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AIR News

focus

“OUR MISSION IS THE PROMOTION AND SUCCESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS WITHIN EDUCATION.”

Created in 1993 the AIR Program has set out to create a greater future for our American Indian Community through education.



AIR Program year closes on a successful note

(San Diego) American Indian Recruitment Programs has completed a very successful year within our program where we have seen over 80 student participants within our projects. Similarly, we have had over 80 community volunteers working alongside our students providing academic services and motivation to pursue higher education. They accomplished this through library and hands on research on Native languages and Native foods. A high point was the AIR programs’ visit to the Kumeyaay/Ipai Interpretive Center at Pauwai (Poway). Truly this has made our program very special and unique.

We have done this during a critical time, where budget cuts have removed many of our school districts’ academic services to our youth and where cuts in federal spending have caused a reduction in grants to many of Native educational programs. However, it is our belief, as well as many others, that there is no amount of money that can replace the loss of a child’s potential. With this ideal we have continued, despite funding deficits. We did this because our Native children cannot afford to wait for the services that we provide; they absolutely need assistance now.

Because of our success we have been able to garner much needed community support and as of October 2011 we have been awarded an Administration for Native Americans Grant for our 2011-2012 academic year. We are fortunate that many believe in what we do and what we have accomplished. We thank our community for their support and those during this past year, who have participated as a mentor/volunteer and have help guide our students towards reaching their career and personal goals.

Again, on behalf of the AIR Programs we congratulate our Honorees for their efforts and contributions to Indian Education.

AIR Programs Banquet at Sycuan

The AIR Program would like to thank the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation for the generous donation and sponsoring our Annual Fundraiser Banquet at the Sycuan Resort. Sycuan has been one of our most dedicated supporters throughout these many years as well as being a supporter of many Native organizations geared towards aiding our community. We are proud to be associated with the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation who cares about our Native children, as well as our San Diego community.



We also would like to take this time to thank our community partners for their support as this has been a tremendous turnout for our banquet and fundraising efforts. Together our efforts will change our community and nation for a greater future that includes our Native people. Finally, Congratulations to all our Awardees as you have had the greatest impact on our program and our community.

Student Awardee 2011: Cheyenne Garcia

Hello everyone, my name is Cheyenne Garcia, from my mother's side I am Lakota from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in Eagle Butte, South Dakota and from my father's side I am Gabrielino Tongva, Mescalero Apache, and Yaqui. I am a senior at the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts majoring in dance.

Growing up, my parents traveled to different countries to showcase their culture, art, and dance. I was able to travel with them, experience, and learn about other cultures. This experience shaped who I am today. It taught me a lot. I learned that no matter where you come from or who you are, we all share some commonalities. It also inspired me to share my culture wherever I go. It made me proud of who I am and where I come from. I want to thank them for always being there for me, for being my role models, for encouraging me to go to college, and to always do my best.

I've participated in the AIR program for about 6 years now. The AIR program is such an amazing program, not only is it a great place to see other Native students but it is also beneficial to all of us, Native youth who are currently looking into or inspired to further our education. As a student in the AIR program, I believe this program is very important because it encourages and motivates Native youth to go to college. It has really made an impact in my life. Every week, since I could remember, I look forward to attending the program. I am inspired to make an impact in my community and to pursue higher education, especially as a Native student. As you may know, the statistics are very low among American Indians and I do not want to be another statistic. Therefore, I am determined to pursue higher education and graduate with a college degree. The AIR mentors, all have really made a difference in my life. They have helped me stay on track and provided me with the tools and resources to prepare me for college.

Attending AIR every Monday, I was able to see the college campuses and interact with college mentors, which has helped me become more confident in being in a college campus and dealing with everyday college life. I really enjoyed the college campus tours because it provided us with a different perspective about college. Interacting with the mentors, the mentors shared their experiences, which helped me understand their struggles and successes in college. The AIR program components provide us students with a holistic perspective to achieve success in college. I am very grateful especially during these next couple of months when college applications are due and when there's a lot to juggle with school and extra-curricular activities. I will be applying to UCLA, Stanford, USD, UCSD, SDSU, UC Irvine, and Harvard. UCLA being my top choice.

