



IAIA ALUMNI

SUMMER 2017

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POEMS LAYLI LONG SOLDIER

IN MARCH, GRAYWOLF PRESS PUBLISHED WHEREAS, THE FIRST BOOK OF POETRY BY LAYLI LONG SOLDIER '09 (OGLALA LAKOTA). ALSO IN MARCH, SANTEE FRAZIER '06 (CHEROKEE) EDITED THE TRIBAL COLLEGE JOURNAL - STUDENT EDITION, JUDGING THE MAGAZINE'S CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION. IN MARCH AND APRIL, ANTHONY LOVATO '78 (KEWA), CRAIG DAN GOSEYUN '12 (SAN CARLOS APACHE), FRITZ CASUSE '96 (DINÉ), AND JOHN HAGEN '11 (ALEUT/INUPIAO) PARTICIPATED AS FELLOWS IN IAIA'S ARITST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM. THEY JOIN A LONG LIST OF ALUMNI WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE MONTH-LONG RESIDENCIES SINCE THE PROGRAM'S INCEPTION IN 2015. EARLIER THIS YEAR, NANCY FIELDS '06 (LUMBEE) WAS NAMED THE DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHEAST AMERICAN INDIAN IN PEMBROKE, NORTH CAROLINA. IN MAY, LINDA LOMAHAFTEWA '65 (HOPI/CHOCTAW) RETIRED AFTER TEACHING AT IAIA SINCE 1976. MONTY LITTLE '15 (DINÉ) IS COMPLETING HIS SECOND YEAR AS A TULSA ARTIST FELLOW IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA. ALSO EARLIER THIS YEAR, CANNUPA HANSKA LUGER '11 (MANDAN/HIDATSA/ARIKARA) MADE NEWS BY DESIGNING "MIRROR SHIELDS" FOR USE IN THE NO DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE MOVEMENT. THE SHIELDS WERE MADE OUT OF VINYL AND MASONITE AND WERE USED TO SHOW POLICE WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE. IAIA HOSTED ITS FIRST ON-CAM-PUS ALUMNI DAY ON MAY 12TH FOR RETURNING ALUMNI AND THEIR FAMILIES. ALUMNA AND CURATOR OF DINÉ COLLEGE'S MUSEUM NONABAH SAM '05 (DINÉ/TESUQUE PUEBLO), GAVE A LECTURE AND ON HER EXPERIENCES AS A MUSEUM CURATOR AT A TRIBAL COLLEGE. FOLLOWING LUNCH, JAMISON CHAS BANKS '12 (SENECA/CAYUGA) GREETED ALUMNI GUESTS WITH A PRINTMAKING DEMONSTRATION, CREATING T-SHIRTS OF HIS CUSTOM DESIGN.

2017 ALUMNI COUNCIL ELECTION

THE ALUMNI COUNCIL IS HAVING AN ELECTION THIS AUGUST FOR FOUR OPEN SEATS. THE COUNCIL IS THE PRINCIPAL REPRESENTATIVE OF ALUMNI AND THE PRIMARY FORUM FOR THE EXCHANGE OF ALUMNI SENTIMENT. THE COUNCIL CONSISTS OF 7 MEMBERS WHO SERVE TWO-YEAR TERMS. GO TO WWW.IAIA.EDU/ALUMNI TO LEARN MORE AND FILL OUT A CANDIDACY FORM. THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT A CANDIDACY FORM IS JULY 21, 2016. THE ALUMNI COUNCIL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD FROM AUGUST 3 TO AUGUST 29.

THE FIRST ALUMNI COUNCIL ELECTION WAS HELD IN 2014—THIS WILL BE THE THIRD COUNCIL ELECTION. THE COUNCIL MEETS FOUR TIMES A YEAR, WITH COUNCILORS ATTENDING EITHER BY CONFERENCE CALL OR IN PERSON. COUNCILORS HAVE THE OPTION OF BEING REIMBURSED UP TO \$500 ANNUALLY FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES TO ATTEND MEETINGS.

