

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE

THE IMPRINT OF ONE WOMAN:
VEDA STONE'S INFLUENCE ON WISCONSIN
NATIVE AMERICANS

SENIOR THESIS
HISTORY 489: RESEARCH SEMINAR
PROFESSOR KATHERINE LANG

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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EAU CLAIRE, WI
12 DECEMBER 2006

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the life and work of Veda Stone, a Native American advocate from Wisconsin. During the 1960s and 1970s, Native Americans around the country demanded self-determination and better education from the United States government. Veda Stone brought the national protests to Northwest Wisconsin in hopes of bettering the lives of Native Americans. Beginning in the 1960s and lasting until her death in 1996, Stone developed numerous organizations and programs designed to help educate the state's Native Americans. Stone's influence over individual Native American students who attended college was profound and many Native Americans still think of her fondly. This research paper emphasizes Stone's work with Native Americans and analyzes how her influence affected those living in the state of Wisconsin throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

Introduction

Ever since the establishment of colonies on American soil, hostilities existed between European Americans and Native Americans. The numerous wars, ill treatment of Native Americans by the European Americans, and the imposition of white education are all examples of these animosities. In the 1700s, European Americans established boarding schools for Native Americans in an effort to educate them about white customs. However, many Indians resisted the schools because they feared losing their culture and way of life. During the 19th century the Bureau of Indian Affairs established day schools and government-run boarding schools that emphasized the English language and basic mathematical skills. At these schools, teachers did not allow students to speak in their native languages or dress in their native clothes; essentially, teachers forced students into a foreign culture. Many students resented these teachers and attempted to run away.

After the disastrous start to Indian education, things began to improve; however, at a slow pace. After the Meriam Report was issued in 1928, an Indian education reform movement began to evolve. The report revealed the poor conditions of boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The authors of the report criticized the low student achievement and inadequate care of students at these schools.¹ As a result, the federal government attempted to improve Native American education by allowing Indians to control the schooling of their children. However, between 1928 and 1960, little was done to improve the ill feelings Native Americans had towards whites.

By the 1960s, reservation conditions were astonishingly bleak. The author of “The Angry American Indian: Starting Down the Protest Trail” compared the forty-four

¹ Evelyn C. Adams, *American Indian Education: Government Schools and Economic Progress*, (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1971), 70.

year life expectancy of the average Native American with the seventy-one years of whites.² The author also cited the inadequate housing, low income, and high unemployment rate of Indians who lived on reservations.³ By the time the 1960s began, hostilities began to boil over and Native Americans saw an opportunity to take charge of their lives and their education.

In 1961 Native Americans responded to a federal initiative to improve their living conditions and education during a conference in Chicago. According to Nancy Lurie, one of the directors of the American Indian Chicago Conference (AICC), the conference was “the beginning of Indian activism on a national scale.”⁴ Under the direction of Sol Tax and Lurie an unprecedented four hundred and sixty Indians from ninety different communities around the country attended the conference. The Native American attendees discussed the “survival of Indian tribes [that was] threatened by federal policies adopted in the 1950s, including termination of tribal trust status and the relocation of American Indians from reservations to urban areas.”⁵ The attendees drafted the *Declaration of Indian Purpose* at this conference, which asked for a reversal of the federal government’s termination policies, increased Indian educational opportunities, more economic development programs, and better health-care-delivery systems.⁶ The conference led to the formation of several activist groups, which included the Coalition of

² “The Angry American Indian: Starting Down the Protest Trail,” *Time* (9 February 1970), 16, Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 31, Folder 8. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴ Nancy O. Lurie, “Epilogue,” in *Irredeemable America: The Indians’ Estate and Land Claims*, ed. Imre Sutton (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 363-368.

⁵ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, Volume 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 1041-1059.

⁶ Laurence M. Hauptman and Lack Campisi, “Eastern Indian Communities Strive for Recognition,” in *Major Problems in American Indian History*, edited by Albert L. Hurtado and Peter Iverson, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), 462.

Indian Controlled School Boards, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and the National Indian Youth Council.⁷

Shortly after the American Indian Chicago Conference, Herbert Blatchford, Melvin Thom, Clyde Warrior, and Shirley Hill Witt formed the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). According to Vine Deloria, “The NIYC was a group of recent college graduates who sought a change in the conditions of Indians and adopted some of the ideas of the Civil Rights Movement.”⁸ Brown, however, described this group of young, educated Indians as a “somewhat militant, activist group, many of whom felt that education and Indian leadership was the key to advancing tribal status and economic conditions.”⁹ Historian Alvin Josephy, Jr. added that the NIYC demanded Red Power, which he defined as “a determined and patriotic Indian fight for freedom—freedom from injustice and bondage, freedom from patronization and oppression, freedom from what the white man cannot and will not solve.”¹⁰ The NIYC expressed their Red Power through fish-ins, demonstrations and numerous speeches. The NIYC eventually joined with the American Indian Movement (AIM) for many demonstrations.

In 1968, George Mitchell and Dennis Banks created the American Indian Movement (AIM) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The initial goal of AIM was to protect Native Americans, who migrated from reservations to large cities, from the police. AIM was a militant group focused on righting the injustices all Native Americans felt during the 1960s. AIM members led most of the militant events in the late 1960s and early

⁷ Stephen Cornell, *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 175.

⁸ Vine Deloria, Jr., *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence*, (New York, Delacorte Press, 1974), 25.

⁹ Robert Paul Brown, “The Year One: The American Indian Chicago Conference of 1961,” (Master Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1993), 6-7.

¹⁰ Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *Red Power: The American Indian's Fight for Freedom*, (New York: American Heritage Press, 1971), 14.

1970s, including the take over of Alcatraz Island, Wounded Knee, and the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters.

The year 1969 saw a huge upsurge in Native American demonstrations against the federal government. The first demonstration took place on Alcatraz Island off the coast of California. AIM took over Alcatraz Island on November 19, 1969 and occupied it until June 11, 1971. The main goals of this occupation were to transform the island into a Native American cultural center and to unify Indians across the country for bolder and more effective action.¹¹ Members of AIM and Indians of All Tribes wanted a new cultural center because the San Francisco Indian Center was destroyed in a fire following the convention of American Indians United in early November 1969. The militant activity continued into the 1970s with the occupation of Fort Lawton in Seattle, Washington, unsuccessful seizure of Ellis Island in New York City, and the Trail of Broken Treaties, which was organized by leaders of AIM and NIYC.

