Sean Soukkala, an Ojibwe student at Carlton High School, is this issue's Student Voice. See the story on page 6.

“When I go home from this leadership camp, I swear I will try my hardest and do my best and push myself to ‘be the change you wish to see in the world.’”

National Youth Leadership Training participant, Sandstone, Minnesota, July 2004

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Expanding Opportunities
Supporting American Indian Youth in Transition

Welcome to Expanding the Circle News, a newsletter for and about American Indian students and those who support them in the transition and retention process in high school and college. ETC News highlights transition activities and projects for American Indian youth.

Currently, staff at the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota work on four federally funded projects related to American Indian youth and adults listed below.

Outreach to Empower: Promoting the Successful Transition of American Indian Youth

Outreach to Empower is designed to support academic development, increase school engagement and retention, promote goal orientation toward future postsecondary training and employment, and increase leadership skills of American Indian students through participation in service-learning within and outside of their communities.

Outreach to Empower is in its second of three years of federal funding. Project partners include the National Youth Leadership Council and four American Indian education programs in Minnesota (Carlton Public Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools, Osseo Area Schools, and Eci Nompa Woonspe’ Charter School).

Project Highlights
Outreach to Empower students completed a presentation on leadership skills and transition planning at the Minnesota Johnson O’Malley Conference in April 2004.

Students from the Outreach to Empower project sites attended the National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) where they were able to incorporate transition skills learned throughout the school year and develop their ability to lead and serve in their own communities.

Expanding Opportunities
continued on page 5
Community Decision-Making Quilt  ETC Mini Classroom

Each issue of ETC News will highlight an activity from the Expanding the Circle: Respecting the Past, Preparing for the Future curriculum. The following is a lesson from the unit on developing community and team building skills.

**Student Outcome**
Student will make a personal decision to support the program community.

**Time Frame**
30-45 minutes

**Size of Group**
Large or small group

**Materials Needed**
- Colored construction paper
- Large sheet of butcher block paper
- Markers
- Scissors
- Glue
- Masking tape

**Before You Begin**
- Label a large sheet of butcher block paper “Community Decision Making Quilt” and tape it on the wall at a height all can reach.
- Depending on time, different art materials could be used including real quilting materials.

**Directions**
1. Ask each student to think of one decision they will make to support the “community” (this group) during the program. This is a commitment they will make to the group that will support the efforts of the program. Examples may be that students will: be on time, be respectful listeners, share with the group. Tell students they are going to each create a quilt piece by designing their decision and fitting it in with the others’ so a community quilt is created.
2. Give students colored construction paper, markers, scissors, and glue to work with to create their individual quilt square.
3. Remind students as they create their quilt piece that the end result must be that all the pieces fit together to make one community quilt on the butcher block paper on the wall.
4. Ask students to attach their quilt pieces to the butcher block. They may need to adjust their pieces, color in the butcher block between pieces, or other create steps to make the quilt a cohesive community quilt as the end project.

**Discussion**
1. How did you decide what your decision would be?
2. Was it hard to think of a community decision instead of a personal decision? Why or why not?
3. What challenges, if any, did you have making the community quilt fit together as one product? What kind of teamwork went into the process?
4. What is the importance of this activity as it relates to decision-making? Are there any built in supports in a community that help individuals in the community? What might they be?

**Closure**
Journal/Community Circle — Have each student restate their personal decision for supporting the group and how they think their decisions will impact the group as a whole.

Participants working on decision-making quilt.
Participation in service-learning projects provides transition-aged students the opportunity to strengthen their communities through service while experiencing positive personal growth. Through service-learning, students develop skills such as goal-setting and self-advocacy.

Service-learning is an educational method that involves students in challenging tasks that meet genuine community needs and requires the application of knowledge, skills, and systematic reflection on the experience.

**Goal-Setting Skills**

Students who participate in service-learning learn to set and achieve multiple goals, on both personal and group levels. Individual service-learning participants must set personal goals within the context of the group’s work. The group must also set project goals like establishing a project timeline, forming partnerships, and raising funds. Finally, the group must set goals for the project given the community in which they are serving. Instead of intending to “fix” the community, the service-learning group must determine a genuine need through a community needs assessment.

