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**U.S. Department of Education  
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)  
Executive Summary**

OMB No. 1890-0004  
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/ Number # **H325E000020**

(See Instructions)

### Context

Native American children and youth are among the least understood and most underserved in our nation's schools. At rates far above the national average, they do not complete school. They come to us from urban and rural situations and often from extreme poverty, where deliberate disruption of parenting skills and loss of language brought about by U.S. government policy are recent in community history. They come from communities where crime is significantly higher than for the rest of the nation, and mortality rates, including very high suicide rates, are abysmal. Reports of abuse or neglect of Native American children are nearly double the national average. When those children come with disabilities, the problems are compounded! Simultaneously, Native American Indian children and youth come from rich traditions and cultures, many of which, at least in part, have withstood government-sanctioned attempts at cultural genocide. These rich cultures provide a framework for understanding the nature and structure of thinking skills, the nature and nurture of learning, and collaboration with the parents and parenting communities. Affirming this cultural heritage, which traditionally trusted, collaborated, and educated, is a key in the difficult but essential differentiation of disability from disadvantage and difference.

Native American children enter our public schools "at risk" for low achievement, over-referral and mis-identification for special education services, and for dropping-out. Early on, they demonstrate cognitive development, which approximates that of children of the majority cultures on alternative measures; however, suddenly large achievement gaps appear at about grades 3-4, which then contribute to the unacceptable percentages of school leavers and under-achievers. In California, the cumulative growth of Native American students special education is extremely high. Thus, we must assume that mingled with true identification, over-identification has been the "fix" for underachievement. Misdiagnosis and mislabeling are a major concern, and lead to the questions of whether the problem has to do with the referral process, the assessment process, intervention planning, or some combination. Reframing referrals from a culturally affirmative perspective and creating culturally appropriate interventions prior to special education evaluation are significant first steps, facilitated by much-needed NA school counselors and psychologists trained in systems approaches and consultation.

The importance of educating Native American professionals has been emphasized for decades. Very few Native American psychologists and counselors serve our public schools. Low levels of professional involvement parallel low levels of completion in school, college and graduate school in general. Most school psychology and counseling training programs have no Native American students. Many have high levels of non-completers, not unlike the same issue earlier in school. Thus, the need to adequately discriminate, assess, diagnose, and serve Native American youth in special education, and those at risk of misidentification for special education leads to the urgent need for fully qualified school counselors, school psychologists, and rehabilitation counselors.

### Nature and Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the Native American Collaboration Project (NACP) was to implement preparation of related service personnel to serve Native American children with disabilities in schools throughout California and the Southwestern United States. This project addressed shortages in related services personnel and weaknesses in the preparation to serve this population. In addition, it addressed the significant need for culturally responsive service to Native American children identified or at risk of mis-identification for special education, and to their parents and extended "parenting communities." Integral to this mission was the use and mediation of culturally compatible thinking and problem solving skills. Our major objectives were (a) To recruit, retain, and graduate qualified culturally and linguistically diverse candidates in school

counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling committed to serve Native American children and youth with disabilities; (b) To implement program content that includes a culturally relevant knowledge base in Native American education and learning, culturally appropriate assessment and interventions, and culturally affirming parent involvement; (c) To provide collaborative training across the School Psychology (SPP), School Counseling (SCP), and Rehabilitation Counseling (RCP) Programs and in cooperation with field sites with Native American populations; (d) To enable related services personnel to make collaborative and systemic changes on behalf of Native American children with disabilities; and (e) To monitor project effectiveness and to disseminate the model and components of the model.