Originally the Trail of Broken Treaties was organized as a caravan that traveled across the country and end in Washington, D.C. Once there, the leaders hoped to present the Twenty Points to President Nixon and other government officials. The Twenty Points document outlined the vision of sovereignty for all Indian tribes as well as the nature of Indians' relationships with the federal government.¹² When the caravan arrived in Washington, D.C. on November 3, 1972 the participants learned that only low-level bureaucrats agreed to meet with them and that the promised housing was not available. Enraged, the Native Americans barricaded themselves inside the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) headquarters. The occupation of the BIA headquarters lasted five days. On

¹¹ Albert Hurtado and Peter Iverson, ed., *Major Problems in American Indian History*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001), 455-456.

¹² Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence*, 49.

November 7, the demonstration leaders agreed to leave the building if “a federal task force would be formed to respond to their twenty demands. In addition, the government agreed to provide \$66,500 to the demonstrators to transport them back to their homes.”¹³

The events in Washington, D.C. were followed by the siege at Wounded Knee.

Participants in the siege wanted to establish a new tribal organization that was based on traditional forms and free of federal control.¹⁴ The occupation of Wounded Knee lasted for seventy days, resulted in the deaths of two Native Americans, and injured one federal agent. The final major demonstration against the federal government occurred in 1978. The Longest Walk was organized by members of the Alcatraz-Red Power Movement and AIM and took place from February to July 1978. “Several hundred Native Americans marched from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to symbolize the forced removal of American Indians from their homelands and to draw attention to the continuing problems plaguing the Indian community.”¹⁵ The Longest Walk was a peaceful protest and the last major national demonstration.

Even though many whites and Native Americans alike did not agree with the actions of AIM and NIYC, these two organizations were able to call attention to their desire for self-determination and tribal sovereignty. Beginning in 1970, Congress passed legislation that supported tribal self-rule. By the early 1980s, colleges and universities across the country created American Indian Studies programs, the United Nations

¹³ James J. Rawls, Gerald D. Nash, and Richard W. Etulain, *Chief Red Fox is Dead: A History of Native Americans Since 1945*, (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1996), 127-128.

¹⁴ Ibid., 130.

¹⁵ “Alcatraz is not an Island: Indian Activism,”

<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/alcatrazisnotanland/activism.html> (accessed 15 November 2006).

recognized an international Indian rights movement, and AIM members continued to protest on issues related to Indian rights, and team mascots.¹⁶

The Native American Education Movement grew out of Native Americans' quest for self-determination and the need to educate their young people. The activism during the 1960s and 1970s encouraged education and self-determination because most Native Americans around the country were displeased about the lack of concern the federal government had towards them and their children. While Indians demonstrated against injustices and for self-determination, they also pushed for the establishment of tribally controlled community colleges and Native American Studies programs at colleges and universities around the country and in Wisconsin to help younger generations succeed.¹⁷

The 1960 United States census (appendix A) showed a bleak status for Wisconsin Native Americans. At the time of the census, only four percent of Wisconsin Indians over the age of twenty-five completed some level of college. This data proves that there was a need for education among Wisconsin's Native American population. Around the country and in Wisconsin, college administrators began to work with Native American students. Beginning in 1968 and lasting until the mid-1990s, tribes established thirty community colleges throughout the country to teach the young Native Americans about traditional Indian values and culture. Also, by the early 1970s college and university administrators around the nation established Native American Studies programs at their colleges. By 1976, Wisconsin colleges and universities established their own American Indian Studies programs.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Margaret Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination, 1928-1973*, (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), 156.

Native Americans in Wisconsin were not secluded from the activism that took place around the nation. Many of them participated in demonstrations and protests that demanded self-determination and education. In Wisconsin, Veda Stone joined Native Americans in demanding better education for their children. Stone brought the national activism to northwest Wisconsin through the establishment of organizations and programs that advocated better education for Wisconsin's Indians. Stone led a local education movement, which resulted in numerous Wisconsin Indians graduating from college when Indians in other parts of the country could not imagine doing so. By using the organizations and programs Stone developed, one can see a direct correlation between her influence on Native Americans and the rate at which they graduated from Wisconsin colleges and universities.

The Life of Veda Stone

Veda (Wright) Stone was born on August 14, 1906 and raised in the Town of Eagle in Richland County.¹⁸ When she was twenty-two years old, Veda married William Stone and they remained married until his death in 1946. She graduated from Wisconsin State University in 1943 with a bachelor's degree and went on to earn a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1956.¹⁹ After graduation, Stone's professional career involved work in teaching, social work, and community service.²⁰ In 1958, Veda Stone began to work with Wisconsin Indians as a community service consultant in the northwestern part of the state. Her work with Native Americans lasted almost three decades, until her death in 1996. During her life and even after her death,

¹⁸ Veda Stone's Obituary, *Eau Claire Leader Telegram*, 11 January, 1996, Sec. 2B.

¹⁹ Press Release, "Sheila Jordan Concert to Honor American Indian Advocate Veda Stone," 7, September 1988, obtained from Robin Leary, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundations Office.

²⁰ Veda Stone Obituary, sec. 2B.

people praised her more than anyone else in Wisconsin because of her contributions to Native American education.²¹

Shortly after Stone began working as a community service consultant, she showed a special interest in the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewas. While working with the members of the tribe, Stone exhibited her desire for education and leadership among the tribe's youth by developing a PTA, a youth council and other youth organizations.²² She was also concerned about problems like housing, health care, and economic opportunities that plagued the tribe.²³ Veda's hard work and unconditional dedication to the Bad River Tribe resulted in her adoption as an honorary member by the tribe in 1961.²⁴ Most members of a tribe are given an Indian name during a naming ceremony. Stone received the name Be ni she o gi she go aui, Thunderbird Sky Woman, from Chief Henry Jack.²⁵ According to Denise Sweet, a former University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire student, "she was named after the thunders, which is a very powerful force."²⁶ Many Natives remember that Stone felt very honored and proud when the Bad River Band adopted her.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bill Gharrity, "Student Volunteers to Aid State Indians This Summer," *Eau Claire Leader Telegram* 16 June 1965, Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970 Box 18, Folder 36. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

²³ Erica Volkers, "Thunderbird Sky Woman: A Legacy of Education and Leadership in Indian Communities" (History 489 Senior Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1996), 5. This citation is part of the article "Veda Stone Cited for Social Service" written for the Ashland Press, 30 August 1961, which is part of the Veda Stone American Indian Collection housed in Madison, Wisconsin. This document sheds light on the Veda Stone's adoption into the Bad River Tribe, but is currently being processed by the Wisconsin Historical Society and therefore is unavailable to this author.