THE THREE CONTINUING COUNCILORS ARE **KEVIN LOCKE** '13 (LEECH LAKE OJIBWE), **LINLEY LOGAN** '85 (SENECA) AND **ROSE SIMPSON** '07 (SANTA CLARA PUEBLO). OUTGOING COUNCILORS ARE **KARL DUNCAN** '09 (ARIKARA/MANDAN/HIDATSA/SAN CARLOS APACHE), **NANCY FIELDS** '06 (LUMBEE), **SELINA FARMER** '98 (CHEROKEE), AND **GEORGE GREENDEER** '86 (HO-CHUNK).

FRITZ CASUSE PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

In February, 2017, Fritz Casuse '96, was a visiting artist in IAIA's Artist-in-Residency program on the Santa Fe campus. Casuse had a studio space in the jewelry studio for three weeks and worked on a bolo tie in addition to assisting students with their own jewelry projects. He is Diné from Twin Lakes, New Mexico and graduated with an AFA in 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art from IAIA in 1996. Since IAIA, Casuse has concentrated on jewelry work, becoming a renowned jeweler, winning awards at the SWAIA Indian Market and other shows. In 2013, Casuse designed a line of jewelry for the home shopping company QVC. He regularly sells his work at the SWAIA market, the Heard Market, and other shows.

Why did you choose to study at IAIA?

I came to IAIA to be a sculptor. But then I took all these other classes, Karita's [Coffey] ceramics class. I wanted to learn painting, jewelry, to get the basics down.

Who are your artistic influences?

I've had so many. I want to create pieces that make people think.

I try to create clean pieces. I've learned the whole process of making jewelry. Now I use certain files that work well, I use three buffing compounds instead of nine. I learned a lot from Lane Coulter's class just by watching him work. I learned a lot by experimenting, seeing how I could get metal to do what I wanted, hammering it, bending it, trying things out. I still have things that didn't work out in my desk drawers. One of the things I learned was that it took twice as long to clean a piece of jewelry as it did to fabricate it.

What did you do after IAIA?

I took sculpture and jewelry classes at the Poeh Arts Center [in Pojoaque, New Mexico]. We were making tufa casted jewelry and at one point the instructor started asking *me* questions about how to get the result we wanted. That's where problem solving came in. After that class I took a chance and rented a studio from the Poeh for the summer to figure out why the metal didn't flow the way we wanted it to. I discovered it was the tufa material: it was too rough and it made the castings brittle. We had to get better quality tufa.

How would you define your jewelry style?

I call it "sculptural jewelry." I do a lot of hand-building and fabricating. There can be from twenty to fifty different techniques used in one piece. I look at shapes, and start with sketching a line, or sometimes I design with the metal itself.

How did you get into teaching?

I started in 2000 at the Poeh and taught there for seventeen years. I've found that students need to shadow what you're doing in order to learn from it. I also try to teach them about understanding the material. Talk to it. Metal is alive when you're working with it. It becomes a part of you.





How did you become a designer for the QVC Channel?

I was hesitant at first because some jewelers said it might ruin your career because the model is you design the pieces and the company makes hundreds of them to sell. And if your approach is about making one-of-a-kind pieces then that's a problem. But I figured I'd do something different: I'd create designs that I couldn't fabricate by hand. You have to understand, too, that the QVC audience is a totally different audience than your normal annual market audience. The pieces are more affordable. It's a different following. But after I did that work for QVC, people would come to shows wearing my QVC pieces. My goal was to make a few designs that were more affordable.

What is your advice for young Native artists?

When I was doing my residency [at IAIA], I liked working with the students who were also in the jewelry studio. They would come to me with questions about design or technical problems they were having. Sometimes, like my Poeh students, they would ask me about style. I would say, "I can't just find you a style. I'm going to get to know you and hopefully bring that out of you. If you like this certain style and in the end, it works for you, then ultimately it's a part of who you are. I'm not going to teach you Navajo jewelry—I'm going to teach you the basic techniques, then *you* will create *your* style."

