

# Building a Community-based Native Environmental Justice Summer Research Program in Higher Education: NEJSRP

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University of Washington

Presented at NIEA on  
Saturday, November 2, 2013

1:15 pm – 2:10 pm

Room: Rushmore F

Session: K

# Outline

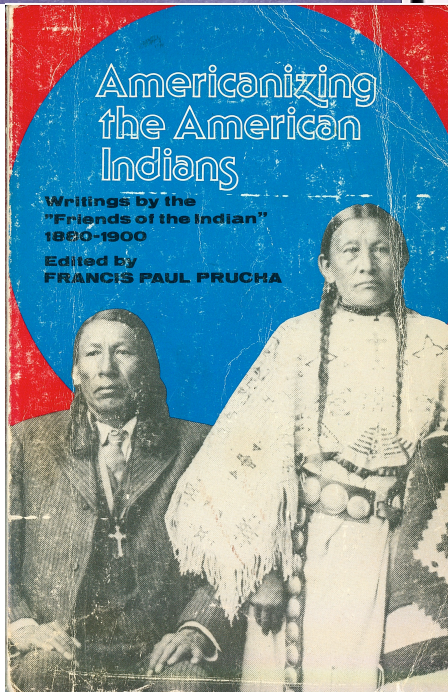
- I. Introduction
- II. Background
- III. NEJSRP Framework
- IV. NEJSRP Goals
- V. NEJSRP Structure & Implementation
- IV. Reflections (Not included in on-line version)
  - Student Group Interview
  - Student Presentations
- V. Lessons Learned
- VI. Future Directions
- VII. Q & A (Not included in on-line version)

# Our discussion today

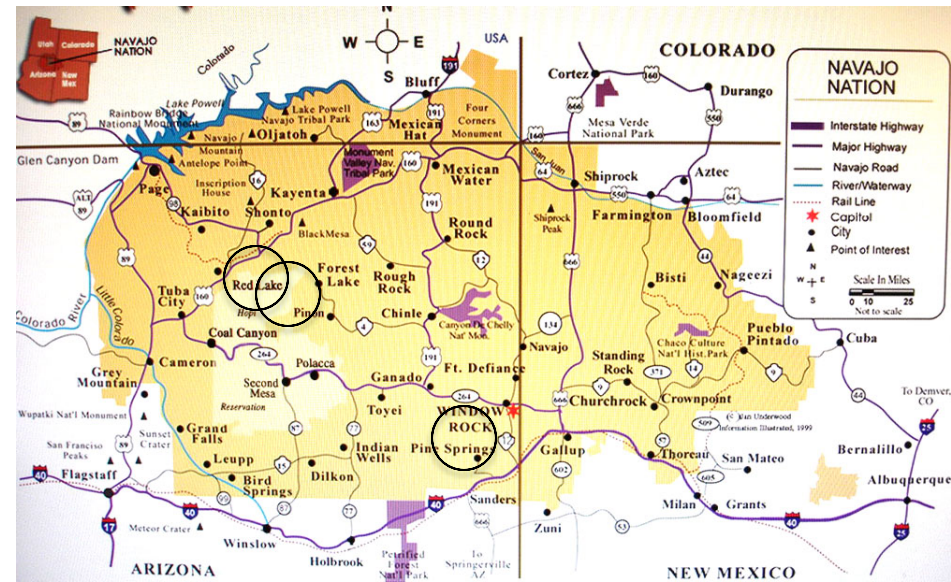
- A culturally responsive practice when developing a experiential program that connect indigenous communities and higher education institutions
- Practices that enhance Native American students' opportunities for empowerment through community-based learning
- New or affirmed strategies that you can apply to your programs and/or communities

# Native Environmental Justice Summer Research Program (NEJSRP) Background

- The program was inspired by the following questions:
  - What Environmental Justice issues are present within Native communities?
  - How does poor water quality impact sustainable tribal lifestyles?
- Additionally, I wanted to work with Native communities, in contrast to conducting laboratory research, and in the process, it was important to me to make my research journey an educational tool.



# Environmental Justice Issues in Indian Country



STRIP MINING AT BLACK MESA

# Funding Source for NEJSRP

## 2008 BULLITT ENVIRONMENTAL FELLOWSHIP WINNER



Clarita Lefthand Begay, a doctoral student in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of Washington has been selected to receive the second annual Bullitt Environmental Prize. The prize, established in honor of Priscilla Bullitt Collins, the late chair of the Bullitt Foundation, carries a cash award of \$100,000, distributed over two years. The awards ceremony was September 9, 2008.