#### Accomplishment of Goals

NACP was extremely successful in recruiting, retaining, and graduating qualified culturally and linguistically diverse candidates in school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling committed to serve Native American children and youth with disabilities. Over the course of the project, creative and culturally compatible recruitment efforts yielded fourteen students who were accepted to the NACP project. Twelve graduated with professional credentials and degrees. Since these graduate programs are two, three, and four years in length, all students were on the project for multiple years. Retaining and graduating 86% of those recruited and accepted was exceptionally high. Personal contacts, outreach to Native American communities and university groups, email contacts to broader organizations, brochure and web site development supported recruitment of our students. Native American students represented a variety of tribal groups (for instance, Cree, Navajo, Yaqui, Apache, Lakota Sioux, Seminole, and Hopi) as well as representing the three related services professional preparation programs of school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling (our goal for collaborative training across disciplines). Project students came from home reservations located across the Western United States: California, Washington, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico as well as those living in Southern California whose original tribal groups were "relocated" to Southern California. The project used a systemic and multi faceted approach to support of the Scholars, ranging from mentoring to modeling, compatible field sites, strong faculty support and liaison, Native American seminars and institutes, and financial support packages.

All Project Scholars were concurrently accepted into SDSU's graduate programs in school psychology, school counseling, or rehabilitation counseling. Those programs are rigorous professional preparation programs, state and/or nationally approved, and value systemic thought and multicultural competence. They provide research-base curricular foundations, and strong linkages with field sites. SDSU's faculty in school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling are committed to educational equity and are extremely active in their professional associations, presenting and publishing locally, statewide and nationally. Program directors met regularly with the Project director to interface about the progress of the Project Scholars, to provide additional support as needed, and learn from the project what additional supports are helpful to the Scholars. They often include the Scholars in their presentations.

NACP Scholars met weekly each semester of the academic year in a seminar with Native American scholars as guides throughout the project period: Dr. Larry W. Emerson (Navajo), Dr. Jill Hill (Cherokee/Delaware), and Ms. Marilyn Robinson (Cayuga). They read extensively, and discussed the interface of their graduate program coursework with Native American perspectives and issues. They grappled with the issues of integrating traditional Native methodologies of learning and "western" system of learning. In addition to the multiple field sites in which they practiced under supervision with a diversity of students, the project director negotiated an arrangement with the All Tribes American Indian Charter School, in which project students would begin intensely to work with the teachers and students at the school to apply that learning.

Mentoring the cohort took many forms. Native American professionals from the community served as external mentors. Dr. Emerson, the Navajo summer institute instructor was a powerful model and mentor. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu, the project director, met with individual scholars, supported writing efforts, and engaged in general planning and interface with instructors and directors in all the graduate programs. The incorporation of traditional modalities and methods into the curriculum served as a strong indirect "mentor" drawing from the traditions of their home communities. In addition, students had broad exposure to mentors in a variety of field sites as they completed practicum, field work and internship assignments, interfacing with professionals and with parents.

Week-long Summer Institutes set the tone of valuing traditional culture and learning as well as building community and high expectations. Students continued their work to translate their own learning to broader school and parenting community applications and to school change, originally informed by data from three major focus groups, from which students worked toward building collaborative relationships. Institutes featured the combined work of Dr. Mogens Jensen, researcher and theoretician in mediated learning with Larry Emerson, Native Mediated Learning expert. Children and parents from the community participated with NACP Scholars.

Dissemination of components of the project, our final goal, began in year one via student presentations, papers, an article and a book chapter. In years two, three, and four these efforts were expanded to an additional ten presentations in the field, targeting local educators and Indian community members, and consultations, as well as national (e.g., National Association of Bilingual Education; Council on Exceptional Children) and one international (World Indigenous Conference on Education) conference presentations. Dissemination efforts are collaborative efforts with current project staff, students, and community members.

### Problems Encountered and Solved; Lessons Learned

One very interesting problem, and consequently lesson learned, centered on the need for Native American graduate students to be immersed with Native American populations. Although all students were originally placed in highly diverse schools that included Native American students, they were not the majority. Because of the extensive qualitative student feedback to the project, this became important formative evaluation information. It was acted on, and the problem "solved" through an arrangement the director was able to make with a local charter school with 95% Native American students, as the school would benefit from the modeling and mentoring from the Native graduate students. Although the distance from the university was great, the benefit for the NACP Project students was greater; thus we carpoled to afford the mileage and arranged to have bi-monthly full days at the "All Tribes" site in the last year. The relevance of the work was significant.

