



Aloha e everyone and welcome to April 2004 of Kaleo O Nani Newsletter!

I love wolves. In some ways they remind me of the diversity in creators thinking. My grandfather was fond of telling me, "Nani girl, your character will be measured by how you treat all creatures, big and small, animal and human." The wolf is a misunderstood creature and thus feared by man. Unfortunately that fear often leads to wanton destruction of these rather shy creatures. Isn't it ironic that humans often fear and misunderstand Diversity so they shy away, seek to ridicule, bad Mouth or refuse to take advantage of educational opportunities that could build bridges of hope. Our Newsletter is about inspiring hope, tenacity, focus, And living the golden rule. As always take what you need and discard the rest.



Enjoy, Nani

First Annual Diversity Conference at Glasgow, Montana successful thanks to all participants and Women's Resource Center. The participants made The day enjoyable by, listening with the intent to Learn, catching each other doing things right, sharing cultural ideas, working as teams, wearing leg Weights to understand special needs better, speaking eloquently during class participation scenarios. We were honored to have Mr. Larry Wetsin speak to us on local Indian people, and Mr. Neil Taylor who was very nice to offer examples or explanations on different tribal customs. The entire group worked a tirelessly 10 hours and earned their 1 cr. Certificate at no charge from Ft. Peck Community College. Donna Buckles, Distance Learning Specialist from the college was on hand to take necessary applications and information from each student. This Annual Diversity Fundraiser Conference will be held in Glasgow next year Friday April 1, 2005.

IRIS ALLRUNNER WINS UNIVERSITY OF LIFE & HOPE LITTLE BROWN

PENNY AWARD FOR 2003.

Iris Allrunner, Sioux grandmother from Wolf Point, Montana won this year's award. Her message reads: "For your courage in improving the lives of Native American Children and your persistent and tenacious stand on issues that make a positive difference."

Congratulations Iris, you have won because you are worthy. I am so proud of you. Nani

Did you know?

Blueberries: are the best fruit antioxidants in the fruit food chain. According to research from Rutgers University" blueberries are rich in tannins, which coat the bacteria (in UTI) blocking it from adhering to the walls of the urinary tract and multiplying." According to Amy R. Howell, Ph.D. lead researcher, if you feel a UTI coming on, eat at least one half cup of blueberries and you should be fine the next day. Better yet, snack on a handful every day for preventive care.

Yogurt: When you take anti-biotics it is a good idea to eat live culture yogurt as they replace the friendly bacteria that keep the bad ones from multiplying. Michael Zemet Ph.D. director of the Nutrition Institute at the U of Tennessee says," eating yogurt tells your body to burn excess fat faster." And eating yogurt can also prevent bloating and other types of stomach pain. At least one cup of "live and active culture" a day or acidophilus supplements work as well.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

If you worked 238 days out of the year times 10 hours(2380 hours yr.) average for small business owners you would need to make \$10.50 an hour to earn \$25K per year and \$21.00 an hour to make 50K a year. Not so bad when you break it down. To keep from being overwhelmed break things down so you can "see" the doable nature of life.

Point of action: What are you spending your time doing? Make a list and see if you are productive during the day or merely running in place?

Point to Ponder: The world's greatest teachers did not etch their words in books. It is as if they knew people would just bicker, split hairs and sometimes move the words around to get their own way. When you

unleash the power within you realize “you are the book” because everything is written inside. Make sense!

Point of Action: What will you do to unleash the power within? Hint: by giving first you are rewarded ten times over. Email and tell me what you think.

MASTERING THE ART OF LIVING

By Nani Aki Linder

All humans have the innate ability to change but, we must make the conscious choice to change. It is not an automatic skill. It takes work, choices and tenacity. Racism is a learned trait. Superior attitudes are learned. A feeling of inferiority is an accepted attitude.

Problems arise often when we pre-judge for example; “your brother never made it so you might as well quite now.” Or, you are only a stupid woman, slob, ignorant, whatever! No where on any of our job descriptions is there a space for, “knows the future, qualified to be judge, jury and enforcer!” If creator God doesn’t stand up in heaven and say, “well let me see, you two will be losers, those 5 will be brilliant, lets give you an extra dose of ugly or stupid, you and you will be drug addicts or alcoholics, 14 thousand will be liars, a million will be in poverty”. We are all born with the same clean slate, capabilities, and love. It is our environment, our intent, our choices, what we learn that mold us into what we become.

