



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/Organization - UW
AOS/SSEC Megapod Deliverable

Audit of previous activities with communities of color at our organizations?

- Ankur Desai has/is giving talks a HBCUs
- CIMSS worked with Patty Lowe, a local TV personality associated with Ojibwe tribe
 - o Project that involved Ojibwe tribe involving forecasting and traditional knowledge?
- SSEC weather camp with high school students
 - o Used to be teachers and students, then teachers one week and students another, now only students
 - o CIMSS online Wx Camp (this year) has already contacted Aaron Bird Bear regarding reaching out to First Nation students
- SSEC two years ago did summer camp for teachers and high school students for those who didn't have technology which we provided materials for
- Bill Smith actively sought work with students at Hampton University
- Steve Akerman and his wife had a WI Idea/Baldwin Grant that involved folklore, lots of N.A. history and weather
- GSA expanding your horizons
- Margret Mooney has contacts with high school teachers across USA, invite to cool events i.e. GOES launch
 - o NOAA is very interested in raising awareness and getting teachers involved
- MATC college career days
 - o Two years in a row
 - § Not that successful in some cases, some cases early prep to actually see if members of that community want to represent

Sought to build trust and form long-term connections and collaborations with local institutions if your project is multi-year / ongoing? Why or why not?

- **Were previous negative interactions, whether from inside or outside of your organization, addressed in the plans for building these connections and trust**
 - o Should make an REU/talk with HBCUs to actively seek out applicants to come into the department
 - § Potentially having a virtual component of REU for students with responsibilities that can't leave home for 10 weeks
 - o Need established relationship
 - o Angel getting a disproportionate chunk of emails of Hispanic students asking about research
 - o Need to reach out to other communities and ask/listen to their needs

- Established programs for high school research project for the summer (not sure the name), some have done this previously
- Need to make sure that we do decide to push on make the biggest movement on the issues that we want to move in
 - § Easier/more effective to target high school and college students as they've already bought into STEM/AOS (to some degree)
- Have high school teachers come here? Target the high school for what teachers would be interested in – relate to their lives
 - § Pay teachers to come here (or pay for grads to go to them, at least transportation costs)
 - § Good to have knowledge for those who don't know it exists
 - § Want "high paying jobs" to support family
 - § Let know viable career path
- ESIP? Education on weather/climate focused on teacher education (not very virtual)
- Need to have buy in early in process
 - § Applied to their communities
 - § REU projects collaborate with leaders/students from BIPOC communities to tailor to their community
- Reach out to tribal leaders to build communities
 - § Aaron Bird Bear, Sustainability Leadership Cohort at College of Menominee Nation
- Color of weather community interactions

Deliverables:

Long-term:

- Developing REU our department has talked about
 - Potentially satellite location as a SOARS program or conversations about how to start a successful REU
 - Astronomy department could be resource
 - Person-power an issue for organizing REU in near-term. Junior faculty time constraints right now, limited senior faculty in department and many already have major service/leadership roles
 - But we don't want to wait 6 years
 - A lot of excitement and momentum right now
 - Can graduate students help? Possible project assistant? Delta project(s)?

Near-term:

- Land acknowledgement statement
 - Create a team with the intention to write this
- Translation of pages to different languages

This is what was found by AOS/SSEC Podlet 2 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

Pods may have members from a range of career stages and involvement in the development and execution of research projects, and pod members may have different experiences or different perspectives when responding to these questions. Consider this in the summary document and focus on capturing responses that are representative of the range in your pod.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**
 - *Invitation to participate in Climate Mitigation Planning workshop by the Potawatomi Tribe in northern Wisconsin – Air Quality impacts of future climate change*
 - *Previous examples of engagements with Washington State tribal communities and central Argentinian communities in international field campaigns*

- **What worked well in these interactions?**
 - *Workshop was conducted at the Potawatomi Nation, one-on-one with Tribal leaders, CCR, and Wisconsin DNR*
 - *Engaging with tribal/local schools in the community before, during, and after the campaign (student engagement in sharing their experiences/interests/concerns related to weather and climate in their region, visits to instrument sites)*
 - *Translation of information pamphlets into multiple languages for disseminating information when engaging with public and students in chance and organized interactions*

- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
 - *It was difficult to maintain contact after initial workshop. Reached out to Tribal contacts via email and phone but didn't get response*
 - *Work with tribal communities in translations of material*
 - *Engaging with communication specialists to ensure appropriate messaging (including interactions with broader media in making sure our message is accurately portrayed)*
 - *Incorporate local knowledge and experience into the science questions and hypotheses*

- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
 - *Representatives are available, make the contact RIGHT at the beginning, not as an afterthought with local projects.*
 - *Establish stronger relationships with Tribal Leadership*

- *UW-Madison director of tribal relations, Aaron Bird Bear:*
<https://diversity.wisc.edu/2019/10/aaron-bird-bear-named-uw-madisons-first-director-of-tribal-relations/>
 - *Can we engage in this grant program?* <https://news.wisc.edu/uw-madison-awarded-grant-to-develop-educational-pathways-for-native-youth/>
 - *Work together on appropriate messaging for land acknowledgements in presentations and in acknowledgements in publications (Dan Vimont a good resource)*
- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**
 - *UW-Madison Native Nations Strategic Working Group:*
<http://nativenations.nelson.wisc.edu/contacts/index.php>
 - *UW-Madison Native Nations Working Group Strategic Plan (2017-2019)*
https://diversity.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Native_Nations_UW_Strategic_Plan_Sept_2017.pdf
 - *Working with communication specialists to ensure messaging is appropriate*
 - *SSEC: Jean Philips* <https://library.ssec.wisc.edu/contact/?to=Jean%20Phillips>
 - Societal and Economic Research and Applications (SERA), work with projects like the PPP (polar prediction project), can help from the beginning co-development of research projects. Worth engaging as people are planning international work

Podlet 3 : Deliverables - Racism and Justice

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**

Considering our organization to include AOS, SSEC, CCR, and CIMSS, the majority of the interactions with communities of color have been through smaller outreach activities as part of individual research projects or department initiatives. Pod members are not specifically aware of projects/longer duration programs in the department which have been built in collaboration with/ focused on dealing with issues faced by communities of color. Broadly, the aim of most activities has been towards raising awareness and sharing “western” ways of science.

Some examples include

- Outreach with the local community during various field campaigns specially ORACLES, RELAMPAGO, OTREC etc which were carried out internationally.
- GSA outreach as part of Madison Area Technical College (MATC) initiative targeting underrepresented minority high school students.
- CIMSS is hosting a virtual weather summer camp for high school students across the country and targeted local (Wisconsin) tribal nations to increase participation from this underrepresented community. This program is anticipated to become an annual event and seek to interact more generally with communities of color in the future.

At university level, there are multiple ongoing and past programs. The Native Nations program ([link](#)) in particular is aimed at working with the 12 Wisconsin Native Nations “to conduct research and educational networks with Tribes” and build a long term collaboration between the university and First Nations of Wisconsin. Nelson Institute is actively involved in many such initiatives as well.

- **What worked well in these interactions?**

Not enough experience in this Podlet to effectively characterize interactions.

- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**

Not enough experience in this podlet to effectively characterize interactions.

- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**

Virtual format does have some benefit and can possibly be used after the pandemic as well for some events. For example, the virtual nature of the upcoming CIMSS WX camp will allow for more high schoolers to be able to participate (up to 50) and to reach out to a broader community. The virtual format also benefits those who may not be able to travel due to family obligations or other commitments.

- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**

Establishing connection and trust with communities takes time and effort which can sometimes be difficult to build for an individual, especially early career scientists. A pre-existing open channel of communication, and a history of collaborative work at the department or university level which individuals can utilize to build their respective projects can be very helpful.

For some of us in the department, pod members recognized that the theoretical nature of work sometimes limited the scope of working with the community in terms of research. Comparatively, it is the big picture motivation behind the research which is based more on engagements with the community. In that regard, more exposure to the work being done by our colleagues at Nelson Institute, who work more closely with the community including the First Nations of Wisconsin, can be a meaningful way in improving our understanding and encourage ideas for future collaborations. For graduate students, attending seminar series by Nelson Institute can be a good way of getting this exposure and satisfying the broadening requirement for their degree.