OPENING SESSION

Presiding

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Welcome

Elmima Johnson

We are very honored to have with us today this very impressive group of nationally known Native American educators and evaluators to help us explore issues surrounding the cultural context of educational evaluation. As you know, this workshop is a continuation of several meetings focused on capacity building that began more than two years ago. In those meetings we asked various groups to discuss with us their issues and concerns regarding educational evaluation. This is a follow-on meeting, exploring these issues from a Native American perspective.

To place this meeting in context, let's look at the actions that led NSF to initiate this series of meetings:

1) Federal agencies were required by regulation to report on the outcomes of funded activities. That is, the Congress decided to ask what we were doing with our appropriations. In a sense they legislated accountability, asking all federal agencies, including NSF, to look at the results of their actions. In doing that, NSF discovered that there were only a small number of evaluators available to help us assess our efforts. Moreover, there were even fewer professional evaluators from under-represented and minority groups.
2) Another impetus for those meetings was the national concern that our educational system continues to fail for large portions of our population. Thus we need to evaluate our efforts and find out how we can change that, so that the No Child Left Behind Act at the Department of Education will work.

We want to emphasize that we are here for your advice and counsel. We are here to listen and to learn. We encourage you to share openly and honestly with us your experience and expertise, and in turn, we promise you that we will utilize what you say to help guide our future evaluation capacity building activities.

I am going to turn the meeting over to my very able co-host, Dr. Anselm Davis, Program Director with the NSF Rural Systemic Initiative. For those few of you who don't know him, he has a Ph.D. in educational administration from Pennsylvania State University. He began his career at the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a teacher, then became an educational specialist. He has served as a Superintendent of Schools in Window Rock, Arizona. He was appointed a Congressional Fellow.

He has been a Principal Investigator with the Navajo Nation Systemic Initiative. Then he returned to Washington to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We are fortunate that we can share his expertise during his tenure in Washington.

There is another accomplishment that is not on his resume. Dr. Davis is an artist. We have a magnificent piece of his work with us that I'm going to bring to the meeting later so that you can see it.

Anselm Davis

Thank you. As stated in your introduction, I have certainly done a few things in my professional life in addition to being an artist and a singer of songs. I've ridden the white horse of success in my professional life and I have also been shot off that white horse a time or two during my professional career. I've been in the field of education, it seems, all of my life as a K-12 student, as a college student, as a teacher and then as an administrator in both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and public school systems. Throughout this time, I've been concerned about the education of our Native American children. Having the opportunity to come here to Washington, DC, with NSF, is exciting because I find myself in a position to be of service to others who are striving to make a difference in the educational lives of our Native American children.

I was excited when I was asked by Dr. Johnson to work with her in putting on this particular workshop because it brought the Rural Systemic Initiative and the Evaluation Division together to discuss important issues of evaluation and to determine who needed to be here. I was aware that two years ago, back in June 2000, NSF brought together a group of minorities for a session such as this. But, again, Native Americans fell through the cracks. In that group of people there was only one Native American individual who provided input on the issues of evaluation from a Native American perspective. I was really excited by NSF's willingness to bring just Native Americans together in order for us to talk about the issues of evaluation from our perspective and then lay things on the table in terms of what needs to be done and where we go from here. I don't see this as a one-shot workshop. Hopefully, the recommendations that come out of this workshop will lead us to other activities.

I brought an elder with me. Harry McCabe is a colleague, a friend and a fellow elder. I've asked him to be here this morning with us. He comes from Dennehotso, Arizona, and is working here in the DC area. I've asked him to set the stage spiritually for us as we talk about some very important issues and to get us started on a very good day.

Harry McCabe
Elder

Ya' at'eeh! That means "hello" in Navajo. My name is Harry McCabe. I am a member of the Navajo Nation. I am born for the *Na-kai-dine-ee* clan and born to the *Toh-di-chiini* clan. My paternal grandfathers are *Tsi-na-giinii* and *Na-kai-llpahii.* I've always kept up my spirituality at home and at work. I worked for Phillips Petroleum for 31 years as a designer and illustrator. Their headquarters are in Oklahoma where I worked until Phillips Petroleum realized that it was cheaper to contract with designers. So after that I went back to Arizona and worked as a self-promotions consultant for a number of the tribal organizations. I was driving 50,000 miles a year and traveling all over the country and couldn't carry on a relationship with anybody. I met a woman who lives in this area so I ended up out here. That's the reason I'm here. Now I'd like to say just a little prayer in Navajo to begin this workshop.

