



# News Release

Missouri Western State College • 4525 Downs Drive • St. Joseph, MO 64507 • 816-271-5649

**Contact:** Kristy Hill

**Phone:** (816)-271-5649

**Title:** Public Relations/Marketing Director

**Email:** [hillk@mwsc.edu](mailto:hillk@mwsc.edu)

## WESTERN CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON NATIVE AMERICA

**St. Joseph, Mo.** —March 25, 2005—Multicultural perspectives and contemporary Native American issues will be explored at the second annual Native America Day April 7 at Missouri Western State College. It is entitled “Native America after Lewis and Clark: Obligations and Outcomes.”

Last year’s initial miniconference was attended by more than 100 persons, fueling interest for this year’s session. It will be held from 1 to 3:30 p.m. in the Leah Spratt Multipurpose Classroom Building, Kemper Recital Hall. All community residents and school students are invited.

Three Native American speakers will be featured. They include Raquel Burnett, director of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee in Lawrence, Kan.; Gayl Edmunds, sociologist and counselor and director of Indian Alcohol Intervention Services in Wichita, Kan., and Jimmy Dick, educator, spiritual leader and ceremonial singer and drummer from Toronto.

--more--

## Page 2 – Native America Day

The individual speakers will give 10-minute talks, followed by a panel discussion and questions from the audience. More than 40 Western students have submitted questions for the speakers, and classes studying Native America and legal issues will participate.

Two Western faculty members will round out the program. They are Dr. Elizabeth Latosi-Sawin, professor of English and scholar of Native American literature, and Joanne Katz, professor of criminal justice and legal studies.

“We are hosting this event to network with regional Native Americans, and to open the Western campus to the wide array of Native American multicultural concerns, activities and strengths,” commented Mark Hamilton, instructor of English.

“Another reason is to recognize Native Americans with a celebratory day every year,” he continued. “Their importance cannot be overestimated for the historical, cultural, artistic and environmental significance of their way of life.”

Networking with Native Americans is one step closer to establishing a planned Center for the Advancement of Cultural and Ecological Studies of the Great Plains at Western, according to Hamilton.

More information can be obtained by contacting Hamilton at 816-271-4169, or [hamilmb@mWSC.edu](mailto:hamilmb@mWSC.edu), or by contacting Melony Schmidt at [mrs3678@mWSC.edu](mailto:mrs3678@mWSC.edu).

—end—

*Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.*