My ultimate goal is to get a college degree. I want to make a difference in my community by sharing my knowledge and empowering other Native youth, not only within my Native community but all other Native and non-Native communities as well. I learned that earning a college education is important because it can provide me with new opportunities and create change in a positive way.

I want to thank everyone in my Native community for all your support and encouragement you have provided me throughout the years, especially now that I am embarking on my new journey. I also want to thank my family for always sharing and keeping our culture alive. I hope to do the same for the next generations to come. And, I would like to thank the AIR program for choosing me as the AIR "Student of the Year." It is a great honor and accomplishment. In past years, I have always been inspired by former AIR "Student of the Year" awardees. Thank you everyone for coming.



We thank Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP, one of the largest business law firms in Southern California, for their sponsorship of our American Indian Recruitment Program. Procopio is part of a public interest collaboration serving the Native American Community. For more information, contact Procopio's Native American Practice Group Leader, Ted Griswold at ted.griswold@procopio.com.

Student Awardee 2011: Katy Davis

Hello, my name is Katy Davis. I am from the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and live on the Rincon Indian Reservation where I also attend All Tribes Charter School as a senior. I have been in the AIR program for 2 years. I am also part of the ATCS Early College Program at USD, where I am able to take college courses and receive college credit. This program in conjunction with the AIR program has provided me with the experience, the understanding of commitment, academics, and social aspects in attending a university.

The AIR program has been a great motivator, guide, and inspiration on my path to college. It not only opened new doors and gave me valuable opportunities but it also exposed me to the college campus life. I feel more confident and sure of my decision to further my education. Through this program, I have been introduced to other Native youth, who have similar interests and goals, to not become a product of our environment, and being surrounded by people has been an irreplaceable experience. From the research topics that require each student to really think about what their culture means to them and how much they know about their roots, and to having a mentor that truly cares about your future. Being a part of AIR has been a crucial element in my decision to go to college.

I have chosen to go to college to pursue a Bachelor's in Women Studies because I wish to help those who are not as fortunate as I am, such as women in other countries whose rights are being taken away, as we speak. For this reason, after receiving my college degree, I plan to join the Peace Corps and become a human rights activist. After the Peace Corps, I hope to be a social and community activist to help make change in my Native community, especially in the lives of Native women. The colleges I will be applying to are: Evergreen, Warren-Wilson, CSU Long Beach, Hampshire College, and some in the San Diego area.

Being in the AIR program has been a blessing for me, not only have I met new friends who have similar interests and goals like me but it has tremendously helped me choose the right path after high school and how to achieve success. The support and encouragement I have received has been amazing. It is comforting to know that if I ever have a question or concern related to college, I know who to contact for advice and trust they will help me to the best of their ability.

I would like to thank my family and friends, especially my parents, who are always supporting me, my teachers who never give up and always push me to do better, and all the mentors who have inspired me to go into college.



Community Leadership Awardee 2011: Mary Ann Donohue

We would like to take this time to recognize a person who has demonstrated great leadership and dedication in working with our Native children, Mary Ann Donohue. Together with Michelle Parada (Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians) they have created and developed All Tribes Charter School for Native Children. This school serves disadvantage students and is often that last school Native children can go to before leaving the traditional school system. Where many would give up Mary Ann has moved forward to expand the school ensuring that many can graduate and become productive members of our communities. All Tribes Charter School has become a community partner of our AIR Program. Where many of their students come to our after-school program in addition to their current school day. Words cannot be enough to truly express how one can be dedicated and show the care for others as much as Mary Ann Donohue. Congratulations.



We thank the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for their continued support of our Native Students. Together we continue to bring a greater future for our Native children.



Christy's Corner

In Spring 2011, I graduated from CSUSM with my Master's in Sociological Practice. I have both worked previously and have volunteered within the AIR Program, since 2006. There have been countless hours that I have put into our AIR program that go beyond 1000 hours. I am proud to say that I have been part of the development of our very successful program for these many years. I strongly believe that the disadvantaged and underserved populations should be able to have equal opportunities as other non-Native people, who are often aware of and take advantage of those opportunities. I thank the AIR program for this opportunity to continue to work with the AIR Program as the Youth Service Specialist.

