

# Citizen shares the importance of philosophy

In [Features](#) | March 23, 2017 | 895 Views | 0 comments



([www.andreasullivanclarke.com](http://www.andreasullivanclarke.com)) Muscogee (Creek) citizen Andrea Sullivan-Clarke spoke about a philosophy internship open to Muscogee (Creek) high school seniors.

*Deviney Luchsinger/Multimedia Specialist*

## **Sullivan-Clarke discusses scientific research, internship opportunity**

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) citizen Andrea Sullivan-Clarke is a first generation college graduate who uses her doctorate in philosophy to help shape the way people look at everything, from the way they organize our day, to scientific research and ethical issues in Native America.

Sullivan-Clarke graduated in 2015 from the University of Washington with her doctorate in philosophy. She is now an educator at DePauw University in Indiana where she teaches Native American philosophy and ethical issues in Indian Country.

In these classes, she uses the building blocks of philosophical arguments to explore big topics effecting Native Americans and Native culture, such as cultural appropriation, Native American stereotypes in relation to environmental issues, how Native American knowledge is acquired or shared and how it differs from Western ideas of problem solving.

Sullivan-Clarke's students are mostly non-Native, and she uses this as a platform to educate her students on the history of Native people and how it is often "whitewashed."

"A lot is really trying to get them to know where Native Americans are coming from; what kind of experiences have informed how they are in the world," Sullivan-Clarke said.

Her heritage has also impacted her research. Her dissertation titled, "Analogical Reasoning and Scientific Practice: The Problem of Ingrained Analogy," the idea that metaphor and scientific models can impact the way experiments are created.

Scientists use common models to explain complex ideas, such as describing gas molecules as bouncing off of each other like billiard balls. This happens so often, Sullivan-Clarke said, a lot of the time scientists are not aware they are using them.

"Sometimes when they're thinking about what the natural phenomena is like, it might lead them down a certain path. Sometimes that will be good because it will create research, but sometimes it might be misleading," she said.

She referred to an example of the 19th century scientist, Dr. Samuel George Morton thinking that each race was a different species, that brain size had a direct link to intelligence and thought different races had different brain sizes.

He concluded that the white race had to be smarter because of their larger brain size, followed by Native Americans, then African Americans.

"He made a lot of little mistakes that added up to a big result of Native Americans being removed from the southeast United States to Oklahoma or reservations," she said.

What drew Sullivan-Clarke to study this topic was that Morton used Muscogee (Creek) skulls as examples, which he had acquired from grave robbers and war sites.

"My work is sort of ethical in the sense that I want to protect groups by helping scientists reason better so they don't get misled and have this information harm people," she said.

Sullivan-Clarke has recently been awarded the a Diversity and Inclusion Grant from the American Philosophical Association to develop the Inclusive Summer High School Institute for Philosophy, or ISHIP at the Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University.

This program will invite Native Americans and other diverse groups of high school seniors to spend a week at DePauw University and introduce them not only what it is like to attend college, but also to explain what philosophy is and how it will help them in different aspects of their life.

“I was a person who was a first generation (college student) and I didn’t know anything about going to college. I didn’t know anything about philosophy,” she said, “I wanted to create a program to help others if they were interested to come up and see what it’s like to be at a college for a week.”

Sullivan-Clarke wanted to create an inclusive program to share her passion for philosophy for a long time.

“I’m just so excited to offer this opportunity to my fellow Muscogees,” she said.

High school seniors can [apply for the program here](#).

Share:



 [Internship](#) [Philosophy](#) [research](#)

 [Features](#)

## Latest Posts



We built this city on Council Oak

[Cultural](#), [Latest News](#), [MCN](#), [Other News](#) October 26, 2017



Locating our ancestors

[Latest News](#), [MCN](#), [Other News](#) October 25, 2017



## Leave a Comment

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked with \*

[POST COMMENT](#)

## About Mvskoke Media

Mvskoke Media is an independent tribal media entity committed to delivering accurate and unbiased information to citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

### Contact Us

PO Box 580 | 1010 E.  
Eufaula St.  
Okmulgee, OK 74447

### Phone/Fax

Phone: 918.732.7720  
Fax: 918.758.0824

## Latest Posts

### Emvpanayv: One who tells the story

Editorial, Latest News  
October 24, 2017

### We built this city on Council Oak

Cultural, Latest News, MCN, Other News  
October 26, 2017

### Locating our ancestors

## Upcoming Events

There are no upcoming events at this time.