

Diné Language Teacher Institute Cohort

Vincent Werito, Tiffany Lee, Melvatha Chee, Michelle Whitestone, Cheryl Yazzie, and Sarah Adeky-Henio

The purpose of this panel presentation is to provide information about the Diné Language Teacher Institute cohort program. The DLTI cohort consists of Navajo language teachers from across New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. The panel will include a brief overview of the cohort's goals to support Diné language cohort members through ongoing, sustained professional learning via college courses, Summer/Winter Language Institutes and Family Immersion Camps, onsite instructional support and curriculum development. Further, the panel will showcase the DLTI cohort members' voices as language educators as they talk about their successes and challenges in meeting the goals of the DLTI project.

Sarah Henio-Adeky, UNM Graduate Level Student to DLTI . As a native and member of Ramah Navajo of the Navajo Nation, for more than 30 years, Sarah Henio-Adeky has been involved in multi-disciplinary work that required Diné language and people-oriented skills. She is bilingual and fluent in Navajo and English languages. She has expertise to provide oral interpretation, written translation and transcribe materials in Dine and English Languages. She is currently attends UNM Dine Language & Culture Teaching Institute as one of the cohort students.

Ya'at'eeh. My name is Cheryl Yazzie and I am from the Salt Clan and born for the Bitter Water People. My maternal grandparents are the Water Edge Clan and my paternal grandparents are the Bear Clan. This is how I identify myself as a Dine' woman. I live in To'hajilee, NM. I am a master's candidate in the Native American Studies program at the University of New Mexico. My focus is on language revitalization, retention, and to build first generation speakers.

Melvatha R. Chee is Tsé Nahabilnii, Kin Lichii'nii, Hooghan Łání and Áshijihí, originally from Lake Valley, New Mexico. Dr. Chee's research focuses on the linguistic analysis of Navajo child speech. Through the analysis of child speech, Chee studies how children analyze information that is packaged into a single word and what patterns are recognized at different stages of linguistic development. Dr. Chee's research interests include the first language acquisition of morphophonology and semantics, as well as the intersection between culture and linguistics. Her secondary research goal focuses on building a Navajo language database consisting of literature, conversations, narratives, and child speech for corpus-based studies. Dr. Chee is a United States Marine Corps Veteran and she maintains a connection to her culture to enrich her

Navajo language skills, knowledge and wellbeing. She is Assistant Professor of Linguistics and Director of the Navajo Language Program at the University of New Mexico

Vincent Werito, Ph.D.:

Vincent Werito is Ta'neezahnii (Tangle Clan), born for Naakai Dine'4 (Traveler's Band clan). His maternal grandfathers are Kin[ichiinii (Red House clan) and his paternal grandfathers are T0dichiin77 (Bitter Water clan). He is originally from Na'neelzhiin (Torreon, New Mexico), a rural Navajo community southwest of Cuba, New Mexico. Dr. Werito is an Associate Professor in the College of Education and Health Sciences at the University of New Mexico in the Department of Language, Literacy, and Socio-cultural Studies. His research examines the experiences of Indigenous youth in education, identifying exemplary practices in the education of Indigenous youth and using community engaged approaches to create research partnerships, community defined understandings of wellbeing, and successful aging with a health research focus.

Tiffany S. Lee (Diné/Oglala Lakota) is a Professor and Chair of Native American Studies at the University of New Mexico. Her research examines educational and culturally-based outcomes of Indigenous language immersion schools, Native youth perspectives on language reclamation, and socio-culturally centered education. Her work is published in journals, such as the Journals of Language, Identity, and Education and of American Indian Education; and in books, such as Diné Perspectives: Revitalizing and reclaiming Navajo thought. She is a former secondary social studies and language arts teacher, and a former member of the New Mexico Indian Education Advisory Council, Public Education Department.