

RESOLUTION OF THE
NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE OF THE
23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL - Third Year, 2017

AN ACTION

RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES, NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; RECOMMENDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIVE AMERICAN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM AT NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY, FACUNDO VALDEZ SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

WHEREAS:

Section One. Authority

- A. The Health, Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council has legislative authority to recommend resolutions relating to education. 2 N.N.C. § 401 (B) (6)
- B. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'iyáti' Committee as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee and as such empowered the Naabik'iyáti' Committee to coordinate testimony before non-Navajo entities. 2 N.N.C. §700 (A).

Section Two. Findings

- A. The Diné, Apache and Pueblo people have strived over the centuries to exercise their sovereign right to assure appropriate responses to the needs of the people. The struggle to end the destructive and long-term damaging effects of the nations' assimilationist policies and to provide an appropriate education for Native people is legendary and testament to the significance of education in tribal thought. It is this struggle that propels efforts to establish a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work.
- B. At the founding of the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work in 1974, its stated focus was to be on Hispanic/Latino and Native American social work education.
- C. In the 2015 New Mexico legislative session bills to establish a Native American Social Work Studies Institute at Highlands University School of Social Work were introduced. Unfortunately, the University's request was reduced by the amount necessary to fund the social work education initiative.

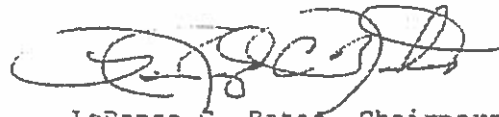
- D. The establishment of the Native American Social Work Program at the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work would constitute the nation's first effort by a school of social work to respond in a programmatic way to Native American social work education.
- E. The Native American Social Work Program Advisory/Development Committee, comprised of social work, psychology and education practitioners, including practitioners from Diné, Apache and Pueblo tribal programs, has been established to develop a curriculum for a Native American social work sequence of courses that responds to community needs and meets core graduation requirements.
- F. It would be in the best interest of the Navajo Nation to support the establishment of a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work and encourage the University to support and work cooperatively with the Native American Social Work Program Advisory/Development Committee in developing a sequence of courses that meet core graduation requirements. See Exhibit "A".

Section Three. Approval

The Navajo Nation hereby supports the establishment of a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work and encourages the University to support and work cooperatively with the Native American Social Work Program Advisory/Development Committee in developing a sequence of courses that meet core graduation requirements.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Naabik'iyáti' Committee of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona), at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 15 in Favor and 00 Opposed, this 12th day of October, 2017.



Lorenzo C. Bates, Chairperson
Naabik'iyáti' Committee

Motion: Honorable Seth A. Damon
Second: Honorable Jonathan Perry

Chairperson Bates not voting



Statement of the
Native American Social Work Studies Institute (NASWSI)
Advisory/Development Committee

August 22, 2018

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Armstrong and Committee members:

My name is Evelyn Blanchard and I am Coordinator of the NASWSI Advisory/Development Committee (the Committee). The Committee requests your support of a bill to establish the Institute that will be introduced in the upcoming legislative session by Representatives D. Wonda Johnson and Georgene Louis. The Institute will be situated within the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work (the School), New Mexico Highlands University. The School's 1974 founding mission pledged focus on Hispano/Latino and Native American social work education. In 2005, the Legislature enabled the School to partially fulfill its mission through the establishment of the Bilingual/Bicultural Concentration which educates students to work in Hispano/Latino communities. The establishment of the Native American Social Work Studies Institute enables the School to fulfill its founding mission.

Although the work to establish the Institute has gone on for many years it recently reached a significant milestone. The School is providing office space to the Institute on its Albuquerque campus. Throughout academia this action illustrates an investment by the University to meet the social work education needs of the state's Native American population. When the Institute is established it will be the first Native American social work program in our nation and will place the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work in a national leadership role regarding Native American social work education.