[The prayer in Navajo asked for wisdom and the strength to help us discuss the issues at hand with clarity of meaning and purpose. The prayer ended with a reminder that as we begin this workshop beauty is all around us.]

Anselm Davis

I am half Navajo and half Choctaw. So for my Navajo friends who are here, I say "*Ya' at'eeh."* To my Choctaw friend sitting across the way, "*Ha da lito,"* and good morning to everyone else.

This morning we have with us Dr. Conrad Katzenmeyer and I have the pleasure of introducing him. He is a colleague from the Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication at NSF. As the Senior Director for Evaluation in the Division, he has a varied set of responsibilities. He is the Contracting Office's Technical Representative for most of the Evaluation Program's contracts. He also serves as a Program Director for over a dozen evaluation and monitoring task orders as well as six grants. Dr. Katzenmeyer further serves as evaluation consultant to other parts of NSF and has prepared evaluation plans on request. He joined the NSF staff in January 1993, but he has been working with various types of evaluation activities for about 30 years. Let's welcome Mr. Evaluation!

Remarks

Conrad Katzenmeyer
Senior Program Director
REC/EHR/NSF

The Evaluation Program within the Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication began in 1992. I want to say just a few things about what the Evaluation Program is and what we've been doing with respect to building capacity in evaluation, which has been a theme in the Evaluation Program almost from the beginning.

The purpose of the Evaluation Program, in general, is to conduct evaluations of the 30 or so programs within Education and Human Resources, with a few others added in at times. We work under a Congressional mandate to evaluate all of our programs systematically. This has led to a large number of studies; I will mention just three of these evaluations.

Briefly, we did a study of the Young Scholars program that operated within the Directorate for a number of years. This was a small program, and our study concentrated on comparing later attainments of Young Scholar participants versus a comparable group of students who had not been in the Young Scholar Program. As a second example, we carried out a study with a particular emphasis on evaluating dissemination and implementation of the Instructional Materials Development (IMD) Program. This is one of our larger EHR programs. We did an evaluation of the Statewide Systemic Initiatives, which was the largest evaluation we have run, to date.

As our contractors conducted these evaluations, it became apparent that in order to have good information available to them from NSF-funded projects, we were going to have to provide help to Principal Investigators, to their evaluators, and to our own staff who weren't necessarily all that familiar with evaluation. Remember, this was ten years ago when evaluation wasn't the requirement in NSF that it is now.

Our first effort was *The User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation,* published in 1993. It was followed in 1997 by *The User-Friendly Handbook for Mixed Methods Evaluation* that took a more qualitative approach than the original. A new edition has just been published that combines the two previous *Handbooks* and contains additional material on the cultural context of evaluation. All three *Handbooks* were developed by Westat. We distributed about 20,000 copies of the original *User-Friendly Handbooks* and we started with a print run of 10,000 for the new *Handbook*.

In addition, it was necessary to provide some training using the *Handbooks*. We had Westat run workshops for our PI's, evaluators and staff. These were very popular. We plan to be supporting additional workshops focused around the new *User-Friendly Handbook*.

That is how we got started, both in making materials available and in doing the training to help the field. But we recognized that we needed to provide other types of assistance, as well. As one example, we knew we needed to support other kinds of training opportunities. Although the workshops for *The User-Friendly Handbooks* were successful, they only took a day and a half. So they could provide nothing more than awareness about evaluation. Hence, we have supported several other training activities. One is summer institutes run by The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University. These provide about a month-long intense experience for evaluators and aspiring evaluators. About half of the participants go on to internships during the next year in our Advanced Technological Education Program. The Evaluation Center has just conducted the 5th annual summer institute; there have been approximately 100 participants over this time. We also made a connection with the American Educational Research Association to oversee a program for the preparation of Ph.D.s in evaluation with a math/science focus. Projects were supported at Lesley College, Utah State University, the University of California-Berkeley and the University of Minnesota. These projects are now ending, and this has been a very successful program. It has turned out about 25 Ph.D.s in evaluation and has had a marked impact on the field. We are very pleased about both of these training opportunities.

