoid as well in the time in which we live is the temptation to blame the present generation for the sins of the past.
1:00:12
We individually and collectively have the ability to shape the future and I -- this is where I believe,
1:00:18
and you'll see in my next couple slides, where libraries and museums play a pivotal role in helping to shape the future.
1:00:24
I'm a firm believer and this is really just, you know, being a tribal leader, I was in office for eight years
1:00:30
and having the weight of a tribal nation and all of its people kind of on your shoulders every day
1:00:36
and I'm a fixer. When I see something is broken, when I see something is out of order or it's dysfunctional, my first way
1:00:46
of thinking is, "OK, what's the root cause of this? How do we correct this?" And I don't want to put band-aids on a gaping wound.
1:00:53
So, what is the root cause of this issue and how do we correct that?
1:00:59
And as I thought about these things for the last eight years being in office, I came to the realization that the answer
1:01:05
to our problems are not new, they're ancient which, again, when Jennifer was doing her talk, I'm like, "She's doing my talk," because the answers are they're ancient.
1:01:13
It's our values, it's our culture, we have to learn to apply and adhere to our traditional and cultural values
1:01:20
because of the anchor for the human soul and that's whatever your background is. If you're German, Italian, Irish,
1:01:26
if you're a tribal citizen of a tribal nation, we have to know what those values are,
1:01:32
we need to know what our genealogy is, we need to know where we come from, who we come from, who our people are.

1:01:38
I loved it when Halena was talking and I don't remember the phrase he used that meant essentially
1:01:44
who are you, where are you from, who are your people. It's so important. And so, there are great lessons that I believe the rest
1:01:51
of the world can learn from indigenous communities. For my people, it's this.
1:01:56
It's returning to our language. When I first came into office way back in 2015,
1:02:03
we had 272 fluent Cherokee speakers left in our community
1:02:09
out of 16,000 people and all of those fluent speakers are advanced in age. At that time, the majority of them were 60 plus.
1:02:18
Most of them in their late 60s, early 70s. When I left office, we had 128.
1:02:25
So, that's a huge percentage of fluent language speakers to lose.
1:02:31
But more importantly or equally as important, the history, the culture, all of the stories, everything that they know
1:02:39
and understand about our past and about our values and who we are as a people, that died with them except
1:02:45
for the fact that we were recording -- interviewing and recording. So, when I came into my second term, my goal
1:02:53
and my objective was to ensure that we were going to not only preserve but to proliferate Cherokee language.
1:02:59
And so, there's been a Renaissance of adult Cherokee language learners and we did
1:03:04
that by actually creating full-time paid positions because my mindset was if we're serious about --
1:03:10
if I'm serious about the preservation and proliferation of our language, we need to put our money where our mouth is because it's a very difficult language to learn,
1:03:16
it takes a long time so we created an adult immersion program. And so, that program now has grown to about --
1:03:23
I think about 35 or 40 adult learners. It's a two-year program and they essentially live

1:03:29
and work amongst the fluent speakers five days a week. So, it's been pretty amazing. Returning to our traditions, our ceremony, our traditional foods,
1:03:40
our values and this was a big one for me because I firmly believe that every civilization has an ethos
1:03:48
and has a value system. And so, I started asking the question of tribal elders. I would say, "What does it mean to be Cherokee?"
1:03:55
And they would look at me like, "What do you mean by that?" I'm like, "Well, what does it mean to be Cherokee?" I'm like, "It can't just mean that, well,
1:04:02
I live on the reservation, you know, I get these benefits because -- from the tribe because I'm a tribal citizen."
1:04:08
What does it mean to be Cherokee? And so, this began this whole discussion and interview process
1:04:13
where I was, once a month or twice a month, I would sit down with a tribal elder and interview them.
1:04:19
It was more of a conversation but we happened -- we recorded it for posterity sake to talk to them
1:04:25
about the values they were taught when they were growing up. And then, more importantly, adhering to those values
1:04:30
because it's one thing to say you have values but if you don't live by those values,
1:04:35
you don't have values, right? So, it's only those ones that we adhere to. And then, lastly, and this is a big one is our medicine game.
1:04:42
So, stickball. The Cherokee word literally means little brother of war. You can see in the middle, center that black
1:04:48
and white photo, that's a really old picture. That game used to be used to settle disputes.
1:04:54
Rather than clans going to war with one another and killing one another, they would play the little brother
1:04:59
of war, the stickball game. And you can see in the top right, even now, the little kids are playing and it's always awesome just
1:05:06

around festival time to see each community has a team
1:05:13
and their team represents their community and to see everybody out supporting and just -- it's been really cool.
1:05:20
So, how our libraries contribute? One of the big things our library has done is essentially
1:05:26
created a library within a library. They now have an entire room that's solely dedicated
1:05:31
to indigenous materials, indigenous studies, Cherokee history, genealogy, et cetera.
1:05:38
Another thing that they're doing is they're scheduling cultural classes that are being hosted in the library.
1:05:44
This is where they'll bring in a master basket maker or a potter
1:05:49
or a wood carver and they're teaching, you know, over a series of weeks, you know, one or two days a week teaching the next generation.
1:05:58
When I was a kid growing up, you know, there was a lot of poverty here. Now, we're a gaming tribe and we're, you know, we're involved
1:06:04
in all these other economic development opportunities which is great. But I've also noticed that when I was a kid,
1:06:10
people made baskets, they made crafts, they did pottery, they did wood carving to make a living. And now that we have resources,
1:06:18
fewer and fewer young people are doing that. And so, the concern is that that's going to be lost
1:06:24
and so the library is hosting classes to teach the next generation. Genealogy, as I said earlier, I'm a firm believer it is
1:06:32
so important to know your own family's history, who your people are, and where they come from.
1:06:38
My parents got divorced when I was probably less than a year old and I never knew my father.
1:06:44
My mom took my sister and I from the reservation and she took us to New Jersey where she was from,
1:06:49
grew up not knowing my father, not knowing my family. I met him when I was 13 for one day.
1:06:56
And then, the following winter, I moved down to live on the reservation with my father,

