

# AIR News



23 November 2009

Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 16 years



## AIR Announces: Mentor Award Recipients

SAN DIEGO — The AIR Program officially announces our AIR Mentor Leadership Award Recipients for 2009. This year's "Mentor Leadership Award" is being presented to Ms. Katherine Gordon, University of San Diego, and Ms. Roberta Garcia, Navajo, University of San Diego. Mentoring is the foundation and key ingredient of our AIR Program projects. Our program is most successful when our mentors dedicate and engage themselves with our students within our projects giving academic advice through their current experience, familiarity and socialization within each campus, and studies skills within higher education.

Both Kate and Roberta have excelled in providing our students the greatest opportunity in understanding the road to higher education and the motivation to pursue it.

Our "Mentoring Leadership Award" is chosen from those mentors who have volunteered within our program for a minimum of one year, have inspired and motivated our student participants to pursue a greater future through higher education, have dedicated themselves to the majority of our program meetings, maintained their academics within their educational pursuit and have helped the American Indian Recruitment Program. Both Kate and Roberta have accomplished this and more while being a mentor to many of our Native student participants at the University of San Diego and San Diego State University programs.

Kate Gordon first started volunteering for our program two years ago where she mentored within our AIR Sr. project and eventually being employed as our Youth Service Specialist coordinating our Tutorial project. Due to funding we could no longer keep her employed however she continues to coordinate and volunteer within our AIR Sr. program and our AIR Tutorial project. We cannot think of any one person who has given more of themselves in improving our community than Kate. Her care for others and ability to take leadership within our program has made her one of our greatest mentors within our program.

Roberta Garcia also started volunteering for our program two years ago. We were fortunate to hire Roberta as a Youth Service Specialist where she coordinated our AIR Tutorial Project. Roberta was instrumental in laying the foundation of the tutorial project by coordinating with USD and outreaching to our American Indian community. Roberta currently volunteers within our AIR Sr. and tutorial projects while being one of our student's favorite mentors with her ability to communicate and make lasting friendships with our students. Truly, Roberta represents the ideals of our mentoring leadership award.

Both Ms. Gordon and Ms. Garcia are an inspiration to all of us within the AIR Program. Their dedication and passion for helping others less fortunate define their character and if this is the defining measurement of a person then they are truly of the greatest character. Congratulations to our future community leaders.





## Going for it All! by Rose Vasquez

*From time to time we have student writers, from our program, contribute to our newsletter giving their thoughts on various Native issues and events. Here, Rose Vasquez has agreed to contribute to our newsletter.*

My senior year came quicker than I had expected. My senior year meant choosing a college, or colleges in which I would apply to. I cringed at the thought of all the essays I knew I would have to write and the lengthy applications I would have to fill out. Yet, I knew it had to be done.

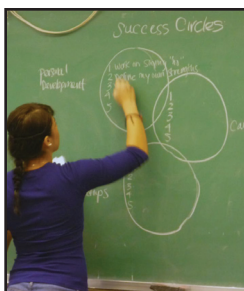
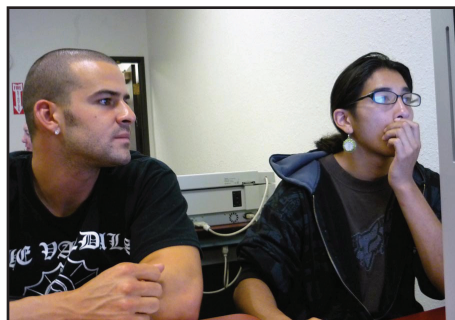
The question of where I would apply still remained. I thought to myself, "big or small school?, private or public school?, rural or urban school?, religious or non-religious school?" I realized there were many factors to consider when applying to college, but what kind of college would best fit me? I was not sure which type of college would fit me best, so I went for it all. I am applying to big, small, private, public, rural and urban schools in order to have a chance at it all.

In considering different colleges, you should keep in mind that each college has something different to offer. Each college is unique and has its own personality. Look into each one and see where you best fit. If you are not sure where you fit, just go for it all!

## AIR Senior: Research Project by Kate Gordon

*Kate Gordon is our Youth Service Specialist and Coordinator of the AIR Tutorial Project. From time to time she will be writing updates on our programs and our progress.*

This semester in AIR senior we have been conducting a research project on environmental justice. In the past sessions, we have divided the students into groups and designated several mentors to each group who help guide the students through their research. The students have learned important aspects about the research process, including how to search the internet for scholarly material, how to cite material from the internet, and how to record their findings in an organized fashion. This past week, we listened to a fantastic lecture by Dr. David Kamper on how environmental justice connects to the American Indian community. He spoke about the huge transfer of land and wealth that occurred during colonization, which left American Indian tribes with little land and resources. This history is essential to understanding why American Indians must stand up for their rights to the land and fight for environmental justice in current times. His lecture was an example of a lecture that would be given to college students, which gave the students good insight on what they can expect when they go on to higher education. After Dr. Kamper's lecture, the students and mentors got into groups to discuss the main points that they learned and to record these points so that they could incorporate them into their final presentation. I worked with Johnnie Venegas and we focused on the transfer of wealth that occurred due to colonization. She did a great job of writing an overview of the concept and practiced reading it aloud with me, as if she was giving a mini presentation. I am impressed with the students' progress this semester, as they are learning a great deal about what it takes to do a research project and about the significance of environmental justice.