The Bullitt Environmental Prize is awarded each year to an outstanding graduate student at a university in the Pacific Northwest who has overcome a disadvantaged background, compiled a sterling academic record, been endorsed by key professors, and demonstrated promise of emerging as an environmental leader.

# NEJSRP Program

## Promote A Native Community of Teaching and Learning

It takes a village to raise a child

Mentorship

Undergraduates, graduate student, Native Professors, community and elders

Self-esteem building and role modeling

## Environmental Justice (EJ)

What EJ issues are present within Native communities?

How does whaling restrictions led to ceremonial and cultural suppression?

How is climate change impacting communities

Tribal Water Quality: How does poor water quality impact sustainable tribal lifestyles?

## Social Change

How can the research process include social change?

What can you do to promote social change?

## Knowledge: Who owns or has it?

Universities, research Institutions, industry...?

How about communities?

How about you?

Let's build some critical consciousness about how we obtain our knowledge

## Indigenous Research

What does it mean to be an indigenous researcher?

What kinds of methodologies can be used to conduct research?

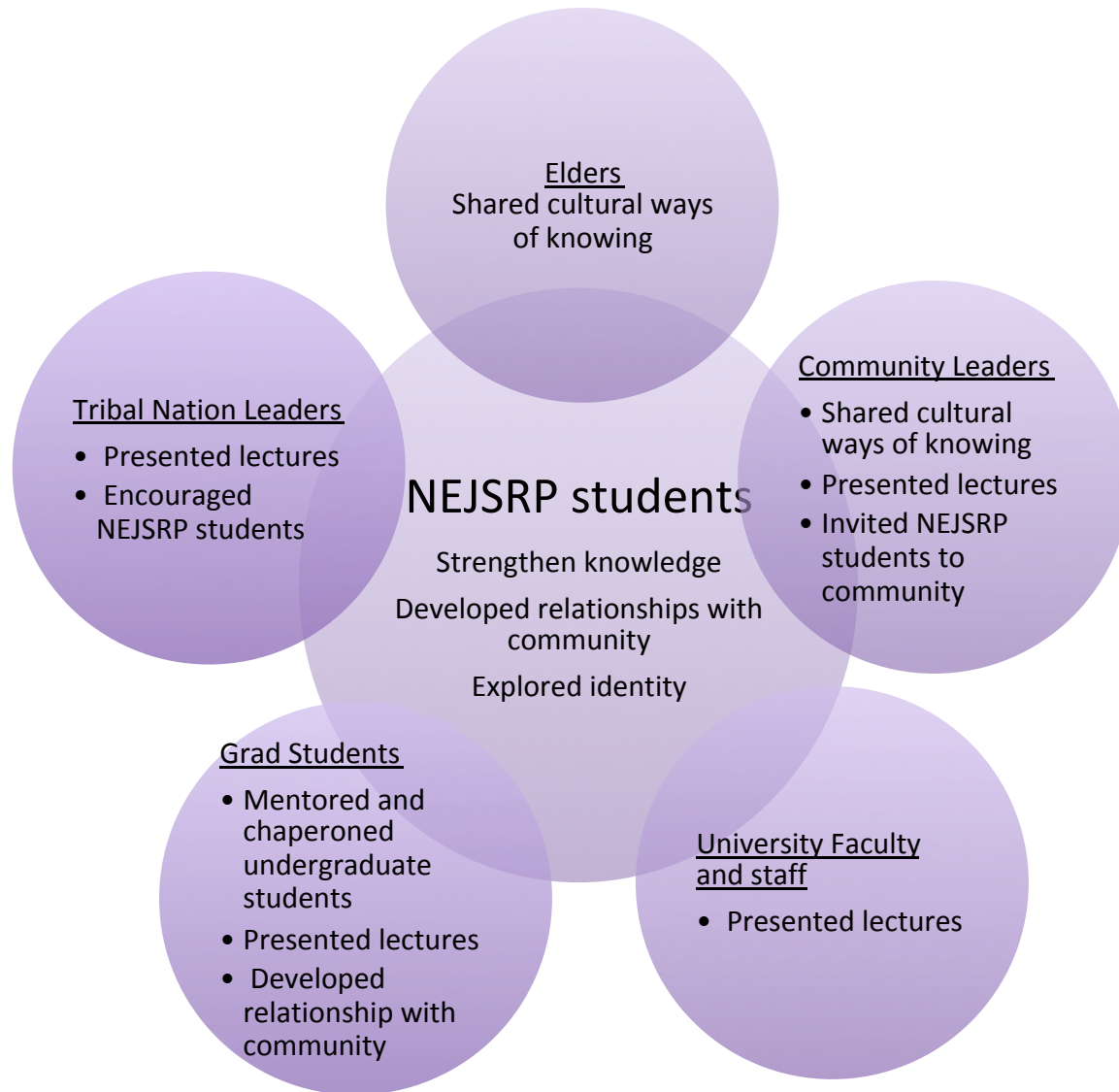
What are the barriers that must be addressed before or during research within Native communities?

