

## Rooted In the Mountains Program Schedule

Rooted in the mountains is an annual symposium that intersects traditional/local knowledge with health and environmental issues. Participants will go away with a new sense of urgency and tools to use in valuing our common ground.

This year's theme is ***duyuk' dv' l***, an important and essential Cherokee concept that translates to "the correct way" or the "right way." Cherokee culture attuned itself to its understanding of the science that is life. Cherokees understood that life is at its core, an energy that moves forward. The law of that science grows out of the knowledge of systems working together in a correct or right way. ***Duyuk' dv' l*** is the natural order of things, it is a way, a road, that is Native Science which brings meaning to life and purpose in how we interact. It is a consciousness of being that is rooted in where you come from, which determines who you are. "We believe that life is a gift and we take care of it out of gratitude. Being disconnected is contrary to ***duyuk' dv' l*** because the 'correct way' is being connected to all else and all others." (T. Belt)

Meeting to be held at the Blue Ridge Conference Room on main campus.

### Tentative Agenda

#### DAY ONE

##### Thursday, September 28, 2017

Registration

Sign up to car pool for field trip to Kituwah on Friday a.m. 8:30

Welcome and Announcements, Mae Claxton (Dept. of English, WCU) 9:00

Cherokee Anthem

Opening Prayer/Cherokee Blessing 9:15

Introduction to ***duyuk' dv' l*** and *It's Application for Community Health*

Thomas N. Belt (Cherokee Nation, Cherokee Language Program, WCU)

and Lisa J. Lefler, Ph.D. (Cherokee Studies, WCU)

Break 10:00 -10:30

Healing Native Communities through Indigenous Paradigms 10:30 -11:30

Joe Gone, Ph.D. (Gros Ventre)

Q & A 11:30-12:00

Lunch - On Your Own 12:30 -1:30 pm

The Path to Tohi' : A Personal Journey 1:30- 2:30

Mr. Kevin Jackson (EBCI)

NIEHS: Valuing Traditional Knowledge 2:30-3:30  
Symma Finn, Ph.D. (National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences)

The Smithsonian Institution: Valuing Traditional Knowledge 3:30-4:30  
Gwyneira Isaac (Smithsonian Institution Museum of Natural History)

Q & A 4:30-5:00

Dismiss

Reception at FPAC Gallery on Campus 5:30-7:00

## **DAY TWO**

**Friday, September 29, 2017**

Registration 8:30

Field Trip to Kituwah Mound, Ela, NC- meet behind UC 9:00-11:00  
Brett Riggs, Ph.D. (Sequoyah Professor, WCU), TJ Holland (EBCI), &  
Thomas N. Belt (Cherokee Nation, Cherokee Language Program, WCU)

Lunch - On Your Own 12:00-1:00

Cherokee Relationship with Plants 1:00-2:00  
Jim Veteto, Ph.D., (WCU), and  
Onita Bush (EBCI elder)

New Kituwah Academy 2:00-3:00  
Hartwell Francis, Ph.D. (New Kituwah Academy)

Working with Knowledge Keepers 3:00-4:00  
Tim Powell, Ph.D. (U. Penn) & TJ Holland (EBCI)

Healing through Cosmological Narratives: An Affective Neuroscience Proposition  
Enrique Gomez, Ph.D. (WCU) 4:00-5:00

Final Q & A

Dismiss

### Information on Speakers:

Thomas N. Belt (Cherokee Nation) - Tom Belt is a Cherokee Language Instructor at WCU. He is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and a fluent Cherokee speaker. He attended the Universities of Oklahoma and Colorado and taught Cherokee language at the Cherokee Elementary School for seven years. Tom is a frequent guest lecturer at universities including Duke, UNC-Chapel Hill, Purdue, Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale. He also works with the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia as a consultant as he does with the Center for Native Health. Tom is also a member of the Smithsonian Institution's Native Culture and Health Workgroup.

Onita Bush (EBCI) - is a tribal elder and member of the Snowbird Community in Graham County, NC. She serves on the executive board of the Center for Native Health, Inc. and assists with the Center's annual spring "Medicine Walks" intended to inform health professionals who work with the Cherokee community. Onita is a home health provider for the EBCI in the Snowbird community. She is a fluent Cherokee speaker and elder in the community. She is leading a group of Snowbird elder women in providing a resource of traditional perspectives for young people on topics of childcare, substance abuse, and well being from a Cherokee perspective.