1:07:02
my stepmom, and my step sister. So, I essentially moved in with three strangers when I was 14 years old.
1:07:07
There was always an emptiness and when I talk about it, it's like growing up around my peers who had, you know,
1:07:15
strong ties to their family, to their grandparents, and I didn't have that and I always felt like I didn't belong.
1:07:21
I felt like there was a piece missing in my heart, a puzzle piece, if you will, and I, you know,
1:07:27
tried to find every way in the world to fill that and never could. And then. when I was about 25 or 26, my father had said to me,
1:07:35
I had a family at that time and I really needed to build a house, and he says, "Well, I've got a couple acres up on the mountain.
1:07:41
We'll go up and look at it." I'm like, "OK." So, we drive up there and we park off of this gravel road
1:07:47
and I noticed a graveyard in the distance and he's pointing out the land. I'm like, "What's that over there?"
1:07:53
He said, "Well, that's the family graveyard." I didn't know we had a family graveyard.
1:07:58
So, he walks me over there and for probably the next 45 minutes to an hour introduces me to all of my ancestors
1:08:06
and tells me about them. And you have to know my dad. My dad is like, you know, stereotypical, stoic,
1:08:12
native guy, doesn't say much, just, you know, real quiet. And to have him open up and tell me where I came from
1:08:21
and who my people are on that day, it's like that piece that was missing my whole life was put back
1:08:27
and I remember driving home that day from that feeling like I'm OK now. I know where I come from.
1:08:32
So, we have a genealogy room at the library, they're doing storytelling of Cherokee legends
1:08:40
and Cherokee myths, and hosting language classes. Some of the external partnerships

1:08:46
that the library is involved in, Eco-Explore and North Carolina Arboretum Field trips and this is
1:08:51
to teach students about traditional plants. One of the things I'm really proud of that our administration did, if you're not familiar
1:08:57
with where we are, we're in Western North Carolina and we're actually the boundary, the reservation boundary.
1:09:04
I keep calling it a reservation but we're unique, we're actually not a reservation. We're a boundary but I'm not going to get into that.
1:09:10
If you come to Cherokee, it says welcome to the Cherokee Indian Reservation. We are at the southern entrance
1:09:16
to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park which is the most visited Park in the country. I think last year, they had 14.9 million visitors come
1:09:26
through the park. One of the things I was really proud of, we were the first tribe to be able to work at an MOA
1:09:32
with the National Park Service to allow our people to get permits. If you know anything about the national park, taking plants
1:09:41
or any wildlife, or anything from the park is absolutely prohibited. We were the first tribe to get an MOA
1:09:46
with the National Park Service to be able to go and to harvest indigenous plants.
1:09:52
Sochan was the first and we're working on getting our folks permitted to dig --
1:09:58
to be able to go and to dig ramps in the park as well. And if you're not familiar with ramps, they're kind
1:10:04
of like a garlicky onion kind of plant. And I think ever since some of the celebrity chefs started cooking with them,
1:10:10
now everybody wants them. So, we've got a partnership with the Arboretum and Eco-Explore
1:10:15
and we also have a seed bank at North Carolina Arboretum of heirloom seeds that belong to the tribe.
1:10:23
And then, lastly, creating traditional Cherokee children's books and this was grant funded
1:10:29

through the Reading Nation Waterfall and this is a project that's just in process right now. So, this is a new project.
1:10:35
I want to talk next about how our museum contributes. I think, first and foremost, and Jennifer talked a lot
1:10:40
about this too, is a paradigm shift. So, about two-and-a-half, maybe close to three years ago,
1:10:48
the museum board decided that, you know, they needed to hire a new director and they went on a kind
1:10:55
of a nationwide search for a new director and they ended up hiring Shana Bushyhead who is actually Eastern Band citizen
1:11:05
and I never met her, I didn't know her, and they said, "Well, we're going to have a reception for the new director.
1:11:16
And chief, we would like you to offer a toast." And like I don't even -- I don't know this person.
1:11:21
So, whenever I lack knowledge or wisdom, I just pray. So, I prayed and asked the Creator, "Give me --
1:11:27
you have to give me what to say, I don't know what to say." And so, I prayed and I got the words and what came to me was
1:11:34
that the way museums are structured right now is it's
1:11:39
almost like a, you know, a time capsule and visitors get to walk
1:11:44
in and see what used to be. And what struck me is that, well, our story is right now,
1:11:50
our story is not just the past. It's right now and it's the future. And so, I wrote this toast and when I got done,
1:11:57
it was just -- it was short. When I got done, Shana comes up to me, she's got tears streaming down her face, she goes, "Oh my God,
1:12:03
that's exactly the vision I have for this museum." And so, what she has done over the course of the last few years has transitioned the museum
1:12:11
for a place for visitors, you know, exclusively instead to a community cultural hub for our citizens and visitors alike.
1:12:19
One of the things that she did that there's an exhibit it's still going on right now

1:12:25
and I just spaced out as to what the -- what it was called -- oh, Disruption. And the whole point of the art exhibit was
1:12:32
to disrupt this traditional way, this traditional colonized way
1:12:38
of thinking of a museum as, basically, a place to look at the past. And so, they -- throughout the museum,
1:12:46
they would put contemporary art mixed in with the historic archives, relics, and so forth.
1:12:53
She's hosted contemporary artists in formats of film,
1:12:58
tattoo, poetry, electronic media, fashion, music, et cetera.
1:13:04
And again, answering the question what does it mean to be indigenous in the 21st century because in conversations
1:13:09
that I had with her after we were introduced and, you know, we built a relationship, I said,
1:13:15
"It's the question I'm always asking," because time doesn't just stop. We're ever evolving and I think about it in terms
1:13:22
of like you see this happen in religions a lot. Religions will get stuck in like one time frame
1:13:28
to where we only sing songs from the 1800s and 1700s and I'm like, "No, like music, art, those are all expressions
1:13:36
of the human soul and that's our story and it's happening right now in real time and we need to tell
1:13:41
that story as it's happening." So, we all, as human beings, need to live out our culture.
1:13:51
For us, as indigenous people, it's what's sustained us in spite of an attempt to systematically destroy us.
1:13:57
Jennifer tested on that. They were -- you know, here they are, you know, they were told, "Oh, you know, you're living in lack,"
1:14:03
when the reality is there's abundance, there was an abundance of culture and abundance of family
1:14:08
and relationship and life. It's what sustained us in spite of the attempt to systematically destroy us.