Students must also set separate goals for the service and learning components of a project. Students learn to develop goals that are consistent with the purpose of the service and why the service is important to them and their community.

Students’ learning goals serve as a constant reminder of what they should take away from the service-learning project. Learning takes place at all levels of the project, including planning and preparation, implementation, evaluation, and celebration. Constant reflection throughout all of these stages ensures that students are able to identify and assess where they are in the learning process.

“I learned that everyone is not the same — everyone has different opinions. It is up to us to respect them even if we don’t agree.”

NYLT participant

**Self-Advocacy Skills**

Students participating in service-learning projects also gain valuable self-advocacy skills through their involvement in all compo-
nents of the project. All service-learning projects utilize a “youth voice”, meaning that the projects are completely student-driven. Service-learning empowers students because they are in charge of their own learning. They are involved in each component of the project and set their own goals and learning objectives for both the service and their subsequent learning. Students become fully invested in the project and are often emotionally involved because of the impact within their own communities. When students are given the opportunity to fully engage in a project from the beginning and see it through to the end, it becomes something in which they take great pride and ownership. This results in a higher level of commitment to their own learning as well as a sense of accomplishment.

“With the right motivation, service and leadership can change your community or reservation for the better.”

NYLT participant

Impact of Service-Learning

By having a youth voice driving each project, students learn to develop and utilize positive self-advocacy skills. For many, a service-learning project becomes their first opportunity to practice positive self-advocacy. Students learn the need to take initiative to finish tasks and accomplish goals. Students learn how to prepare themselves for situations where they might need to ask for assistance. Having project materials organized ensures student success when self advocating to accomplish their goals.

Students from all project sites have participated in service-learning projects throughout the school year. While attending the National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) this past summer, students continued to plan and improve on these projects as well as develop new projects. Students were able to incorporate transition skills learned throughout the school year to enhance their ability to lead and serve in their own communities.

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**Future Bound: Promoting Post-secondary Transition Opportunities for American Indian Youth**

The *Future Bound* Project facilitates postsecondary transition for American Indian high school students in Minnesota. Project services include training and technical assistance for Indian Education secondary and postsecondary staff to implement transition programs during the summer and throughout the school year.

*Future Bound* is in its fourth and final year of federal funding. Project partners include the Indian Education Division of Minnesota’s Department of Education and the four Dakota Communities of Minnesota: Lower Sioux, Prairie Island, Shakopee, and Upper Sioux.

**Project Highlight**

The *Future Bound* project completed its fourth year with a three-day trip to Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center in Lanesboro, Minnesota. Students participated in a variety of challenges including a high ropes course. The outdoor activities challenged the students to work together and develop their communication and problem-solving skills.

Future Bound participant on Eagle Bluff Challenge Course.

*Expanding Opportunities* continued on page 7
Me and my friends are stuck in this one place on the reservation and we hadn’t been out into the world. The world is so much bigger [than where we live]. Instead of being stuck in this one place, we got to go down to the Cities for the week and it opened our minds to everything. We didn’t know what the lifestyle was like for people that lived in Oklahoma or New York or all over the place. It made us appreciate the world more.

What did you learn at the NYLT summer program that will help you in your transition from high school to the next step?
I learned to trust other people that you don’t really know and open yourself up to them. The only way you can get to know other people is by going up to them and talking to them. If you do it, then most other people will do it too — sometimes they just need that extra step to start.

I learned to make new friends, go somewhere, and not have to feel like an outsider. If you make new friends, they’ll be able to help you in return when you need help... don’t go out into the world just for yourself.

I learned through the camp that it’s OK to accept your mistakes — you can always learn from them. Before, I would always kick myself over and over again — why did I do that? Sometimes you feel like you don’t want to try anymore, but then if you think about what happens in the future — you think...alright then, I better just keep on going.

Sean presenting at NYLT Culture Night.