The Institute's establishment is strongly supported by the All Pueblo Council of Governors (Resolution No. APCG 2017-06), the Legislative Education Committee of the Navajo Nation Council (Resolution No. NABIO-69-17) and the Pueblo of Sandia (Resolution 2017-100). The resolutions speak to the need for adequately trained social work personnel able to address the complex nature of practice in communities that have undergone "a long history of imposition of policies and laws purposefully conceived to dismantle the family and community systems and institutions nurturing families, children and community wellbeing" (APCG/2017). At present only one-third of tribal program staff have master degrees of social work to direct response to the complicated adaptations produced from historically-imposed laws and policies whose design and methodology were developed over centuries without tribal involvement. In 2009 the State/Tribal Collaboration Act opened the door to greater discourse and collaboration between state agencies and tribes which has undergirded and given direction to the collaborative work of Facundo Valdez School of Social Work and the NASWSI Advisory/Development Committee.

The Institute will be comprised of three components: curriculum and faculty development, research, and law and policy. A Native American Clinical Practice Concentration will be developed that includes instruction for all components. To work effectively in tribal communities a broad range of knowledge and skill is needed.

Curriculum and Faculty Development

Curriculum

The Institute has committed to instruction in four courses in the 2019/2020 school year that will address central issues in family and children's practice with particular focus on Indian Child Welfare Act practice. Courses will be offered to students enrolled in the School's degreed programs and to tribal and off-reservation program personnel primarily through the School's long-distance learning facilities which allow the students to access classes at their work places and/or the privacy of their homes. Primary development of the course offerings is led by Advisory/Development Committee members, Caroline, Dailey, LISW, Director, Pueblo of Isleta Social Services, Regina Yazzie, LISW, Program Director, Family and Children's Services, Navajo Nation Department of Social Services and Melissa Riley, PhD, Owner, Native Community Development Associates, Inc., Independent Social Worker for the Pueblo of Laguna Tribal Court. These members have decades-long experience as front-line practitioners, managers, program developers, educators and advisors/consultants to tribal, state and federal governments. They possess expert knowledge regarding the mores and norms that guide social interactions in their communities which enables them to assess and devise useful approaches to behavioral change within the context of the person's and families' lived environment.

Committee member Diana Tsoodle Nelson is managing a bibliography effort initiated during Dean Cristina Duran's tenure as Acting Associate Dean to increase the texts and periodicals dealing with Native people, their lives and social work's response to their circumstance. During this summer's session, now Dean Duran provided the help of a graduate assistant to develop a periodicals bibliography dating from 1975.

In the upcoming semester Melissa Riley will teach a law and policy course that will expand course content to include tribal governance and leadership. Her company has been approved as a field practicum site which will provide the opportunity to focus on the specific knowledge and skill base necessary to community development and organization efforts in the state's native communities. The knowledge elicited from the field practicum will inform the content of courses in the Native American Clinical Concentration.

Faculty

Tribal leadership's call for preparation of social workers equipped to "respond to the growing complexities of issues and challenges facing tribal communities and the State of New Mexico" will guide faculty development. For decades tribal governments have supported the scholarship of their members with the expectation that knowledge and skill would be brought back to their communities. Over time tribal officials and personnel have developed a clearer definition of knowledge and skill levels and practice protocols that support the integrity of the tribal family and the well-being and continuance of the people.

Faculty development will focus on professionally-trained family and children/social services personnel who will be assisted by Committee members and School faculty to prepare for teaching duties. Discussions have begun between Dean Duran and the Committee regarding Institute and School efforts for Native students at the San Juan College campus and through other venues. A position formerly held by a Navajo instructor is vacant. Committee member Regina Yazzie has identified a number of masters' level Navajo social workers who have expressed interest to teach.

Research

The Institute will introduce an indigenous research methodology based on the paradigm developed by Shawn Wilson (Metis) in his text, Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods. The methodology's orientation focuses on questions raised by the community itself to avoid problems of mainstream research which relies on "comparison(s) made between the culture of the "studied" and that of the "studier." It is not uncommon that mainstream and indigenous methodologies may share similar subjects of inquiry but the ways in which studies are conducted in different communities can impact validity and the likelihood the knowledge developed can/will be implemented in ways understood to be beneficial to the community.

Part of the importance of developing an indigenous research paradigm is that we can use methods and forms of expression that we judge to be valid for ourselves. We can get past having to justify ourselves as indigenous to the dominant society and academia. We can develop our own criteria for judging the usefulness, validity or worth of indigenous research and writing. We can decide for ourselves what research we want and how that research will be conducted, analyzed and presented (Wilson, 2008, 14).

