

Curriculum Vitae

Summerdawn Klain

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Education

University of Kansas – Lawrence, KS

Master of Arts in Indigenous Studies (In Progress)

Focus Areas: Indigenous language revitalization, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation

Coursework includes Indigenous research methodologies, tribal governance, and decolonizing environmental policy

Haskell Indian Nations University – Lawrence, KS

Bachelor of Arts in American Indian Studies – Concentration in Tribal Law & Government

Recipient, American Indian College Fund Endowment Scholarship (3 consecutive years)

Capstone Research: Sustaining Indigenous Language Through Traditional and Cultural Ecological/Environmental Sustainability: A Path for Indian Country (37-page report shared in rural education outreach)

Research Experience

Capstone Research Project – Haskell Indian Nations University (2023)

- Designed and conducted an in-depth study on the role of Indigenous language in sustaining cultural and ecological practices within Indian Country
- Utilized qualitative interviews, literature review, and case studies to assess the intersection of language revitalization and environmental sustainability
- Developed educational outreach strategies to share findings with rural and Indigenous communities

EPA Student Research & Outreach – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2024)

- Co-authored and contributed to Educational and Environmental Win-Wins: EPA and Indian Country (EPA.gov)
- Engaged in research linking federal environmental programs with Indigenous education and cultural preservation efforts

Publications

Klain, S. (2024). Educational and Environmental Win-Wins: EPA and Indian Country. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/ks/educational-and-environmental-win-wins-epa-and-indian-country>

Klain, S. (2023). Sustaining Indigenous Language Through Traditional and Cultural Ecological/Environmental Sustainability: A Path for Indian Country. 37-page academic report shared through public rural education programs

Conference Presentations & Academic Seminars

TRIO-SSS “Building Young Leaders” Workshop Series, Presenter – Haskell Indian Nations University

- Delivered interactive sessions on leadership, cultural identity, and educational pathways for Native youth

Graduate School Seminars, Participant – Regional and national academic conferences

- Attended sessions on graduate research preparation, Indigenous methodologies, and scholarly publishing

Teaching & Mentorship

Lead Intern, TRIO-Student Support Services – Haskell Indian Nations University

- Provided one-on-one mentoring to first-generation and underrepresented college students
- Designed and facilitated workshops on academic success, time management, and cultural empowerment

Community Role Model – Volunteer presenter at former high school

- Encouraged Native youth to explore higher education and professional careers to strengthen their communities

Professional Experience

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Student Trainee, Public and Government Affairs

- Developed educational outreach initiatives connecting environmental policy to Indigenous community needs
- Assisted in coordinating events between EPA and tribal governments

Hall for Kansas Campaign – Student Intern

- Supported grassroots organizing efforts and voter engagement in Indigenous communities
- Assisted in developing outreach materials tailored to Native populations

Honors, Scholarships & Awards

American Indian College Fund Endowment Scholarship (3 years) – Awarded for academic excellence and leadership in Indigenous education

Recognition for contributions to community-based cultural and educational programming

Languages

Fluent in Diné (Navajo) and English

Certifications & Technical Skills

Certifications: Basic Mechanics (Forklift, Backhoe, etc.)

Skills: Indigenous research methodologies, community outreach, program coordination, event planning, academic writing, public speaking, environmental and cultural sustainability education

Service to the Academic & Indigenous Communities

- Advocate for Indigenous education and cultural preservation
- Contributor to public discussions on environmental justice in Indian Country
- Volunteer speaker and mentor in Native youth leadership programs