Sean Soukkala, an Ojibwe student at Carlton High School, participates in the Outreach to Empower project (see page 2). He completed the National Youth Leadership Training at Sandstone, Minnesota this past July. Recently, we had the opportunity to visit with Sean about his experience with the Outreach to Empower program and the summer National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT).

What would like to do after you complete high school?
I know that I want to go to college. After college, I want to travel to places that my mom or my family hasn’t been able to go to. I want to be able to make money and send that home. I can do a lot of stuff — I draw in my spare time and I’ve thought about studying wildlife biology.

What is the most important thing for you right now as a high school student?
Right now — making a lot of “good” friends. I don’t want to feel like I’m over here with my Native American clique and over there are the popular kids. I don’t care who’s who — I just want to talk to everybody. I don’t want to feel pushed away from a certain group.

I also want to get through high school and get good grades, of course.

What have you enjoyed about the Outreach to Empower project?
All of the activities that we did at first got us excited for what was ahead — what was to come. We knew this was going to be a blast. It’s all the projects that we do — working together and trusting each other — stuff that we really never do when we’re out in public.

What was the best part of the NYLT summer program for you?
It was fun actually — it was really fun. It’s like a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I learned more in those seven days than I would have learned in seven months.
Tips for Transition

Becoming an Independent Student

Using this simple checklist, students of all ages can assure that they have completed their assignments correctly while practicing self-advocacy and independent work skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is my name on the paper?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do all my sentences begin with a capital letter?</td>
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<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do all my sentences end with the correct punctuation?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did I answer all of the questions?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did I ask for extra help if I needed it?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did I ask for extra time if I needed it?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did I understand the assignment?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Did I finish all of the assignment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did I follow my teacher’s directions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Did I have my assignment done on time?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Did I turn it in on time?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: M. E. McConnell, “Self-monitoring, cueing, recording, and managing: Teaching students to manage their own behavior,” Teaching Exceptions!

Pathways to Possibilities: Supporting the Transition of American Indian High School Youth

Pathways to Possibilities offers American Indian students the opportunity to gain leadership skills while they explore the choices that are available to them after high school graduation. The program is designed to introduce students to career and college choices via a variety of program opportunities including job shadowing and internships at local businesses, enrollment in college courses, and participation in service-learning projects.

Pathways is heading into its third and final year of federal funding. Project partners include Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, the National Youth Leadership Council, Cloquet Public Schools, the Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, St. Paul Public Schools, American Indian Parent Committees, local American Indian businesses and organizations, the Ando-Giikendaasowin Native American Math and Science Programs at General College at the University of Minnesota, and the American Indian Science & Engineering Society.

Project Highlight

Students from Pathways project sites have participated in service-learning projects throughout the school year addressing issues of hunger and homelessness, community development, nature preservation, American Indian education, drug and alcohol prevention, needs of the elderly, and youth mentorship.

Students attended the Ando-Giikendaasowin Native American Math and Science Summer Camp held on college campuses at the University of Minnesota and Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.

Expanding Opportunities
continued on page 10
A survey has recently been developed to administer to students both before and after their participation with the Expanding the Circle curriculum. The Expanding the Circle curriculum was developed as a result of summer and school year transition activities for American Indian youth throughout Ojibwe and Dakota reservations and communities in Minnesota. The curriculum is designed to offer a structured process and a set of culturally relevant activities that will facilitate successful transition for American Indian high school students.

The survey assesses students in nine curricular areas: leadership and advocacy, communication and relationships, emotions, goals and planning, career preparation, college preparation, community and culture, communication, and self-management.

The survey was given to 30 students in the Outreach to Empower program at the beginning of the project, in February 2004. Findings include —

- Students appear to be aware of what goals and expectations are and how their emotions affect their work.
- Students lack knowledge of key terms and concepts such as “transition”, “self-advocacy”, and characteristics of “leadership”.
- Students are also unsure about specific skill sets such as completing job interviews and applying to college and financial aid.
- Students showed a high level of awareness of what goals and expectations are and they indeed have goals for themselves.
- Students seemed less sure about the processes that get them from setting those goals and objectives to actually achieving them.
- Students appeared to be aware of their own communication strategies and able to identify people in their lives who can support them in the transition process.

