

Arizona Law Leads the Way in Indian and Indigenous Peoples' Law

Indian and Indigenous peoples' issues are increasingly at the forefront of national and international affairs. Less than three weeks after President Obama took office, the First Lady paid an official visit to the Department of Interior and announced that the President would soon be appointing a senior policy advisor for Native American Affairs to his White House Staff. Less than two years ago, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. These activities are the result of decades of struggle by attorneys, policy makers, and academics who have labored tirelessly to draw attention to the demands of indigenous people, to hold governments accountable for their actions and their promises, and to assist tribal governments build the legal and institutional structures necessary for successful self-governance. *Arizona Law's* faculty, students, and graduates are actively involved in these efforts. Indeed, Wizipan Garriott, who served as First Americans Public Liaison on President Obama's transition team, is a graduate of the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law.

Over the last decade, *Arizona Law* has become the pre-eminent place for the study and Indian and Indigenous peoples' law. Students from all over the world travel to Tucson to learn from and work with the faculty at the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program. Those faculty members literally "wrote the book" in all three areas of the field - federal Indian law, tribal law, and international indigenous peoples law. In addition, all IPLP faculty members actively work with tribal governments and indigenous peoples, putting theory into practice and using law to make a difference in peoples' lives.

In Federal Indian Law:

- Professor Williams, IPLP's Director, is a co-author of the leading casebook, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law*.
- Professor Melissa L. Tatum, IPLP's Co-Director, is a contributing author to Cohen's *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* (the leading treatise), and is widely recognized as a leading scholar and lecturer on cross-jurisdictional enforcement of protection orders.

The breadth and depth of *Arizona Law's* commitment to Indian law also extends beyond the IPLP faculty. Indian and Indigenous issues are incorporated into other classes; Professor Barbara Atwood, who writes extensively on child custody and family law issues, is one of the nation's leading scholars on the Indian Child Welfare Act.

In Tribal Law:

- Many IPLP faculty serve (or have served) as tribal judges, including Distinguished Jurist in Residence, Dr. Ray Austin, who served on the Navajo Nation Supreme Court for sixteen years.
- Professor Tatum created a method for indexing, digesting, and publishing tribal court opinions and served as general editor of the eight volume *Mvskoke Law Reporter* and also edited volume eight of the *Navajo Reporter*, as well as the second editions of volumes 1 and 2 of the *Navajo Reporter*.

In addition, IPLP students, under the supervision of the IPLP faculty members, especially Professor Robert Hershey, IPLP Clinical Director, have worked on a number of projects, ranging from drafting tribal codes and constitutions to clerking for tribal judges to representing clients in tribal court.

In international Indigenous people law:

- Professor S. James Anaya wrote the leading treatise in the field, *Indigenous Peoples in International Law*, and currently serves as the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the human rights and the fundamental freedoms of Indigenous Peoples.
- With the assistance of students in the program, IPLP faculty have litigated landmark cases before both the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court on Human Rights.