

AIR News



14 December 2009

Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 16 years



Thank you to all our Community Partners

For making the AIR Program Banquet a Success

RINCON RESERVATION — The AIR Program Annual Fundraiser Banquet was a great success. The contributions made here will help our program with costs to continue our program through the spring of 2010. These programs include our AIR Sr. Project and Tutorial program. Both have been highly successful in bringing academic success to our Native students and the motivation to pursue higher education.

First and foremost we thank the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians for being this year's host for our banquet. Their contribution and the promotion towards education for our American Indian children is truly inspiring as there is a great need to support Indian education as drop out rates still remain high.

We also congratulate our AIR Program Award recipients who have demonstrated great character within our program. These students, mentors and our community leader award recipient are remarkable people whom are an example of what our Tribal communities will offer to the world in leadership and stewards of the environment.

This fall semester we have had approximately 26 students participants within our two programs. These programs were held on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday throughout the academic semester. To help provide these services to our students we have had 40 volunteers comprised of community members and student volunteers from the San Diego community and San Diego State University and the University of San Diego. It is estimated that these volunteers have put in over 700 hours of their time to provide these services to our students. Beyond this, we are finding more and more mentors continuing to volunteer within our program for more than one semester. Truly, the return of students and return of mentors to a program where there is no monetary reward is truly remarkable. We thank all our mentors this semester as well as our students who have participated within our program. Following our American Indian community ideal, we help each other so that we may advance together for a stronger and greater future for our children.

Our program still remains strong although lacking in funding. We grow strong with our community partners and their support, in the belief of a greater future of our Tribal communities. Thank you for a great and wonderful semester!





Reflections about our AIR Senior Project by Rachel Venegas

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, Rachel Venegas has agreed to contribute to our newsletter.

Hello! My name is Rachel Venegas and I have been in the AIR program for about three years. I really enjoyed the program this semester because I got to meet new people and reunite with old ones. This was my first time participating in AIR Senior. It was interesting because the environment was more advanced in the projects we did, which made me think harder and dig deeper into each question. Our main topic at AIR senior was environmental justice and how it relates to Native Americans. I was very surprised about all the information I learned regarding what was happening everyday on the reservations and all across native lands. For example, the nuclear testing site in Nevada may be linked to the deaths of many natives because of all of radioactive dust that is carried by the wind and inhaled by the surrounding reservations or how radio tower may affect natives living in close proximity to it because of the microwaves. There are so many things that are increasing the rate of death to our Native communities each day. I am one of the few who got really interested on this mind exploding topic and I am

willing to do anything to help and stop all of these unfortunate events. I thank the AIR program and my mentors who tell me how I can contribute in my community. For them, my family and all the natives across our land. Peace and Native Pride!

Award Recipients for AIR Program 2009

Student Award Recipients

Chandler Hood (Navajo: High Tech High, 4 years within AIR Program)

Rose Vasquez (Santa Ysabel: Valley Center High School, 4 years within AIR Program)

Monique Vasquez (Mojave: All Tribes American Indian Charter School, 4 years within AIR Program)

Mentor Awards:

Roberta Garcia (Navajo: University of San Diego, 2 years volunteer service within AIR Program)

Katherine Gordon (University of San Diego, 2.5 years volunteer service within AIR Program)

Community Leadership:

Dr. Michelle Jacob (Yakama: University of San Diego, 3 years within AIR Program)



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY



Thanking our community partners: SDSU
Dept. of American Indian Studies and
CSUSM Student Outreach



Thanking USD, Dept.
of Ethnic Studies and
CASA Programs





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AIR Tutorial Program

The AIR Tutorial program has concluded for the 2009 academic year. We have made great progress with our students within their academic grades. Success of the program depends a lot on our communication with the student's instructors and parent involvement and we are pleased that this combination of efforts have brought great success. In many cases simple correspondence with the instructors has allowed us to find out where the student needs to be and what the student needs to work on while in class. Where the instructor feels that good faith efforts are being made on the students behalf outside the school setting there seems to be more support within the classroom. We must thank the University of San Diego, Dept. of Ethnic Studies and CASA Programs for their help in establishing this program that has truly helped many of our students (*we especially thank Dr. Jacob, Brenna Hughes, Kate Gordon and Roberta Garcia*).

Fall Semester Review

AIR Tutorial Project:

- 9 students with 160 hrs of tutorial time
- 11 tutor/mentors with 303 hrs of tutorial time (prep and within class)

AIR Sr. Project:

- 17 students with 182.5 hours of time
 - 29 mentors with 459 hrs of time within prep and in class
- Leveraged Resources include Rooms provided by the Universities and Food.



Thank you to all those who have contributed to our fundraiser banquet: University of San Diego, Dept. of Ethnic Studies and CASA Programs, 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, Native American Lawyers Association, California Indian Legal Services, Southern Indian Health Council, Rincon Indian Health, 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



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