The 30 Outreach to Empower students surveyed vary in age (13-19) and grade (8th-12th). All but five of them attend a traditional high school and twenty-nine of them have at least one American Indian parent. Looking at the reasons these students are participating in the program, it is evident that nearly half (43 percent) of them are taking it to prepare for life after high school and because they are required to take it.

After analyzing these results, a revised survey was developed for use with students involved in Expanding the Circle curriculum activities.

Project staff is interested in sites that are currently implementing or planning to use the curriculum to pilot the survey. Pre- and post-participation data will be evaluated to help you measure the progress of your students. Results will also help project staff make improvements to the curriculum and survey. If interested, contact —

Jean E. Ness
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota
15 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Dr. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-5322
nessx008@umn.edu

Report prepared by Karen Febey, project staff. ■
Dear Dennis,

I’m going to be a junior in high school and I’m positive that I want to go to college. I’ve heard that it’s really expensive and I don’t know how I’m going to pay for it. Do you have any suggestions?

Sincerely,

Joe

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Joe,

I just want to start out by congratulating you on your decision to go to college! It’s a big decision and one of the most intimidating parts is trying to figure out how to pay for college. Many students don’t know how or where to look to find scholarships. I will be truthful in saying that scholarship searching is hard work, but it is work that definitely pays off in the end. Here are a few resources and tips for looking for grant and scholarship money for college.

My number one resource is www.fastweb.com. They are the largest scholarship search engine and boast over 1,000,000 grant and scholarship opportunities. Visit the Web site and take some time to fill out your personal profile as completely as you can. They will continually e-mail you scholarship opportunities that you are qualified for. I filled out a profile for myself recently and received over 30 opportunities with my first response alone! The folks at Fastweb will also remind you of the dates when scholarship applications are due so you never miss an application deadline.

My second resource is very general, but I suggest searching the Internet as a whole. Simply log onto www.google.com and type in the word “scholarships” and see what comes up. You can do a general search or narrow it down with more specific search criteria. You’ll be surprised at what you find.

Finally, I encourage you to seek out anyone with knowledge in financial aid. One of the best resources is your high school guidance counselor. Make an appointment to sit down and discuss your goals with him or her and continue to visit them often. If your counselor is unavailable, try talking to friends or family members that have gone to college or are currently in college. More than likely, they had the same questions then that you have now and if they don’t have the answers, I bet they know someone who does.

This may sound contradictory but it really does make perfect sense – it’s never too early to start, and it’s never too late to start. If you are a sophomore in high school, start looking around to see what’s out there and start becoming familiar with the college application process. Practice writing essays and answers to specific questions. If you are a senior in high school, you can start applying for scholarships and grants immediately. Like I said before, it is often intimidating and a lot of work, so try and do a little bit each day – try setting aside 15 minutes a day to work on your scholarship applications.

Good luck with everything. I hope I was able to help!

Dennis

Are you wondering about what to do after high school? Do you have questions about college or careers? If so, ask Dennis. Remember, it hasn’t been that long since he’s been there himself.

Submit your questions to —

Ask Dennis
ETC News
6 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Dr. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455

E-mail: etcnews@umn.edu

We hope to hear from you soon!
The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.service-learning.org
This Web site provides up-to-date information on educational and political initiatives that are being used in service-learning programs for K-12 schools, colleges and universities, communities, and American Indian tribes.

Learn and Serve
www.learnandserve.org
Produced by the Corporation for National and Community Service, this site provides background information on service-learning, resources for programs, research materials, service news and grant opportunities. It focuses on a guide to service-learning for adults, teachers, parents, after-school providers, and community based organizations called “Students in Service to America.” It also connects users to various national service programs including scholarships, service awards, and recognition awards for programs that excel at instituting service-learning.