1:14:13
Today, there are 574 federally recognized tribes. We are still here because we've adhered to our culture
1:14:21
and I believe libraries and museums have an absolutely pivotal role in helping the community to get in touch with culture,
1:14:29
to live it out, to adhere to a value system, and to preserve our culture from here on until eternity.
1:14:37
Thank you. Stop my share.
1:14:44
>> Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca: Thank you so much everybody for your wonderful presentations. It's -- it was so nice to listen to everybody and what they had
1:14:53
to say and I can say that some of the things that you all were talking about are things
1:14:58
that I've experienced as well. My family is from Guam and so the importance of culture
1:15:04
and language and the type of clothing you wear, all of the things that you all were talking
1:15:10
about is extremely valuable and important and things that need to be preserved.
1:15:15
Unfortunately, on Guam, like I can't speak tomorrow,
1:15:20
my family didn't teach a lot of us how to speak the language. And so, sadly, the language is starting to die
1:15:29
and I'm not the full culture, of course, because we still have food and, let me tell you,
1:15:34
I can cook the food and I can wear the clothing and I respect my elders and the land and the respect
1:15:44
for family is still alive and still something that's cherished and expected.
1:15:51
And so, it was so nice to hear everything that you all were saying and I think it's important
1:15:58
for everybody to really understand who they are, know where they come from so they can appreciate who they are
1:16:04
and then learn to understand other cultures and find commonality because I think that's the piece
1:16:12
that will help us grow. Yes -- or no, we cannot change the past but what we can do is just appreciate who we are,

1:16:21
appreciate who others are, their cultures, and then grow and help one another
1:16:27
and be really the best we can possibly be and cherish, you know, again, where we come from and who we are.
1:16:34
So, thank you so much all three of you for your presentations.
1:16:39
And I do know that we have a couple of questions already in the chat and I don't -- if -- I don't know if I should,
1:16:48
if you would like me to read them or if any of you would like to read any of them but there are two.
1:16:54
And if you don't mind, maybe we'll start with those. And then, for others, if you all want to,
1:17:00
if you all feel comfortable speaking, you can feel free to ask the question or if you would
1:17:06
like to ask your question in the chat. But if you don't mind, I'll go ahead and start
1:17:12
with the first question. It's to any presenter. What are some of your thoughts on how we can shift influence educational institutions
1:17:20
to establish indigenous librarianship? Libraries is a core component in MLIS programs.
1:17:28
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: Thanks for the question. And for Richie and Jennifer, I'm actually going to weave this
1:17:34
into one of our kind of panel, these questions that we have which is, you know, what are the challenges of advancing this kind of work in our fields
1:17:41
and this question gets straight to the point. That part of it is capacity in creating programs
1:17:47
where indigenous students can learn from practitioners, from scholars about how to do this work
1:17:52
in ways that are effective. I can speak from, you know, recent experience
1:17:58
within the field of art in Hawaii and this speaks to the importance of organizing not just within the university
1:18:06
that you're at but really knowing your community that surrounds you and working towards a common interest.
1:18:12
So, last year, there was a major art exhibition that was held

1:18:17
across multiple university of Hawaii campuses. It was called Ai P haku.
1:18:22
It was the first time in over 20 years that there was a major art show of contemporary native Hawaiian art within the University
1:18:29
of Hawaii which shows kind of the length of time it has taken the institution to do that.
1:18:36
The curators for those shows were very intentional and called out the university in many ways for the ways
1:18:41
in which they haven't supported or created opportunities, haven't allocated resources to support native Hawaiian arts
1:18:50
in Hawaii in a system that kind of claims itself to be an indigenous serving institution.
1:18:57
And so, part of those efforts that I was able to be a part of, this was before I took on this position, I was working
1:19:04
as a graduate assistant in museum studies, was we put together a petition.
1:19:09
We worked with the artists and the curators to develop this petition that essentially demanded the university
1:19:16
to create a tenure track Hawaiian visual art position in the art department, something that they didn't have.
1:19:24
So, you know, we -- I was in charge of putting this petition together so it's my first time. I used a Google form, learned that, you know,
1:19:31
if you make it public there may be bots, people who will like attack you with bots, and you'll have like thousands of fake names on it and you have to sort through it
1:19:38
but we figured it out. We got over 700 signatures, I believe, and we delivered it to our Board of Regents.
1:19:45
And lo and behold, we're hiring now for a visual art -- a Kanaka Maoli visual art professor for that department.
1:19:51
And so, that's just an example of how, even as students and as community, we do have that power to, you know,
1:19:57
ask and demand of our institutions to create these opportunities especially if it makes sense,
1:20:02

especially if there's critical capacity to do so. So in terms of MLIS programs, you know,
1:20:10
I don't expect all MLIS programs across North America
1:20:15
to have an indigenous focus, but there are definitely those programs who are starting to move in that direction and we need to be able to support them
1:20:23
and get the word out to potential students that, "Hey, there are these programs that hopefully you'll be able
1:20:30
to contribute to developing," right? Because these are still relatively new. I think there's a lot of places that are still trying to figure
1:20:37
out how to work out the kinks on indigenizing these fields or creating spaces.
1:20:42
But there are opportunities for us to really restructure how we think of MLIS
1:20:48
to really serve the needs of our communities. So I'll stop there. If Richie or Jennifer, you have anything else
1:20:54
to add to this question? >> Jennifer Himmelreich: I'll pop in and just add that,
1:21:00
you know, I think that was the hardest thing was to be in a program that didn't have that as a core component in it.
1:21:10
It was, you know, I did my program I think over 10 years ago.
1:21:16
And I think one of the hardest things as a non-white student going through some
1:21:23
of these programs is that when you are explaining, what I ran into quite a bit was
1:21:29
when you're explaining how something theoretically works and you're being taught it and we're, you know,
1:21:36
we as folks are saying, "Well, you know," and a lot of us who are going through the program have actually library experience saying, "Actually, this won't work."
1:21:43
There's actually other models that are doing it. It then became this, "Well, why don't you teach the class this thing?"
1:21:50
And it just sort of reminded me how we have so many amazing professionals in the field
1:21:58
that could be pulled forth as lecturers. There's a way -- they may not have the PhD but they have the PhD in actual,

