

From a Co-Founder of the Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) has come a long way at Penn State in the past twenty years. In 1995, Ladislaus Semali, a faculty member in the College of Education and I, a faculty member in the College of Agricultural Sciences, came to believe that the historical commitment to **out-reach** on the part of land grant universities might be enhanced by a similar commitment to foster **in-reach** on the part of indigenous peoples. We thought that knowledge generated outside the academy might be valued within the academy if “other ways of knowing” were more widely understood, valued and respected by those faculty and students whose “way of knowing” was based primarily, if not solely, on the precepts of Western science.

Ladi and I were encouraged in our indigenous knowledge efforts by G. Michael Warren, a professor of anthropology at Iowa State University and a leader in the effort to bring indigenous knowledge into the academy. Michael’s goal was to create a global network of institutional resource centers where indigenous knowledge related to agriculture and rural development would be archived and made widely available. Approximately 30 of these IK centers were established and coordinated initially through the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. The final addition to the global network of indigenous knowledge centers was Penn State’s Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK) that was “blessed” by Michael on a visit to Penn State in 1995. In 1997, Michael died of a heart attack in the village where he and his Nigerian wife had a home. In 2010, the collection of materials housed in his Center for Indigenous Knowledge in Agriculture and Rural Development (CIKARD) was acquired by the Penn State University Libraries, creating a major collection of IK documents at this institution.

The Libraries at Penn State is now the institutional home of The Interinstitutional Center for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK) and its new journal *IK: Other Ways of Knowing* will provide a channel through which the knowledge of indigenous peoples can find its way into the academy. And, in so doing, we hope to encourage a meaningful dialogue between academics and those whose different “ways of knowing” can benefit us all.

We hope you will help us spread the word about *IK: Other Ways of Knowing* and we encourage you, your friends, and colleagues, to become authors, reviewers and readers as well as thoughtful commentators who will tell us what you would like to find when you open the electronic pages of the new journal. We know the written word, particularly when it is English, is not an ideal medium for communicating across cultures and we are committed to publishing articles in indigenous languages as well as English. Our indigenous knowledge center at Penn State will continue to support an active listserv, schedule on-line seminars, hold workshops, maintain a [website](#) and expand connections with institutions and organizations around the globe. We would like to have you share with us your “other ways of knowing”.

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