²⁴ John Hunnicutt, retired University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire professor, interview with author, notes in possession of author, 3 August 2006.

²⁵ "City Woman Honored at Northland College," *Eau Claire Leader Telegram* 30 May 1974, Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970 Box 2, Folder 3. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

²⁶ Denise Sweet, former University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire student, interview with author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 13 July 2006.

Following her Native American adoption, Stone continued to work for Wisconsin Indians. In 1970, Stone established an American Indian Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, which she followed with the establishment of similar programs at Mount Senario in Ladysmith and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 1974 and 1976, respectively.²⁷ Stone's work at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire included serving as director for the American Indian Studies program until 1978 and as the coordinator for the Arts and Sciences Outreach program from 1982 until her retirement in 1985.²⁸ Even after Stone retired, people found her at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus working with Native American students. Robert Powless, a former student from the University of Wisconsin-Stout, noted, "Even during the end of her life when she was not feeling well, she still hung in there and drove around [to meetings and gatherings] when she shouldn't have been driving."²⁹

Veda Stone had the most influence at mainstream American institutions of higher education, especially the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. She was active in many organizations that fought to improve education for the state's Native Americans, such as the Great Lakes Intertribal Council, the Wisconsin Indian Youth Council, and the Harvard-Red Cliff Indian Project. On a public level, Veda Stone fought for the state to pass legislation that brought Native American curriculum into public schools. Eau Claire faculty members who knew Stone remembered her never-ending drive and desire to help Native Americans. Most Wisconsin Indians remember her ability as a role model, to network and provide gentle nudges; all of which helped them graduate from the

²⁷ Press Release, "Sheila Jordan Concert to Honor American Indian Advocate Veda Stone," 7, September 1988, obtained from Robin Leary, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundations Office.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Robert Powless, retired University of Minnesota-Duluth professor, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and other colleges. According to Denise Sweet, “Mrs. Stone made sure you graduated. She helped you, guided you, and was a role model to you.”³⁰

Organizations and Programs

Throughout Veda Stone’s life, people characterized her as a very active and driven person. As La Vone Sneen, program coordinator for Continuing Education, noted, “I hope when I am in my eighties that I can be as active as she was.”³¹ While a nation-wide education movement took place through protests and demonstrations, Stone advocated for a local movement through organizations and programs that promoted better education for Native Americans. These organizations and programs included the Great Lakes Intertribal Council (GLITC), Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Wisconsin Indian Youth Council (WIYC), Upward Bound, Wisconsin Demonstration in Indian Educational Opportunity (WDIEO), Programs for Recognizing Individual Determination through Education (PRIDE), and the Ad Hoc Commission for Act 31. The members of each organization/program advocated for better education for Native American students.

Great Lakes Intertribal Council

In 1961, Stone helped Wisconsin tribal leaders establish the Great Lakes Intertribal Council (GLITC) because of a need for sovereignty and self-determination among tribes in Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. Stone was most active on the education committee. The main goal of the education committee of GLITC was to “work

³⁰ Denise Sweet, interview with author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 13 July 2006.

³¹ La Vone Sneen, program coordinator for Continuing Education, interview with author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 16 August 2006.

for education opportunities for all Wisconsin Indian youth.”³² Stone and members of the education committee accomplished this goal by communicating with school districts and the public about the needs of Native American students, involving Indians in their local school districts as counselors or parent-school coordinators, promoting Indian culture among non-Indians and learning opportunities among Indians, and creating a storehouse of materials and information on educational opportunities for all ages.³³ Stone made use of these goals in other projects and programs in which she worked.

Volunteers in Service to America

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, Veda Stone became an activist for Native Americans. One of the first things she advocated was VISTA, Volunteers In Service To America. VISTA is a volunteer program for young men and women who commit themselves to increasing the capability of low-income people to improve the conditions of their own lives.³⁴ Stone used VISTA members in two projects she developed.

The first was the Wisconsin Indian Summer Project, which ran from 1962 to 1964. Through the Wisconsin Indian Summer Project, Stone invited VISTA volunteers to spend the summer months working with Native American college students in order to develop leadership among the students.³⁵ Together the VISTA volunteers and the Native American students “worked primarily with the children and youth of the community, organized playground activities, craft projects, field trips, and other small group

³² “Education Committee Great Lakes Inter-tribal Council,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 10, Folder 2. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ “AmeriCorps VISTA,” **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** (Accessed 1 August 2006).

³⁵ “Personal Papers,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 1, Folder 1. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

activities.”³⁶ This project encouraged and developed leadership roles among Native American students.

The second project was called the Harvard-Radcliffe American Indian Project. This project was nationally known and took place during the summer months on reservations throughout Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon and Wisconsin. The purpose of the Harvard-Radcliffe American Indian Project was to “improve Indian and non-Indian relationships by providing student volunteers who assist tribes in setting up and running summer programs that are educationally oriented.”³⁷ Stone helped to set up the Harvard-Radcliffe project on numerous reservations in the state of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Indian Youth Council

In 1962, Stone organized a group of Indian students in Eau Claire and together, they started the Wisconsin Indian Youth Council in response to NIYC’s call for youth participants. Shortly after the establishment of WIYC, Stone became the advisor and worked with Indian youth. This program encouraged Wisconsin Indian youth to “complete high school, become familiar with opportunities to further their education, and to acquire more knowledge of past and present situations that affect Indians in today’s [1962] world.”³⁸ Aside from working with Indian youth through WIYC, Stone also helped Native American parents see the value of education for their children and helped to create a better understanding of Native Americans among the general public. To