1:22:06
they've been doing the work a long time. They've been building stakeholders.
1:22:12
And sometimes I feel like that formal programs overly emphasize
1:22:18
a PhD and don't really actually appreciate the pragmatic
1:22:24
knowledge that practitioners have in the field and don't --
1:22:29
and, you know, potentially set up students for failure by not actually teaching them the real skills that they need
1:22:37
in order to be successful. So I'm really -- I'm hoping that there's a shift in the field
1:22:42
where they allow more of our folks that are really practicing this work to do this thing.
1:22:52
I think somebody's talking. [Inaudible]
1:23:02
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: I think you can keep going, Jen. That was an ideal thing. >> Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca: Yes, definitely.
1:23:08
>> Jennifer Himmelreich: Yeah, I think that that's for me. I think I would love to see -- we have a lot of tribal librarians in the field who've been doing the work for a long time.
1:23:15
Indigenous folks, indigenous librarians. The theoretical framework that is coming
1:23:21
out of Hawaii is just blowing my mind. I would love to see that work forwarded
1:23:27
and we're disrupting these systems. I think I'm always asking tribal librarians, not whether they're librarying --
1:23:33
whether they are doing librarying correctly. My question is always asking them, "How do you library?"
1:23:41
Because they are creating new indigenous ways of doing that work. And I wish we could forward that a little bit more
1:23:48
to show how these systems which were not created based on our indigenous knowledge systems.
1:23:55
Our tribal librarians are actively working. And, you know, MacGyvering the system
1:24:01
so it works for their community. So I wish we could forward and really present that work
1:24:07

and really challenge these ways of organizing knowledge
1:24:12
and really think about what these indigenous communities are doing and recognize it.
1:24:24
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: You know, just to piggyback off of your comments, Jennifer, I think the point of really getting practitioners into academia is
1:24:32
such an incredibly important intervention to make. Even in the museum field, you know, when I was at the University of Denver,
1:24:38
what they were really good at was hiring people with master's to teach courses on museum evaluation or exhibitions,
1:24:44
people who are working out in the field as opposed to that strict academic demand for a PhD to teach.
1:24:51
And I raise this because this is something I think about in my fields as well in Hawaiian studies
1:24:56
and anthropology and museum studies is that in a lot of ways, you know, academia trains us
1:25:01
to synthesize information that's coming out of academia. And sometimes we develop these projects
1:25:07
and we sound really cool and we're doing all this great work. And then you go to community and they're like, "We did that 20 years ago," right?
1:25:13
That there are already people outside of non-academic spaces who are presenting such incredible work.
1:25:19
And as part of the challenge that we face is how do we do better at making sure
1:25:24
that we're training students to learn from those spaces and to write about the incredible rigor and complexity
1:25:32
of these projects that are already taking place in our communities. So that's just a little bit about my thoughts
1:25:38
on this particular issue within academia. Richie, do you have any other thoughts you'd want to add?
1:25:46
>> Richard Sneed: No, you all did excellent answering that. OK. >> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds. OK.
1:25:52

>> Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca: OK. So we could -- oh, go ahead. Go ahead. >> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds.
1:25:58
Yeah, I think that would be a great kind of segue for one of the questions that we've prepared in advance for us
1:26:04
to really think through. And shifting gears a little bit from challenges is really trying to highlight and identify perhaps some of the strengths
1:26:12
of our indigenous galleries, libraries, archives and museums. And I think we've touched a little bit on this on each of our conversations.
1:26:18
But this is an opportunity to really pinpoint exactly, you know, what are those things.
1:26:23
And Richie, thinking about your presentation and naming some of the issues around colonization
1:26:30
that so many communities still grapple with today, you know, coming from a small Hawaiian homelands community
1:26:36
which is some way set up like Indian Reservations. It has a lot of issues in terms of who can belong and who can't,
1:26:43
a lot of issues that you're naming. And so as people coming from these spaces,
1:26:48
I oftentimes wonder, you know, how -- we're doing this work and we're deeply committed to community,
1:26:53
but how do we do it in ways that we don't then become impacted by those same things? Or how can we then model for our community?
1:27:01
You know, how can we help in that process of healing? And so, you know, this question of the strengths
1:27:07
of indigenous galleries, libraries, archives and museums, one of them, as you've mentioned, is hopefully creating those spaces
1:27:14
where we can cultivate healing and model well-being and health. As a curator, I'm a very nontraditional curator
1:27:23
in many ways. I didn't grow up in art. I didn't go through art history. I'm not necessarily there to collect high pieces of,
1:27:30

you know, grand art but really using my expertise and my own learning journey into Hawaiian history
1:27:36
to hopefully help others understand what the past was for Hawai'i in ways
1:27:43
that oftentimes you don't learn about in academia. That there are the ways in which we're taught the post-colonial
1:27:51
critique of recognizing these impacts that colonialism has done. But what we don't do enough of is letting students know that,
1:27:59
you know, there are these aspects of culture that survives in our families. And when we talk story with our parents and grandparents,
1:28:06
when we have the opportunity to do so and really try to pay attention to that, there's more
1:28:13
than what we initially thought. And sometimes it just takes recrafting that narrative a little bit and doing that background research
1:28:20
to say, "Actually, you know, the way that grandma eats with her hands, that's actually something that she got
1:28:25
from her grandparents," or the ways that they choose to like make their hair of certain ways.
1:28:32
Now, these are the elements of culture that I think for a long time in our critiques,
1:28:37
we haven't necessarily created space for people to feel heard, to feel like they have somewhere to start.
1:28:44
That is not always starting from nothing. And, you know, this is also part of the challenges
1:28:50
of being an indigenous librarian and cultural worker is that once you're tasked with developing the professional skill sets and on top of that,
1:28:58
it sounds it's in many ways you have to have this other skill set of communicating with your community of in some ways being a social worker
1:29:06
trying to meet people where they're at and hopefully, you know, build the change and transformation
1:29:13
that we need in our communities. So I hand it back to you guys, strengths of our indigenous galleries,
1:29:19
libraries and museums. >> Richard Sneed: I'd like to comment on something you just said there.

