Woman as the First Environment - Bodies Telling Her/stories

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Speaker:
Katsi Cook
Midwife, Environmental Activist, Mohawk community at Akwesasne

At the intersections of environmental health and reproductive health in a social justice framework, the story of the Indigenous woman’s body is told from core cultural constructs - the knowledge, difference and power - of the Mohawk community of Akwesasne, located in Northern NY State, Southwestern Quebec and Southeastern Ontario along the St.Lawrence River. From the MotherBabyMotherEarth continuum, presenter Katsi Cook will connect themes of Historical Trauma, trans-generational embodiment of industrial contamination and transformative processes necessary to achieve structural competency for the health, well-being and thriving lives of Indigenous women.

About the Speaker:
Katsi Cook (Mohawk) is a midwife and Research Associate and member of the Health and Culture planning group at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). As Executive Director of the First Environment Collaborative at Running Strong for American Indian Youth, Katsi has worked with Indigenous women’s organizations, Tribes, First Nations, Inuit, federal agencies and not-for profit organizations to build capacity to support the health, well being and thriving lives of Indigenous women wielding the tools of transformation, advancing Indigenous girls and women from isolation at the margins to increased stability, balance and capacity for coming into their full power, so that they can lead. In June of 2015 she will take the helm as Initiative Director at the NoVo Foundation.

Katsi has served as a member of the Indigenous Peoples Environmental Justice Working Group (IPWG) of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is a member of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) National Tribal Environmental Health Think Tank working in policy arenas at the tribal and federal levels, increasing discussion and promotion among North American public health authorities of the significance of Indigenous women’s health across the lifecycle from the knowledge that woman is the first environment, first relationship, first experience and first medicine of a new life. Katsi is the founding Aboriginal Midwife of the Six Nations Birthing Centre, Ohsweken, Ontario, and is a founding member of the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives (NACM) of the Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM). She is also a member of Kononkwe Council in the Mohawk community of Akwesasne.
and works to support the Oherokon “Under the Husk” rites of passage through curriculum development.

**Learning Objectives**

After watching this webinar participants will be able to:

- Identify one of the ways in which historical trauma is embodied by American Indian women
- Name a body system/organ targeted by PCB contamination
- Recognize the three major elements of the Centering Model of Pregnancy
- Understand how the political, social and cultural context of the aboriginal birthing center in Canada differs from the U.S. context

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