In addition, we developed other materials. One is a publication called *Footprints: Strategies for Nontraditional Program Evaluation.* This was based on a conference designed to explore other approaches to evaluation that might have particular relevance to our research programs. And we had SRI International develop the On-Line Evaluation Resource Library (OERL). This is a web-based system that contains instruments, evaluation plans and evaluation reports drawn primarily from NSF-funded projects. It is on the web and is available for people to search, to borrow from, or to adapt if they want. Through OERL, anyone can take advantage of previous NSF work, and just explore alternatives if that is what they wish to do. I encourage you to take a look at it on the web at www.oerl.sri.org. I think that you will find it of interest.

About two years ago, after having encouraged these activities over a period of years, we held two conferences to sum up and reflect on what we had done. The first of these dealt with the training activities that I just summarized, and focused on how we might take advantage of what we already know and where we might go in the future. The second, organized by Elmima Johnson, dealt with the cultural context of educational evaluation, and is the direct forerunner of this conference today. In the initial conference, participants talked about how to build the cultural context of evaluation into our efforts and those of others, and how to encourage the development of minority evaluators. It was a very successful conference with many suggestions on how to move forward on this. And we have been following the recommendations that we received from both workshops to implement programs for capacity building in evaluation.

Let me end by telling you a few of the things that we are now doing. We are continuing, as I mentioned, the training activities at Western Michigan University, and we will be doing more training around the *User-Friendly Handbook*. We are now developing an evaluation website that will be designed to assist people with an interest in NSF and NSF's evaluations, or our PI's and evaluators who are looking for help in evaluation. We'll include things such as: "How does NSF think about evaluation?" And also, "What resources are available, both from us and from others?" Many materials have been developed or are now being developed and this will provide for one-stop shopping for these evaluation resources. We'll have a lot of other things, including, I hope, websites for some things that will come from this group. We are also exploring how we can provide technical assistance in evaluation. We in the Evaluation Program are not a big group and technical assistance is a very big question, but we feel we need to provide some technical assistance directly. All of the other aids are helpful, and the training is helpful, but at times we need also to give direct technical assistance.

Finally, let me mention something going on right now. For the first time, the Evaluation Program has published an evaluation solicitation via which we expect to award a significant number of grants dealing with capacity building. It is a small effort, only $3 million, and we don't expect that we will be able to make more than 5 to 10 awards, but it is a start in what we hope is a means to reach out to the field and to meet the field's needs as well as our own. So, that's what we are doing and we hope that we have a chance to work with you.

It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Judith Ramaley, the Assistant Director for the Directorate for Education and Human Resources. (For those who work in Education and Human Resources, she's the boss!) Dr. Ramaley has been with us not quite a year. She came from the Presidency of the University of Vermont and, previous to that, she had been the President of Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. She has had a long and distinguished career in academia, and has had a number of positions in research in academia and in industry over that period of time. Among her many accomplishments, she has been very active in the pursuit and establishment of successful partnerships between higher education, the K-12 schools and industry. It isn't surprising that she took a very active personal interest and leadership role in the development of the Math and Science Partnership Program, which is conducting its first competition in the 2002 fiscal year. She has also been very active on issues of the scientific workforce and school-to-work.

Greeting

Judith Ramaley
Assistant Director
EHR/NSF

There are a couple of issues that I would like to discuss with you that pick up where Conrad Katzenmeyer ended. The first important point is that we are very aware that nationally we must think differently about accountability. We need to reinterpret accountability to mean not only measuring outcomes but creating the capacity to continue to develop and improve a program once it is launched. To do this we need a new approach that links together research, evaluation, and consultancy. We are experimenting with some of this within NSF itself. For example, we are reexamining the way in which we can articulate the underlying ideas and principles that guide our own approach to our programs and how we can write our solicitations to draw attention to some of the key issues that people like yourselves can articulate to us, and have advised us to pay attention to. This workshop is very important to us.

