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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 Summer Program Ready to Start*

(San Diego) With the completion of another successful program (Spring 2011) we are ready to begin our AIR Summer program. During this summer’s project, we will introduce the topic of

Rock Art and interpretation through Native Cultural Perspectives. This is an important topic as Rock Art was produced, in many cases, with the interpretation of cultural views of creation and life during that point in time. This is significant, as these views unlock a historical perspective of our Tribal Nations and where we came from. It is our hope that in researching this topic we will be able to understand the importance of the meaning of Rock Art within the region and the historical value to our many Tribal Nations.

With our summer ready to begin we wish to cover three main components within our program, which we use to service our participants.

Academic workshops; that help our students understand processes of higher education.

Topical Research Assignment; Here we research an American Indian issue with the assistance of our mentor staff. The ideal here is to get a small glimpse of research methodology on an academic level that will benefit the student in their current and future academic settings. Additionally, our topic is geared to induce interest in our Native American cultures and promote greater self confidence for our student participants.

Familiarity with higher education; Through the immersion of using the university setting to have our students overcome any fears of the higher educational environment.

Finally, a fourth but not mentioned ideal we attempt to promote is to have fun during this part of summer where our students can feel safe and create new friendships. We look forward in seeing you this summer!







## AIR Program Spring 2011 Statistics

We completed our spring 2011 semester with great optimism as many of our students took away with them greater knowledge on higher education, ideas on various issues affecting our Native communities and greater self awareness of whom they are. Overall, we use the ideal of instruction (teaching) through culture. With this ideal students gain greater identity, self confidence and empowerment which, overall, leads to greater academic performance.

During this last semester's topic, we researched ideas on language and culture. Language is a foundation of our Native communities and of our cultures. Language forms the root of our communications in telling stories, of our creation, and of our family heritage. Therefore, the loss of language has hurt our Tribal nations and

caused great dysfunction within our communities if not the greater destruction of our Tribes. Using this topic as our base our students examined culture and languages, loss of our languages (reasons) and finally current preservation efforts. Although, with the little time to truly examine this great issue, our students participants with help from their mentors obtained valuable information and were able to understand how such a loss effects them as Native persons.

We at the AIR Program believe in our ideals, methods, and people that work within our program. We believe transparency of our organization and share what we do within our program and our statistics with our community as it is our community that we work for. The following is a brief statistical narrative of our program this semester for our AIR Sr. Project. Again, thank you to all our community partners for all your help for our Native Youth.

Student Meetings:	8	Mentor meetings + student meetings:	10
Student Participants:	24 total	Student participant hours:	247.5 hrs
Mentor/Community Participants:	32 total	Mentor/Community Participants hours (excludes Program Coordinators):	534 hrs
Tribal Nations Represented:	15	Hopi/Navajo/Cahuilla/Kumeyaay/Lakota/Cherokee/Luiseno/Tohono Odom/Tongva/Kickapoo/Apache/Yaqui/Cheyenne/Omaha/Choctaw	
Tribal Reservations Represented:	12	Hopi/Navajo/San Pasqual/Mesa Grande/Rincon/ Cahuilla/Torres Martinez/Santa Ysabel/Tohno Odom/Pauma/Pala/La Jolla	

## Sharp Business Systems Community Outreach Programs giving support to our AIR Program

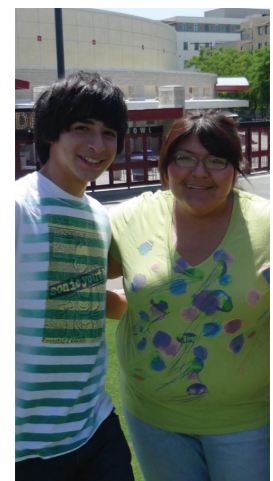
AIR Programs welcomes Sharp Business System as a community partner. Sharp Business Systems of San Diego in an effort to encourage education among our Native Youth and to promote higher education, will donate a portion of their Native sales to our AIR Program. We thank Sharp Business Systems for caring for our Native Youth and our community as truly it takes our entire community to make our Nation a greater place.