Wilson further advances that "[t]he development of an indigenous research paradigm is of great importance to indigenous people because it allows the development of Indigenous theory and methods of practice" (Wilson, 2008, 19).

The introduction of the indigenous research paradigm will be addressed in both the classroom and the communities. It is necessary to introduce the information simultaneously so that research and the methodologies used are understood by leadership, program personnel and the community people. Program personnel are central to research topic decisions and have responsibility to build a data base of information that most accurately defines needs and resources and provides direction for programmatic efforts that respond to the question: What is best for the people?

The subject of the first research effort using Wilson's paradigm comes from a student and former tribal judge concerned with tribal enrollment criteria and the impact of the historical quarter-blood quantum established decades ago by the federal government and its continued use by many tribes. She is concerned about enrollment eligibility of progeny of members whose parents may be from different tribes or relationships with Non-Natives. Her tribe is small and she is worried about its continuance if the tribe maintains its current criterion of one-fourth degree tribal blood and wants to explore community thought and stimulate discussion about considerations of lineage and descendance as alternative to a blood quantum requirement. Her findings will be reported to the Tribal Council.

Law and Policy

Intersections of law and policy on and off-reservation and the mainstream society are complex and at times contested. This component will focus on analysis of current law and policy to educate the student to process and development encompassing the various influences that determine response,, academic and otherwise. An subject of analysis will be the recently enacted Family First Prevention Services Act (Feb. 9, 2018), Section 50731. This section entitled "Reviewing and Improving Licensing Standards for Placement in a Relative Foster Family Home" is of particular interest because of the long history of tribal efforts to develop standards regarding relative and non-relative foster home placement. The law commits the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "to establish model licensing

standards for placement in a relative foster family home by October 1, 2018” (First Focus Campaign for Children, March 2018). The law’s design relies heavily on the model developed by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for child welfare. States are required “to report by April 1, 2019 whether their licensing standards are in accord with the model and if not, why there is a deviance” (Ibid, March 2018). What consultation has the state had with tribal leadership and program personnel to examine the law as required by the 2009 State/Tribal Collaboration Act? Who is involved in authoring licensing standards that accommodate differing views of a relative foster family home. Is the Indian Child Welfare Act tribal consortium involved in the work? These discussions are crucial as many tribes have entered into Title IV-E contracts with the state governing financial support for children placed with relatives and non-relatives on and off-reservation.

The legislative work to establish the NASWSI which is led by Elizabeth Duran and I provides a learning ground for native and non-native students interested in the development of law and policy involving a subject that will change the character of their learning environment. Students will be invited to hold discussions about the legislative process and encouraged to make contact with legislators to gain experience in expressing their opinion regarding establishment of the Institute.

This work has come a long way and the Committee is deeply indebted to Dean Cristina Duran who managed the development and integration of the Bilingual/Bicultural Clinical Concentration made possible by legislative action in 2005. Not only has she worked closely with the Committee but has reached out to the native community of Albuquerque to learn its concerns and the role the School has and can have in response to their needs.

The Committee asks that you cast your vote to support the establishment of the Native American Social Work Studies Institute in the upcoming legislative session. Thank you for consideration of our need.

Respectfully submitted,
Evelyn Lance Blanchard, MSW, PhD, Coordinator
Native American Social Work Studies Institute
Advisory/Development Committee

Committee members:

Elizabeth A. Duran, MSW, MPH, Director, Pojoaque Family and Children’s Services
Caroline Dailey, MSW, LISW, Director, Isleta Pueblo Social Services Department
Regina Yazzie, MSW, LISW, Program Manager, Family and Children’s Services,
Navajo Nation Department of Social Services
Melissa Riley, MA, PhD, Owner, Native American Community Development Assoc.
Social Work Consultant, Laguna Pueblo Tribal Court
Diana Tsoodle-Nelson, MSW, NMHU, FVSSW graduate

**Statement Supporting the
Native American Social Work Institute
Advisory/Development Committee**

Good afternoon Chairwoman Louis and Committee Members:

Dr. Blanchard has presented on the importance of establishing the Native American Social Work Institute at New Mexico Highlands University. I will address the dire need for individuals pursuing a social work degree to also become educated on Native American Social Work.