1:29:25
One of the greatest challenges I ran into was connecting individually with people in the community.
1:29:32
Because of colonization, because of historic trauma, especially dealing with a lot of elders, they kind of have chip
1:29:39
on their shoulder, right, you know, like right when you engage. And my wife and I were just talking about this where you really have to build the relationship
1:29:46
and win their trust first so that they know that you're not there to cause harm or to try to change them
1:29:55
in some way, necessarily. But once you build that relationship, there's a strong bond and a strong loyalty but you got
1:30:02
to be thick-skinned at first. And everybody was always telling me, "Don't take it personally." I'm like, "It's kind of hard not to take it personally
1:30:08
when it's directed at you." But learning to just kind of roll with it and understand
1:30:13
that that's just kind of a tough exterior, it's a defense mechanism. And if you'll just kind of press in and show love
1:30:20
and kindness, it'll all work out. But yeah, it's a challenge for sure. And I think that it's one of those things
1:30:26
that if you're working in a tribal community in any capacity at all, that's something that you need to know and you have
1:30:33
to develop the skill set to be able to -- it's a soft skill but you have to have it.
1:30:39
Otherwise, I've seen lots of people come from the outside to work on the reservation
1:30:46
and not last very long because of that.
1:30:51
>> Jennifer Himmelreich: Yeah, I'd like to I think plus one all of that because it's I think, you know, there's a couple
1:30:57
of questions in the Q&A around how to better serve communities. It really comes down to relationship building.
1:31:04
It's so central and it's a core value of indigenous communities.
1:31:09

And, you know, when the timeline only, you know, when you're thinking about engaging with communities
1:31:14
in the timeline of that sort of beginning relationship building is not in it,
1:31:20
I think the projects sputter along until eventually they die out. And so really engaging with communities in a thoughtful way,
1:31:29
learn about them, find out that I think it's because we want
1:31:34
to -- we want services, we want help, you know. And I think that's really important.
1:31:40
I think getting back to what we have in abundance and what's so good about our tribal communities I think is
1:31:46
we're resilient. You know, we've been through a lot. I think we're innovative. I think about those creation stories and all
1:31:53
that we've come through. We've always, you know, taken and been agile and been able
1:32:00
to move and create and do good work. But I also think like one
1:32:05
of our major strengths is our humor, like it's so fun. You know, the fact in our relationship building of --
1:32:14
and I love when I go back out into community, having a meal with community members.
1:32:20
They always say that when community members tease you, you know, you're in. And if they're not teasing you, that's like --
1:32:26
that's a side eye there. You need to take a moment to say, "All right, what do I need to do? Maybe I need to, you know, be a little less formal."
1:32:35
Maybe you need to figure out how to reword these things so that it feels a little bit more conversational.
1:32:40
I always think that if I can't explain my work to my mom, that's my biggest indicator. Then it's I need to rethink my approach
1:32:47
because my mom is somebody who grew up on the reservation. Navajo is the first language and making sure that I can --
1:32:57
whatever I do is understandable to her, it's translatable to her, I feel like is a good indicator of success.

1:33:04
And generally how I explain the work that I do, no matter whatever I'm doing with anybody is to sort
1:33:12
of understand that not everybody has the education, the experience that I have, the knowledge that I have.
1:33:18
So making entry points, these bridges to the work that we do, why it's impactful,
1:33:25
the potential impact is mutually beneficial to both
1:33:30
of us I think has been a hallmark in the work that -- is really key in any work that you do in order to have any sort
1:33:37
of lasting sustainable change is you really need to do that. And I love within tribal communities,
1:33:44
we have a wicked sense of humor. We always want to sit down and have a meal and we want to get to know you.
1:33:51
And I think Halena's very beginning point about the importance of introductions. When you're talking with folks, let them know
1:33:58
where you're coming from. And I've had to teach that at IMLS. Slow down.
1:34:04
Let's take a moment. You need to tell people where you're from, not where you live. Know where you from.
1:34:10
And this gives us the lens in which you view the world and I think that's really important. And everybody I've taught that to and they come
1:34:18
into a conversation like that. It shifts. Everything shifts. We get to move past the sort of shallow level of engagement
1:34:28
and we get to something deeper. So, I think I prize our relationships, I prize our humor
1:34:37
and I prize that our inventive sort of agile minds
1:34:43
that continually are always thinking of new ways of solving all these problems that are continually coming.
1:34:48
Those problems will never end. And our creation stories show that.
1:34:54
So, we lean into the skills that we have and I love that about indigenous communities.
1:35:02

>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: This is actually a great segue, Jen, to one of the second questions that we got which is what were your experiences in tribal libraries
1:35:08
versus academic libraries? And did your experience influence any specific project or practices in your career?
1:35:15
Richie, feel free to interpret this as broadly as you'd like given your career trajectory. And I segue in this way because you mentioned, you know,
1:35:23
having to rethink our approaches. And this is something that we have to do within our communities as well as in academia.
1:35:29
You know, being in academia for over the past 10 years as a student has taught me a lot,
1:35:35
has provided me a lot of skills. But also what I've witnessed is that oftentimes when students go
1:35:40
within these university spaces that they come out really galvanized thinking that they know their history,
1:35:46
when really they know the academic history of their communities. And there is value and power to that,
1:35:51
but then there are also ways in which sometimes we're preparing students to go back into their home communities.
1:35:57
And sometimes they can become bullies. You know, trying to police what is the correct history
1:36:02
and what isn't, what needs to be done in the community. And what we have to recognize is there is a time
1:36:09
and space for that activism. But at the same time, it can be really stressful in the long run, right?
1:36:15
That maintaining relationships with people in not just academia and in our communities requires us, you know,
1:36:23
in some ways being OK with disagreeing and recognizing the right time and space to have critical dialogues especially in a time and a world
1:36:31
where we're really seeing this decline in community cohesion
1:36:36
and division as being the norm. Especially if we just look at national politics here
1:36:42
in the States, the ways in which we're -- nationally, we're constantly being trying to be divided
1:36:48

