Connecting Indigenous Cultural Teachings and the Scientific World

05/02/2022

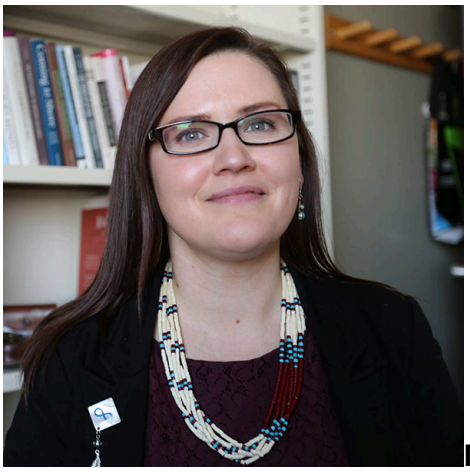
Dr. Kisha Supernant uses a ground-penetrating radar machine to search for unmarked graves and map archeological sites.

The Mentoring and Encouraging Student Academic Success (MESAS) program recently hosted its second annual Indigenous Knowledge Symposium. This event brings together campus faculty, staff, and students to learn about the importance of Indigenous knowledge across academic disciplines. This year's virtual symposium featured three scholars in archeology, mathematics, and environmental science.

MESAS was created to encourage more Native American students to pursue graduate degrees in STEM fields and to build a more inclusive campus environment at Utah State University. The program has grown to now provide academic assistance and cultural programming for all Native American students at Utah State.

For those who were unable to attend this year's symposium, a full recording of the event is now available.

2022 Indigenous Knowledge Symposium Presenters



Dr. Kisha Supernant, PhD

Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Alberta

Dr. Kisha Supernant (Métis) is director of the Institute of Prairie and Indigenous Archaeology and an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Alberta. Her research focuses on Indigenous archaeology, archaeological remote sensing, and heart-centered archaeological practice. She is the founding Director of Exploring Métis Identity Through Archaeology (EMITA), where she works with her own relatives to explore the Métis archaeological record.

Dr. Henry Fowler, PhD

Associate Professor of Mathematics, Navajo Technical University

Dr. Henry H. Fowler is from Tonalea, Arizona. He is a member of the Navajo tribe and is an associate professor of mathematics at Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, New Mexico. Mr. Fowler is born for Bitter Water and born into the Zuni Edgewater; his maternal grandparents are Many Goats, and his paternal grandparents are Red Running into the Water. Dr. Fowler is the co-founder of the Navajo Math Circles and works with over 40 mathematicians to promote math education for students from the Navajo Nation.

Dr. Tommy Rock, PhD

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Princeton University

Tommy Rock is a member of the Navajo Nation from Monument Valley, Utah. Dr. Rock received his Ph.D. in Earth Science and Environmental Sustainability and hopes to integrate issues of health, environment, and culture—especially related to uranium mining—into more informed decision-making on tribal lands. As a citizen of the Navajo Nation, Dr. Rock advocates for the use of Navajo fundamental laws to make laws addressing issues of uranium contamination to help the tribe improve their quality of life.