An important second lesson, which grew out of the multiple programs we worked with, was that focusing on programs that have a prior commitment to school based work yielded better integration than trying to fold in a program that was interested. Specifically, we had several rehabilitation counselors who were Native American and interested in work with Native American youth and families, but because their school based programs were not as well grounded in field and school issues, but more in agency related issues, this was a harder program to integrate. Future proposals either will not include this component or will demand a higher level of integration of that program with the others.

### Results of the Research/Project

Compared with most university programs, and specifically with graduate programs in these areas, this project was extremely successful, with an 86% graduation rate among its Native American students.

One of the major premises of the project, that a systemic and multi-faceted approach must be used to the support of the students, was critical. Student exit interviews indicated that the combination of the financial, cultural, academic and mentoring support along with the field experiences contributed to their success. Several of them mentioned their external presentations at the national and international level being key in their gaining perspective on the broad relevance of what they were learning and doing. Virtually all mentioned the weekly seminar taught by a Native American scholar and/or elder as a critical component. The diverse cohorts of graduate students with whom they studied also supporting the development of their voice. Finally, the Project helped define the important roles of valuing traditional knowledge, discussing colonization and decolonization, and extensive mentoring in the support of Native American student success.

## Implications for Practice, Policy and Future Research (Including Recommendations For OSEP)

Successful recruitment, retention and graduation of Native American students in educational fields that will ultimately support greater success for Native American students in pre-K-12 schools is complex, yet feasible. Programs must not assume that a generic level of attention to "multicultural" issues is either sufficient or appropriate in preparing related service personnel to serve Native Americans. Specific knowledge of the issues of these youth and their communities, including the historical antecedents central to the current situations is critical. Understanding the depth of the historical traumas that influence behaviors, from parenting to achievement, helps in the design of curriculum that will concurrently support culturally appropriate service delivery and serve as an empowering and healing oriented complement to rigorous graduate study. Mentors at multiple levels, from cultural and traditional to academic and professional make a significant difference in retention.

The Project suggests several next directions of research. One would be to study the parallels in successful graduate level and successful K-12 level student support of Native Americans. For instance, some evidence suggests that cultural content and meaning infused in the curriculum and policy of the school yields greater success for Native American youth. The Project results would suggest that similarly, infusion of culturally specific and meaningful issues in the student of school counseling, psychology and rehabilitation counseling, positively impacts retention and achievement at that level. A second would be to research the role of the attitudes and knowledge base of the instructors in student success in both venues.

One of the major challenges encountered was the need for graduate students to do their fieldwork in a place where they could contribute to, and/or see modeled, success with Native American students. This is a highly complex process, requiring systemic involvement in shifting attitudes, skills and knowledge on the part of the existing staff, work with the parents and parenting community, concurrent with training. Thus, having more resources available to support the on-site components within existing schools would have been extremely helpful, as well as the inclusion of key elders, parents, and/or medicine people from the community. This project did not use or propose a "start-up" year with differential resources, in part because it is heavily discouraged informally from reviewers. A suggestion to OSEP might be to encourage pre-service in-service collaboration for systemic change, and to allow funding to more directly support such efforts.



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Project Status Chart**

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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**1. Project Objective**       Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To recruit, retain and graduate qualified culturally and linguistically diverse candidates in school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling committed to serve Native American children and youth with disabilities.

1.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Effective strategies for recruiting students from underrepresented populations [34 CFR 75.105 (c)(2)(l)].	Program	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information).

We developed and distributed recruiting brochures and email advertisements about the grant. We developed and continue to update a web site for the continuing recruiting period, as well as to share information. We sent information through email listservs, and universities throughout California and the Southwest. Our recruiting coordinator visited Indian clubs (e.g., Native American Student Associations) and reservations and made personal contacts to recruit for the project. These were commensurate with our plan, and yielded applicants and accepted students to the project annually.