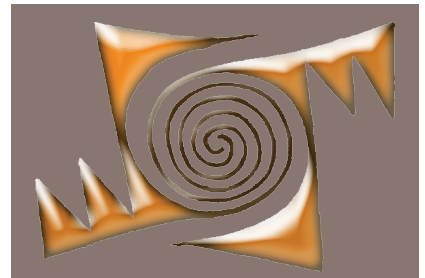
My personal story comes from my parents who are from Baja California but moved to the San Pasqual Indian Reservation where I grew up. Growing up on San Pasqual, I witnessed first-hand how American Indians (and those living on the reservation, like my family), struggled against structural disadvantages in the arenas of healthcare, the economy, and education. Instead of being part of the problem, I wanted to be part of the solution. Therefore, I aspired to be an agent of change who empowers the community that nurtured me in my youth. I am proud to represent the AIR Program as a mentor and Youth Service Specialist. I hold mentorship dear to my heart because I can make a difference in Native youth's lives. Our mentoring programs is not too different from my life, as if it were not for my mentors like Dr. Michelle Jacob and my parents, I would not be where I am today.

AIR Program Year End Stats

The AIR Program has an academic calendar from Fall through the end of Summer (roughly from October 1st through September 30th). We make our statistics (numeric) public as we wish to show our community what we do, our impact and successes. We feel this is imperative, as we serve our community and are part of our community therefore we must hold ourselves accountable to our community. We are proud of what we have accomplished and look forward to another successful year.

Student Participants Total: 69 (Sr. Fall/Spring and Summer) + 19 (Tutorial) = 88
 Mentor/Community Participants Total: 88 (Sr. Fall/Spring and Summer) + 19 (Tutorial) = 107
 Mentor/Community hrs: 1,558 hrs (Sr. Fall/Spring and Summer, *Note: excludes tutorial program*)
 Community Partners:

All Tribes Charter School/ Barona Band of Mission Indians/California Indian Legal Services/Mesa Grande Tribal Youth Programs/Native American Lawyer's Association/Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians/San Diego Community Enhancement Programs/San Diego State University, Dept. of Psychology/San Diego State University, Dept. of American Indian Studies/San Manuel Band of Mission Indians/San Pasqual Band of Kumeyaay Indians/SHARP Business Systems/Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation/Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation/Tribal Star/University of San Diego, Dept. of Ethnic Studies/University of San Diego, CASA/University of San Diego, Office of Outreach/University of California, San Diego, Native American Student Alliance/University of California, San Diego, Office of the Chancellor/Viejas Band of Mission Indians Youth Programs



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AIR Programs Board

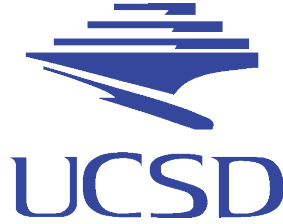
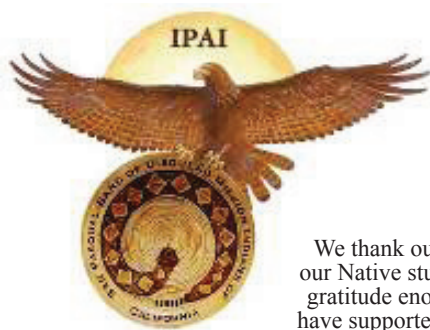
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 (Hopi Tribe)
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We thank our community partners who have donated and support our Native students under our AIR Program. We cannot express our gratitude enough how these organizations, Tribes, and Universities have supported our program through these many years. Together we are creating change for our Native Community so that our future will be of the greatest in our nations history.



AIR Programs welcomes Mr. Gary Lomayesva to our AIR Programs Board

The AIR Programs board and staff would like to welcome Gary Lomayesva to the AIR Programs Board. Gary works as the Marketing and Intranet IT - Program Director at Hewlett-Packard and is a Hopi Tribal member. Throughout these many years, Gary has been an enthusiastic promoter of our AIR Programs as well as many other non-profit organizations whom serve youth.

AIR Programs Recieves ANA Grant

The AIR Program is a proud recipient of an Administration for Native Americans Grant for the 2011-2012 year. We thank ANA for their belief in our program and native children.



Thanking all our community partners for their support of our program, Native children and bringing hope and future for all our American Indian community.



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