Being poor doesn’t mean you have to stay poor, many of the wealthiest people alive started out poor. They applied strength of will, tenacity, persistence and refused to quit when the going got tough. They learned to fish and have it their way.

Here is a tip that might help. Whenever a negative “I don’t want” enters your thinking, replace it immediately with what you do want and let your sub-conscious mind move you towards attaining that which you do want. In my new children’s book, Be A Star I have two powerful statements for the children to learn as a way of life so they might THRIVE.

I can be what I will to be! Do not confuse it with “I can be what I will be!” The first is filled with possibilities of ones choice, the second is acceptance of where they are. The sentence difference is subtle but one is powerful in the positive the other in the negative. Careful!

The second is a simple prayer: **“I’m whole, perfect, strong, powerful, loving, harmonious & happy!”** This is one of those mysteries of life because this is as we are at birth and how creator sees us. It is the essence of truth that keeps our body, mind and spirit in tact and loving. This simple function of purity of thought

releases endorphins and serotonin and all the healing tools our cells need to thrive and keep us healthy. We are all born with this gift; it is only man that pollutes these attributes with negative attitudes. Think about it! Which of these words are not true or doable? Which judges as not worthy? When you affirm this for yourself do it as well for everyone in your family, friends and foes alike. When we teach this to our children as an automatic way of life we promote and enhance hope, and hope is the greatest gift one can bring to the life of others and indeed your own.

Successful living always depends on intent and purity of thought to do no harm as you go about your life's journey. All things begin with choices and then work. Nothing is automatic. Seeing your life as half full or half empty is a choice. One is on survive mode, the other thrive. Pick one!

Malama Pono, Nani

FEATURE ARTICLE PART 2

Riveting conclusion from Christine Rose. Read with the intent to understand and see through the eyes of others. Mahalo Christine

Untangling the Web of Racism in the School Yard: When Civil Rights Do Not Apply Part 2 By Christine Rose

Although for the better part of my life I was unaware of it, I came into this world with many privileges. I have never had to deal with being turned down for housing because of assumptions about my behavior, or for a job because it was assumed I was not qualified solely because of my race or ethnicity. I can live where I want, anywhere in the country, and be surrounded by others that resemble me. Testing in schools reflects my culture and knowledge base so I am assured my children are being tested fairly. When I walk into a store, it is not automatically assumed I am going to steal. My morals and values are not judged by the color of my skin. And even with the best of intentions, even while feeling I am as unbiased as I could be, there are certain life experiences that passed me by that prohibited my understanding of what its like to be a person of color.

Until my path led me to do the work I do now, I never even considered I possessed any privileges. How could I? I could never have imagined the kinds of things that some people have to face. My own experiences led me to believe that life is the same for everyone. I had always assumed this was truly the Land of the Free." My patriotism was unchallenged; my belief in what this country stands for was firm. In fact, I do still believe that everything this country is supposed to stand for is correct, but all too often now I see another side of life and I know that for many people "Justice for All" is an empty phrase.

I have always had a theory that life is like one of those electronic walkways in airports; we think we are walking, but an unseen path beneath our feet is taking us where we need to go. And my path has taken me deeper into Indian Country than I could ever have imagined. Through a series of events, I have come in contact with many people whose children are suffering extreme situations of racism in the schools on and off reservations, throughout the country.

Iris All Runner in Wolf Point, Montana was the first person to enter into my life at this particular fork in the road. Iris faced a racist school that had refused to budge in their tactics, some so archaic it is hard to imagine they had not been banished decades, even centuries ago. It was a school with an 80% Native student population and a completely white administration. The school board was white but for one Native man who had a very hard time making his voice heard. There was absolutely no cultural understanding between staff and students and the results were disastrous. Parents felt intimidated by the staff and teachers, there were no cultural references that indicated that this school was attended by Native students, no classes that reflected Native culture, no library books about Native people, history or culture, none of the curriculum focused on the history of Native people and began with the arrival of Columbus, who was lauded as a hero. With Columbus responsible for the death of millions of Native people, and his arrival heralding the demise of an entire civilization as it had been known up to that point, the majority of the students had a distinctly different perspective than was being taught.

Beyond that, discipline techniques that were being employed by the school were reminiscent of the old boarding schools where assimilation of Indian children was imposed by a heavy hand. The Wolf Point School earned the national reputation of being one of the most awful places to have sent one's children before Iris put out a call to bring it to a halt and change is still slow in coming. Is it possible to imagine that a 7 year old child was placed in a padded cell for letting her foot wander beyond the parameter of her desk? Can you even consider that a teacher molested young students, both male and female, and was supported by the school administration?