Service Learn
www.servicelearn.com
This Web site contains a guidebook and journal package (available for purchase) to help educators introduce service-learning to middle and high school students. The guide provides programming ideas and information to adults; the reflection journal is for students to use while they work on their service-learning projects.

Reflections From a Different Journey: What Adults with Disabilities Wish All Parents Knew
This book of essays gives a glimpse inside the lives and minds of people with disabilities offering life-affirming lessons as well as suggestions for parents and family members of people with disabilities.

Understanding Disabilities in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities: Toolkit Guide
This toolkit provides information about disabilities, American Indian tribes, and resources as well as suggestions for improving services, providing protections, and tapping resources in local tribal communities for people with disabilities.

The toolkit focuses on health care, independent living, education, and vocational rehabilitation and provides resources on housing and transportation.

Strengthening the Capacity of American Indians Through the Development of a Four-Year, Small Business/Entrepreneurship Degree
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDLTCC) and the Institute on Community Integration are working together in this five-year project to develop a four-year degree entitled Gidakiimanaan: An Interdisciplinary Degree in Sustainability with emphasis areas in Small Business-Entrepreneurship, Environmental Science, Renewable Energy, and American Indian Studies.

Project Highlight
A recent graduate of the two-year Small Business/Entrepreneurship program at FDLTCC, Dylan Olson, has become the general manager of the newly opened gas station/convenience store — Fond du Lac Gas & Grocery — on the Fond du Lac Reservation. This is the first tribally owned retail business on the Fond du Lac Reservation (other than gaming). It is one of a growing number of businesses on the reservation.
Expanding the Circle: Respecting the Past, Preparing for the Future
by J. Ness and J. Huisken

ETC is a transition curriculum for American Indian youth that offers culturally relevant activities to facilitate the successful transition from high school to adult life. The curriculum package includes one Onaakonan System (OS), a personal portfolio system designed to help students plan for their future in an organized and structured way. The curriculum includes activities that lend themselves to the use of the OS. (2002)

Cost: $55.00 for each curriculum package
$7.00 for each additional OS

ETC Sweatshirts and T-Shirts

The fire keeper shield artwork used for the t-shirts and sweatshirts was created by Turtle Heart, an Ojibway artist who comes from the River Otter Clan. Sweatshirts are 90% pre-shrunk cotton and 10% polyester; available in sizes adult M–XXXL. The T-shirts are 100% pre-shrunk cotton; available in sizes adult M–XXXXL.

Cost: T-Shirt $20
Sweatshirts $30

ETC Product Order Form

Ship to (please type or print clearly):

Name ____________________________________________________________
Organization _____________________________________________________
Street Address ______________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ____________ Zip ____________
Phone __________________________________ Fax _______________________
E-mail ____________________________________________________________

Send completed order form and check or purchase order (payable to the University of Minnesota) to: Publications Office, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Prices include shipping and handling. Orders are sent via USPS and usually arrives within 7-10 days. To arrange faster shipping, contact the Publications Office at 612-624-4512 or publications@icimail.umn.edu.

* Minnesota residents add 6.5% sales tax. Minneapolis residents add 7% sales tax. Minnesota tax-exempt organizations (other than public schools) must enclose a copy of their tax exemption certificate.

Expanding the Circle Curriculum (includes one OS Filing System)
$55 x _______ = $ ___________

Additional OS Filing Systems
$7 x _______ = $ ___________

Sweatshirts: ______M ______XL ______XXXL
________L ______XXL
$30 x _______ = $ ___________

T-Shirts: ______M ______XL ______XXXL
________L ______XXL ______XXXXL
$20 x _______ = $ ___________

Subtotal $ __________
Sales Tax (MN only)* $ __________
TOTAL $ __________
We are
Native American, European American, Latin American, African American, and Asian American.

We are
People of pride, strength, honor, and integrity.

We are
People who show leadership in
Our city, Our state, Our country, Our world, Our community.

We fight
for freedom, equality, justice.

We do this when we unite as one.

We are
The change.

— Sherman Joseph, 15 and Laura Potter, 16