I love it when people talk to me and we exchange ideas. I want them to feel like I do in the studio. It's a high when I finish a piece. Sometimes I can't even remember how I did it. I feel overwhelmed. It's a good feeling. We all go through hardships in life. My healing process is creating art. It's like rolling tobacco for a prayer smoke. Like releasing tension in a beautiful piece you create.

How is native jewelry evolving as an art form?

Although I didn't learn the Navajo language, I grew up around it, and my mother was strong in Navajo culture. And so I like the really traditional work, but I want more now, too. Twenty years from now, what I make will be considered traditional. But really, I would just like to have pushed things. Like [Charles] Loloma did. Push the envelope.



Layli Long Soldier (Oglala Lakota) has just published her first book of poetry, WHEREAS, with Graywolf Press this March. The book has already gained acclaim, with blurbs by Joy Harjo and Maggie Nelson. She has been profiled in the Santa Fe New Mexican's Pasatiempo, and has been a guest on the nationally syndicated radio show On Being. Long Soldier grew up in Fruitland, New Mexico, where she attended Farmington and Kirtland high schools near the Navajo Nation. But it wasn't until she attended IAIA that Long Soldier really found her educational calling. She earned her BFA in creative writing from IAIA in 2009. She maintains ties to her family home on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. For the epigraph of her book, she used a phrase from Arthur Sze, one of her creative writing professors at IAIA: "No word has any special hierarchy over any other."

Why was IAIA important for you?

At IAIA, the school had a native perspective so I could relax mentally and psychologically. I worked with Jon Davis, Arthur Sze, and Evelina Lucero in creative writing. I also studied painting with Norman Akers. I studied writing with visiting professors Mark Turcotte and Erika Wurth.

The epigraph for my book is a line from my class notes. I interpreted it as applying not only to the English language but also to native languages. The Chinese character for heart and mind is the same. When the mind is working, we can trust that the heart is engaged as well.

How did your book, WHEREAS, come about?

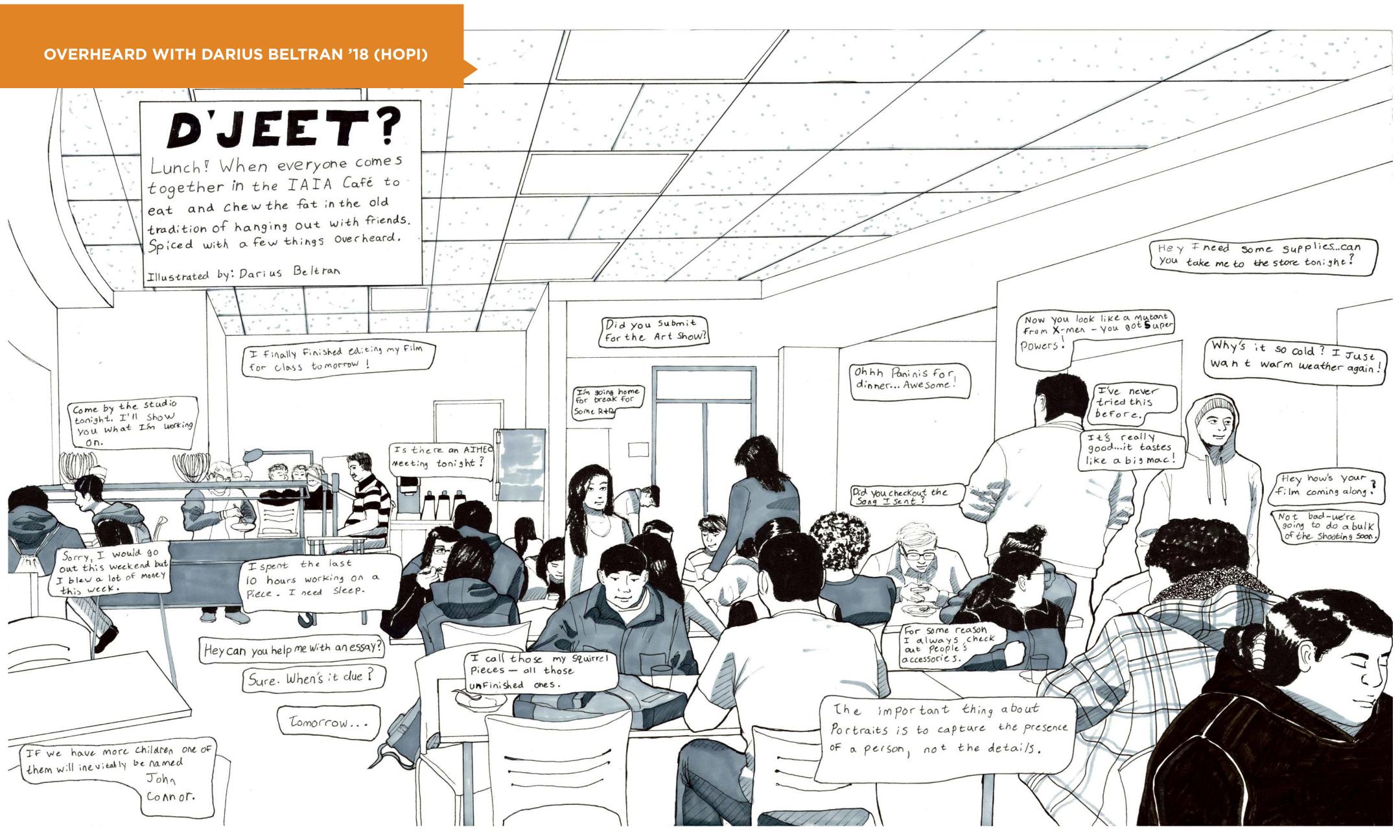
I took the language for the title from President Obama's apology to Native Americans. Obama's apology disappointed me and enraged me at the same time. Just personally, I wanted to say something. I started writing what would become WHEREAS in 2011. It took five to six years to write. In the first section, the oldest poem was written in 2009 at IAIA. I feel that most of the pieces in WHEREAS are examinations instead of parodies. Without action, an apology doesn't mean anything. It doesn't change anything. And it came with disclaimers at the end.