³⁶ “Report: Wisconsin Indian Summer Project 1964,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 18, Folder 35. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

³⁷ “Harvard-Radcliffe American Indian Project,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 11, Folder 7. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

³⁸ “Wisconsin Indian Youth Council,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 14, Folder 1. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

accomplish these goals, Stone spoke to Indian students at meetings and gatherings, corresponded with many students and parents through personal letters and face-to-face contact, and took part in numerous conferences that focused on Native American education. The Wisconsin Indian Youth Council became an influential force in the lives of Native American students who attended the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Upward Bound

The Upward Bound Program also brought Wisconsin Indians into colleges and universities. The Upward Bound Program took place on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus in 1966 and 1967, before Stone worked at the campus. Faculty and staff ran the Upward Bound Program for six weeks. During this time, Native Americans between the ages of 16 and 18 took classes in mathematics, English, science, social studies, the fine arts and Native American culture. Coordinators designed the classes to help students improve their schoolwork during the following school year.³⁹ According to Jim Williams, a retired University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire professor, “The hope was that some of those students would decide to come back to the University in the fall as freshman students.”⁴⁰ Coordinators of Upward Bound felt it was an invaluable asset to the Eau Claire campus, but not everyone felt that way.

In 1969, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire administrators cut the Upward Bound Program for financial reasons. The college administration felt that the program did not reach Native Americans effectively, so they cut the funding. According to Jim Williams, “It was like a slap in the face for Native Americans. Some people felt that the

³⁹ “Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point, Upward Bound Program, summer 1968,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 26, Folder 5. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

⁴⁰ Jim Williams, retired University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire professor, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 14 August 2006.

University was showing that students [Native Americans] were not welcome on campus.”⁴¹ Jim Williams added, “However, then Stone came to campus and things began to change.”⁴²

Wisconsin Demonstration in Indian Educational Opportunity

Veda Stone was not only active at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, but she also worked with Native Americans at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Stone established the headquarters for the Wisconsin Demonstration in Indian Educational Opportunity program (WDIEO) while she worked at the River Falls campus. Stone set up the WDIEO to help Native American Freshman adjust to their first year of school. The philosophy of WDIEO was to “show that Indian students could meet the intellectual and emotional challenge [of college] if they have orientation and counseling services geared to meet their individual needs and are relieved of financial worries.”⁴³ The summer before students entered the university, they enrolled in pre-college classes. Students also used counseling and tutoring services that accompanied the summer classes. When Native American students began their freshman year of college at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the “counseling center provided personal help where needed, tutoring was available for any subject, plus the personal interest of faculty members in a school where classes were small enough so that you were regarded as an individual, not a number.”⁴⁴ Through WDIEO, Veda Stone made extraordinary efforts to help Native American students feel comfortable and accepted on the River Falls campus.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ “Wisconsin Demonstration in Indian Educational Opportunity,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 26, Folder 1. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Programs for Recognizing Individual Determination Through Education

Programs for Recognizing Individual Determination through Education (PRIDE) was another organization in which Stone took interest. Robert Powless established PRIDE at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1969. Powless and Stone worked together on PRIDE and numerous other programs that encouraged higher education. The objectives of PRIDE were to

Provide in a summer program the opportunity to take a three-credit college course, which will therefore enable a student to take a lighter load during the first semester of his/her freshman year; provide the students with counseling and tutoring services; and to finance the student through employment and grant money so that he/she will have no financial problems during freshman year.⁴⁵

According to Powless, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point wanted the PRIDE program because it “attracted people of diverse backgrounds to the campus.”⁴⁶ PRIDE offered support for students and allowed them to take fewer credits during their first semester while they adjusted to college life. Powless felt that PRIDE profoundly affected Native American college students because most students “never even considered the possibility of going to college, but because of PRIDE and Upward Bound, students felt they could accomplish this goal.”⁴⁷

Ad Hoc Commission

Beginning in the 1980s, tensions were high between Native Americans and whites in the state of Wisconsin. These feelings appeared because of the ruling in the case Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians v. State of Wisconsin, known

⁴⁵ “Application for NCAI Ford Foundation Assistance,” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Box 10, Folder 2. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

⁴⁶ Robert Powless, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

as the Voigt Decision. The Voigt Decision allowed Wisconsin Indians to preserve their right to hunt and fish on ceded lands, as originally stated in the treaties of 1837 and 1842.⁴⁸ In a letter to Congressman Obey, the authors stated, “It is becoming clear that in northern Wisconsin the Voigt Decision is a catalyst for the expression of racial hostility . . .”⁴⁹ The Voigt Decision resulted in a series of verbal and physical attacks aimed at Native Americans. In the article, “Smear Campaign Assaults Native Americans,” Melissa Gross stated,

Discriminatory publications advertising the opening of “Injun Season” are being distributed anonymously in Northern Wisconsin near the Chippewa area. Poster listing “Indian hunting tips” and bumper stickers reading “Save a deer, shoot an Indian” are also being posted.⁵⁰

Angered by the outburst of racism, the Lac Courte Oreilles tribe formed the Ad Hoc Commission on Racism during the mid- 1980s in hopes of bringing public awareness to this ongoing problem. Stone was the Chief Commissioner for the Ad Hoc Commission. The major result of the Ad Hoc Commission was Act 31, which established that all kindergarten through twelfth grade schools in Wisconsin must teach curriculum about American Indian history, culture and tribal sovereignty.⁵¹ Stone’s work with the Ad Hoc Committee directly impacts all public school teachers working in today’s schools.

⁴⁸ L. P. Voigt, “Chippewa Hunting & Fishing Rights: Voigt Decision,” (Eau Claire, WI: Government Publications Department, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1989).

⁴⁹ Erica Volkers, “Thunderbird Sky Woman: A Legacy of Education and Leadership in Indian Communities” (History 489 Senior Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1996), 17. This citation is part of a letter from Marvin Hunt, Sherman Secord and Robert Olson, to Congressman David Obey, 15 September 1984, which is part of the Veda Stone American Indian Collection housed in Madison, Wisconsin. This document sheds light on the Ad Hoc Commission, but is currently being processed by the Wisconsin Historical Society and therefore is unavailable to this author.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 17. This is an article written by Melissa Gross, entitled “Smear Campaign Assaults Native Americans,” which is part of the Veda Stone American Indian Collection housed in Madison, Wisconsin. This article provides details about the Ad Hoc Commission, but is currently being processed by the Wisconsin Historical Society and therefore is unavailable to this author.