## Congratulations to our Mentors Graduates

The AIR Program is a work in progress, always. We evaluate ourselves and we always try to improve on what we have done. We do this by bringing in new ideas and new people and using their knowledge and their talents to make our program the best we can be. Therefore, our program is mainly based on all our mentors who have brought this talent and their dedication to work with our Native Youth. We are truly honored to have so many great and talented people within our program throughout these many years. If we reflect on our mentors we will see many of our past mentors on their Tribal Councils leading their Nations, Directing Indian Health Programs, Directing Legal Services Program, as Teachers, as Nurses, as Doctors and Lawyers, and many more. Truly, great leaders have participated within our program and continue to lead our Tribal Nations and our communities toward a greater future. That is why we wish to congratulate our recent mentor graduates as they inspire, give us hope for the future, and we will look to them as leaders of our Nation. It has been a great honor to work with all of them within the AIR Program. Congratulations to:

*Christy Garcia, Phillip Espinoza, Iran Lopez, Wynona Peters, Roberta Garcia, Kelsey Novi, and Amanda Moreno*







## Thank you to Phillip White

We wanted to take this time to thank Phillip White, SDSU Librarian, and Native American Collections Specialist; for all that he has done for our program throughout these many years. Phillip has worked for the San Diego State University, Love Library for over a quarter of a century and in that time he has assisted our program every year since our creation. He has been a true supporter of our program in promoting greater academics and motivation to our Native Youth.

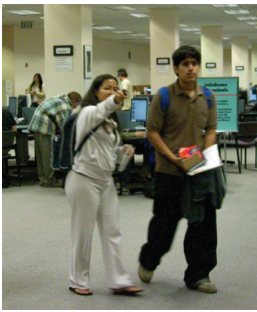
Throughout our program we have made great efforts to have our students become familiar with the Library through various activities. In having our students becoming familiar with the library we have hoped that they lose their intimidation of the major research facility, that they would become inspired to use the facility to study and research, and finally, to overcome any fears of the library and utilize the services

offered by the many librarians there. Librarians are the key to good research as they have a greater understanding of the library and research methodology.

Phillip has helped us in our efforts to accomplish this goal and has assisted many of our students in understanding the research that is carried on within the Library. Truly, Phillip White has been an asset to our program, to the Library and to San Diego State University.

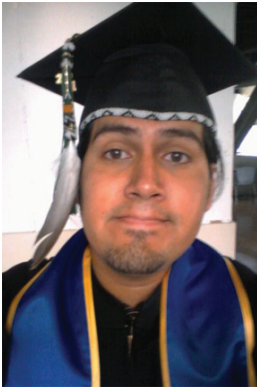
Phillip is retiring from his position at the SDSU Love Library and we wanted to take this time to thank him for all these years of support. Truly, your community service work has greatly helped our students, mentors, and enhanced our program. We will truly miss you and wish you the best as you enjoy your new chapter in life!

Thanking the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for their support for our program. Your help has given our students a greater ability to reach their greatest potential.



## From Student to Mentor to Graduate

For the AIR Program it is special year, as one of our students became a mentor within our program and has now graduated from the University of California, San Diego. We are proud to stand by him as he will someday take the tools of success that he has and lead our nation to a greater future. We congratulate Phillip Espinoza on his graduation and wish him great success in his life. The AIR Program, is a non-profit, and with all non-profits, we struggle with limited resources therefore our expansion is slow. But sometimes, where there is need and a willingness to work for the betterment of our Native Community we will never say no. Slightly over a year ago, we met Phillip again after so many years away from our program (as a student). He offered to host our program (via native student group) and be their community partner at UCSD. We cannot stress enough how changing this moment has been as our program has developed strong ties with the university as both the university, their Native Student group, and our program seeks to improve the lives of our Native Youth through our academic program.



Having such willingness to partner with us and to serve our community it shows such dedication and the greatness of his character. Whether he has been influenced by our program may be debatable but his influence on our program is more than apparent. He graduates with a degree in Political Science, class of 2011! Congratulations!



**AIR PROGRAMS**  
 PO Box 880471  
 San Diego CA 92168  
[info@airprograms.org](mailto:info@airprograms.org)



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



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