The second point is that we are very much interested in creating new capacity within the evaluation field. We have tried to do this through the Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication, through work with the Department of Education and the National Institutes of Health, and through activities such as this workshop that bring together people to share their knowledge and strengthen the field. The most recent example is the Math and Science Partnership Program. We made special efforts in the way we designed it and in the way we are trying to reach out to different communities to include a rich and meaningful cultural context in educational strategies for science and mathematics. I have a list of some of the ways we are trying to reach out to Native American communities. First of all, the program solicitation encourages tribal colleges to participate in one of these partnerships, all of which are designed to bring higher education, K-12 and the community together in various ways that will encourage a success for every child in science and math from PreK through completion of high school. We use the language: “PreK-12 local, tribal, regional or state educational system.”

We have developed a number of outreach efforts to engage Native Americans. One of them was our Rural Systemic Initiative meeting in February 2002. Another was the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) National meeting, which was also in February. We had two national workshops that occurred about a month later, and we had some participation by representatives from tribal colleges. We received 380 letters of intent, about 15 of which included a tribal college or university and/or a PreK-12 tribal institution.

We have been actively working to get representatives of tribal colleges on review panels. I hope that you will take this very seriously. Please let Anselm Davis know of people that you believe should be on those review panels so that we have the benefit of their expertise.

The “Dear Colleague letter” is what I particularly want to draw to your attention. We are doing something a little different in this Math and Science Partnership Program, which is aligned with the No Child Left Behind policy document promulgated by the transition team that prepared the way for President Bush to take office. What we want to do is to create a very different intellectual support for the individuals involved in mathematics and science education, and also to create capacity for those sites to work with each other. We want to share ideas and experiences, provide very important support at certain moments when only a few can really understand what you are going through, and to develop answers to the “now what do I do?” question that comes up from

time to time in any large complicated partnership. We are seeking to encourage from the research and evaluation and consulting communities proposals for designing ways to integrate these three approaches to providing support for a partnership. On the basis of what we receive, we will then know how to use the dollars that we've set aside in the Math and Science Partnership Program to support networks that we have put together. We hope that some of you and your colleagues will submit proposals for developing this kind of integrative strategy, to ensure that the partnerships are supported by an enriched cultural base. We are soliciting design studies or empirical studies that will link research, evaluation, technical assistance/consulting together in a much more meaningful way, drawing upon the shared knowledge of educational reform, some of which is tacit and some of which is published. Our hope, of course, is that we will end up with a very wide range of approaches that will draw on many different perspectives.

The idea behind what we're doing now and what we have been doing for some time is this: not only does EHR itself want to model a more integrative and consultative pattern of working with people like yourselves, but we want to create through the actions we take more capacity for you to interact with each other, and thus advise us on the best strategies for approaching these complex and very important questions. At one of the very first meetings that I had after coming to NSF in the summer of 2001 I had the chance to meet with several people from the tribal college environment and to find out what it means to teach science and mathematics in a culturally embedded way, that for me was a joyful experience. What I learned was enough to convince me that we have to adapt our evaluation strategies to recognize the need for these elements to be present. For example, it is important to understand the cultural tradition that an entire community supports every student and that every student will bring to the classroom and to the learning experience a cultural knowledge that needs to be recognized and connected in effective ways to the learning of science and math, and the use of technology. The traditional approaches to evaluation would not notice this at all. Therefore, as we work toward new instruments, new approaches and ways of thinking about these challenges, we need something that will capture what is meaningful to each community, and what is meaningful to the people who are leaders in those communities, and to the teachers, and to the students themselves and their families.

One of the foci we have for the Math and Science Partnership Program is to support the next generation of large-scale reform. We can begin to approach answers to four critical questions in a way that will capture the special context of environments in which this learning will take place. These questions are:

1. How do you adapt what is already known about teaching science and mathematics to your own situation? In particular, how do you adapt to the cultural context, however complex it is, of a particular school or a particular community? We really need to understand adaptation. I'm hoping that coming out of this kind of interaction and those to follow it we will have some way of looking at this question. One reason things don't easily move from one place to another is that they don't make sense at the new place unless they are changed to reflect the realities of the new environment.
2. How do you go from a promising small-scale something to a successful large-scale something? That is, how can we achieve scalability? How do you do this in a way that retains cultural knowledge, particularly when the move to scale includes different communities of interest that need to see themselves and this material in such a way as to not create a dissonance but to create a greater sense of common purpose and identity. This concern is very important to us.