⁵¹ Ada Deer, director of the American Indian Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, phone interview by author, 10 July 2006.

Ability to Get Things Accomplished

Not only was Veda Stone actively involved in many organizations and programs that promoted higher education for Native Americans, but she also had an innate ability to find funding, and develop policies and programs for numerous colleges. People at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire saw this ability when Stone and Professor Michael Hilger organized a course entitled, “The American Indian in Literature and Film” in the early 1970s. This class is still offered on the Eau Claire campus as a part of the English major.

Shortly after Michael Hilger arrived on the Eau Claire campus, Stone approached him about the possibility of a new film class. Michael was interested in film and Native Americans, so Stone thought he would be a good person to start the class. “She [Stone] decided that that American Indian Studies program needed more courses.”⁵² Stone gave Dr. Hilger a grant application that the UW System offered for the new class. Hilger noted, “She told me she thought we needed a course that dealt with images of American Indians in film and the grant was a perfect way to get the course started.”⁵³ People rarely turned down Stone’s offers, so Dr. Hilger took on the challenge of writing the grant. Soon after he received conformation about the grant and started research for the course.

Hilger also included,

The first time I taught the course, Stone helped me set up prominent Indian speakers from Wisconsin and Minnesota. Each new film I taught, they would come in and give a talk to the class. These talks included the speakers’ perspectives on the film and their perspectives on the way American Indians were portrayed in the films.⁵⁴

⁵²Michael Hilger, retired University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire professor, interview by author, tape recording, Altoona, Wisconsin, 25 July 2006.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Dr. Hilger used numerous types of films to portray both positive and negative images and stereotypes of Native Americans. Throughout the following semesters, Dr. Hilger received feedback and encouragement from Stone. According to Hilger, “This story epitomizes Stone in the sense that she was very good at getting people going [towards a specific goal].”⁵⁵ Stone was interested in curriculum that related to Native Americans and knew how to accomplish this goal through specific avenues, such as the American Indian in Literature and Film class.

Other faculty on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus also saw that Stone accomplished her goals through specific means. Dr. Helaine Minkus stated that the university needed people like Stone who had a vision and was very determined to accomplish goals. Minkus recalled, “It became clear to me early on that the university needed someone with an absolute maniacal vision and those of us with enough imagination could come along and fill in the details.”⁵⁶ Both Hilger and Minkus agree that without Stone, things just did not get accomplished.

Before Stone became involved in Native American education, she worked with Native Americans as a social worker. During this time she learned a lot of organizational skills that she used later to advocate for new policies and programs for Native American students. According to Robert Powless, “As soon as she [Stone] felt that organizations or projects ran smoothly, she immediately got an Indian person to run it.”⁵⁷ Many faculty members considered her a consultant to these organizations because she would hand over power to Native Americans.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Helaine Minkus, former chair of the American Indian Studies program at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 31 July 2006.

⁵⁷ Robert Powless, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

Aside from Stone's great organizational skills, she also constantly found money to help students go to school. "She was always looking for money for kids to go to school because it was not as plentiful in those days as it is now."⁵⁸ Sometimes Stone used her own savings to help get Native American students through school. Stone was dedicated to the education of Wisconsin's Indian population and she did not allow any obstacles to stand in her way of this goal.

Influence on Native American Students

In 1970, Stone began to work on area colleges and universities. In the professional world, people knew her because she started American Indian Studies programs at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Mount Senario in Ladysmith. However, Stone meant a lot more than this to Native American students who knew her well. Veda Stone knew every single Indian student enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; she knew each student's strengths and weaknesses and she saw potential in every Native American. Stone tutored students, introduced them to people who worked in professional fields, and above all she gave students a place to gather where they could feel comfortable and welcome.

For a large majority of the Native American students who attended these three campuses as well as the University of Wisconsin-Stout, Stone's influential presence helped them graduate from college. Three such students were Denise Sweet, who is a nationally known poet and professor of Humanistic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; Ted Holappa, former director of the Nishnaabemwin Pane Immersion Program; and JP Leary, American Indian consultant for the Wisconsin

⁵⁸ Robert Powless, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

Department of Instruction. Each of these former college students recalled fond memories of gathering at Stone's house in Eau Claire. Denise Sweet remembered,

After she [Stone] retired, I went to her house on a weekly basis and drank tea with her. She would have someone there she wanted me to meet, such as education leaders, artists, art patrons, and political leaders. She opened doors for me I doubt would have opened otherwise.⁵⁹

In this way, Stone provided networks between Native American students and people who could aid them in their future endeavors. Ted Holappa added, "Her home was always open if any one of us needed help."⁶⁰ JP Leary felt that Stone's home provided a place to gather, where Native American students felt welcome.

In addition to being a place to eat good food, her house was also a place to interact. We could be ourselves; we did not have to be on our best behavior, we did not have to wonder about what conclusions people on campus were drawing about us, we did not have to worry about public persona. Veda took you where you were at.⁶¹

Many Native American students viewed Stone as a mentor because she opened her home to them. Faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire also viewed Stone as a great asset to the college. One former faculty member considered Stone to be the "first Native American counselor" for the campus because she was so devoted to increasing the enrollment of Native Americans and also so involved with students' personal lives.⁶² Students and faculty alike viewed Stone as an extraordinary person deeply devoted to the education of Wisconsin's Native Americans.

However, students also viewed her as a mentor because she pushed them to excel in their studies. According to Denise Sweet, "She expected a good deal more than what

⁵⁹ Denise Sweet, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 13 July 2006.

⁶⁰ Theodore Holappa, former University of Wisconsin-Stout student, interview by author, tape recording, Danbury, Wisconsin, 15 August 2006.

⁶¹ JP Leary, former University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire student, interview by author, tape recording, Madison, Wisconsin, 18 August 2006.

