

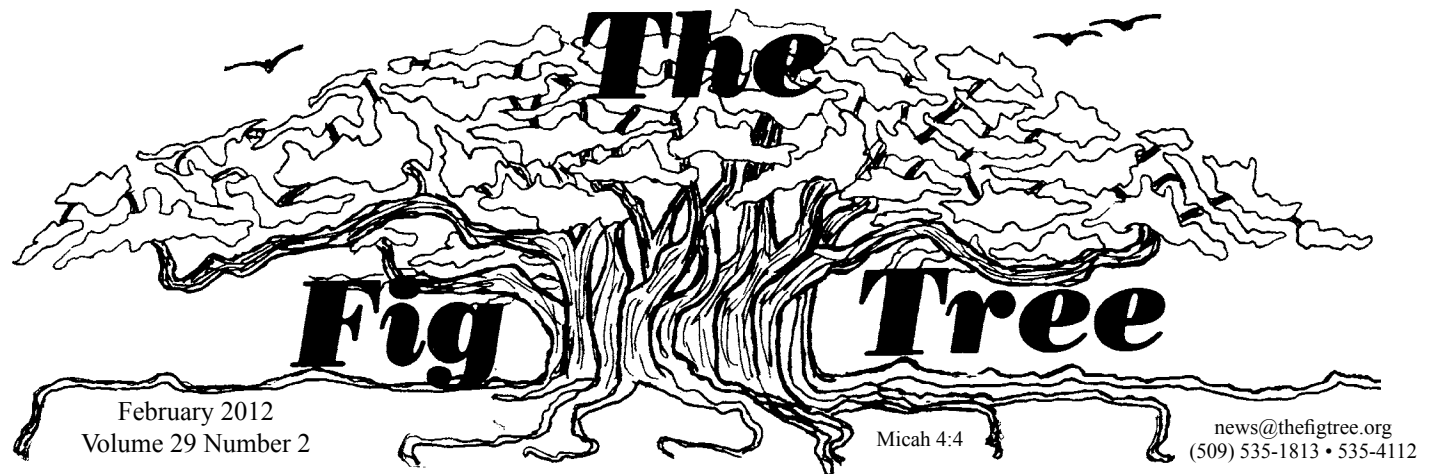
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Monthly newspaper and website covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

online in color at [www.thefigtree.org](http://www.thefigtree.org)

# Sharing stories helps heal historic trauma

By Mary Stamp

Robbie Paul, director of Native American Health Sciences at Washington State University, knows health and healing involve more than today's medical care and prescriptions.

She believes Native Americans entering health care careers need to understand their culture, lives and stories, and particularly the effects of historical trauma.

"I teach from my strength, which is Native American culture," said Robbie. "That means I tell stories and adapt them to the world today."

She teaches a class at the WSU College of Nursing titled, "Plateau Tribes Culture and Health." In the health class, Robbie has students do a three-generation genealogy of health history, education and hometowns to help students understand who they are. She knows that understanding her family history has been important to her own healing.

Part of her role is to recruit and retain Native Americans into the health science programs at WSU to help address the health care shortage and low numbers of Native Americans in the health care professions.

As one way to expand the number of students, she helped in 2007



Robbie Paul adapts stories to the world today.

to set up the Na-ha-shnee Health Science Institute, which offers a two-week camp in June at the Washington State University Pullman campus for Native American high school youth interested in health care careers.

The Na-ha-shee Health Science Institute's purpose is to encourage native youth to explore health sciences. The camp counselors are current Native American health care students from WSU. Some of the workshops at the camp are presented by native health care professionals, such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, an exercise physiologist, speech and hearing therapists, and others. The counselors and professionals are role models for the high school students.

This institute for Native American high school students is a collaborative effort of several organizations and grants.

A grant called "Growing Our Own Native American Students and Faculty" is in partnership with Northwest Indian College, the lead institution, with WSU, the University of Washington and the Yakima Farm Workers Clinic of Yakima as subcontractors.

That camp is jointly held with  
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## Rally and march draw record crowd, especially more whites and clergy

The more than 3,000 who rallied at Spokane's Convention Center and marched to Riverpark Square on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day—double many previous years—were "not afraid and would not be bullied," said event co-chair Ivan Bush, expressing gratitude to see the community come together as one.

Not only were there more people, there were more white people and clergy than in previous years.

"We are one community coming together. We're not going to let anyone turn us around," he said, referring to last year's bomb

threat on the march. "We've come too far. We have plans. There is no room for hate. Hate does not live here any more. I'm glad the community is standing for something."

A roll call revealed that people came from the Spokane area and from Walla Walla, Coeur d'Alene, Alaska, Montana, Louisiana and California.

Ivan called those gathered to extend the day from the third Monday of January through the year.

Spokane's Mayor David Condon said Martin Luther King Day

each year is an opportunity to "pause and recommit ourselves to equality. Although we celebrate one day, we work to live out the commitment to end racism and build his dream every day."

He promised that Spokane would continue to be a leader in that work.

State Senator Lisa Brown said the turnout was part of people standing up and speaking out around the world, from the Arab Spring to the Occupy movement.

Going out into the 14-degree temperature, she said, "I remembered that some folks are cold and have no home. We are here to stand up not just for ourselves, but also for them."

In the 60-day legislative session, she said Martin Luther King, Jr., would challenge legislators not to back off programs for those in need, education, economic opportunity, the social safety net or economic equality.

"In this affluent state in an affluent country," she said, "he would call us to be our best selves."

"We stand here for freedom to  
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## Fig Tree benefit events raise half of donations

The Fig Tree's annual Benefit Breakfast and Benefit Lunch in March provide half of budgeted donations for the year.

"Just as public broadcasting's appeals on air, the benefits allow The Fig Tree a venue for celebrating our unique, non-profit communication media, both to celebrate our model of media, to introduce it to new people and to invite donations," said Mary Stamp, founder and editor since 1984.

Seeking to "Deepen Our Roots," the events will invite several speakers to share how The Fig Tree media are engaged in "Communicating Credibly," modeling media responsibility.

The Benefit Breakfast begins at 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, March 14, at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University, and the Benefit Lunch begins at 11:45 a.m., Friday, March 16, also at Cataldo Hall. The programs that share The Fig Tree story begin at 7:30 a.m. and noon.

"Media may seem remote from direct service, but it's clear that if people are informed they are inspired and become involved in caring for people and providing a myriad of direct services," Mary said. "It's particularly evident in times of natural disaster. The mainstream media focusing attention on the immediate devastation motivates people to give. After media attention wanes, it's up to media like ours to tell the stories of how the faith and nonprofit communities continue to be involved in restoring lives and hope for years."

Mary also pointed out that often coverage of the faith community by secular media emphasizes the negative—the abuse, hypocrisy, divisions and other stories that are sensational enough to sell their media.

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SPokane WA  
Permit No. 1044

The Fig Tree  
1323 S. Perry St.  
Spokane, WA 99202-3571