

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN 49855

UNIVERSITY NEWS BUREAU

M E M O R A N D U M

October 3, 1980

TO: Norman E. Hefke, Dean of Students  
FROM: James L. Carter, Advisor, The Nishnawbe News  
RE: 10th Anniversary of Nishnawbe News

In June The Nishnawbe News began its 10th anniversary of continuous publication, having been established on the Northern Michigan University campus in June, 1971. During the past decade, the paper has grown in size and matured to where it has become one of the most respected Native American newspapers in the United States and Canada. The 10-year existence of The Nishnawbe News represents an unusually stable and long-lived journalistic undertaking. American Indian newspapers have an unfortunate history of brevity and instability.

The importance and usefulness of The Nishnawbe News to the American Indian community cannot be overemphasized. Although the operation is a very modest one by any standards, the few thousand dollars invested by this university and granting agencies each year pay large dividends which are not always apparent here. The direct benefits to Northern are rather small. On-the-job journalistic and business training is provided to a small number of American Indian students. Subscription and advertising revenues do not make the paper self-supporting and, therefore, it does not produce financial support for the university.

I recall what a difficult time we had trying to get outside funding to establish the newspaper back in 1970-71 when the Indian program was first started in the Office of Research & Development. If it were not for an offer by President Jamrich to provide start-up support, the paper never would have been born. (Our Advisory Committee, made up of American Indian leaders from throughout Michigan, told us a newspaper was the top priority of the Indian community, needed to provide a vital means of communication and education via the printed word.)

The paper has been published each year by a small, very dedicated group of Indian students who usually put in time far beyond that for which they are paid. I have seen dozens of young men and women come and go; on more than one occasion we thought the forthcoming issue would be the last -- insurmountable problems seemed to loom ahead. But each time they were overcome, somehow, and the paper has continued.

The Nishnawbe News is received in government offices in Washington, Lansing, Ottawa, Minneapolis and a dozen other cities where state and regional offices are located. Libraries from coast to coast receive the paper. We have had many national Indian leaders on campus over the years; I have talked to most of them. Without exception, they were aware of and

Dr. Norman Hefke  
October 3, 1980  
Page 2

read The Nishnawbe News. The paper obviously has a low profile on campus. The great bulk of its influence is spread throughout the Great Lakes region and other parts of the country.

We would hope that The Nishnawbe News can continue publication on campus for another decade, bringing widespread and lasting benefits to American Indians in Michigan and across the nation.

JC/ch

cc: Dr. John X. Jamrich  
Dr. Allan Niemi  
Mr. Matthew Surrell  
Ms. Nancie Hatch  
Mr. John Hatch