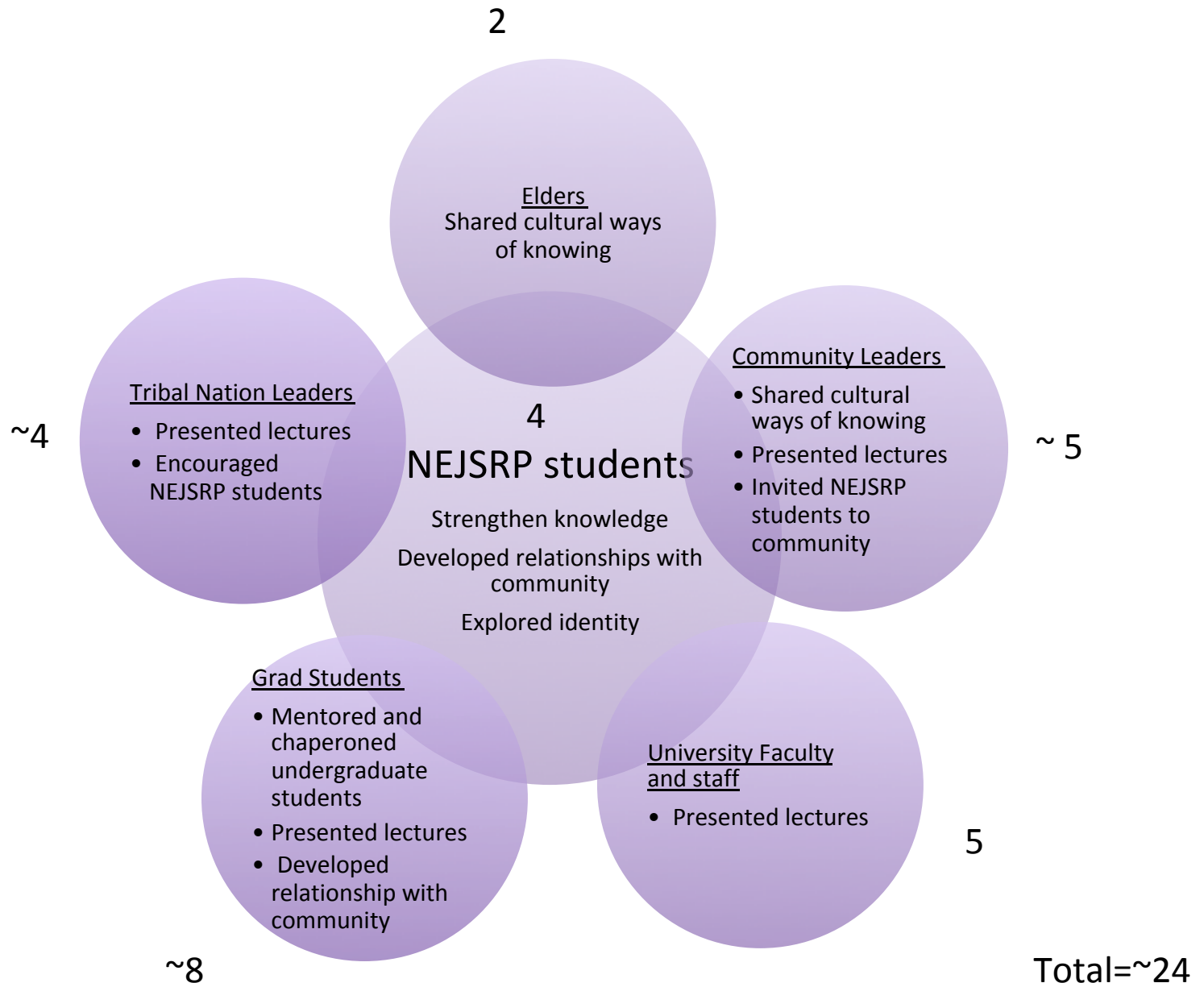
## Communication Skill-building

Video Interviews, writing, photo journaling, PowerPoint Presentations, publication and research