1.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
To recruit or retain eight qualified culturally and linguistically diverse candidates annually in school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling (3-4 year programs) committed to serve Native American children and youth with disabilities.	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		12	/		14	12/14	86%

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information).

We recruited and retained fourteen and graduated twelve Native American scholars over the course of the project. We had two Native American non-completers, one of whom still speaks of returning to complete his degree.

I.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 4.2. Minority Institutions.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

The NACP Project is housed at San Diego State University, a minority institution, to which all students were recruited, retained and graduated.

I.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 4.3. Minority and disabled personnel receive financial assistance for training.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/		14	14/14	100%

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

All fourteen of the graduate students receiving financial assistance under NACP were minority individuals – all Native American. Two were disabled.

I.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Assist graduates to find employment	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		12	/		12	12/14	86%

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Of the twelve graduates, eight are working in schools, one in a university a recruiter and mentor for Native American students, and three in agencies that serve Native American youth and interface with public schools.



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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**2. Project Objective**       Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To implement program content that includes a culturally relevant knowledge base in Native American education and learning, culturally appropriate assessment and intervention, and culturally affirming parent involvement.

2.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 1: Programs respond to critical needs of children with disabilities and their families.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

The response of the NACP Project to this indicator is found in the proposal under the Need for the Proposed Project section, pages 1 – 6. Critical needs of children with disabilities and of their families are detailed.

2.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
(b) Equity in hiring: Attention to diversity and disability. [606 IDEA; 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(I)].	Program	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		4	/		5	5 /6	83%

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Great attention has been paid to diversity and to disability over the course of the project. The project mentors/instructors on the project were Native American: Jill Hill is Cherokee/Delaware and Marilyn Robinson is Cayuga; the summer institute instructor Larry Emerson is Dine/Navajo. The recruiting coordinator, Kester Ta-ED 524B

paha, is Navajo and is a person with a disability. The Project Director, Robinson-Zañartu, is the mother of a child with a disability. The project manager was Euro American.

2.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 2: Projects use high quality methods and materials.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

NACP is grounded in theory and research. Its graduate programs are state and nationally accredited. The NACP Project proposal details the high quality of the project under the section Quality of Project Services, pp. 11-23.

2.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 4.1. Personnel are trained to serve children	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		12	/		12	/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

NACP's purpose is to train pre-service personnel to serve children, specifically Native American children. Their quality programs, monitoring and mentoring are designed to assure program completion. All recipients of support were trained to serve children. Twelve graduated with degrees and credentials that support their employment in public schools working with children with disabilities (school counseling, school psychology, rehabilitation counseling).

2.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Institute a weekly seminar with culturally relevant content, process and skill building. Thirty seminars/year were con-	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%

ducted.		30	/		30	/	
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Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Each year of the project the Native American seminar was taught by a Native American scholar and/or elder who guided readings and discussions of the issues that impact Native American youth and communities as they relate to schools. Process and product feedback from students guided re-formatting, added readings, and guest speakers attending the seminars.

2.f. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 5.1. Informed families. GPRA Indicator 5.2. Families served	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

One of the foci of this project is to assure that Native American parents receive information and services that are culturally compatible and therefore comprehensible and useful. Seminar and summer institutes support this goal. Although this project is not a parent training and information program, family involvement is seen as central to learning to serve Native American children with integrity. Families were consultees during the summer institutes, and families were part of the team decision-making processes at the schools.

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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**3. Project Objective**       Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To provide collaborative training across the School Psychology, School Counseling, and Rehabilitation Counseling Programs, and in cooperation with field sites with Native American populations.