The Lakota language appears in quite a few poems, how do you incorporate the language?

The Lakota language came because I'm concerned with community and connection. Through Lakota I could put my concerns into structured thought. Lakota language was the best way to do that. For example, Wahpanica -American "material poverty" vs who we are as Lakota.

What interested you in the prose poem form?

I learned about Akira Akutagawa's Fools Life prose poems through Arthur Sze. Now, it's a form that suits me, it's a kind of poetic note taking. It allows the reader to unpack content, to do what they want to with that block. In other forms with line break, caesura, you're using deliberate punctuation. I'm telling them how to read it. (continued on page 12)



I'm setting the pace for them. The prose poem allows the reader to insert themselves more into the poem. Some of my friends might disagree, but that's how I see it.

What creative mindset were you in when you wrote WHEREAS?

I was tired on a very personal level. It was not about audience or marketing. I see poems as messages in a bottle. I don't know who will find it. Maybe no one will. But it needed to be written or said. I trusted that it would land in the right hands. At the end of the day you want to feel good about what you've done.

What is your next project?

I'm working on a show called "Mitakuye Oyasin" which translates to "We are all related" in Lakota. This is a show where we will explore the meaning of that phrase in the context of community. I'll be working with Mary and Clementine Bordeaux, sisters who are also IAIA alumni. Part of the exhibition will be a star quilt made of paper, copper wire, wood, laser cut materials. It will show at the Racing Magpie Gallery in Rapid City, South Dakota. It opens on June 21, 2017, the summer solstice.

What is your advice for young native writers?

Treat each poem or story like it's a gem, like it might be the only thing you write. (**)





JASON BEGAY FINDING YOUR AUDIENCE

President of the Native American
Journalists Association from 2015-2016.
He spoke with IAIA Alumni recently
about his experience as a journalist.

Why was IAIA important for you?

My first journalism job was an internship at the *Navajo Times* in the summer of 1995, right after my first year at IAIA. I'd never had a job before in my life. I didn't know what to expect and I didn't think I could do the job. I had a really bad stutter. The thought of talking to people to interview them scared me.

What is the state of Native American Journalism today?