Dr. Mae Claxton, WCU - Mae Miller Claxton received her Ph.D. from the University of Georgia. She teaches classes in Southern, Appalachian, and Native American literature. In 2012, she published *Conversations with Dorothy Allison*, a collection of interviews along with an introduction (University Press of Mississippi). She was a contributing editor to the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* (6th edition) and co-editor of the *McMichael Anthology of American Literature* (8th edition). Her scholarship focuses primarily on Eudora Welty, but she has recently expanded her interests to Horace Kephart, an Appalachian writer, and the Native South. Articles have appeared in *Mississippi Quarterly*, *South Atlantic Review*, and *Southern Quarterly*, among others. She is the Hunter Scholar for 2012-2013, developing a number of projects from the Kephart collection in Hunter Library. She served as president of the Eudora Welty Society from 2010-2012. Mae has worked on the planning committee for *Rooted in the Mountains* since its inception.

Dr. Symma Finn, (National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences) Program Officer, NIH (NIEHS) - received her Ph.D. in medical anthropology from the University of Florida (UF) in 2008 for her work on quantifying empowerment in a rare genetic disease community. She has a M.A. from the University of Miami in environmental anthropology for her work on the anthropological aspects of ecosystem management, and an undergraduate degree in communications from Adelphi University. Symma has conducted research on physician-nurse-patient communication and shared decisionmaking as a postdoctoral fellow at UF, has served as director of research and grants for the Alpha-1 Foundation, a rare genetic disease organization, and as administrative assistant to the dean of the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. She joined DERT in December 2011 after concluding an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Policy Fellowship in the NIH Office of

Science Policy/Office of Biotechnology Activities. Symma administers social and behavioral research and develops new areas of interest in communications and environmental health literacy. She is overseeing communication and outreach and community resilience activities for the Deepwater Horizon Research Consortium, and is involved in the Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Program, Partnerships for Environmental Public Health, NIH-EPA Centers of Excellence for Environmental Health Disparities Research, and in other programs that deal with health disparities, environmental justice, and communications. She is point of contact for Tribal Activities at NIEHS and a strong advocate of equity in community-academic partners and cultural sensitivity when working with tribal communities and other racial/ethnic communities.

Dr. Hartwell Francis - is a Linguist and teaches and is a curriculum developer at New Kituwah Academy, a Cherokee Language Immersion School in Cherokee. Francis has a BA in Spanish and Latin American Studies from University of New Mexico, an MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from the Applied Linguistics Department of Portland State University in Oregon, and a Ph.D. in theoretical linguistics from the University of Colorado at Boulder. His work is focused on the syntax-semantics interface in Native American languages and on pedagogical approaches to languages of small speaker populations.

Dr. Enrique Alberto Gómez, WCU - is an associate professor of physics and astronomy at Western Carolina University where he studies supernovae and stellar outflows. He has also done research on atmospheric cosmic ray interactions with atmospheric balloons and the teaching and learning of physics and astronomy. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Alabama doing his dissertation on gamma-ray burst and supernovae. He was born in Mexico to a Mexican father and an American Mother with Spanish is his first language. He regularly gives public presentations in WNC in English and Spanish about astronomy and leads public telescope viewings. He is also president of the Jackson County branch of the NAACP.

Dr. Joseph P. Gone (Gros Ventre) - is a national expert in American Indian psychology and mental health. A professor at the University of Michigan, Dr. Gone has collaborated with tribal communities for over 20 years to harness traditional culture and spirituality for advancing indigenous well-being. He has published 65 scientific articles and chapters, and received recognition in his fields through several fellowships and career awards, including a year-long residency at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. A graduate of Harvard College and the University of Illinois, Dr. Gone also trained at Dartmouth College and McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School. He is currently a Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, and of seven divisions of the American Psychological Association. An enrolled member of the Gros Ventre tribal nation of Montana, he also served briefly as the Chief Administrative Officer for the Fort Belknap Indian reservation. In 2014, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

T.J. Holland (EBCI) - Cultural Resources Officer for the EBCI and is Director and Curator of the Junaluska Memorial Museum in Robbinsville, NC. Holland serves as Board Chair of the EBCI Cultural Internal Review Board and as a member of the Health IRB for the tribe. He is on the