⁶² Jim Williams, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 14 August 2006.

we expected from ourselves.”⁶³ Often, Stone called students to make sure they kept up with their studies. She also found tutors for students who struggled, or she tutored students. Stone did whatever was necessary to ensure that Native American students graduated from college. However, she was also tough on students, when she thought they needed tough love. If students failed to show up for a meeting or a class or played into the stereotypes people held about Native Americans, Stone responded with a stern voice in hopes that the students would change their behaviors.⁶⁴ Stone was tough on students at times because she wanted them to succeed in college and be good role models for younger Indians. Helaine Minkus added, “There was a time in the state when almost every Indian student succeeded because of Veda Stone, who encouraged him/her and supported him/her. She had faith in them [Native American students] and believed they could be successful.”⁶⁵ Stone cared very deeply about the type and amount of education Wisconsin Indians received in the state’s colleges and universities, as well as the daily well-being of students she worked with on the Eau Claire and River Falls campuses.

The census data for the 1960s and 1970s reflected Veda’s influence and the hard work and determination of Native American college students. According to the 1960 United States census data, shown in appendix A, only 266 Wisconsin Indians completed some level of college, which was four percent of the Native American population over the age of twenty-five.⁶⁶ That census data also shows that more Native American men

⁶³ Denise Sweet, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 13 July 2006.

⁶⁴ Michael Hilger, interview by author, tape recording, Altoona, Wisconsin, 25 July 2006.

⁶⁵ Helaine Minkus, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 31 July 2006.

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *US Census of Population, 1960: Volume 2, Subject Reports, Non-White Population by Race* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), Table 51.

were attending college than Native American women. Only thirty-six percent of Native American students in college were women in 1960.⁶⁷

When the 1970 United States census was released in 1973 (appendix B), the number of Native Americans that completed some level of college increased from 1960. The US Bureau of the Census calculated 461 Wisconsin Native Americans had completed between one and four or more years of college.⁶⁸ This number is six percent of the population over the age of twenty five, which is higher than the four percent from 1960. This increase in the number of Native Americans who completed some level of college could be due to a population increase of more than four thousand people or due to Stone's influence on Wisconsin's Native American population.

Influence on Sex

Native American students at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire felt Stone's influence on a daily basis. She was involved in most aspects of their academic lives while they attended the university, but how did students perceive her? Did one sex feel that Stone gave them more assistance? Did Stone, in fact, assist one sex over another? Retired professors Robert Powless and John Hunnicutt, and two former students, JP Leary and Denise Sweet gave their insights on this topic.

Robert Powless, a retired professor from the University of Minnesota-Duluth felt that when Stone began her work with Wisconsin Indians, she influenced more men than women.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population: Volume 2, Subject Reports Part 1F, American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), Table 3. The statistics of men and women who completed some college are unknown to the author based her research of the census data.

I think she realized, as many people did, if you spend any time working with Indians and education that male leadership in the [Indian] communities was lacking and if you were going to overcome that you needed to get some guys into college. Many male Indians were not getting through high school much less going to college. In Indian country, if you start working with one particular male then he usually has a brother or cousin who will also become interested in education and the cycle will continue from there.⁶⁹

Powless clearly felt that Stone encouraged male Indian students to attend college because there was a need for male leadership on reservations.

However, one former University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire student felt that Stone was not biased toward one gender or the other. According to Denise Sweet, “If she [Stone] saw potential [for a student to be] a leader, activist or role model for younger children, she took [that student] under her wing.”⁷⁰ Sweet explained that Stone helped students based on their character and desire to help their fellow Native Americans more so than their sex roles.

JP Leary provided a little different perspective on how Stone treated male and female students. “If Veda spent more time working with me than with female students, I was oblivious to it because I’m a guy.”⁷¹ Leary heard a lot of whispers about the treatment of men and women from University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire alumni. According to Leary, “Some former female students used the term ‘smotherly.’ They felt that the men appreciated all the attention [Stone gave them], but that some of the women found her to be ‘smotherly.’”⁷² Leary’s insight seemed to follow Powless’ idea about increasing male leadership through education.

⁶⁹ Robert Powless, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

⁷⁰ Denise Sweet, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 13 July 2006.

⁷¹ JP Leary, interview by author, tape recording, Madison, Wisconsin, 18 August 2006.

⁷² Ibid.

Finally, retired University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire professor John Hunnicutt gave a slightly different view about how Stone treated males and females. Hunnicutt recognized that men and women have different problems as a result of their sexes. He also felt that men and women do not understand the problems that face the opposite sex. With that in mind, Hunnicutt noted, “As a social worker, Stone knew that some problems were gender based and some were not.”⁷³ Overall, Hunnicutt felt that Stone’s treatment of men and women was equal. Because of her social work background, Veda knew how to address both the gender-based problems and other problems like academic issues.

Based on data collected from student files, which is housed at the Area Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, one can form a picture about how Stone’s treatment of gender affected student performance. According to a random sample of ninety-seven male students and ninety-three female students who attended colleges and universities in Wisconsin from 1965 to 1972, the average grade point average (GPA) of each gender was relatively equal.⁷⁴ Twenty-three of the ninety-seven male students had GPAs listed in their records. These GPAs averaged to 2.00, or a “C” average. Twenty-three of the ninety-three female students also had their GPAs listed in their records. Of these students, their average GPA was 1.95, close to a “C” average.⁷⁵

From these results, one can see that the extra help Stone provided to Native American male students did not drastically affect their overall GPA when compared to female students. It is possible that Stone provided extra help to male students because of

⁷³ John Hunnicutt, interview with author, notes in possession of author, 3 August 2006.

⁷⁴ “Restricted Files” Veda W. Stone Reference Collection, 1945-1970, Boxes 39-43. Eau Claire Area Research Center, Special Collections, McIntyre Library University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The author gained permission to use these files from the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

a need for male leadership in tribes during the 1960s and 1970s, but from the above analysis, this help did not affect their performance in classrooms when compared to female students. However, their success in the classroom did affect their socioeconomic status.