I would like to say that this is unusual but the many situations I have encountered and many people that I have met, show me that it is far more prevalent than one would imagine.

We hear about the Indian sports logo issue and so many people say, "But its an honor," or "Its only meant in fun." But when one looks at a line-up of all the emblems for sports teams, it is glaringly apparent that Native American Indians are the only humans represented as mascots, which are sort of like pets. Why is that? Well, it is partially from the belief that Native people have disappeared and they are seen as almost mythological rather than as People who continue to live among us today. But it is also a national, though subliminal, manifestation of the stereotypical ideas of Indian people. Many schools and teams have indeed changed their name in recognizing that having a team of people who are pretending to be another race is kind of like having a team called The African Americans or The Asians. It doesn't make any sense.

Many may think that the mascot is a small issue considering the other issues facing Native people, such as teen suicide, higher rates of alcoholism and drug abuse, diabetes and heart disease, government housing with black mold and often no heat and unclean water. Yes, these issues are extremely important but if the country barely recognizes that Native people are real and respectable by the continued use of sports names and mascots, how can they comprehend the greater issues that face reservation communities?

And where do these greater issues originate? Many people of privilege do believe that Justice For All actually means something, and it can be unfathomable as to why conditions exist on some of the reservations as they do. I have been asked more than once, "Why don't they get off the reservations and get a job like everyone else?" This certainly seems an easy enough question.

But it again denies that Native culture is real and thriving, and for that to continue, many Native people choose to remain among their own people. And while it isn't true for all Native people, many who leave the reservations can become part of that enormous melting pot that this country is famous for, where practicing their culture becomes a quiet affair, or where their children may become embarrassed about their customs and culture, and begin to assimilate.

In Peggy Macintoshes article entitled "The Invisible Knapsack", she states, "my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us". It is important for non-native people to recognize that Indians did not immigrate here, they liked it the way it was, with their own sophisticated societies that thrived before the arrival of the Europeans.

Native cultures do continue to exist, and the differences between them and the dominant culture are awesome. In fact, the value of accumulating a lot of "stuff" is not a value to be found in almost any Native culture. Some Native cultures communicate more in non-verbal than verbal ways and as Columbus found out, some tribes were more loving and giving in their approaches to others. This is still true with many traditional Native people, whose children do not react well to discipline. Native children in schools are sometimes treated harshly because they may respond differently to questions, often choose to keep their hair long for traditional reasons, and are frequently misunderstood because they may not be willing to share their culture with outsiders. In many tribes, children are taught to respond slowly and thoughtfully to questions while the children of the dominant culture are often taught to learn by rote and to respond quickly.

White teachers often do not understand why Native children take so long to answer a question. The fact that Native cultures can be so different from the dominant culture is one of the greatest causes of all the problems that Native children face in school because teachers in the dominant culture do not recognize or understand behavior that is different from their own norm. I have heard from so many Native parents that their children, well behaved at home, have been accused of belligerence, ignoring the teacher, procrastinating, having learning disabilities or that their children, who they know to be bright, should

expect to fail.

When teachers of the dominant culture don't recognize that Native children are behaving normally according to their own culture, disaster occurs. The teachers may be perceived by the Native parents to be racist because the behavior a teacher may be complaining about seems normal to the parents. The teacher doesn't have a clue that their attempts to "fix" the child may be seen as trying to assimilate Native children. When the teacher recommends behavior modification such as discipline or medication to make the children fit their own idea of the norm, which is to make Native children behave like white children, the parents may think their children are being treated unfairly because they don't see the same behavioral problems at home. If a teacher says, "He won't look at me when I am speaking to him," they may not know that eye contact in some cultures is a sign of disrespect.

Teachers who are unfamiliar with Native cultures can completely misinterpret the behavior of their students. This is a culture clash where people who are speaking the same language actually don't understand what the other is saying because of their own cultural references. When a child who responds in a culturally appropriate manner is under attack for misbehaving, it can cause confusion and resentment in the child. Feeling misunderstood and inherently un-liked, he is likely to exhibit different behavior than his parents are used to seeing from him. In the end, the parents can't understand what the problem is and the teacher labels the child as a trouble-maker.

Because the Civil Rights Movement did not change the perception of Native people and the stereotypes of times gone by, racism has been allowed to exist and this mistreatment is reflected in the way Indian students are targeted in schools.