# NEJSRP Goals

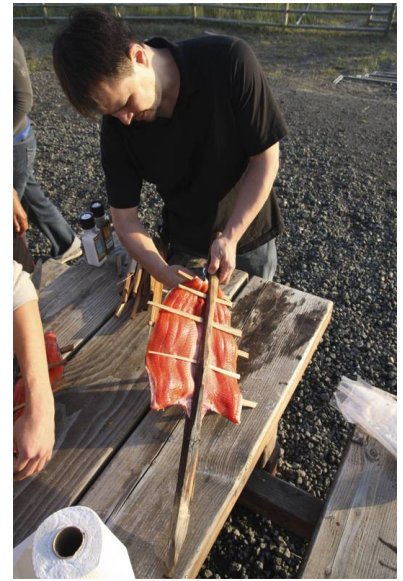
- Build community-based curriculum relevant to Native students,
- Encourage students to consider Indigenous approaches when conducting research; and
- Raise students' awareness about environmental justice and environmental issues occurring in the Pacific Northwest.





# NEJSRP Curriculum

- Indigenous Research Methodology
- Topics in Environmental Justice
  - Fishing and Hunting Rights
  - Makah Whaling
  - Water Quality
  - Water Issues
- Community-based learning
  - Tribal community visits
- IRB process



# Schedule

## MONDAY, JUNE 22 (Classroom)

Orientation and Introductions—For Students accepted to the program and who are being awarded a stipend  
History of Lake Washington  
An Overview of Environmental Justice in Indian Country  
Indigenous Researcher's Story of Ceremonial Knowledge and Environmental Justice  
Indigenous Research within American Indian Communities

## TUESDAY, JUNE 23 (Classroom)

Discussion and questions about previous day  
Native Environmental Justice Issues  
Tribal sovereignty, environmental justice, government-to-government interactions  
Treaty Rights pertaining to Tribal Water Quality and Makah Whaling  
Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth Whaling Tradition

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24 (Field)

Depart from Seattle for Taholah  
Arrive in Quinault Nation  
Meet up with Leaders from Nisqually, Makah, Quinault, and the Intergovernmental Policy Council, then attend salmon bake  
Early check in at the Quinault Beach Resort and Casino

## THURSDAY, JUNE 25 (Field)

Arrive to Neah Bay  
Makah Cultural and Research Center  
Lecture from Fisheries Department by Colby Brady Groundfish Biologist Makah Fisheries  
Tour with Elder  
Dinner with Community

## FRIDAY, JUNE 26 (Field)

Environmental Issues that Impact Indian Country: global warming, open landfills and water quality, green building transportation design plan and recycling  
Students will work together on peer video interviews



# Schedule

## **SATURDAY AND SUNDAY**

Students are on own but are encouraged to work on presentations for July 2<sup>nd</sup>!