Education and Socioeconomic Status

According to a study performed by Dr. Kent Hill, Dr. Dennis Hoffman and Dr. Tom Rex at Arizona State University, “Average annual earnings for individuals with a bachelor’s degree are more than seventy five percent higher than the earnings of individuals whose maximum educational attainment is a high school diploma.”⁷⁶ This statistic can be applied to any race or ethnic group in the country, but the economic improvements felt by Wisconsin Indians directly resulted from Veda Stone’s undying dedication to their education. Stone’s influence is still felt today on numerous Wisconsin reservations and at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

In Schofield Hall, the main administration building at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus, there is a plaque depicting the names of Native American graduates and the years when they graduated from the college.⁷⁷ Throughout the 1960s, an average of one Native American student graduated from the university each year. Since then, that number has increased each year. Today, an average of eight to ten Native American students graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire each year. Beginning in 1964, one or two Native American women graduated for the

⁷⁶ Kent Hill, Dennis Hoffman, Tom Rex, “The Value of Higher Education: Individual and Societal Benefits,” (Arizona State University School of Business, 2005), 15. http://wpcarey.asu.edu/seid/upload/Value%20Full%20Report_final_october%202005a.pdf (Accessed 18 November 2006).

⁷⁷ Plaque: Native American Graduates (1964-2003), Schofield Hall, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. However, in 2003 a total of eight females graduated from the college. The number of graduates increased over the years because parents and children became more conscious about education and “want the best for their children.”⁷⁸ Margaret Hebbring, coordinator for the Gear Up Program at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, felt that currently there is a change in the mindset of the Native American population and they now want to go to college. Hebbring also suggests one possible reason for this increased interest in education. “Parental support is the number one indicator of student success. If Native Americans do not have that parent support, it is much harder for them [to succeed].”⁷⁹

Eric Phelps, a former Native American advisor at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire agreed with Hebbring. Phelps believed that statistics about how the level of education affects job availability and networks for non-Indian communities could be applied to Indian communities with the same results. He also believed that job availability and networks have a strong impact on economic status. Phelps stated,

I do not know that you would see a huge change in income because casinos generate wild amounts of money and often inhibit education because students can see getting money from the casino and do not pursue furthering their education. However, tribes recognize that to be stable, they need a broad range of economic support and that means getting members educated.⁸⁰

Stone recognized the need for economic support within tribal communities and helped students achieve a college degree.

Robert Powless agrees that education and economic status are strongly related. He felt that it is very obvious that Native Americans had and currently have

⁷⁸ Margaret Hebbring, coordinator for the Gear Up program at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 31 August 2006.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Eric Phelps, former Native American advisor for the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, interview by author, tape recording, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, 16 August 2006.

financial problems. “Any kind of job, particular ones that required a college degree would pay enough to bolster rather dramatically what you wanted to do.”⁸¹ Powless believed that any economic improvement profoundly affects Native American families. “There are many Indians who moved up the ranks and earn a good living because of the educational aspects in Indian country that Stone promoted.”⁸²

When Stone worked with Native American students throughout the state of Wisconsin, her main goal was for them to receive an education to improve their economic status. One can see by the patterns of Wisconsin’s Indians today, progress is being made towards Stone’s goal. Appendices A through E are tables generated from information included in the United States censuses from 1960 to 2000. The appendices show how the number of Native Americans in college and the number of Native Americans in the work force has increased from 1960 to 2000. One explanation for this increase is that the Native American population grew with each census and therefore more people were made available for the work force. Another explanation is that Stone’s continued influence is the reason for the increase in numbers. A third explanation is a combination of increased population and Stone’s influence.

The 1960 United States census shows a bleak status for Wisconsin Native Americans. As previously stated, 266 Wisconsin Indians had completed some level of a college degree, which was equal to four percent of the Wisconsin Indian population over the age of twenty-five, in 1960.⁸³ One can also see from the educational statistics that more men completed one or more years of college than women. During the early 1960s,

⁸¹ Robert Powless, interview with author, tape recording, Trego, Wisconsin, 7 August 2006.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *US Census of Population, 1960: Volume 2, Subject Reports, Non-White Population by Race* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), Table 51.

Stone just started to advocate for better Native American education and had not yet strongly impacted the state's Native American population.

Other information included in the 1960 census was economic characteristics of the Wisconsin Native American population. According to the US Bureau of the Census, in 1960 Wisconsin's Native American population was 14,461 and nineteen percent of the population was employed in the civilian labor force (non-military).⁸⁴ As we will later see the number of Native Americans in the work force rose with each census.

The 1970 United States census (appendix B), which was also previously discussed showed that the number of Native Americans that completed some level of college increased from 1960 as did the number of Native Americans in the labor force. The US Bureau of the Census calculated 461 Wisconsin Native Americans had completed between one and four or more years of college.⁸⁵

A rise in the number of Native Americans in the civilian work force is also seen in the 1970 census. According to the Bureau of the Census, 18,776 Native Americans lived in Wisconsin and twenty-four percent were employed, which is five percent higher than the data from the 1960 census.⁸⁶

Appendix C shows the educational and economic statistics for 1980. Wisconsin's US census data shows that the total population of Native Americans increased by twelve thousand to 30,788.⁸⁷ In 1980, nineteen percent or 2463 Native American men and

⁸⁴ Ibid., Table 56.

⁸⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population: Volume 2, Subject Reports Part 1F, American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), Table 3. The statistics of men and women who completed some college are unknown to the author based her research of the census data.

⁸⁶ Ibid., Table 4.

⁸⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1980 Census of Population: Volume 1, Characteristics of the Population, Chapter D, Detailed Population Characteristics Part 51, Wisconsin* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), Table 203.

women completed some level of college.⁸⁸ This number is fourteen percent higher than the number of Indians who completed some college in 1960. The year 1980 also saw a large increase in the number of Native Americans in the civilian work force. The number of civilians in the work force was thirty percent, compared to twenty-four percent in 1970.⁸⁹

The 1990 United States census data shows an increase in the number of males and females who completed some level college. The statistics for the 1990 census are found in appendix D. By 1990, Wisconsin's Native American population grew to 39,367.⁹⁰ In 1990, twenty-eight percent of the Wisconsin Native American population completed one or more years of a college education.⁹¹ According to the 1990 census, this number is twenty-four percent higher than the number of Native Americans who completed some college in 1960. Also, the number of females who completed college increased between the 1980 and 1990 census. In 1980, almost 1,000 females completed one to three years of college. Ten years later, the number grew by five hundred. The increase in the number of Native American females attending college is an encouraging trend that may show how society's views of women and education have changed over time.

