Wisconsin Woodland Indian Arts Initiative
Fieldwork in central Wisconsin completed by Karen Ann Hoffman
Goals

This report is the final report by myself, Karen Ann Hoffman, for the field work done on behalf of the Wisconsin Woodland Indian Arts Initiative (WWIAI) under the direction of the Wisconsin Arts Board. I was hired to do field research to survey the state of ‘Native Arts’ in Wisconsin for the period of January 1, 2014 to May 31, 2014. I was instructed to focus my research on the Central Wisconsin Districts of Wisconsin’s HoChunk communities in Wisconsin Rapids, Wittenberg and Wisconsin Dells.

The goal was to:
- conduct a survey that would begin to uncover the state of the arts within that community,
- design an artist-centered study that would suggest how the Wisconsin Woodland Indian Arts Initiative could do to support and encourage Native Arts,
- find out what the artists themselves wanted.

It was understood that given the brief nature of the fieldwork, the investigation would be exploratory in nature and would probably raise more questions than it would answer.
Methods

Outreach Methods: phone, email, personal networking, internet searches, field visits, FaceBook

Cold called and interviewed area artists.
Posted a "Looking for HoChunk artists" call on my Facebook page.
Also posted this query on the HoChunk Nation’s Facebook page.
Phoned the Hocak Worak (the nation's newspaper).
   Explained our project to the editor and asked for a notice to be included in the paper.
   Emailed the editor an article for possible inclusion.
Searched the internet for contacts.
Reached out, via email, to HoChunk listings found on the "Indian Arts and Crafts Board's" website.
"Google Searched" for HoChunk artists. Reached out to these individuals by phone and email.
Visited an ad hoc "art sale" in the hallway of the HoChunk Casino in Baraboo, WI
Spoke about the project at the Wisconsin Arts Board Winter Listening Session in Wausau and Arts Day hosted by Arts Wisconsin in Madison.

Responses
The Facebook posts led to two referrals for interviews. The interviews were accomplished by phone, Facebook messages and email. Facebook also lead to two direct responses from HoChunk artists (Jodi Webster and Jennifer Jones). Interviews with these artists were conducted through Facebook messages and follow up phone calls and personal interview.
The outreach to Hocak Worak has yielded no results.
Outreach to artists listed in the Indian Arts ad Crafts Board website led me to the HoChunk nation's Business Department. The lead was not productive.
Outreach to individual artists gleaned from the internet have had varying results.
Emails and website contacts have gone largely unanswered with one exception-contact was established with photographer Tom Jones.
Field visit to the ad hoc art sale resulted in interviews with artist/vendors.
Top Line Results January-May 31, 2014

9 Communities Visited for Field Interviews

25 FORMAL Personal Interviews

8 Phone Interviews (* denotes extensive interview)

14 INFORMAL Personal Interviews

4 FaceBook Interviews/Research

1 Presentation attended
Joy Harjo-Muskogee Poet

10 Organizational Connections
Ho Chunk Artists
They sell their work at the HoChunk Casino in Wisconsin Dells as well as the Business Office building in Black River Falls.
Jayne Crom for Dennis Lewis
Beadwork/Business Owner

2honestinjuns - business name
sell work primarily on eBay
Anderson Family -
Ron Anderson-Traditional Artist/Singer/Drummer. Linda Lou Metoxen-Silversmith
Sequoia Anderson-Drawing
BreeAnna Walker with beaded backpack
Wittenberg, WI
Melanie Talmadge Sainz
Little Eagle Arts Foundation
Mohican, Oneida, Menominee and Lakota artists
Mohican Writer’s Circle
Stockbridge Munsee Reservation
Betty Putman Schiel reading her prose at the Mohican Writers’ Circle, Bowler, WI
“Never Alone”

watercolor by
Dawn Darkmountain

beadwork by
Karen Ann Hoffman
Karen Ann Hoffman, Oneida
Iroquois Raised Beadwork
Rodrick Elm, Oneida
Iroquois Raised Beader
Robert Messner, Oneida
Musician
Mike Hoffman, Menominee and Ottawa Ceramics, spoons, cultural items
Brian Szabo, Sicangu Lakota (Wisconsin resident)  
Bone and Silverwork
Respondent Generated Recommendations

Education
Education in two broad categories: Skills Enhancement and Enrichment Experiences. Skills Enhancement was for training in bookkeeping, marketing and business organizational skills. Enrichment Experience requests included funding for exposure to concerts, plays and dance performances.

Documentation and Preservation of Traditional Skills
Document and preserve traditional skills through an apprenticeship program, such as WAB’s, and by reaching out to elders and capturing their traditional knowledge.

Sales support
Create ways to showcase and sell art. Requests for gallery space, gift shop or cooperative, and exhibition opportunities came most often from the group of artists desiring to ‘make a living from our art’. Also, on line opportunities.

As an example, one artist is selling her home in Wisconsin and moving to Santa Fe, NM in pursuit of sales opportunities. The artist cites weak opportunities for exhibition and sales in Wisconsin contrasted with the strong Native American art market, gallery venues and attendant sales opportunities in other locations. Her financial reports show that, despite the high number of shows and markets in which she participates across our state, the vast majority of her sales come from activities outside of Wisconsin and in particular from localities with high end gallery opportunities.

Networking
Looking for artists whose work a marketer could sell. Looking to develop cooperative sales opportunities. Looking to connect with employment opportunities. Looking for ways to connect with other artists.

Personal Grants
Direct grants to artists for personal projects, to pay for lessons, pay for supplies or pay for travel expenses or jury fees.

ReGranting to Tribal Arts Communities
Funds could be given to existing tribal arts organizations for re-granting purposes or to hire a professional fundraiser. The goal would be to generate “significant funds” housed within a stand alone Native Arts Foundation.