

# OklaDADA

## Providing American Indian Artists an Outlet for Expression

OklaDADA, a newly formed network of American Indian artists and community supporters, seek to create a constructive instrument for artists in Oklahoma.

According to Richard Whitman, one of the two official spokesmen for the group, "The organization is a way for Indian artists to network and promote Indigenous perspectives".

The OklaDADA organization's main objective is to expand knowledge and achievement of American Indian cultural identity. However, the group felt that they should formulate a response to the Oklahoma Centennial Celebration. "We are not in a reactionary mode to the Centennial," stated Whitman. "The state is going to celebrate the past 100 years according to how they understand it. We felt that it is essential that one of many voices of this Centennial should be that of the American Indian artist."

Whitman feels the need for an Indian sensibility to be a part of the proceedings. "Everyone wants to have a happy beginning and a happy ending, but exploring history can bring up uncomfortable issues, such as policies of assimilation and acculturation. What OklaDADA hopes to convey is that we are still here and not just in the casino business."

OklaDADA is in the planning stages of hosting an art show that will provide a tribal perspective to the Centennial. The website for OklaDADA, [www.okladada.org](http://www.okladada.org), currently offers a plethora of topics for artists and others to explore. The current topic looks at the use of *dada* in their organizations name. According to Heather Ahtone, "The dada reference comes from the belief of artists that there is more than one valid perspective. By exploring the different perspectives as they relate to indigenous aesthetics, contemporary art dialogue will open opportunities for Indian artists."

The website also offers discussion boards, a comments page, and links to websites of Oklahoma American Indian artists. For more information please visit [www.okladada.org](http://www.okladada.org) or call Richard Whitman (405.524.4506) or Russ Tallchief, Director, Jacobson House (405.366.1667).

Steve Barse, Community Liaison for the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic supports and serves on their Public Relations committee for OklaDADA. Barse says, "I have been very impressed with the groups organizational skills and commitment. They have made it clear that they want to engage not only Centennial celebrants and Indian artists, but also the Indian community as a whole."



### IHS Oklahoma City Area 2006 Awards

The 2006 IHS Oklahoma City Area Awards Banquet was held at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, July 27, 2006. John Daugherty, OKC Area IHS Director, says, "The awards are given out annually to honor the outstanding commitment, compassion, community outreach and delivery of critical services."

Four members of the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic were recognized. Amy Wilson, OD, was presented with the Area Directors Excellence Award. Sara Kernell, RN, received an Exceptional Performance Award. Natalie Knight-Glass, PA, received a Merit Award. Finally, Sarah Brown, LPN, was honored with the Peer Recognition Award.



Amy Wilson, OD  
Area Directors Award



Sara Kernell, RN  
Exceptional Performance Award



Natalie Knight-Glass, PA  
Merit Award



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