The economic census data for the state of Wisconsin in 1990 is not that different from the data of 1980. In 1980 and 1990, thirty percent of the Native American population was employed in the civilian workforce.⁹² Fewer females were employed in

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., Table 213.

⁹⁰ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "American Fact Finder," generated by Marie Mierzejewski using American Fact Finder. <http://factfinder.census.gov> (Accessed 20 November 2006).

⁹¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population, Social and Economic Characteristics, Wisconsin*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), Table 64.

⁹² Ibid., Table 76.

1990 than were employed in 1980 and more men were employed in 1990 than the previous census.

The census data from 2000 showed a drastic increase in both education and employment for Wisconsin's Native Americans. In the year 2000, Wisconsin had a total of 47, 228 Native Americans living within its borders.⁹³ This number is over 8,000 more people than the 1990 census. Also, according to the 2000 census data, forty-two percent of the Native American population over the age of twenty-five completed some level of college.⁹⁴ This number is thirty-eight percent higher than the four percent from 1960. Also, the number of Native Americans employed in the civilian labor force rose by almost seven percent.⁹⁵ In the year 2000, women surpassed men in the number of years of college completed and in the work force. This number could be due to a rise in the Native American female population that became eligible for college and the work force between the 1990 census and the 2000 census.

Together, the census data from 1960 to 2000 show a wide variety of things. First, the census data shows that the total population of Wisconsin Native Americans grew by thirty percent. Second, the number of Native American men and women attending and completing one or more years of college increased by thirty-eight percent between 1960 to 2000. This increase could be partly due to Stone's everlasting influence over the Native American population and her desires to see more of them attend college. The number of men and women in the work force also increased between 1960 and 2000 by seventeen percent. Finally, we can see that the number of women attending college and

⁹³ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "American Fact Finder," generated by Marie Mierzejewski using American Fact Finder. <http://factfinder.census.gov> (Accessed 17 October 2006).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

working in the civilian workforce surpassed men by 2000. The statistics for the number of years of college completed and the number of Native Americans in the work force between 1960 and 2000 show that Native Americans continue to achieve their goals of a college education.

Conclusion

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Native American activism made national headlines along with the Civil Rights Movement. Across the country, Indians pushed for tribal sovereignty, self determination and education for their children. Most Native Americans wanted to be independent of the federal government's control, especially in areas related to education. Simultaneously, Indians demonstrated against injustices they faced for hundreds of years and pushed for the establishment of tribally controlled community colleges on their reservations and Native American Studies programs at universities across the country.

Wisconsin Indians were no different; they participated in demonstrations and demanded better education for their children. Veda Stone heard these cries for a better education and started an education movement in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. She developed and participated in numerous organizations and programs such as Great Lakes Intertribal Council, VISTA, Wisconsin Indian Youth Council, Upward Bound, WDIEO, PRIDE and the Ad Hoc Commission. The main goal of these organizations and programs was to provide quality education for Native American students at the college level.

To many people, Veda Stone is associated with the establishment of Native American Studies programs at three Wisconsin colleges, but she meant so much more to Native Americans who knew her. She was their mentor, mother, friend, teacher and a

source of networks. She touched so many lives during the thirty years she pushed for Native American education. Some say that Stone favored one sex over the other; however, most Native Americans were unaware of it. Regardless of who she helped more, Stone's influence helped thousands of Native Americans graduate from Wisconsin's colleges and universities since the 1960s. This influence is shown in the 1960-2000 US census education data. The data showed a gradual increase in the number of Wisconsin Native Americans in college.

Today, one can still hear whispers among Wisconsin Native Americans about the life and work of Veda Stone. She was an incredible woman who cared very deeply about a group of people and spent her life trying to improve the lives of others. Veda Stone left and continues to leave an imprint in the hearts of many Wisconsin Native Americans.

APPENDIX A: US CENSUS DATA FROM 1960

Social and economic characteristics
of the Native American population for the state of Wisconsin

Schooling Completed (1960)

	Population 25 years and older	College 1-3 years	College 4+ years
Male	3,061	124	45
Female	2,852	82	15
Total	5,913	206	60

Economic Statistics (1960)

	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
Male	2,502	2,017	485
Female	957	838	119

APPENDIX B: US CENSUS DATA FROM 1970

Social and economic characteristics
of the Native American population for the state of Wisconsin

**Schooling
Completed (1970)**

	Population 25 years and older	College 1-3 years	College 4+ years
Male	3,581	Unknown	Unknown
Female	4,020	Unknown	Unknown
Total	7,601	376	85

**Economic Statistics
(1970)**

	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
Male	3,215	2,703	512
Female	2,086	1,883	203

APPENDIX C: US CENSUS DATA FROM 1980

Social and economic characteristics
of the Native American population for the state of Wisconsin

Schooling Completed (1980)

	Population 25 years and older	College 1-3 years	College 4+ years
Male	Unknown	858	329
Female	Unknown	997	279
Total	12, 986	1855	608

Economic Statistics (1980)

	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
Male	6,346	5,183	1,163
Female	4,792	4,161	631

APPENDIX D: US CENSUS DATA FROM 1990

Social and economic characteristics
of the Native American population for the state of Wisconsin

**Schooling
Completed
(1990)**

	Population 25 years and older	Some College	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate/ Masters/Ph.D.
Male	9,292	2,226	617	383	220
Female	9,990	1,182	349	237	148
Total	19,282	3,408	966	620	368

**Economic Statistics
(1990)**

	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
Male	9,239	7,903	1,336
Female	4,547	3,897	650

APPENDIX E: US CENSUS DATA FROM 2000

Social and economic characteristics
of the Native American population for the state of Wisconsin

Schooling Completed (2000)

	Population 25 years and older	Some College	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate/ Masters/Ph.D.
Male	10,803	2,456	701	643	342
Female	12,064	3,144	924	1,025	380
Total	22,867	5,600	1,625	1,668	722

Economic Statistics (2000)

	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
Male	9,675	8,302	1,373
Female	10,331	9,165	1,166

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