## **MONDAY, JUNE 29 (Field)**

Tour of Duwamish Longhouse

Kayaking Tour of Duwamish River

## **TUESDAY, JUNE 30**

Human Subjects Research Ethics & The IRB Review Process

## **TUESDAY, JUNE 30 AND WEDNESDAY, JULY 1**

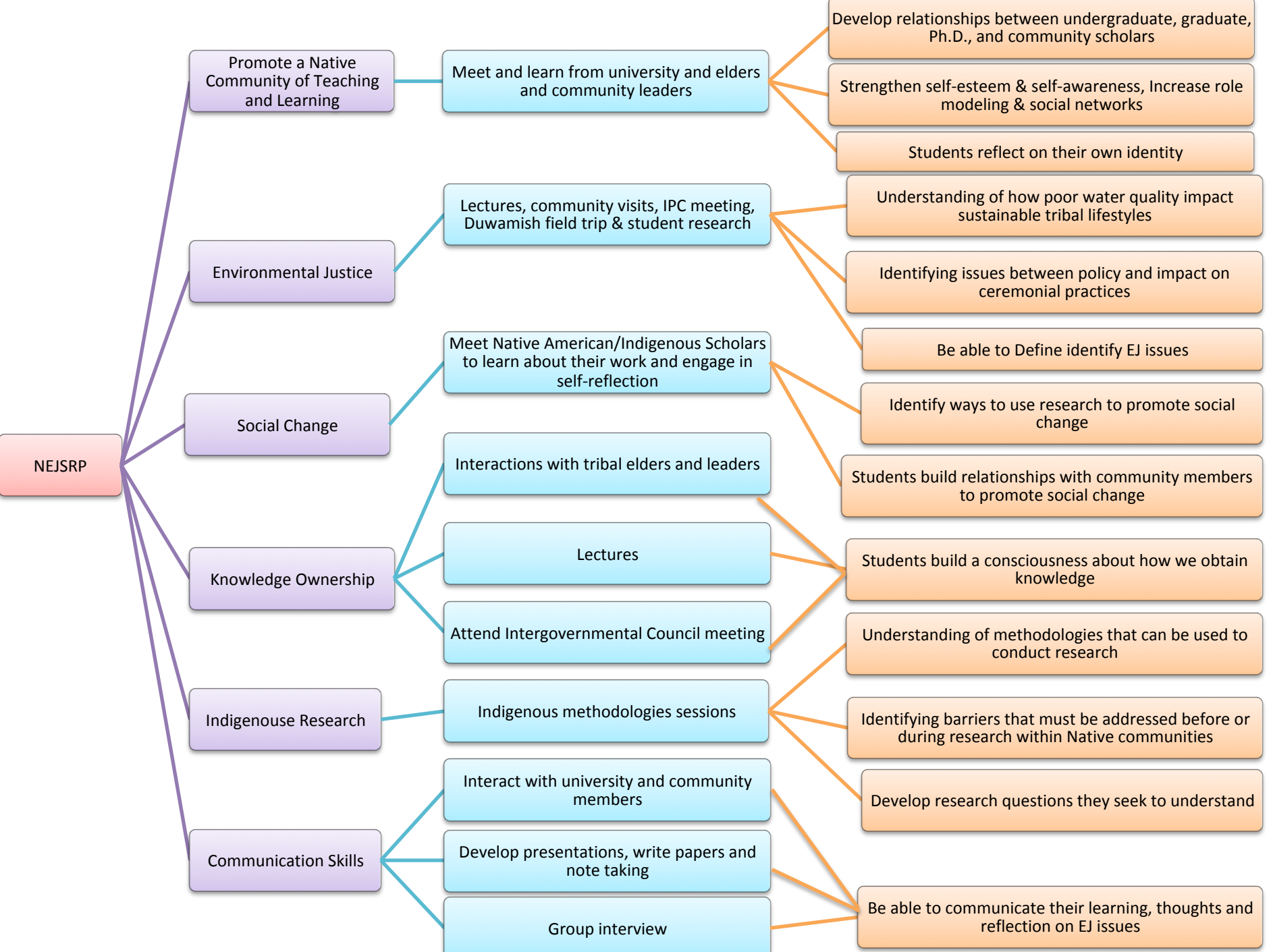
Students will have these two days to read and work on presentations for Thursday.

## **THURSDAY, JULY 2**

Student Presentations with EPA Region 10, and community--15-minute presentations.

# Evaluation Framework

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape photograph. In the foreground, there are several tall, dark green evergreen trees. Beyond them, a series of rolling hills and mountain ranges are visible, with some peaks covered in snow. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The text 'Evaluation Framework' is centered over the middle of the image.



# Student Requirements

1) Notebooks

2) Goals statement (1-2 pgs)

- Students were asked to write about their 10 year goals and how they might use environmental justice to address concerns in your community or your life.

# NEJSRP Student Requirements (cont.)

## 3) Student Group Interview

- i. How would you describe your past experience with tribal nations within and outside your community?
- ii. What have you done in your communities or life that connects into this program?
- iii. Discuss some of the environmental justice issues that you have heard about this week. Do they make you think of other issues happening in your own communities? How so?
- iv. What are some research topics/questions that you might want to develop over time based on your experiences in this program?

# NEJSRP Student Requirements (cont.)

## 4) Reflection paper

- Students were asked to discuss the topics/issues that they learned about and how their 9-day experience changed the way they thought about environmental justice issues, community, your social responsibility, research, information, and communication.