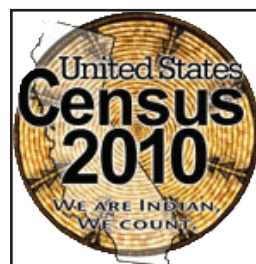
**Thanking our community partners:**  
SDSU Dept. of American Indian Studies, USD Dept. of Ethnic Studies, CSUSM Student Outreach



**SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY**



**Stand up and Be Counted  
Census 2010**







American Indian  
Recruitment  
(AIR) Programs  
P.O. Box 880471  
San Diego, CA 92168

[www.airprograms.org](http://www.airprograms.org)  
[info@airprograms.org](mailto:info@airprograms.org)



## AIR Tutorial Program

The AIR Tutorial Program is accepting students throughout the year. This is one of our newer programs that has had great success in working individually with each of our student participants. The program is held in a safe environment on the campus of the University of San Diego, with qualified tutors and staff from the university. The location poses a terrific opportunity for research, study, and academic support.

For any information on our tutorial program contact:

Kate Gordon (Youth Service Specialist-Site Coordinator) at [kgordon-10@sandiego.edu](mailto:kgordon-10@sandiego.edu) (or)

Dwight K. Lomayesva (Director) at [info@airprograms.org](mailto:info@airprograms.org)

## AIR Program Fundraiser Banquet December 2, 2009 at Harrah's Rincon Casino

The AIR Program would like to thank all those who have contributed to our Annual Fundraiser and those who have pledged their donations. Your funding will help us continue to maintain and operate our current programs. We are very fortunate to have such overwhelming support from our community that we have served for the last 16 years and look forward in continuing our services for many years to come.

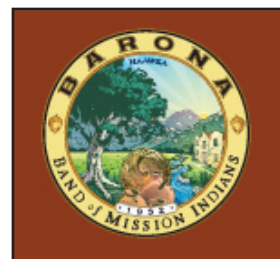
The banquet will start at 5:15 pm on Wednesday, December 2, 2009, at Harrah's Rincon Casino and Resort. Honorees will be our Student, Mentor, and Community Leaders of 2009. Please join us for a festive and delightful program.

For more information please go to: [www.airprograms.org](http://www.airprograms.org) or contact Dwight Lomayesva at [dlomayesva@airprograms.org](mailto:dlomayesva@airprograms.org) or call (619) 920-3152.

Student Awards: Chandler Hood (Navajo)  
Rose Vasquez (Santa Ysabel)  
Monique Vasquez (Mojave)

Mentor Awards: Roberta Garcia (Navajo)  
Katherine Gordon

Community Leadership: Dr. Michelle Jacob (Yakama)



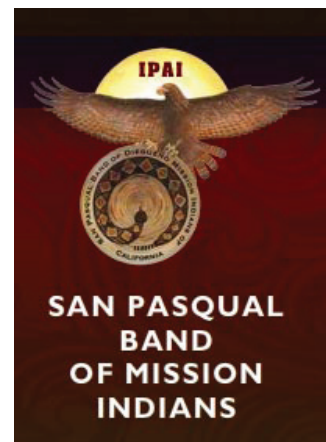
Thanking Barona Band of Mission Indians and Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation for their continued support for our program



*Thank you to all those who have contributed to our fundraiser banquet: University of San Diego, University of California, San Diego, California State University, San Marcos, San Diego State University, Dept. of American Indian Studies, Palomar College, Department of American Indian Studies, Southern CA Tribal Chairman's Association, University of California, Los Angeles, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, The Barona Band of Mission Indians, The Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, Native American Lawyers Association, California Indian Legal Services, Project Embrace and the many other organizations that made our program possible.*

A Special thank you to the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians for your support for our program

**Rincon PALOMAR COLLEGE**  
Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians Learning for Success



Devon L. Lomayesva (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel)  
Board Chair/President

Larry Banegas (Barona Tribe)  
Board Member

Natalia Orosco (Kumeyaay)  
Secretary/Treasurer



Stephanie Saavedra-Leo (Otomi/Pueblo)  
Vice President

Hattie Lou Lomayesva (Hopi Tribe)  
Board Member

Dwight K. Lomayesva (Hopi Tribe)  
Executive Director