



## **Session: Applying the Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators to Work with Diverse Communities**

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This session will examine best practices for conducting research and evaluation with underrepresented communities, through the lens of the American Evaluation Association's (AEA's) Guiding Principles for Evaluators. The session will discuss the Guiding Principles, with special attention to the Respect for People principles, using examples from an evaluation involving Native American communities. Following this discussion, participants will be asked to break out into small work groups to review an evaluation case study using a process that has been developed by the AEA Ethics Committee Professional Development Task Force.

The Teacher Retention and Renewal through Bioregional Outdoor Education (TRRBOE) project, undertaken by the Four Corners School of Outdoor Education (Monticello, UT), provides professional development activities and mentoring to teachers in 48 elementary schools in the four-states region of the Colorado Plateau Bioregion. The program seeks to improve teacher retention and renewal by providing teachers with tools to incorporate place-based education into their math and science lessons. In addition to tracking teacher retention rates for the 4-year project period, the evaluation includes on-site observations and interviews and an in-depth study of the program's implementation in the Eastern Navajo BIA schools. As such it is useful for informing evaluation practices for working with schools that serve Native American populations.

The discussion of each of this project will be framed around AEA's Guiding Principles for Evaluators, with special attention to 1) understanding the contextual elements of the evaluation; 2) abiding professional standards regarding risks, harms, and burdens of participation; 3) fostering social equity so that participants benefit from the results of the evaluation; and 4) respecting differences among participants and accounting for these when carrying out the evaluation.

After presenting the AEA Guiding Principles and using the TRRBOE evaluation as the basis for discussing the principles, the audience will be asked to break into small work groups. The break out groups will review an evaluation case study of an outreach program intended to serve Native Alaskan students. Each group will then present their findings to the full audience to close the session.

### ***References***

American Evaluation Diversity Committee Cultural Reading Task Force (2004). A cultural reading of the Program Evaluation Standards, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

American Evaluation Ethics Committee Professional Development Task Force (2007). Using the Guiding Principles for Evaluators to improve your practice. Available online at <http://www.eval.org/GPTraining/GPTrainingOverview.asp>.

Hopson, Rodney (2003). Overview of multicultural and culturally competent evaluation issues, challenges and opportunities. Available online at <http://www.calendow.org/evaluation/pdf/overviewbook.pdf>.

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994). *Program Evaluation Standards, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

National Science Foundation (2002). *The cultural context of educational evaluation: A Native American perspective*. Arlington, VA: NSF.