The establishment of a Native American Social Work Institute at New Mexico Highlands University will train both American Indians and non-Indians interested in working with tribes on the social, behavioral and mental health issues of American Indians. In conjunction with the social work principals, students will learn about the historical and current events that have impacted the lives of American Indians. Additionally, the curriculum will include education on the cultural beliefs and values of American Indians that impact their response to social services. Techniques on working with American Indians will also be an important aspect to the Native American Social Work Institute curriculum.

The New Mexico Highlands University is well suited for the Native American Social Work Institute as the University has the capacity to offer this curriculum to undergraduate and graduate students on the main campus, off campus sites and through on-line learning. This affords access to many tribal workers interested in pursuing a social work degree with an emphasis on Native American Social Work. Presently, New Mexico Highlands University has the largest number of Native American students pursuing a degree in social work in the State of New Mexico. Additionally, students educated on Native American Social Work will provide well-trained and qualified individuals available to work for tribes and increase the quality of social work practice in the State of New Mexico. An additional benefit will be for the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department who will benefit from trained graduates in Native American social work practice.

The tribes in New Mexico (Apaches, Navajo, and Pueblos) are challenged with the same social and health issues as the rest of our Nation. An area of great concern is child welfare. Presently, the majority of tribes in New Mexico do not have licensed social workers serving their communities. Existing tribal personnel are dedicated, yet express the need for university courses that will enhance their knowledge of social work practice. Some tribes have licensed social workers who diligently work with the New Mexico Indian Child Welfare Consortium to develop child welfare policies which tribe may adopt and incorporate into the tribe's social work programs. Additionally, the Consortium in collaboration with the NM Children, Youth and Families Department, Casey Foundation, the National Indian Child Welfare Association and other collaborators, provide training for all the tribal child welfare workers. Unfortunately, this effort needs support by establishing a university degree curriculum that offers education on Native American Social Work.

**Statement Supporting the
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The Native American Social Work Institute Advisory/Development Committee request the support and endorsement of the Interim Indian Affairs Committee and the New Mexico Legislative Finance to support the introduction of a bill in the upcoming 2019 Legislative Session to establish the Native American Social Work Institute within the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work, New Mexico Highlands University. Thank you for allowing us to present before your committee and solicit your support for establishment of a Native American Social Work Institute at New Mexico Highlands University.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth S. Duran, MSW, MPH

Pueblo of Pojoaque

Director, Family and Children's Services Department

Form Governor and Lifetime Council Member of the Pueblo of Pojoaque



ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

Officers:
E. Paul Torres, Chairman
Governor Val Panteah, Sr., Vice Chair
Governor J. Michael Chavarria, Secretary

RESOLUTION

ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

RESOLUTION NO. APCG 2017-06

ENDORSEMENT TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE AMERICAN SOCIAL WORK STUDIES PROGRAM AT NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

Acoma

Cochiti

Isleta

Jemez

Laguna

Nambe

Ohkay Owingeh

Picuris

Pojoaque

Sandia

San Felipe

San Ildefonso

Santa Ana

Santa Clara

Santo Domingo

Taos

Tesuque

Ysleta Del Sur

Zia

Zuni

WHEREAS, the All Pueblo Council of Governors (“APCG”) is comprised of the Pueblos of Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Pojoaque, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Sandia, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, Zia and Zuni, and one pueblo in Texas, Ysleta del Sur, each having the sovereign authority to govern their own affairs;

WHEREAS, the purpose of the All Pueblo Council of Governors is to advocate, foster, protect, and encourage the social, cultural and traditional well-being of the Pueblo Nations; and,

WHEREAS, through their inherent and sovereign rights, the All Pueblo Council of Governors will promote the language, health, economic, and educational advancement of all Pueblo people; and

WHEREAS, the Apache, Navajo and Pueblo people have overcome a long history of imposition of policies and laws purposefully conceived to dismantle the family and community systems and institutions nurturing families, children and community wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations have exercised their sovereign right in this time of self-determination to develop policies and laws to reverse the destructive and long term damaging effects of these historic policies and laws, a testament to their resilience, and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, the founding of the Facundo Valdez of School of Social Work at Highlands University with a mission to focus on Hispanic/Latino and Native American social work education held great promise and produced countless numbers of Native American social workers that have contributed in significant ways; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, through a legislative initiative, the School responded to its pledge to focus on Hispanic/Latino social work education establishing a bilingual and bicultural sequence of courses to meet core graduation requirements to strengthen the preparation of students to work with the people of Hispanic/Latino rural and urban communities; and