3. How do you sustain this work over time? When I first came to NSF, I thought that meant, "What do you do after NSF goes home?" I've since begun to realize that this is not what sustainability means at all. The instabilities in our educational institutions are extraordinary. The transfer of leadership at the principal or superintendent level or other areas of leadership in a system are often so rapid that we barely get names on our electronic rolodex before we have to write in a new name. Teachers entering the field will probably be engaged in some other kind of employment within 5 years. I don't know how this works in tribal environments. I don't have specific data, but it would be helpful for us to know, and also for the community to know. Students move around within the space of any given year—40% of the students may be new to that classroom or that school. Policy makers shift what they think is important and how they want to define accountability. All of these issues affect sustainability along with the fact that anything that is devoted to improvement is considered discretionary, and it's very hard to find resources for it.
4. How do you build a strong case that will encourage others to undertake this same journey? How do you build the culture of evidence that gives people confidence that we are not experimenting on their children? At the same time, it's important to acknowledge we don't know what works.

How do we think about these four big issues—the adaptability question, scalability, sustainability, and the culture of evidence—all of which depend upon a strong, culturally valid context that supports the values, purposes and expectations of the people who are working together in a particular area? I read one of the workshop papers and it raised many important questions about what we should be measuring and who should do this measurement, who gets to define what is important and what isn't, and who gets to decide if we are approaching these goals. We need a broad repertoire of approaches in order to capture this cultural context. What we are trying to do at NSF is to broaden participation in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics educational environment, and advance the science and technology capability of the workforce as a whole. We cannot do this unless we understand how to ensure that people of all backgrounds are welcomed, that they are supported, and that they have every opportunity to learn in a way that is meaningful and useful to them.

Your thoughts, observations, participation in the review process and recommendations can help us understand the multicultural contexts for evaluation. We hope that you will participate in some of our solicitations. Your ideas will not only strengthen our ability to achieve these goals, which we are trying to incorporate into everything that NSF does, but will also contribute to the nation in ways that will last for many years to come. Thank you for being willing to come here, for contributing to our work and for letting us contribute to yours. I look forward to perhaps a short debriefing following the workshop so that I can then use it with proper attribution in trying to test every single program, first within my own Directorate, EHR, and secondly, within NSF as a whole, because EHR is looked to as a guide, a consultant and/or an advisor for other Directorates. Today, for example, I'm meeting with two advisory committees of other Directorates, Biological Sciences and Geological Sciences, and they want me to talk about diversity. Having a chance to hear from such a wonderful group of people, seeking your advice and your counsel in how to conduct our business will make us stronger. With that I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you. Have a good day.

Anselm Davis

As Dr. Ramaley mentioned, I am putting together a list of Native Americans who may have the opportunity to participate in one of the upcoming Math and Science Partnership (MSP) panels. If anyone here would like to be a panel member or know other individuals who might want to be on the panel, please give me your name or the name of the other person. I will need your occupation, e-mail address, mailing address and telephone number. I will then be able to get your name on the list. Different individuals who are putting panels together will be taking a look at the list as they determine the makeup of their panels. They like to have a mix of people from universities, from the schools, from industry, etc. We've been very fortunate so far to be able to get one or more Indian individuals on a couple of panels that have been put together. In fact, the latest individual who has been put on a panel is Tim Begaye. So, we've got a future panelist with us today.

You've heard a couple of times this morning that the State, the Urban and the Rural Systemic Initiatives are coming to a close. This spring, we funded the last five Rural Systemic Initiatives (RSI), a couple of which were tribal colleges. From this point on we will be overseeing and managing those initiatives until they are phased out. The way I like to look at the Systemic Initiatives is like a big wave that is coming to an end, coming up to the shore. It's not quite there yet, but it's getting there. We now have a new big wave, the MSP program, that is gaining a lot of energy and a lot of force.