Executive Board of the Center for Native Health, Inc., and provides lectures for Cherokee Studies programs at WCU. He is a Consulting Scholar to the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. T.J. is an active participant in traditional activities including stickball and he helps to organize an annual event, Fading Voices, that provides an opportunity for non-Cherokees to learn about the Snowbird community and their traditions. He also writes a column for the Cherokee One Feather on the history and importance of Cherokee sites. He is currently working on an exhibit about stickball for the Junaluska Museum in partnership with the American Philosophical Society, the National Anthropological Archives, and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Dr. Gwyneira Isaac (Smithsonian Institution Museum of Natural History) - is Curator of North American Ethnology at the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution. Her research investigates the dynamics of and intersections between culturally specific knowledge systems. Central to this study is her fieldwork and ethnography of a tribal museum in the Pueblo of Zuni, New Mexico, where she examined challenges faced by Zunis operating between Zuni and Euro-American approaches to knowledge. Currently, her collaborative work at the Smithsonian as part of the *Recovering Voices* initiative has created a methodological platform focused on the applied synthesis of research, as a means to integrate knowledge that is co-produced through interdisciplinary and collaborative research projects.

Kevin Jackson (EBCI) - Kevin Jackson, a combat veteran of the U.S. Army, has earned a BA in Business Management from Montreat College and is enrolled in the Graduate Program with the University of Alabama Human Environmental Science. He has served on the steering and selection committee for The Right Path and works in the EBCI Information Technology Department. He has been a chaperone on the Costa Rica Eco-Study trips available to youth in the region, and he frequently volunteers his time for the betterment of the youth on the Qualla Boundary. Kevin is a Jones-Bowman Program Mentor and Board Chair for the Tribal Employee Rights Office

Dr. Lisa J. Lefler, WCU – Director, Culturally Based Native Health Programs, and Founder/Executive Director, Center for Native Health, Inc., a local non-profit. Lisa received her Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee and is an Applied Medical Anthropologist who has worked with dozens of tribal communities in the U.S., particularly the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina, and the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, and Chickasaw Nations in Oklahoma. Lisa organized the first workshop of its kind on the East Coast to bring in elders from across the country to dialogue about the Native Science worldview and how it can create positive paradigm shifts in how we approach health, environmental, and wellness concerns. She is a member of the tribal cultural IRB for the EBCI and has organized several sessions at regional and national meetings of anthropologists, which included Native partners to discuss issues of conducting research in Indian country. Lisa is a Consulting Scholar to the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia and a member of the Smithsonian Institution's Native Culture and Health

Workgroup. Lisa also serves on the Tribal Health Improvement Plan Workgroup for the EBCI's Public Health and Human Services Division.

Dr. Timothy Powell, University of Pennsylvania - Dr. Powell is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies and a Consulting Scholar at the Penn Museum. He directs EPIC (Educational Partnerships with Indigenous Communities) through the Penn Language Center. He serves on the advisory board for the Native American and Indigenous Studies initiative, the Penn Program for Environmental Humanities, and the governing board for the Price Lab for the Digital Humanities. He also serves as a consulting scholar to the American Philosophical Society's Center for Native American and Indigenous Research (CNAIR), which he founded. He has been awarded more than \$3 million in grant funding to support the digital repatriation of archival documents to the Indigenous communities where these materials originated. It is his great honor to count among his teachers elders from the Ojibwe, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Tuscarora Nation, and the Six Nations of Grand River.

Dr. Brett Riggs, Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies, WCU - A graduate of the University of Tennessee, Brett is an archaeologist and specializes in Cherokee studies. He has worked in Western North Carolina for more than 20 years studying the lives of Cherokee families during the removal era of the 1830s. In his position with the Research Laboratories of Archaeology at UNC-CH, he helped to establish the National Historic Trail of Tears Long-Distance Trail in the southwestern corner of WNC. He received the 2016 Cherokee National Worcester Award for his efforts to preserve Cherokee culture. It is the highest honor the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma presents to non-Cherokees for their dedication to tribal history, heritage and sovereignty.

Dr. Jim Veteto, WCU - James Veteto is an environmental anthropologist specializing in ethnoecology, political ecology, sustainable agriculture, and climate change. He has done research with home gardeners and farmers among both the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) and the Cherokee Nation, documenting agricultural biodiversity and plant conservation initiatives. He serves as a consultant to the Center for Cherokee Plants. Dr. Veteto's current applied, collaborative research project involves interviewing members of the EBCI who work closely with the land to document their observations of environmental changes and incorporating that information into several tribal environmental programs.