

**American Indian Ambassadors Program:
*Medicine Pathways for the Future***

**Report on the Third Gathering
August 4 - 8, 1993
Berkeley, California**

The Third Gathering of the American Indian Ambassadors was held on the Berkeley Campus of the University of California. This Gathering was dedicated to self reflection by the Ambassadors and the formulation of pathways for carrying out effective Indian leadership.

Because of the group dynamics of the 1993 class of Ambassadors, many of the Ambassadors and the Program Advisors expressed concern that the Ambassadors needed to concentrate on and discuss the issues surrounding how one defines their own identity as an Indian and how one defines other Indians. So on the first day, the Ambassadors undertook the hardest and some of the most important work of the Program. David Beck, Director of the Tribal Research Center at NAES College, spoke to the group about "Ways in which scholars have tried to identify Indians and some of the effects this has had on both the White world and for Indians." Program Advisors, Mary Jo Butterfield and Edgar Bowen, initiated discussion among the Ambassadors about tribal and self identity and how one's identity effects one's ability to lead.

In Berkeley, the group moved to the next step in the Tribal Issues Management System (TIMS) process. The Ambassadors generated and then structured pathways for overcoming barriers so that we can exercise effective Indian leadership. At times, the Ambassadors found that it is difficult to describe and articulate direct actions that would enable us to be more effect leaders, but in the end, the group identified over 80 activities that would help us overcome barriers.

We discovered, once again, that the TIMS process brings out full participation of the group. Although it is often difficult, TIMS calls on each of the participants to look inwardly for their ideas and vision, to share them with the group, and then to decide how their ideas fit into the larger scheme and how best to carry out their visions. In sharing their ideas and visions, participants are forced to take a hard look at what they believe in and to better understand what others believe. They are able to hear what others think about the same issues and how others react to their ideas.

The entire Gathering was filled with frank discussion on hard issues. The Ambassadors proved themselves leaders by contributing, sharing, and learning. Each Ambassador went away with a better understanding of themselves and their fellow Ambassadors.