It's as strong as it has been in the past. Social media has had both good and bad effects on the media, and is starting to affect rural reservations. This just means that more and more people have access to news sites. Mainstream news sites will never have the resources to cover Indian Country the way we would like, so that leaves it up to the tribes. The money part is where it gets tricky. We see this all over journalism. It's becoming tougher and tougher to recruit young native journalists. It's a hard sell, especially in Montana, where we have seven reservations and only one independent tribal newspaper—the other six newspapers are owned by the tribes. So [journalism] is not seen as a safe job prospect. But the opportunity is ripe for an entrepreneur to start a low-cost news service focused online. Right now it's a tough sell because of the overall image that media has in this political climate. But mainstream journalism is still really hungry for journalists of color, especially Native Americans.

How has it been teaching non-Native students at the University of Montana?

Overall, the University of Montana has a diversity of experience on campus. Growing up in Gallup everybody is Navajo, and I honestly thought everyone in the world was Navajo until I went to California

in ninth grade. And then I found out no one was Navajo. Wow! Here there is a diversity of thought and experience. It's so much more rich here than what I experienced in Gallup. But not all the students I teach understand the need for diversity, kind of like how I didn't understand it when I was in high school. I find presenting that perspective much more challenging now. I get asked to present on diversity in many other classes on campus. A lot of students don't understand why it's important to look for sources you wouldn't normally look for. For them, they're not looking for sources of color. And at first they're snotty about it, they think I'm being "politically correct." But then we have a conversation. I teach them that if you only talk to sources that naturally come into our daily lives and don't search them out, then you would only talk to black people about sports, or on black history month. And that's not doing our community justice. Some get it by the end, and some don't, but I enjoy the challenge of presenting that perspective to them.

What was it like to take student reporters to Standing Rock to cover the No DAPL movement?

The camp is about 30 miles south of Bismark, North Dakota, just north of the Standing Rock Sioux reservation. This whole thing had been simmering in the summer. We had two white students, and one Native student from Montana who wanted to go. So we made the 13-hour drive. It was my first time being out in the field as a reporter in a while. It was Labor Day weekend in September. There were a lot of people there, maybe 1500. The camp was wedged in between the Missouri River and a two-lane county road. It's literally in the middle of nowhere, and all of a sudden you come over a hill. You see the river first, then all these tents. It kind of looked like a music festival. All of sudden there was that color and movement in the middle of those serene, green, rolling hills. It wasn't sprawling, but pretty condensed. The flags gave it away. The driveway leading to the camp was lined with tribal flags.

Jason Begay '96 is an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Montana's School of Journalism in Missoula. Begay got his start in journalism with an internship at the Navajo Times the summer after his first year at IAIA in 1995. At IAIA, he served as editor of the student newspaper and graduated with an associate's degree in creative writing in 1996. Following his graduation from the University of Montana with a bachelor's degree in 2002, Begay began his career in journalism in earnest, working as a reporter for the New York Times, the Portland Oregonian, and then the Navajo Times. Last fall, he led a team of University of Montana student reporters to Standing Rock, South Dakota, to report on media coverage of the No Dakota Access Pipeline movement. Begay, 39, is Diné and grew up in Gallup, New Mexico. Begay served as the

It was intimidating at first. There were signs for journalists around the camp saying that we couldn't take pictures, and there were areas we weren't allowed to go. It did feel like a prickly environment, like they were being overly sensitive, but actually we learned they weren't. It was just about following common courtesies and asking if we could take pictures. No one turned us down for an interview.

We went there to focus on how the people there thought the media was covering the event. We looked at the social media aspect. One hundred percent of the people we talked to (two or three dozen) had heard about the event on social media—not from a media outlet. That told us a lot. Even if there were a lot of media outlets covering it, they didn't trust them. They trusted what people were saying on Facebook more than anything else. They felt the rest was filtered in mainstream media. They wanted to see a different perspective.

How do you relate to the No DAPL movement?

