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Member Spotlight: Michelle Sarche

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Faculty Page

Who inspired you and why (and/or who inspired you to go into your chosen field of study)?

My grandmother, Rose (LaRonge) Hoff. She was born in 1907 on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation in Northern Wisconsin. She was quiet but fierce and she always believed in me. My work with tribal communities is inspired by her every day. I am so grateful to do work that is so personally meaningful to me and helps me stay connected to my grandmother even though she is no longer with us on earth.

Do you have a mentor or mentors who have been instrumental to your career and, if so, who and how?

I was blessed to have Dr. Robert (Bob) Emde as a close mentor over many years. He was known the world over for his research on early development but always made me feel like my ideas and work were the best...but that's just how Bob was...he saw the best in everyone, was genuinely enthusiastic and curious about their work, and was so affirming. I knew Bob as a mentor and a friend for nearly 25 years. His loss in 2021 was felt the world over but his legacy endures. He was a model mentor and human. I was also blessed to have Drs. Candace Fleming and Spero Manson as mentors. Both opened doors for me to explore my clinical and research interests early on and have remained cherished mentors and friends since.

What advice would you give to a Grad student beginning their Ph.D. studies in Developmental Science or related?

Follow your passion and stay true to your path...never take "no" for an answer to anything that would take you off that path.

What is something you learned in the last month outside of your field?

I love listening to the Tim Ferriss podcast - he hosts so many fascinating guests and I learn something new every time. I especially loved an interview with Donald Hoffman, a computational psychologist at UC Irvine, who said that based on the outer limits of what we know through math and physics, there is good reason to believe that there are far deeper realities than space and time. It was one of many examples of hearing about a scientific breakthrough that is really just catching up with what Indigenous communities already know to be true through Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

What is your Best SRCD memory?

My best memories are always catching up with former professors, mentors, and colleagues. I always look for Brad Brown, Grayson Holmbeck, and Susie Lamborn...they were some of my earliest mentors and I wouldn't be where I am today without the opportunities they gave me at the very beginning of my career! I hope to see them all - and others - at SRCD 2023!