WHEREAS, in the 2015 New Mexico legislative session, the legislature endorsed a similar effort to establish a Native American Social Work Program at Highlands University Social Work and was supported by former Highlands University President James Fries collectively expressing the need for a specific mission focused on the unique needs of Native American people and their tribal communities as a result of the evolving complexities, socially, culturally and legally; and

WHEREAS, a Native American Social Work Program Advisory and Development Committee comprised of social work, psychology, and education practitioners representing the Apache, Navajo, Pueblo nations and the urban Indian populations has been established to develop curriculum focused on Native American community needs while meeting core graduation requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Native American Social Work Program at the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work would constitute the nation's first effort by a School of Social Work to respond in a programmatic way to Native American social work education.

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, the All Pueblo Council of Governors fully endorse the concept of establishing a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University to respond to the growing complexities of issues and challenges facing tribal communities and the State of New Mexico.

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned officials of the All Pueblo Council of Governors hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. APCG 2017-06 was considered and adopted at a duly called council meeting held on the 22nd day of May 2017, and at which time a quorum was present and the same was approved by a vote of 16 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstain, and 4 absent.

ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

By: 
APCG Chairman E. Paul Torres

ATTEST:


Governor J. Michael Chavarria, APCG Secretary

Malcolm Montoya
Governor

Lawrence Gutierrez
Lt. Governor



(505) 867-3317
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www.sandiapueblo.nsn.us

**TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE AMERICAN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
AT NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY,
FACUNDO VALDEZ SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Resolution 2017 - 100

At a duly called meeting, the Pueblo of Sandia Tribal Council ("Council") passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Pueblo of Sandia ("Pueblo") is governed by a Council made up of appointed representatives who act in accordance with the custom and tradition, and;

WHEREAS, the Council is the governing body of the Pueblo and is empowered to act in the best interest and well-being of the Sandia people, and is charged with the duty of protecting the health, security, and general welfare of the Pueblo, and;

WHEREAS, the Council is the ultimate authority to negotiate permits, contracts, and official documents on behalf of the community, and;

WHEREAS, the Apache, Dine', and Pueblo people have strived over centuries to exercise their sovereign right to assure appropriate response to the needs of the people. The struggle of Native people throughout the county to end the destructive and long-term damaging effects of the nation's assimilationist policy and to provide an appropriate education to their people is legendary and testament to the significance of education in tribal thought. The pan-tribal ethos that 'the people shall continue' propels the effort to establish a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work, and;

WHEREAS, at the School's founding in 1974 a mission was established to focus on Hispanic/Latino and Native American social work education. In 2005 through a legislative initiative the School responded to its pledge to focus on Hispanic/Latino social work education by establishing a Bilingual/Bicultural sequence of courses that meet core graduation requirements. The courses comprising the sequence prepare students to work with people of Hispanic/Latino rural and urban communities and;

WHEREAS, in the 2015 New Mexico regular legislative session identical bills to establish a Native American Social Work Studies Institute at Highlands University School of Social Work was introduced in the House and Senate by Representative Roger Madalena and Senator Benny Shendo, Jr. respectively. The bill was supported by former Highlands University President James Fries who gave it priority status in an amendment to the University's budget request and the assistance of the University's lobbyist Max Baca to work on the effort, and;

WHEREAS, in the 2015 New Mexico legislative session the bill was among the ten funding priorities of the Legislative Native Coalition and received recommendation to move forward from requisite committees of both chambers with the exception of the Senate Finance Committee. The Native Coalition's budget request for \$1,000,000 was reduced to \$700,000 and as a result the social work educational initiative (\$120,000) was not funded, and;

WHEREAS, a Native American Social Work Program Advisory/Development Committee comprised of social work, psychology, and educational practitioners has been established to develop curriculum for a Native American social work sequence of courses that responds to community needs and meets core graduation requirements. The committee includes practitioners from Apache, Dine', and Pueblo tribal programs and off-reservation programs serving Bernalillo County residents from almost four hundred different out-of-state tribes, and;

WHEREAS, the Native people of New Mexico are determined to maintain pressure on the School and the University to respond to its pledge to focus on Native American social work education. Social work practice in Native communities is complex and requires knowledgeable and skilled practitioners who can appropriately respond to community need within the context of locally indigenous mores and norms in a complexly and often contested milieu, and;