3.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 3.1: Projects communicate appropriately with target audiences.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Communication with special education and regular education teachers and parents was integral to the field experiences of the students and is central in the summer institutes. Students took coursework in counseling and consultation as well as in systems change to facilitate this. Further, the project communicated via its dissemination efforts to other cohorts of pre-service related services personnel, to state and national professional conferences.

3.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Students serve in field sites with Native American populations	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		12	/			12/12	100%

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

All students were placed in field sites that had Native American constituents. In the final year, all students also served All Tribes American Indian Charter School, which had 95% Native American students for special mentoring, tutoring and intervention work.

3.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Students meet across cohorts and across programs weekly to share perspectives, gain new knowledge and plan on site intervention work. Thirty such seminars occurred annually	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		30	/		30		

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Collaboration was enhanced by putting students together in their project seminar across school psychology, school counseling and rehabilitation counseling. Students shared professional perspectives as well as cross-tribal methods and knowledge bases. This occurred each week of the project for all scholars.

**4. Project Objective**       Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To enable related services personnel to make collaborative and systemic changes on behalf of Native American children with disabilities.

4.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Participation in innovative summer institutes designed to address change and to include work with pre-service related services personnel, parents and students. One institute preceded each academic year.	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		4	/		4	/	

4.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Monitor and evaluate effects of Summer Institute Training and make necessary modifications in the program	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Summer Institutes were attended by all Scholars each summer of the project. In two of those institutes, they worked directly with parents and youth in mediating learning. In the other two, they discussed systems change from an indigenous perspective. The first week of this institute focused on theories and practice of learning the mediation of systems change. They extended this learning to the local educators and elders who attended as consultees and advisees, and began work at the Barona Indian School in the Fall of 2001 and All Tribes School in Spring of 2003. Learning that occurred at that site was profound for the students, who developed a protocol for future relationships between tribes and schools. In July and August of 2001, the NACP project underwent a qualitative study on the significant issues that prevented Native communities in San Diego County and public school systems from collaborating. The questions formulated by NACP project staff were to extract information so that the NACP program could use these issues as the basis when involving our students within these communities. NACP held three separate community-talking circles that addressed four specific questions that NACP student would need to know. The preparation for these talking circles was extensive. In 2002-03 contacts were made with the reservation community and charter school that serves the five northern reservations in San Diego County, "All Tribes." Initial meetings were held in the community, and service to the school and Native American children began in the Spring. Reports from the school indicate great enthusiasm for the SDSU students' work, and offers to continue.

**5. Project Objective**       Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To monitor project effectiveness and to disseminate the model and components of the model.

5.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
GPRA Indicator 3.2 Products and practices developed during the project are used to improve results for children with disabilities and their families.	GPRA	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Issues and methodologies have been communicated across the three graduate programs in pre-service preparation of related services personnel, and to state and national conferences. Several publications are in progress, and the director is serving as co-chair of a newly formed (NASP) Presidential Task force on Native American issues in School Psychology.

5.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Progress of students was monitored regularly	Project	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%

			/			/	
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**Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)**

Project students and staff met monthly to monitor effectiveness, gather feedback notions and report on prior modifications. Each semester students turned in portfolios outlining their progress on competency development, their papers infusing the project specialty in regular graduate classes, and their current academic status. Annually the project director reviewed transcripts and academic progress, and each month she met with program directors to discuss any difficulties and to design needed interventions.



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**SECTION B - Budget Information** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

All funds for this grant have been drawn down.

Funds essentially were expended at the rate anticipated in the approved budget and the budget projected for the no cost extension period. Student fees and tuition, books, stipends, materials, professional development activities and professional supplies were covered during the no-cost extension year, as well as a final summer institute, graduate assistants to support that and dissemination efforts. The director was compensated for her time expended during the summer to mentor, write, collect data and work with the partner sites at a rate slightly higher than anticipated previously.

No significant changes beyond those outlined in the no cost extension proposal occurred.

We were able to support the proposed project activities with the budget we had. No significant variations occurred in the last year.