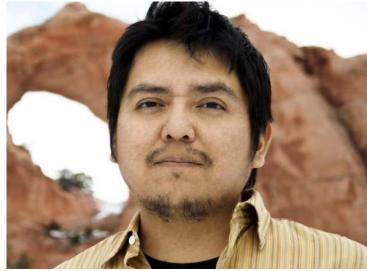
I don't usually partake in social justice actions. Objectivity has been engrained in me since I was eighteen. I've spent more than half my life avoiding being involved in anything like that. I can appreciate the planning, the practical things that get accomplished through that kind of action. But I still have a hard time recognizing the spiritual aspect of it. My instinct is to be a spectator, to watch from the outside, to kind of remove myself emotionally from all that. When I

got my first journalism job at the *Navajo Times*, objectivity was the first thing [publisher] Tom Arviso and [reporter] Marley Shebala ingrained in me. Everything else I learned on the fly. Even before I learned how to write a lead or punctuate a quote, I learned to be objective. That's how important it was to them, so it became important to me.

What did you learn at IAIA that influenced you?

I was a creative writing major and studied with Arthur Sze, Jon Davis, Gloria Bird, and Barney Bush. I learned a lot from them. There definitely was this courage that I got there that I wouldn't have been able to get anywhere else. It was that leap of putting a name on something for the public that I learned at IAIA. It took a certain amount of self-confidence that I didn't have in high school, probably because of my stutter. But I gained it at IAIA by being creative and presenting my work to my colleagues in the classes and at readings. Putting my name on something for others to read and critique like you do in journalism, I wouldn't have been able to do that if I got a job at a newspaper straight out of high school. IAIA definitely changed my life.







What was it like writing for the New York Times?

It was by far the most stressful time in my life. In a good way, a healthy stress. It was just nonstop work. That was the summer of 2002 when Martha Stewart was found guilty of insider trading. They assigned me to go to Wall Street and interview bankers about it. I had to talk with the business desk because I didn't know what insider trading was. I had to go home and read up on all these stories, get the background and then come back and write. It was really easy to get lost in the newsroom because it was so big. So, the more stories you could come up with the better off you were. There was this two-week period where I worked on one feature story about a woman who sold cigarettes at a fish market, and she was only open from midnight to 8 a.m. I spent two weeks building trust with her, going back to the fish market every night. Two weeks of nonstop chaos. But it paid off. It was one of the best stories I've ever written and it ran on the front page of the New York section of the paper. And the paper offered for me to stay based on that story. But the stress and fatigue was overwhelming. And New York was not appealing to me. I really felt no connection with anything on the east coast, so it made no sense to stay—outside of the prestige of working at the New York Times—but I've never been drawn to that.

How was writing for the Navajo Times audience different than writing for other papers?

It made so much more sense writing for the Navajo Times. If I compare the two, I never understood the readers at the *New York* Times. It was kind of hard to care about those readers, to care about my subject. It's like in creative writing, when you're writing about a character in fiction, you have to understand them psychologically, understand them from the inside so you can understand why they're doing what they're doing. In journalism, when you do an in-depth profile about someone, you have to understand them, and you do that through interviews, but I wasn't invested enough to do that full time at the New York Times. Even at the [Portland] Oregonian I didn't feel connected to the subject matter of my stories. At the Navajo Times everything fell into place. I could picture who was reading my stories. It was the people I grew up with. I could understand my subjects so much better, even if I didn't agree with them. Audience is so important in all writing. It made my writing so much more confident and clear. It was exponentially better than writing for anybody else.

Who was your reader?

When I was writing for my first daily newspaper, the *Duluth Tribune* in Minnesota, it was tough being far away, alone, and the daily newspaper was intimidating. I didn't know what stories that community wanted to read. When I had a story idea, I had to figure out how to write it so people could get into it easily. My mom would ask me to send my stories to her where she lived with

my grandma, near Chinle, Arizona. And my grandma speaks only Navajo, so my mom had to translate. But my mom stopped translating when I went to Minnesota because she said the syntax became too hard. So my way to fix that was to write in a style that was easily translatable to Navajo. Simple sentences, strong verbs. So that's my audience, the Navajo audience, or my mom translating it into Navajo for a Navajo audience. I don't speak Navajo, but I know a bit about linguistics. What's the easiest way to translate, or convey one language into another language? Verbs are universal. Colors, real life details, these are all pretty universal. I figured the more I can use those, the better I can write.