into this red or blue category. And actually a lot of us, and I just heard this recently at a humanities conference, a lot of us is kind
1:36:55
of in the purple because, you know, we're not necessarily aligned. We're not necessarily just focused on politics,
1:37:00
but we're trying to think about the people in our communities and helping them where they're at. And it requires us to kind of, you know,
1:37:08
sometimes put politics aside to try to figure out how do we get our communities that are struggling to the table?
1:37:16
How do we ensure that they are heard? That we're doing what we need to within community and academia
1:37:24
to ensure that we're getting back to some sense of cohesion, of an ability to be able to meet at the same table again
1:37:30
to have these really difficult conversations. So, those are just some of my thoughts
1:37:36
with that question is that, you know, it's been learning this process of learning how
1:37:41
to translate knowledge across different contexts, that learning how to develop skills of deep listening.
1:37:48
And when I say that, it's about, you know, making the time to not be reactive all the time to what people are telling you
1:37:55
but trying to read in between the lines of what they're saying. Even in confrontational settings, right?
1:38:01
In Hawaiian community, especially in my community, we're known to be like very loud and angry and shouting
1:38:08
at people, but oftentimes it's not necessarily directed. Like it's directed at the individual
1:38:13
but then it's also being directed at this longer history of frustration of institutions of not listening
1:38:20
or taking information and saying they're going to do better but then they don't. So how can we as intermediaries be those advocates to, you know,
1:38:31
perhaps it's our job to translate what they're saying to other people who may not necessarily understand exactly
1:38:36

what's being asked of them and to provide guidance on how to do those in ways where you're not adding to the frustration
1:38:43
or leading down this cycle of frustration and further division.
1:38:50
So, those are just some of my thoughts on that particular question.
1:38:56
>> Jennifer Himmelreich: I think my experiences
1:39:02
in tribal libraries versus academic libraries is I think academic institutions are
1:39:12
built on a very interesting model, very hierarchical
1:39:18
that I sometimes feel like the process to create scholars can sometimes be hard and isn't necessarily,
1:39:31
you know, older systems. It's not necessarily -- we're just talking --
1:39:40
I was just talking to a professor about this yesterday
1:39:46
about his frustration of how, you know, in order to get a degree, sometimes it felt
1:39:52
like a hazing system, a hazing. You were just going through things
1:39:58
because they were things other people had gone through. And I don't know -- I think it sometimes feels,
1:40:07
can feel a little cold because it's -- it adheres to this,
1:40:12
you know, larger organizational model that's isn't
1:40:19
very community-based. And I think tribal libraries and, you know, other libraries
1:40:25
as well, sometimes I'm always struck with the compassion
1:40:31
and kindness of, you know, when I was reading these profiles
1:40:37
of libraries for our national medals, I was reading these amazing programs that were being made
1:40:45
that were responsive to the community. And so I was happy to see that and I was really thrilled to see
1:40:53

when some of that began to change. But I think that was my experience was that it felt very cold, very different.
1:40:59
And, you know, again I went through it long time ago. I think things are changing. I'm really excited about that.
1:41:05
They're being -- I think the response -- what COVID made us do in the pandemic made us do
1:41:12
in these spaces was think thoughtfully about how to be useful to our communities.
1:41:17
And I'm really thrilled about that. And I'm seeing community libraries,
1:41:24
libraries of all sizes and spaces really embrace that community anchor institution label
1:41:31
and become the hubs of their communities. And I so appreciate that and I get excited
1:41:37
when I meet a community -- a library and they've got their hands kind of everywhere. They're like working with social services.
1:41:43
They have like an entrepreneur center in there doing after-school help.
1:41:50
I mean, they're just sort of everywhere. The staff is ingrained and they become so essential to the community.
1:41:57
And those are the spaces that make me so excited that I want to cheer on and hope that other libraries work their way there
1:42:06
and I'm really thrilled that, you know, the ways that I grew up and entered into those spaces hopefully won't happen
1:42:15
to other new visitors into those spaces. Hopefully they're more compassionate and kind and responsive to me.
1:42:20
So, I'm really excited about that change in the last couple of decades.
1:42:33
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: Richie, I wanted to ask, given your experience in tribal government, you know, maybe we can think about this question as some
1:42:39
of the lessons you learned and practices you developed for being able to work in community, you know,
1:42:46
as somebody really in between tribal government and federal government. >> Richard Sneed: I'm sorry we cut out there.
1:42:54

Can you repeat that? >> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: You know, what are some of the practices you learned as somebody who really served
1:43:00
as an in-between tribal government and federal government working in their community? >> Richard Sneed: I think that the biggest challenge really
1:43:08
and it's been touched on already is trying to make sure that the agencies that you're engaged
1:43:15
with are actually hearing you. Obviously, there's been this long-standing we're-up-here,
1:43:22
you're-down-here kind of mentality with the federal government. I think that's changing.
1:43:27
You know, having like Deb Haaland as the Secretary of Interior was a huge leap.
1:43:32
Prior to that, I had met with the previous secretary, Ryan Zinke and with a lot of other tribal leaders.
1:43:41
And immediately in this meeting and there was probably about 35 or 40 tribal leaders in the meeting, 15, 20 minutes in,
1:43:48
I thought I've been to this meeting before. It's just wash, rinse, repeat. You know, "That sounds great.
1:43:54
That sounds good. Send us a memo. We'll see what we can do about that." So, I think it does have a lot to do
1:43:59
with relationship building, but then you have to have somebody on the other end who is receptive
1:44:05
to relationship building and not necessarily just going through the motions to check the box and say, "Yes,
1:44:10
we had consultation with the tribal leaders and then off we go." I think that as we get more indigenous people
1:44:17
into these high-ranking positions in the federal government, we can see more of that.
1:44:23
But that's the incremental change. It doesn't necessarily mean that we have to have indigenous people in all those positions,
1:44:30
but having people that maybe have at least worked in tribal communities and have an understanding because as all three of us have pointed out in our talks,
1:44:38