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**SECTION C - Additional Information** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**Based on evaluation results, the following conclusions were drawn about the success of the project and its impact.**

First and foremost, the NACP Project was extremely successful in recruiting, retaining, and graduating qualified culturally and linguistically diverse candidates in school counseling, school psychology and rehabilitation counseling committed to serve Native American children and youth with disabilities. Over the course of the project, creative and culturally compatible recruitment efforts yielded fourteen Native American students who were accepted to the NACP project. Twelve graduated with professional credentials and degrees from these graduate programs that are two to four years in length. Given the dismal retention and graduation rates of this population in general, 86% success is excellent.

Successful mentoring of Native American students is an essential component of support. It is enhanced by deep knowledge of the issues, from the historical antecedents of the current situational issues to the worldview differences in mainstream and traditional Native learning. Mentors having community connections are extremely meaningful, as are elders and scholar models. Mentorship involves discussing books and articles by Native scholars and incorporating Native scholarship into the professional practices of school counseling and psychology, and makes those professions more accessible. Valuing parental culture and language values the Native American professional in training as well, and enhances the probability of his or her returning to work with this population.

A strong systemic approach to the issues is essential and feasible. The model used, adapted from Cook-Morales and Robinson-Zañartu's (1995, 2001) systemic change model for educational equity in professional psychology programs, incorporated an integrated series of key components: critical mass; same culture mentoring; culturally affirmative and relevant curriculum and research; connections to "home;" mul-

multiple levels of support (e.g., financial, academic, professional); meaningful field activity; building “community;” committed faculty members; and strong professional program base. The model and components of the model have been disseminated to colleagues in special education, bilingual education, general education, Indian education and school psychology via professional conferences. Colleagues from around the nation attending presentations and workshops on the model give enthusiastic support to its tenets. Manuscripts for publication are in process. The director has been invited to co-chair a national task force on Native American issues in School Psychology, and two of the Project graduates will serve on the national advisory group.

### **Unexpected outcomes or benefits from the projects or barriers that we encountered.**

One unexpected outcome resulted from our monthly feedback from students regarding the project (process feedback). They voiced that although placing students in schools with diverse student bodies including Native American student populations was important, that they wanted more intense engagement with the Native community and school. The director was able to negotiate more full engagement with All Tribes American Indian Charter School as a mutually beneficial addition to the project. The school would benefit from the mentors and models the project provided, and the project students would benefit from their engagement more intensely with Native American youth. The director also negotiated that this engagement would count for some of the optional hours of fieldwork otherwise required, thus working toward institutionalization concurrently.

A barrier we encountered was in the attempt to combine tribal groups across cohorts of graduate study and three fields of study (school psychology, school counseling and rehabilitation counseling) in a multidisciplinary project. For the most part the cross-tribal interactions were rich and fruitful, as were the school psychology and school counseling interactions, especially since we had been able to institutionalize some of the collaboration. However, the rehabilitation/school counselors did not have sufficient grounding in school issues to easily facilitate the collaboration. That component would require far more “up front” work in the future, as well as defined relationships across schools and agencies that work with this population.

### **Advice and recommendations to other educators interested in the project.**

Advice: Gain community support and mentorship. Work with educators, elders and scholars. Work systemically with the schools you will serve. Recruit sufficient Native American students in each cohort to allow their voices to have a place, and create spaces for those voices. Expect that worldviews and interpretations of school practices and children’s behaviors will be distinct from that of the mainstream. Become familiar with the literature on decolonization and indigenous research methodologies. Expect to work harder and more broadly than you would with most students, and to be challenged beyond what you have been with other populations; but expect that you also will be rewarded in equal levels.

### **Plans for continuing the project or disseminating the project results.**

We were excited about the experiences of the project, and have proposed a follow-up project incorporating successful components and expanding beyond to more systemic levels of engagement. Further, the All Tribes School pursued funding to support continuing to house SDSU students for field experiences. Several manuscripts, collaborative efforts of the director and the project graduates and mentors, are currently in progress.