

**Declaration of the FNAHEC Council of Elders
for the
Indigenous Social Work Program**

VISION: "communities living in a sacred manner"

We, as the Indigenous peoples of this land, have a fundamental responsibility to maintain balanced and harmonious relationships with all forms of life;

We hold in reverence all that Mother Earth has given us;

We recognize that our sacred knowledge is carried in our languages, our ceremonies and the gifts of Creation;

We possess a fundamental right to meet our sacred responsibility of raising our children in a manner so that they will fulfill *their* sacred responsibility of conducting their lives in a harmonious manner;

We recognize that we have a responsibility to protect tribal protocols that are used in the transfer of sacred knowledge;

We recognize that our sacred ways ensure our survival; and

We recognize that the survival of the collective is critical to ensuring that individuals are able to fulfill their sacred responsibilities and thus achieve a state of personal well-being.

Therefore, we agree and commit ourselves as Elders and members of our Nations to respectfully work together to fulfill our fundamental responsibility to:

Ensure that our sacred ways are sustained through:

- Speaking our languages;
- Conducting our ceremonies; and
 - Living in good relationship with our families, clans, tribes, and all of Creation.

The Council of Elders for FNAHEC is a body that possesses the authority to protect the sacred ways of our people. This authority has been transferred through the generations and honors sacred ways of knowing. The mandate of the Council of Elders is to ensure that the Indigenous Social Work Program graduates people who will practice social work in a manner true to our sacredness.

Approved October 2002