Many stories of teachers berating Indian students, and turning a blind eye to white students who do the same as well as endless accounts of bullying have come across my desk with examples as bad as:

An 11 year Lakota old boy who was thrown in a trash bin by students who told him he couldn't come out until he stunk like an Indian.

The same boy who was jumped and painted brown by high school students as he walked home from school and was taunted as a "gay Indian."

A 14 year old Native girl who was raped by her white teacher and told she would die if she told. When she reported the incident, the school tried to protect the teacher. In another school, eighteen Native girls have given accounts to their guidance counselor of sexual harassment by a white teacher who was suspended last year for the same. These new complaints are not being investigated by the school and he is still teaching in the same school today.

A Dakota boy was knocked down and whipped on the playground by white classmates. He went to the nurse and was told to lie down for a while. The school never notified his mother, who only found out by seeing the deep welts

on his back days later. The boys who whipped him were not reprimanded until the mother sued the school.

Young Native children in South Dakota are arrested at school and brought to Detention Homes or even prisons. Often, the school does not alert the parents, who only find out when the child does not return home on the school bus. The parents have to fight, sometimes for years, to get their children back and often, the treatment of the child in these detention homes or prisons is so severe they suffer irreparable emotional damage. The offenses are often unjustified or are minor offenses such as talking back to a teacher or pushing in the lunch line.

There are endless stories across the country of children being teased by being called the names of the school team or mascot, such as Redskin. Is such treatment even imaginable towards a child of any other race? Yet it is considered "all in fun."

A Pep Rally was held at a Minnesota school for an upcoming game with a team called the Indians. At the rally, teachers dressed up as cowboys and Indians. The "cowboys" pulled out guns and aimed at the Indians and told them to go back to the reservation. After the Pep Rally, just outside the school building, Indian boys were assaulted by white students.

A young Tulelip girl worked to have the "tomahawk chop" removed from her high school football teams "pep" activities. The team uses an Indian name. When she was successful, she was told by white students that she would be raped and killed, her cousin was beat up, they taunted her with "Hiya ya ya" whenever she passed by, and ultimately she had to leave the school. She states that she could never go to another game or she would be in "big trouble." All in fun?

A father complains that his son is so harassed, he is turning away from his culture and "becoming white before my very eyes." His son is so embarrassed at being Indian, his father must drop him off a block from school in the mornings.

Multitudes of children are placed on Ritalin or other similar drugs to cure them of the learning disabilities that most often do not exist but are only misunderstood cultural responses.

There are so many stories of mothers afraid to complain about their schools for fear of having their children removed by Social Services. Native parents live in constant fear that if they step out of line, their children will be taken from them. In Montana, the Native population is about 6%. The amount of adopted children there who are Native is 33%. In Denver, Native infants are taken from their birth mothers sometimes even without consulting the mother before giving the child away for adoption. And in Iowa an investigation will soon be underway as to the reasons so many Native children are adopted out to white families, which is against the Indian Child Welfare Act, that states Indian children should be placed within the tribe.

Their removal is no different than when children were forced to attend the Indian Boarding Schools. There they were often abused as a way of making the children

abandon their culture. Language was forbidden, traditional clothing replaced, hair cut, until the child was stripped of his identity, which in turn was responsible for the demoralization of the tribes, whose communities were left devastated by the absence of their children's laughter. The removal of children by Social Services for bogus reasons is no different today. No other group of people must fear the removal of their children, who carry the torch of their culture into the future. When the children are removed and raised in white families, they can lose their sense of self and have very high rates of suicide. A piece of the culture is lost with every child who is removed from their home or tribe.

In schools, Native children are often told by teachers that they will fail anyway, so they might as well quit school. Statistics in many schools show a high Native population, anywhere from 30-80% in elementary schools but less than 6% in high school. These children are routinely forced out of schools. They are forced out and leave their self-esteem behind. They have been called Redskin, they have been humiliated for their learning styles, their culture has been mocked, they have been treated unjustly in so many cases, and it all goes unheard. The papers won't print it, the news programs won't cover it. The excuses run from, "The Native population is too small so there aren't any ratings in it," to the real truth, "No one cares."

Is this a hopeless situation? To many Native parents, the answer sure feels like Yes. But it isn't.

When calls come in about discriminatory situations, there is usually one strong person who isn't afraid to make a lot of noise and demands that their voices be heard. In Wolf Point, that voice came from Iris All Runner, and in other Native communities where change has come there has always been one person who took the lead. Certain government agencies, such as the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Justice have been called in to help clean up the situations. But there are endless stories like these and government agencies can and will only do so much.

