

There Is No Generic Indian - Lydia Whirlwind Soldier - OSEU #2

Many tribes...we all have distinct differences. As individuals, we also have distinct traits. We're individuals. Many times, Native Americans are judged by what you do. That makes it very hard on our children because they are labeled.

And when they go into the educational system, sometimes they are already labeled. They are mostly derogatory labels. We want people to really look at our children, look at our people as individuals. We are proud that we belong to a nation of people. We are proud of that. We take a lot of pride in it.

We really participate in our tribal activities to show that we are a part of that group. But, we are still individuals and there is no generic Indian. Some people think that we all look alike. Really I don't think we do. Even our physical appearance...they all expect us to all have long black hair...straight hair...and other physical attributes. But we all have individual differences...in our personalities...in our physical appearance...in our personalities.

Hopefully, when the teachers look at our children, they will look at them as individuals and not as a generic Indian.