Through the Systemic Initiatives, and especially the Rural Systemic Initiatives, a number of significant things have occurred. For the first time a tribal entity — the Navajo Nation — received funds for its own RSI. Tribal colleges and other entities receiving RSI funds have helped many district schools increase student achievement scores in mathematics and science. In addition, Native Americans have been given an opportunity to further develop their capacity to manage and run their own programs. One of the more important things that I think that has occurred at the teacher level, building principal level, Superintendent and School Board level—including tribal entities and tribal colleges—is the acquisition of new knowledge and development of leadership skills. This has given individuals involved in the RSI the opportunity to be more influential at the teacher, administrative and tribal levels as to how our children are to be educated. I think that's been a real significant impact that the Rural Systemic Initiatives have made. The other one is that, in pushing the concept of collaboration and working together, tribes, tribal colleges, schools and others have embraced the concept that it takes a village to educate a child. In the development of that partnership of working together with state departments, school districts and tribal entities, individuals involved with the RSI have been developing the capacity and the skills for partnering with one another.

During the past decade, we have been learning how to ride the NSF Rural Systemic Initiative wave. There were times when we lost our balance and were tossed into the wave. But, by getting back on the RSI surfboard and riding the RSI wave over and over again, we developed better skills. The Systemic Initiatives, especially for Native Americans, have helped RSI sites prepare for the next major wave, the Math and Science Partnership program. Hopefully we have developed enough knowledge and skills to be able to partner with other entities who are developing proposals.

Another dimension of our RSI effort is knowing what it is that they are really doing and how well they are performing. This is where evaluation comes into play. But who evaluates? And with what instruments? And what are the other evaluation issues confronting programs with large numbers of Native American children (e.g., the dearth of Native American individuals who are in the field of evaluation and individuals who don't know that much about Native Americans)? To address the issues of evaluation from a Native American perspective, evaluation and the RSI began working together. Concerns regarding such issues bring us together today. Now we have the opportunity to grapple with the issues relevant to evaluation, to surface them and amplify them and then address them and translate them into activities that go beyond this particular workshop. That is what we are asking you to do today.

Eric Hamilton
Interim Division Director
REC/EHR/NSF

It is your turn to talk. The only reason I would consider it worthy to interrupt that process is to make sure that you are aware of funding opportunities. So I am going to take just a few moments to go over them with you. You've had several welcomes, so you should consider yourselves extremely welcome. We are delighted to be sponsoring this workshop. Much of what we are trying to do in the Division is to build evaluation capacity. We are right now in the process of reviewing the first round of preliminary proposals for the program announcement NSF 02-034, with formal proposals due in June. These proposals required submission of preliminary proposals by a deadline that has passed. Please keep this in mind, but pick up a copy for later reference. There is a proposal that you can apply to now, with a deadline date of June 17th. You know that right now NSF, especially the Education and Human Resources Directorate, is deeply involved in the No Child Left Behind effort. It's a $160 million program for NSF this year, which is a large program for NSF. Through the MSP, the agency will be supporting partnerships with primary, secondary and tertiary institutions to promote a broad span of organized efforts to improve mathematics and science learning. This is a flagship program of the administration and, independent of where anyone falls politically, all can rally in word and deed around the rhetoric of "leave no child behind." The administration is putting a significant amount of money in NSF for the formation of partnerships to help spur achievement in science and mathematics by all PreK-12 students. A significant fraction of that program is set aside to develop and stimulate networks of evaluators and researchers and provide technical assistance to help partnership programs around the country.

We are building in real time a knowledge base on how these partnerships work. We are in the process of anticipating the new set of formative evaluations as these partnerships proceed. This is serious business, especially in the sense that if we do not build a useable knowledge base as we go forward and if the program accordingly then does not succeed, we will have been much worse off than if we had not tried the program at all. As part of that learning process, therefore, we are inviting proposals from evaluators and researchers for technical assistance, to design formative evaluations and research activities that focus on the Math and Science Partnership. Those proposals are due June 17th and if you go on the NSF Website and look up NSF 02-103, you will see the basic parameters. This gives you a sense of the direction in which NSF is going in its Education and Human Resources Directorate, involving the No Child Left Behind initiative. Beyond giving the canonical welcome, "we are glad you are here," I want to alert you to this opportunity and hope that you will share this with colleagues and broaden the participation that we might otherwise expect. Thank you very much.