What is your advice for aspiring Native journalists?

Journalism really opened my eyes to how everything fits. When I was covering education in Portland, I learned so much because I was watching how a school system feeds kids into the working economy. I was learning about schools, city government, politics, police departments, and that's a really healthy way to experience how things run, how our world works. You learn to communicate in the quickest way possible, you learn to be efficient, and that's appreciated everywhere. You learn an appreciation for the civics of it all, and two, you learn how to communicate. Even if being a journalist is not your long term goal, it does a lot for your confidence and communication skills. If and when you find your audience, like I did, you'll know. Journalism means so much more than any other job I could have had. It's super-enriching and nourishing for my soul.

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Letter from the Alumni Council



Dear Alumni,

Only a few months ago thousands of our water protectors came together to stand at Standing Rock. From afar, millions of us viewed the photos, live video feeds and stories posted online. I was proud to see the many alumni participate and contribute to

the cause of fighting environmental racism. Many alumni and students brought their talents to the camps in North Dakota while others raised funds within their own community or joined advocacy marches across the country.

After students led campus discussions, the Alumni Council voiced their position in support of divestment from Wells Fargo to the IAIA Board of Trustees. Shortly thereafter a notice announced the board's unanimous vote to officially divest from Wells Fargo. From artists on the ground, to students on campus, to boardroom deliberation, actions like

these are a testament to the power of people. Our shared values brought our school together.

Throughout the US and Canada tribal people from all walks of life work to improve their homelands. Battles for tribal rights, sacred patrimony, clean water and air still exist today. The good fight is not over and we must be vigilant against the detrimental chipping away of our culture and community.

With great respect, I thank all the artists, scholars, activists, organizers, leaders, elders, friends, and family that brought out the best of us for Standing Rock. Let us all continue to do that good work and support each other in our challenges, big and small. As we move into 2017, we must remember that any threat our tribal communities face can be overcome with our continued creative call to action. Creativity is our tradition and our traditions have sustained our communities for thousands of years.

Karl Duncan '09 (San Carlos Apache/Mandan/ Hidatsa/Arikara), IAIA Alumni Council President



New Director of Institutional Advancement

Judith Pepper (Choctaw) is the new Director of Institutional Advancement with IAIA. The purpose of the Advancement Office is to build relationships and raise and mission of IAIA. As Director of Institutional

Advancement and Executive Director of IAIA Foundation, Ms. Pepper will work to further public understanding and

recognition of IAIA and its mission. The office of Alumni Relations is part of the Advancement Office.

Ms. Pepper's professional background is in nonprofit management with community-based organizations in Texas and New Mexico. Ms. Pepper has worked as Director of Global Operations for the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health in Amarillo, Texas, and as Executive Director of La Plaza Telecommunity in Taos, New Mexico. Most recently, Ms. Pepper was President of the Catholic Health Initiative St. Luke's Health Brazosport Foundation in Lake Jackson, funds to support the goals Texas. While at CHI St. Luke's, she completed a five million dollar capital campaign to help upgrade the hospital. Ms. Pepper holds a bachelor's degree from West Texas A&M University.







LOOKING AHFAN

Deadline to submit a candidacy form for the 2017 Alumni Council election. To submit go to www.iaia.edu/alumni or call 505.424.5704.

July 22-30

IAIA Writer's Festival. Readers every night, including Sherwin Bitsui '99 and Santee Frazier '06.

August 16

IAIA Annual Scholarship Dinner and Auction. This event raises scholarship funds to assist our students. Last year's event raised over \$170,000. Contact Gracie Schild at 505.424.2310 to purchase a ticket or donate.

August 18

Alumni Lunch at IAIA's Museum of Contemporary Native Arts.

August 3-29

Voting for four seats on the Alumni Council. The term for a Councilor is two years.

December 9

IAIA Holiday Market. Over 70 students, alumni, and other Native artists.

18 19

Santa Fe, NM 87508



