

Roundtable on Systemic Change in Undergraduate STEM Education

Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education

Board on Science Education

Caring Institutions, Successful Students: A Focus on Indigenous Students

Panelist Biographies

Panel 1: Exemplars of Student Programs



ALVIN ALTAMIRANO is the Bridges Program Director at Northern Arizona University. He is a teaching professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and the department associate chair. His teaching abilities and student involvement have been recognized with various accolades awarded by Northern Arizona University, including the Influential Faculty Member Award, the Outstanding Educator Award, and the John F. Wettaw Faculty Excellence Award in Chemistry. He works with Bridge Program students in their laboratories or research areas to assist them with understanding and mastering methods and techniques used in their research. He also provides leadership to the program in the area of developing the Bridges students' skill set to enable them to succeed in pursuing baccalaureate degrees in biomedical and behavioral sciences. He earned his Ph.D. in biological chemistry from the University of Connecticut and completed postdoctoral training at the University of Lethbridge.



STEVEN DAVIS *KiiNockKooMii* (First Thunder), of the Kul Wicasa Oyate (Lower Brule Sioux Tribe) and Niitsiitapi (Blackfoot Confederacy), is a proud alumnus of Montana State University with dual degrees in Chemical and Biological Engineering and an Honors Baccalaureate degree. He now has the honor and privilege to serve current and prospective students at his alma mater as the Assistant Dean and Academic Diversity Partner of the Honors College. Steven's professional work and current research focuses on indigenizing engineering education and broadening access and success in higher education for students at Montana State University. Steven is a Sloan (SIGP) Fellow and LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate Fellow in pursuit of a Masters and eventual Ph.D. in Engineering. His current research efforts are aiming to bridge the gap between traditional, Indigenous

ways of knowing and contemporary, Western empirical sciences – i.e. exploring and translating fluid mechanics, heat transfer, mass transfer, and sustainable principles inherent in the design and building of lodges and/or tipis.



TIA GRAMZINSKI (*she/her*) is Navajo, originally from Kayenta, Arizona. She serves as the Academic Success Coordinator, Sr. at Northern Arizona University's Flagstaff campus, overseeing two NIH-funded research training programs dedicated to fostering successful Indigenous scholars in cancer and health-related research and boosting the number of Indigenous college graduates. With certification as a K-8 teacher, Tia advocates passionately for learners at all levels to approach their realities with a critical lens, aiming to cultivate more constructive, equitable, and productive spaces across academia, research, the workforce, and life at large. Outside work, she enjoys hiking, basketball, Criterion Collection movies, and family time.



TIFFANY SMITH (*she/her*) is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and is also a descendent of the Muscogee Creek Nation. Dr. Smith serves as the Director of Research and Career Support for AISES. In this role, Dr. Smith manages several grant-supported research-related projects and conducts research related to Indigenous students and professionals in STEM disciplines. She provides oversight, strategic leadership, management, and overall direction of AISES' research and related projects. Additionally, Dr. Smith serves as adjunct faculty for the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She served as the National Chair for NASPA's Indigenous Peoples Knowledge Community (IPKC) from 2021-2023 and as a part of the ASHE Indigenous Scholars Collective since 2018. Dr. Smith was recently recognized as a part of the 2024 class of NASPA Pillars of the Profession, the 2023 IPKC Distinguished Service in NASPA award, and the 2021 NASPA Melvene D. Hardee Dissertation of the Year award. Her scholarship focuses on utilizing Indigenous methodologies and her own Tsalagi (Cherokee) epistemology in seeking to decolonize academic spaces, particularly in STEM fields. Dr. Smith completed her Ph.D. in Adult & Higher Education in 2019 from the University of Oklahoma.



LEANNE AVERY (Moderator, Roundtable Member) is Professor and Chair in education at SUNY Oneonta. Her research focuses on documenting local rural intergenerational STEM knowledge, preserving rural communities' cultural/ecological heritage, and exploring impacts of place-based teacher development on classroom practice. Dr. Avery was Co-Editor for Community Development and Cultural Studies of Science Education (CSSE) Special Issue on Rural Science Education. She publishes widely, serves national and community organizations, and co-teaches in clinically-rich partnerships with rural schools. Selective awards include: Distinguished Scholar (SUNY Oneonta) and Paper of the Year (CSSE), research assistantships/grants from the NSF, and a Challenger scholarship. Dr. Avery is a first-generation college student who received an A.A. in Biology from Ulster County Community College, then completed a B.S. in Natural Resources, an M.S. in Educational Administration, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum & Instruction, all from Cornell University. She also obtained a M.S. in Biology Education from SUNY Albany.

Panel 2: Supporting Indigenous Students



TWYLA BAKER is a citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa, & Arikara Nation of Fort Berthold, ND, and currently serves as president of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College in New Town, ND. Her work is highly focused on improving the quality of life for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, and runs the gamut of Native consciousness, research, and education. She previously served as Vice President of Student Services at Fort Berthold Community College, Director of the National Resource center on Native American Aging, and Principal Investigator of the National Indigenous Elder Initiative. She previously served as chair of the AISES Board of Directors. She earned a Ph.D. in research methodology and quantitative methods, a M.S. in education, and a B.S. in environmental geology from the University of North Dakota.



TYLER HALLMARK serves as a Program Associate with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, where he helps oversee the Foundation's grantmaking to effectively advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM higher education. Presently, his primary responsibilities include managing the Foundation's new Creating Equitable Pathways to STEM Graduate Education grant program and supporting the Sloan Indigenous Graduate Partnership program. Beyond his work at Sloan, Tyler remains active in publishing and consulting on higher education literature. Most recently, Tyler served as lead editor for a new book entitled, *Race & Rurality: Considerations for Advancing Higher Education Equity*, which was published by Routledge in November 2023. Prior to joining the Foundation in 2021, Tyler earned his Ph.D. in Educational Studies from The Ohio State University, his M.S. in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, and his B.A. in Communication from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Tyler is also a first-generation college graduate, a former Pell grant recipient, a Gates Millennium Scholar, and a proud citizen of the Cherokee Nation.



NATALIE YOUNGBULL is a citizen of the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma and descendant of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux tribes of Montana. She serves as an assistant professor of adult and higher education in the educational leadership and policy studies department at the University of Oklahoma. Her research interests include the experiences of American Indian Gates Millennium Scholars, Native/Indigenous student success, Native Nation building and intellectual leadership and capacity building within tribal colleges and universities. She serves as an editor of the *Tribal College and University Research Journal*, the first peer-reviewed journal focused on research based at TCUs. Youngbull received her bachelor of arts degree in psychology from the University of Oklahoma and master of education and doctoral degrees in higher education at the University of Arizona.



ANITA MARSHALL (Moderator, Roundtable Member) is a Lecturer and researcher in the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Florida, Gainesville. Dr. Marshall also serves as the Executive Director of the International Association for Geoscience Diversity (theIAGD.org), a 501c3 non-profit with the mission to improve access and inclusion for people with disabilities in the geosciences. Her research focuses on accessibility and engagement in geoscience field courses with ongoing projects including the Library of Inclusive Field Technology, and the GeoSPACE Accessible Planetary Geology field course. Dr. Marshall has 17 years of undergraduate teaching experience designing inclusive and accessible courses in community colleges and R1 research institutions in a range of modalities - in-person, hybrid, and online. She is actively involved in the DEI community of the geosciences, sharing her expertise and personal experience in STEM as a person with disabilities and a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Dr. Marshall received a B.S. in Earth Science and an M.S. in Geology from the University of Arkansas, and a Ph.D. in Geology from the University of South Florida.