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Native American Social Work Program at the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work would constitute the Nation's first effort by a school of social work to respond in a programmatic way to Native American social work education. The absence of Native American social work programs in any of the schools in the country not only denies essential education to students who will work in Native communities but also the opportunity for Native practitioners to bring the expert knowledge and experience of their practice to the work of academia. The absence of opportunity effectively denies Native people a voice at the table of knowledge development.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Tribal Council of the Pueblo of Sandia supports the establishment of a Native American Social Work Program at New Mexico Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work and requests a faithful response to the School's founding mission to focus on Native American social work education.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Highlands University, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work administration work jointly with the Native American Social Work Advisory/Development Committee in its work to develop a sequence of courses that meet core graduation requirements.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Highlands University appropriates \$10,000 to support the work of the Native American Social Work Advisory/Development Committee.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was considered and adopted at a duly called meeting of the Pueblo of Sandia tribal council on this 31st day of May 2017 at which time a quorum was present with 8 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3 abstaining.

Malcolm Montoya
Governor

ATTESTED:

Sharon Parkman
Secretary

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member

Gilbert J. Chavez
Council Member

Daniel Bryan
Council Member

[Signature]
Council Member



NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

A Place for Individual Excellence

November 9, 2017

Mr. E. Paul Torres, Chairman
All Pueblo Council of Governors
2401 12th Street, N.W. Suite 2145
Albuquerque New Mexico 87104

Dear Mr. Torres:

I am writing in full and unequivocal support of Resolution APCG 2017-06 titled Endorsement to Establish a Native American Social Work Studies Program at New Mexico Highlands University, which was signed by the APCG on May 22, 2017.

For many years, Highlands University has operated an excellent and fully accredited program in social work and the program's reputation is well known throughout the state, region, and beyond. In addition, our commitment to serve all citizens of New Mexico, particularly those who face daunting social, economic, health, and other challenges is embodied in our Mission Statement. We take that mission seriously each and every day.

For these reasons, among others, we are very interested in establishing a Native American Social Work Program at Highlands. It is my hope that the fully developed program will assist tribal peoples in New Mexico, starting with Pueblo Peoples, and that our association with the Pueblos will enrich and strengthen our program.

I look forward to future discussions and the development of this program of study.

Sincerely,

Sam Minner, Ph.D.
President, NMHU

cc: Dr. Roxanne Gonzales, NMHU Provost
Dr. Cristina Duran, Dean, Facundo Valdez School of Social Work
Dr. Regis Pecos, Co-Director of the Leadership Institute at Santa Fe Indian School
✓ Dr. Evelyn Blanchard, Project Coordinator



NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

A Place for Individual Excellence

February 21, 2018

Barbara Damron, Ph.D., Secretary
New Mexico Department of Higher Education
2044 Galisteo St. – Suite 4
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-2100

Dear Secretary Damron:

I am joined by Dr. Roxane Gonzales-Walker, Provost/Academic Affairs and Dr. Cristina Durán, Dean of the University's Facundo Valdez School of Social Work to request your support to retain funding in HB 2 to establish the Native American Social Work Studies Institute (NASWSI).

At its founding forty-four years ago the School's mission statement pledged focus on Hispanic/Latino and Native American social work education. In 2005 the Legislature appropriated funds to establish the Bilingual/Bicultural Clinical Practice Concentration which has made it possible to provide students with a curriculum of courses that prepares them for work in Hispanic/Latino communities. The concentration's success is evidenced by the number of graduates of this program who are prepared to work with Spanish speaking clients, and partnerships with agencies and communities throughout the state who seek out our graduates confident of their abilities and knowledge. Funding for the NASWSI opens the way for the School to fulfill its mission and to set a course to develop the Native American Clinical Practice Concentration in response to calls from tribal leadership and the Native social work community for graduates prepared to address the complex issues in today's tribal societies. The program will mark the nation's first effort in any school of social work to establish a Native American program. The School looks forward to this pioneering endeavor to prepare students for work in tribal communities and to position itself in a leadership role in the development of Native social work theory and practice.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sam Minner
President

Dr. Roxanne Gonzales
Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Cristina Duran
Dean of the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work