tribal communities are different. You know, I noticed in talking with tribal leaders across the country, there are common threads that we all share
1:44:46
but then there are things that make their tribal community unique. So, even if we had people within the government who worked
1:44:53
in tribal communities, have an understanding of how they operate, how they think, how we think and how everything we do is really rooted in our culture,
1:45:01
that's really going to make a big difference. But on a closing note, I think after your last comments,
1:45:07
we should just -- we should run you in 2024 for president. I think you do a great job. And if I get a second on that, we'll make a motion.
1:45:15
>> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: I'll have to think about that. I don't know.
1:45:20
Being president of the US is a big task. But this is a great, you know, a great thing to get
1:45:29
into something I also wanted to chat a little bit about. And I think this gets to one of our last questions in the Q&A
1:45:35
about improving services for indigenous communities and academic libraries and museums.
1:45:40
And I want to phrase this question a little bit differently because it's not necessarily about improving services but creating infrastructure
1:45:48
to support those services. And I say that coming from the world of museums
1:45:54
where I'm very much involved in the conversation around museum decolonization and indigenization.
1:46:00
And what you're starting to see now is less people really trying
1:46:05
to name those issues within the institution and saying, "Actually, this is great but you can't expect one person
1:46:12
to do this change for your entire institution." And oftentimes what we see is that, you know,
1:46:17
they create a dedicated position and that individual is tasked with doing basically a million things
1:46:24
like being asked to change the world. And that is overburdening those individuals
1:46:29

with such an immense task. So, you know, instead of improving services, it's how can our academic institutions really create
1:46:37
sustainable endeavors to ensure that there is a team of folks there that can share the burden
1:46:43
of this institutional transformation? But also making sure that they are cared for in those spaces,
1:46:50
that oftentimes that they're, you know, as Jennifer may be able to attest,
1:46:55
as somebody who's really the first in her position to have this, that changing institutions takes time.
1:47:01
It takes emotional and physical labor. And sometimes we're just not prepared enough
1:47:08
to know how can we, you know, put that aside at the end of the day to get the rest that we need, on top of our concerns
1:47:15
and desire to really help our communities where they're at. And over the years, I've been really trying to think
1:47:23
about this because, you know, we are at once really joyful and humorous people but at the same time,
1:47:29
we do carry such immense generational pain and grief.
1:47:35
And for some of us, we haven't quite figured out ways to address that and to process it in ways
1:47:40
that aren't harming us. And I say this because, you know, growing up in Hawaiian education and really learning so much
1:47:49
from leaders at that time and seeing how their health is declining today because those weren't part of the conversation
1:47:57
because they were so focused in on the larger movements in that need.
1:48:03
And so, I think we're in a generation now where folks are trying to continue that work but to also be mindful of how do we better care for ourselves
1:48:11
in these, you know, larger societal demands that we're being asked about. Richie or Jennifer, do you have anything you'd want to add
1:48:19
or respond to with that? >> Richard Sneed: Yeah, I'd like to use -- so I think in our community
1:48:26

and I'll use our museum as an example. So our museum, you know, was started in the early '70s.
1:48:32
It was the typical museum model and it stayed that way up until the new director.
1:48:37
One of the first things that she did was, and I really applauded her for this, I remember I would reach
1:48:43
out to her and say, "Hey, I just want to say, you know, kudos to you for hiring all these young, passionate Cherokees who, you know, have a vision
1:48:51
for the museum and where it can be 20, 30, 40 years down the road." So, I think that if an indigenous community has the
1:49:00
resources and that's really the challenge, right? We're fortunate that, you know, we have the resources now to put to it.
1:49:06
If you have the resources, be open to hiring young people who have passion and energy because unfortunately as we age
1:49:16
and look, we get kind of stuck in a rut and this was the way we've always done it, this is how we're always going to do it. Again, the world is changing and tribal communities are evolving
1:49:25
and growing and changing as well. So, if you have the resources to be supportive
1:49:30
as a tribal government, that's a huge leap forward. But again, hire the best, well-educated, young,
1:49:38
passionate tribal community members and just cut them loose and let them do their thing.
1:49:43
It's been amazing to see what's happened at our museum. >> Jennifer Himmelreich: Yeah, I think as somebody who's stepped
1:49:52
into a lot of first positions like, you know, first native in this space and having to negotiate that, I think I've
1:50:01
over time learned I've had to separate out goal setting
1:50:06
of what is something I can do in six months, what's something I can do in three months, what's a five-year
1:50:13
or what's three years, five years, 10 years. And quite honestly, what's generational?
1:50:20
Because I can't change it all. And I think the biggest thing I can do is try

1:50:26
to prop the door open, pull some folks in and get them, you know,
1:50:31
in here and let them know. And try to find the right people for it because I sometimes,
1:50:37
I think we do a disservice thinking that just everybody can do every position and that's not the reality.
1:50:44
I think working through the fellowship program. And seeing fellows try to enter into spaces
1:50:51
and there be a real misalignment of their own personal goals and what an institution wants to do.
1:50:58
And having to take a step back and saying it's not because of a lack of talent, knowledge or skills
1:51:06
on the fellows or sort of an emerging professional side, it's perhaps just a misalignment.
1:51:13
So, finding the right space for you to feel like you can not only survive but thrive, right?
1:51:21
You can belong to a space I think is really key. And I think for me, it's coming down to in this last year of,
1:51:28
you know, trying to understand what this position is, what sort of power I have.
1:51:34
I think really understanding what is within my realm of change and what's going to take time.
1:51:39
And what can I -- again, what is generational I think is really, really -- it's been the key learning that I have gotten
1:51:47
with this position is understanding the federal government has a whole different way and process
1:51:54
and that I necessarily can't move things. I don't have the ability to move things
1:52:00
but what can I move, what can I do? And that's been this first whole year after --
1:52:06
the first year after I got hired like just me understanding that. So, one, I didn't burn myself out, you know.
1:52:12
And I think there was a point I think just of navigating what the perceived power in the position
1:52:20
and really the trying to sort that out and the way I enter into communities and do that, it took me some time to do that.