## 5) Presentation (15 min)

- i. Students were asked to:  
Be creative in how they composed their presentations

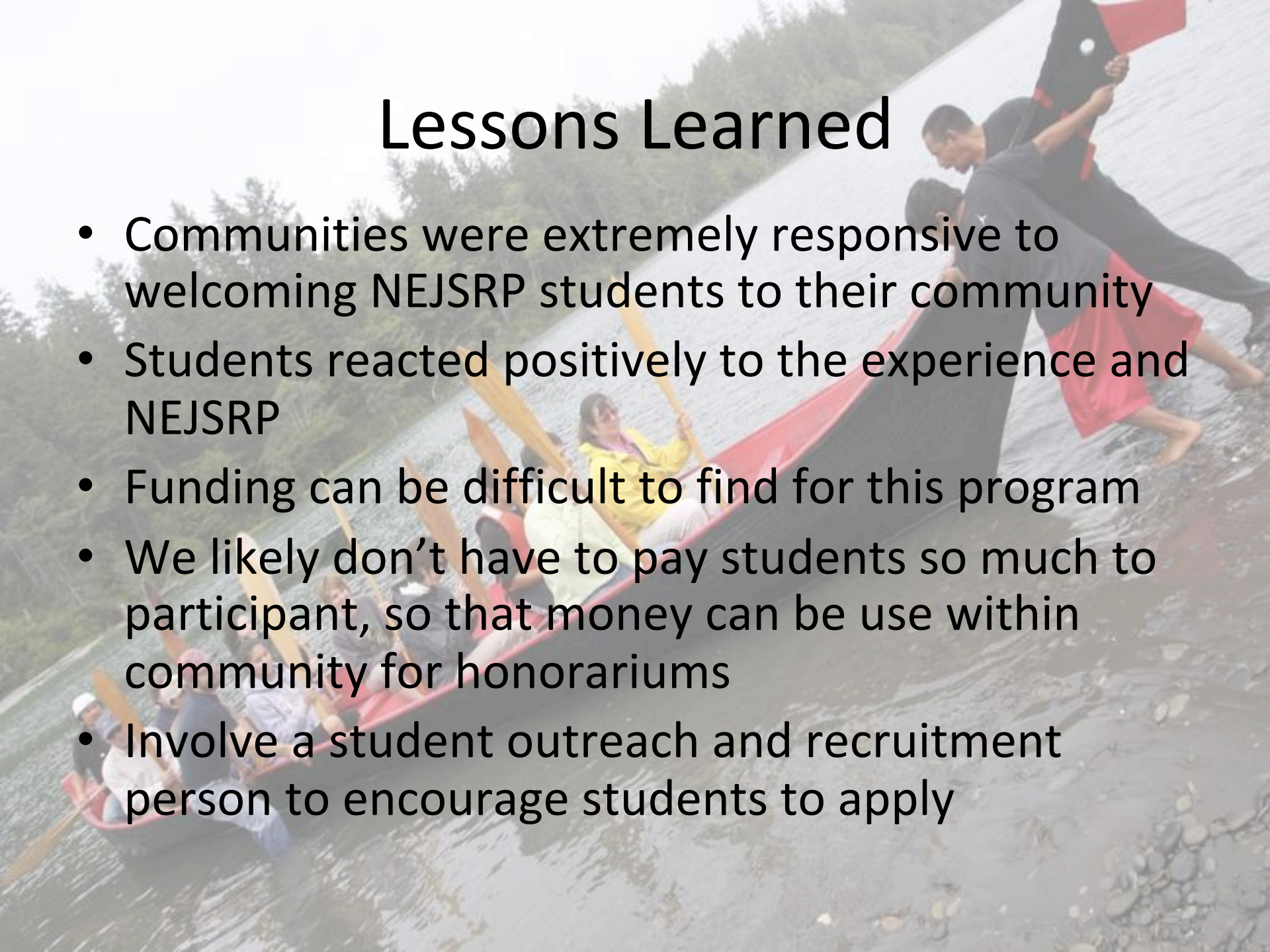


# Student Reflections

(12 slides not included in on-line version)

# Lessons Learned


- Communities were extremely responsive to welcoming NEJSRP students to their community
- Students reacted positively to the experience and NEJSRP
- Funding can be difficult to find for this program
- We likely don't have to pay students so much to participant, so that money can be use within community for honorariums
- Involve a student outreach and recruitment person to encourage students to apply



# Future Directions

- Expand our partnerships and collaborations in all areas of Indian Country and with international Indigenous communities
- Expand on our EJ topics
- Strengthen elder participation in the NEJSRP and encourage it in all parts of academia
- Clarify and be explicit about the values of NEJSRP
- Hold NEJSRP annually or biannually
- Obtain funding for summer 2014 and 2015





If you are interested in collaborating with our  
program, please contact

Clarita Lefthand-Begay

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You can view materials from the NEJSRP at

<http://wiki.claritalb.org/>