

# Indigenous Day Forum Enlightens UWS Students and Staff on American History

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Our own school has recently released a proclamation to no longer call and embrace Columbus Day by that title. The University of Wisconsin Superior has proclaimed that from now on, Indigenous Day will be called as so, to recognize and celebrate the enormous contribution of First Nations People. And our college is not the only place in the area to make this proclamation. The mayor of Superior proclaimed the city's first Indigenous People's Day this month, and it will continue for the years to come. The city of Duluth also recognizes the federal holiday as Indigenous Day, and hosted two events on the week of October 9th to commemorate First Nations People.

Johnson also expressed his thoughts on what he hopes students will bring out into the world after attending the forum. Stating, "That they (students) have a more informed opinion. To think more critically about when it comes to the issues dealing with Native People and when it comes to this idea of discovering America. That it is (Columbus) not really the reality of what happened. And that's what truly happened. The European settlers, and the American Government treated the Native Americans like they were not people at all. The Declaration of Independence itself states Native Americans as "the merciless Indian Savages."

Now in a generation where equality is a human moral extremely valued, documents, language and the treatment of how America has continuously treated First Nations People shouldn't be ignored. Students and staff have vast opportunities to develop their knowledge and opinions about the country's history, so that we do not continue it in the future to the First Nations People.

The discussions we have on Indigenous Day should not be discussions based on political stances as some Americans have chosen to embrace it. They should be discussions based off of informed opinions, embracing the diversity we have as a country, and the respect owed to the First Nations People of America.

## Professor, Mentor, and Mom

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Dr. Jamie White-Farnham is an Associate Professor in the Writing and Library Science department and Writing Coordinator at the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

White-Farnham lived in Massachusetts before she moved to Wisconsin as she said, "I'm from the Boston area originally and grew up in Massachusetts and Rhode Island." She has lived in Superior for six years.

White-Farnham earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English from Bridgewater State College and PhD from the University of Rhode Island.

Her area of research focuses on the effect of writing on women as she said, "One of my recent studies is on how domestic violence survivors use writing for coping and healing."

She has loved writing since she was in college and eventually wanted to teach as she said, "I always wanted to be something like a professor."

White-Farnham began pursuing her passion in writing when she was a tutor as she said she "was an undergraduate tutor in the writing center at my college and that's when I realized I liked helping people do writing and that I was good at it."

She was then persuaded to continue her education by the writing center director who "offered me a job and said if I got a Master's degree at the college, I could be the assistant director of the writing center. That was an incentive to see how I could pay for it."

White-Farnham also studied abroad in college at Oxford in the Summer of 2000. She explained, "Oxford is a university and a city and its divided into colleges, so I was at a campus called Watum College in a dorm."

She added that her experience in Oxford was like traveling back in time

as she said,

"It was awesome. Oxford is an amazing city, super old, with the architecture on the buildings, you feel like you're in another time." But financially this trip was difficult as she said, "In the end, I remember how hard it felt to pay back \$6,000. It took like five years."

Working at UW-Superior is White-Farnham's first job as a professor, but she taught for 16 years prior as a college instructor. She said one appealing factor about the faculty position at UW-Superior was the independent writing program as she said, "It's been awesome to work here and start our writing major and I have awesome colleagues."

White-Farnham also discussed her daily routine, which is very busy as a mom, as she said, "there aren't a ton of Moms who are professors. It's a minority. My life is very busy and I have to do running around for the kids, making food, and driving to school."

She added that her career and family balance each other and she wouldn't give up either as she said, "I come to UW-Superior and do deep thinking, writing, and helping students. I like both things and they often work well together, but sometimes they are both really exhausting even though I love them."

White-Farnham's career enables her to travel and she has already visited most of the states in the U.S. as she said, "I get to travel a lot for work. I go to a lot of conferences and have nine states left to visit in the United States."

Every year White-Farnham visits Massachusetts because her family lives there as she said, "Every Summer we go home to Massachusetts and see our family, my and my husband's parents, so that my kids can see their grandparents." She added, "Even though Lake Superior is great, we are attracted to the ocean and going to the beach."

## A Superior Anthropologist

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Superior, WI- If you wander the halls of the third floor of Swenson Hall on the University of Superior-Wisconsin campus, you might just stumble into the office of Dr. Deborah Augsburger, or Dr. Deb, as her students are allowed to call her. The campus of UW-Superior has been her home since the fall of 2008, although it wasn't actually her choice to work here. "It chose me," she says.

Dr. Augsburger had been teaching at Temple University on a non-tenure track when she was looking for a different position. Due to the heavy teaching load at Temple she wasn't publishing much, a, what seemed to be, prerequisite for acquiring a new job. "People were saying if you're going to get a job you have to publish, you have to publish, and at some point, I thought screw this. You know I felt, well maybe I'll teach myself cause I was getting into the teaching aspect, I thought I'll teach myself into a job. And so, I stopped applying to certain kinds of places and I applied to the places that had reasonably heavy course-loads, and that were teaching-focused. And I think that year when I decided to do that I got three interviews." Lucky for her students UW-Superior seemed to be the right match. "It was just a really good fit here. It clicked. I really, I really liked the people."

Dr. Augsburger was born in 1962 in Harrisonburg, Virginia and grew up in a Mennonite household. Even though the family moved around a lot, she feels as though she grew up in the Mennonite church as wherever they went they were affiliated with a Mennonite congregation. Her father had gone to the seminary, and also worked as a Mennonite broadcaster, as well as a public announcer. Three of her uncles were also Mennonite ministers, and she describes her upbringing as fairly religious, although her father was the most liberal of the family.

To become an Anthropologist wasn't her first career choice. She received her undergraduate degree in history from Earlham College, and as she began her graduate career six years later she began it in Linguistics. Her interest in languages began in elementary school, and even thought to create her own language after years of assembling lists of foreign words

from National Geographic magazines. In junior high she then studied French, and in the years between college and graduate school she studied German as well as New Testament Greek. During that time, she discovered how much she loved learning languages. A class she then took at the New School, Introduction to Linguistics, was another influence which made her enroll at the University of Pennsylvania in the Linguistics program.



Yet after a while Dr. Augsburger felt alienated in the department as there was such a focus on language structure. She had learned that she would rather study what people cared about. Even though she was still interested in languages she was able to take a class in Language, Society, and Anthropology and switched gears to earn a Ph.D. in Anthropology. "I switched to Anthropology because I like the approach to language better. And you got to do more things. You just got to do almost everything you wanted from within Anthropology."

For her, the most important thing about being an Anthropologist is to convey field study results in a way so that people can understand them, as well as to "increase just mutual understanding." Another significant aspect for Dr. Augsburger is also "helping people understand the role that culture plays in what people do, and increase their empathy towards other groups. To me that's really important to encourage people to kind of step back and analyze, and think about the context and the circumstances they're in that shape their own actions, and others actions."