Change needs to begin with each person. We all need to understand that until we walk a mile in another person's moccasins we cannot begin to understand their life's experiences. We need to realize that school pow wows put on by white teachers embarrass Native children because of their inaccuracies. Team names and mascots mock the heritage of Native people. Native students need to see their history and heroes reflected in the curriculum. Pride and interest will be instilled in them when they see themselves reflected in their studies.

Teachers who try to use methods that are resonant with the heavy-handed discipline techniques of the past find they will not be effective with Native children, or even many sensitive children of the dominant society. A gentle and loving approach, a respectful approach, an approach that serves to encourage Native children rather than mistreat them is going to be effective in lowering drop out rates.

In education, each child's cultural differences and learning styles must be recognized and respected, regardless of whether we understand it or approve of

it. Multi-cultural education must begin to include Native Cultural Awareness and teachers must be required to attend courses to help them understand the children they are teaching. This must be mandated in areas with large Native populations and yet is equally important in places where the Native population is less visible. We need to teach all children to respect each other's cultural differences and understand that what is right for one is not necessarily right for all. We must see that an expression such as Land of the Free and Justice for All does not reflect truth for all people in this country and we must be sensitive to what we don't understand. And for those of us who were born with white privilege, we must recognize that privilege comes with a responsibility to see that all people are treated equally or we are not doing our part to further the American Dream.

Christine Rose is the founder of Students and Teachers Against Racism, a small organization dedicated to removing racism against Native Americans in education. She is the author of *The Tears of Strangers Are Only Water*, published by the University of Virginia Law Review as well as many other articles for newspapers throughout the country. The Southern Poverty Law Center published an article regarding STAR's efforts in the summer of 2003 and she was consulted for Inside Edition's television program on Bullying. Through her efforts, The US Commission on Civil Rights issued their resolution against Indian team names and mascots and her work prompted State Boards of Education to issue similar resolutions. Currently, she is investigating racism against Native people in schools in more than ten states. Visit the STAR website at www.racismagainstindians.org

The Final Word: Christine's article is important. She writes about serious issues that somewhere in America as I write another Indian child is experiencing. It just makes my heart limp to visualize the horror many face. Those who see and do nothing consent with their silence. Those who know and say nothing consent by their silence. Now that you know, what positive steps will you take to help in your area or the next time you see an injustice? Will you step up to the plate and drop a quarter and call or write a letter? Will you share food, shelter or clothing with those in need? It only takes a minute to do a good deed and that can make the difference in whether another human being survives or thrives. I read today that when we call someone else for an opinion we are searching for an accomplice. Interesting thought!

In the sacred time of sunrise and sunset, lift your thoughts and petitions to Creator and lets pray for peace, happiness, justice and health for all.

For more information contact me, 509-467-7714 or nani@universityoflife.info, in wolf point or poplar contact Theresa Knoble or myself at Box 1032, Wolf Point Montana

Next month's guest writer is Dr. Gene Adams, PH.D all the way from the outback of Australia. Be prepared for an exciting read. Need a keynote,

Diversity, Leadership, spirit of hope health and wellness or communication skills speaker? E-mail me Nani@universityoflife.info

University Of Life Spring-Summer Schedule

1. Frassati School of Leadership Diversity Conference is **rescheduled**, Spokane, Washington June 2004. Call Michael or Rachael Muglia for reservations and information. 509-487-5323. Nani Linder trains the staff for Frassati and they teach exclusively "Be A Star" and " University Of Life Spirit Of Hope Cross Cultural Leadership" as their curriculum. Certificate available for this conference.
2. Nani will be teaching Be A Star series with the possibility of teaming with another teacher. "Raven's Voice" in **May 20-21, 2004**, at Ft. Peck Community college. Roxanne Bighorn and Theresa Knoble are handling the details of this conference. 1 cr. available.
3. Spirit of Hope conference Wolf Point, Montana **May 22, 2004**, details in May newsletter. This addresses health and wellness issue and natural possibilities of regeneration. It is our belief that the body itself is the miracle when you feed it proper nutrition. WRC fundraiser, 1 cr. Certificate. Theresa Knoble is contact person and coordinator
4. July I will be in Hawaii
5. June I will be in Sedona Az. and Spokane, Wa.
6. August 3 conferences scheduled details to be announced in next month's news letter.

A hui hou dear hearts until next month May 10, 2004

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