1:52:28
And in a way in which I wasn't harming the community and I wasn't harming myself. And that's been a real lesson in the last
1:52:36
since starting this position. So it's I feel I think I've been going
1:52:42
to conferences the last few -- the last month. And the energy I walk into it is so very different
1:52:49
than it was a year ago when I was -- I felt like a little bit like I was drowning.
1:52:54
Now, I feel like I'm walking into it and I understand what I can do and what I can't do. I feel knowledgeable and I feel ready to engage and be
1:53:05
as helpful as I can be and also know where my limits are. And so it's -- and where my unique talents,
1:53:11
the way that my brain works and connects things can be useful in a conversation. So, I'm excited about that opportunity and to have
1:53:19
that little bit of knowledge. But I'm always telling folks when I'm doing it like you have
1:53:24
to sort that out a little bit or else you'll just burn right out. You know, places, anybody, any community, any job,
1:53:31
any institution will burn you out pretty quickly. So, understanding your limits is really key to being able
1:53:38
to do the work that you want to do. >> Halena Kapuni-Reynolds: A great way to end, Jennifer.
1:53:44
Thank you. Tonia, take it away. >> Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca: OK. Thank you, everybody, for such an amazing presentation.
1:53:53
Honoring the past and preparing for the future I think was definitely, you know,
1:54:00
shared here in this webinar. And I thank all of you for not just talking about who you are
1:54:07
but where you are from. And the story of, you know, just the information
1:54:13
that you are able to share with us in such a short period of time, but even some of the intimate information
1:54:18
that you wanted to share about your family and sharing pictures of yourself, your grandma, your cousins, your aunties
1:54:28

and your children, that it's very personal and I appreciate all of that.
1:54:35
And then of course, not just your academic background but your career and the pathways that you took.
1:54:41
And obviously, all three of you took very different paths. And you all are very successful.
1:54:47
And you can see the enthusiasm and the, you know,
1:54:52
just the pride in your work and what you have done. And of course, what you see for the future.
1:55:00
And yes, there has been some challenges but you've identified ways in which we can move on
1:55:06
and how we can improve and how the young people can come in
1:55:11
and use their energy to make change and hopefully improve the future for, of course, next generations.
1:55:17
And so I appreciate all of you. I appreciate your time and your commitment to this symposium.
1:55:24
I thought everything was just fantastic. And again, I just appreciate all three of you.
1:55:30
I also, you know, want to thank everybody that was also a part of this symposium.
1:55:38
And, you know, people in the background so Alfredo, Nicole Purviance, Vivian Zuo, Iori [assumed spelling], David,
1:55:45
or, excuse me, Dale David, Wallace. All of you, I appreciate everything
1:55:51
that you all have done to make this symposium so successful.
1:55:56
I appreciate that. And so, I would like to give all of you an applause.
1:56:02
So, thank you so much. And again, from the iSchool, from the School of Information,
1:56:10
I just want to personally thank each and every single one of you for your informative presentations.
1:56:16
And like I said, I think it's very informative
1:56:23
and very helpful. And, you know, we want to make sure that, you know,
1:56:29
we want to let you all know that we have many teaching opportunities
1:56:34

and we'll hire master's level faculty as well. If there are any of you out there and listening or any
1:56:41
of you, you know, on the panel that maybe have some interest in coming in and providing your knowledge
1:56:49
and sharing your knowledge with our students here in the iSchool. Again, thank you to Chief Sneed for the opportunity to work
1:56:56
with him and the EBCI people and his systems thinking and vision for how libraries, literacy and children are all tied together
1:57:05
for a stronger future. And, you know, the last thing I wanted
1:57:13
to say is just again thank you, everyone, for attending today's symposium.
1:57:19
And a recording of today's proceedings will be posted on YouTube.
1:57:24
And the full transcript will also be available. And one last thing and that's our next symposium will be
1:57:32
in celebration of Black History Month. And that will be in February for those who are listening.
1:57:40
And again, you know, thank you so much. I think I have maybe less than one minute. So again, I just can't appreciate, you know, show --
1:57:48
>> Anthony Chow: Tonia, if I may, I just want to applaud all of your hard work and all of the Diversity Committee's hard work
1:57:55
for putting this together. So, let's give them a loud round of applause. And I apologize for -- I was in commute
1:58:02
so for the microphone snafu there. And I also, on behalf of the School of Information,
1:58:07
want to thank all of you for sharing, you know, your history and your stories and part of you with us.
1:58:17
And Halena talked about infrastructure. So, behind the scenes, creating these symposiums and all
1:58:25
of the infrastructure necessary to do that has taken quite a bit of time. And as Tonia said, quite a bit of effort
1:58:32
on behalf of our staff. So I want to sincerely thank all of them for all of the work they've done.
1:58:37

The other part to it is that this is all recorded. So we have formed a partnership
1:58:45
with a professional video production team. It's going to take -- this full two-hour symposium will be
1:58:52
shared in the recording along with the full transcription. But there also will be kind of more of like a three- to five-minute greatest hits
1:58:58
because we also know that's how people like to digest, you know, content. So, I want you to know that.
1:59:05
And what we've seen with the statistics is that typically double, triple, quadruple the amount of views
1:59:13
that you get from the live audience, right? So I want you to know that your words of wisdom will live on.
1:59:19
The last thing I want to say is, again, thank you to the panelists because the real goal of the symposium is to really educate our students.
1:59:26
We have 3,400 students. We're the largest Masters of Library Information Science program in the world.
1:59:31
Forty-nine out of 50 states, 11 countries. And the goal here is to bring leaders like yourselves
1:59:37
to the table so that we can educate our students about thoughts and ideas of cultures and people.
1:59:44
And we are proud to say we're the most diverse MLIS program also in the country.
1:59:50
And then lastly, I want to say what Chief Sneed is and maybe it's because I have a little bit of Marine Corps in me as well is his strength and his vision and what he's done
2:00:00
with the Eastern Band and, again, having the privilege of working with him. I think working with Adam and his tribal library and kind
2:00:08
of seeing how that is a community hub for so many of the things that he and his people have
2:00:14
in mind I think is fantastic. And final note is on a personal note.
2:00:20
So my father passed away just a few days ago and I think that we talk about how
2:00:26
to connect the past with the future. And so, we have a little free library that's dedicated to
2:00:33

or sponsored by my parents. And so if you can drop that in, Alfredo, just because one
2:00:39
of the things that I really like about Chief Sneed is he's a man of action, right? And I think that ultimately, it's a small token but working
2:00:46
with the tribal library and Adam Lambert, they have curated this Amazon wish list.
2:00:52
So feel free to donate or to consider ways in which to support indigenous and Native American communities.
2:01:00
And so this is one way. And I'm just honored to say that, again, the past honors the future, right?
2:01:06
And I think that as our elders pass on, there's a way for them, of course, to contribute to the future of us all.
2:01:13
So anyway, thank you again for your time. Thank you again for your wisdom and sharing that with us
2:01:21
and I wish you all a wonderful day.