The manoomin project: multidisciplinary lake sediment core based research by Native American students on the wild rice lakes of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

National Science Foundation (NSF) funded collaboration between Fond du Lac Reservation, University of Minnesota-Limnological Research Center, and Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College

Nanda-gikendaasowin Naawij Gaa-izhiwebakin Manoomini-zaaga’iganiing
“Studying What Happened out in the Rice Lakes”

The primary goal of this project is to recruit Native American students into science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields of study. It is the design of this project to use the cultural importance of manoomin (wild rice) to tribal people from the Great Lakes region as a way to recruit student researchers, however the project is a much broader exposure to paleolimnology. Junior high through college students are immersed in the world of lake sediment core collection from the wild rice lakes on the Fond du Lac Reservation. The lake sediment cores tell the story of the lakes and their surroundings over the last 10,000 years. Students participate in field collections of lake sediment cores, as well as laboratory processes at the Fond du Lac Resource Management Division and LacCore laboratories. Junior and senior high students are introduced to research methods through weekend camps throughout the winter months, and longer two week science camps in the summer. These students are then able to use their experiences to formulate science fair projects. College undergraduate students participate in the winter and summer camps with the younger students as well. Undergraduates are selected to participate in ten week research experiences, both building their resumes and producing data that is useful to the overall project. Specialists in various disciplines are employed as mentors to students. The goal of these pairings of student and mentor is to build long term research relationships.

For more information go to http://lrc.geo.umn.edu/manoomin/ or http://gidaa.org/manoomin.html