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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 Announces Student Honorees: Racheal Venegas and Kiowa Montoya



#### 2011-12 Academic Year Ends and we exceed all expectations...

(San Diego) We have concluded one of the most successful years in AIR Programs' tenure. This year we had an overall participation of at least 164 students and 198 mentors/community participants within all programs. This is 362 overall participants within our AIR Program this last year. Our students are being accepted to many of the California universities and are graduating at even greater rates. We ran four projects throughout the year (AIR Sr./Jr./ Tutorial and Summer) and introduced the concept of our in-house Recruitment and Retention Specialist who is assisting our seniors in preparing for higher education (scholarships/applications/admission requirements/personal statements and more) on a very individualized schedule. This position has produced our next crop of college ready students and with this success we will keep this position as a necessity for our students to ensure preparedness for higher education at a four-year university. We mentioned in previous newsletters that our tutorial program is successful in increasing the grades of our students, in review, we note that the success is notably increasing our student's grades by a minimum of 1.5 letter grades. This is done by regular tutoring practices combined with advocacy for the student at their schools. In many cases simple follow up or discussion allows our students to have opportunities to succeed where they otherwise thought they could not. We also acknowledge our students who have earned awards in various competitions demonstrating their understanding of cultural topics and their leadership skills in sharing their thoughts and opinions with the broader community. We are very proud of our students and our accomplishments as our Native students are gaining ground in reaching their greatest potential through education.



# The American Indian Recruitment (AIR) Programs

19th Annual Fundraiser Banquet

Thursday, October 11, 2012, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

San Diego State University - Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center

Co-Sponsored by the Office of the President, SDSU



AIR Programs has proudly served the San Diego County region for over 19 years, through our mentoring and tutorial programs. Our programs provide our Native youth the tools needed to compete and succeed within the academic setting and create opportunities to expose them to higher education. Support our AIR Program by becoming a sponsor of this year's 19th Annual Fundraiser Banquet! The evening's events will include presentations highlighting this year's accomplishments and awards for our students, mentors, and community members. If you cannot attend please support our program through a donation towards our Native youth and academic programs.

For additional sponsorship information please visit our website at [www.airprograms.org](http://www.airprograms.org) or email us at [info@airprograms.org](mailto:info@airprograms.org)



*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 Announces Student Honorees and Banquet

(San Diego) American Indian Recruitment Programs is proud to announce this year's Honorees for our 2011-2012 Student Leadership Awards. This year's honorees are Racheal Venegas (Navajo, Diego Hills Charter School) and Kiowa Montoya (Taos Pueblo, San Dieguito Academy). Both Student honorees have impacted our program making for a highly successful year. We are confident that these two outstanding awardees, whom we honor today, will become future leaders of our community and lead us to a greater future.

At our Banquet we will honor our outstanding students as they are chosen for their impact on and success within our program, their dedication towards education, their cultural ties to their community, and their impact on our Native American community. We cannot express how proud we are of our of this year's honorees, as each of them has a great belief in the hope and potential for Native youth through education.

We will acknowledge their efforts at our 19th Annual Fundraiser Banquet at San Diego State University, at the Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center. Our Fundraiser Banquet aims to help us maintain and operate our current programs. Funding goes towards scholarships for students, AIR Program activities, supplies and related costs in support of our Native students. We are very fortunate to have the support from our community partners to maintain our program and we again look to your continued supported our efforts and our Native American youth so that they may have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and dreams.

Again, on behalf of the AIR Program we congratulate our honorees for their efforts and contributions to Indian education.



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](mailto:ted.griswold@procopio.com).

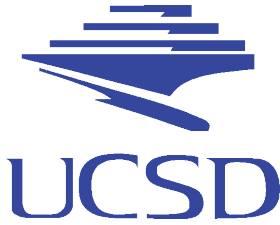




**Racheal's Corner** *From time to time we have our students and mentors contribute to our newsletter by giving their thoughts on Native issues and events. Here, Racheal Venegas (Navajo/Diego Hills Charter School) has agreed to contribute to our newsletter.*

Yá'át'ééh! My name is Racheal Venegas. I have been a member of the AIR Program for about seven years now. I am in 12th grade and currently go to Diego Hills Charter School. I am grateful for AIR because being the second to graduate high school in my family means a lot to me. Sadly not many Native Americans graduate high school or even consider college as a possibility in their lives. I didn't either, that is until I became a part of the AIR Program and met Kate, Anna and Christy and several more outstanding college graduates who took all their time to motivate me to pursue higher education. It worked. After my credits are finished and my school rings a bell for me, I will be on my way to UCSD or SDSU, my two dream schools. I don't think I would even know the name of the different Universities of California without the AIR Program. I've had the wonderful opportunity to know amazing people and explore beautiful campuses. I am forever thankful for the AIR Program because they have helped me understand that I can

accomplish anything I put my mind to through education.



We thank our community partners who have donated and supported our Native students under our AIR Program. We cannot express our gratitude enough on how these organizations, Tribes, and Universities have given their support to 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 Nation's history.



**Kate's Corner** *From time to time we have our students and mentors contribute to our newsletter by giving their thoughts on Native issues and events. Here, Katherine Gordon (USD Alumni/AIR Programs Youth Service Specialist) has agreed to contribute to our newsletter.*

(San Diego) We had a tremendous tutorial program this past spring. With more students than we've ever had before, there were new friendships made and stories exchanged at each meeting. A true community was formed between our AIR staff, volunteers, students and parents and it was great to have everyone working together. We also saw a huge transformation in our students' school performance and self-esteem. Our student's grades improved by an average of 1 ½ grade levels, meaning we had students going from a C to a B+ GPA.

As expected, those who attended on a more regular basis had greater improvement. Many students left with more confidence about themselves and their academics. According to their teachers, they suddenly wanted to answer questions and had a new enthusiasm toward school. We couldn't ask for better feedback. Clearly, our students are capable of succeeding when they get the support and motivation that they deserve. We are excited for another great year in the fall and welcome new participants of all ages!



Thank you to the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians for their contribution to our program. With your assistance we were able to accomplish so much with our students and program!

Special Thanks to the University of San Diego and San Diego State University who has donated so much in making our program exist over these many years. Together we are creating change for our Native Community so that our future will be of the greatest in our Nation's history.



# Final End of the Year Statistics

We just completed our academic year that started on September 1, 2011 and will end August 30, 2012. As stated previously, we had one of our greatest years within our program using the ideals of instruction (teaching) through culture. With this ideal students gained greater identity, self-confidence and empowerment which, overall, leads to greater academic performance. This ideal is greatly enhanced when it is combined with academic services provided within our tutorial program.

This year's topics included cultural preservation, Native Health, and Native contributions to the world. Within cultural preservation the loss of cultural sites deprives many of our Tribal Nations of their history, their place in relation to their territories, and much more. Within Native Health we learned much on the issues of diabetes within our Native communities. This was combined with our academic workshops, college advising through our Recruitment and Retention Specialist. With all the great outcomes from our projects we thank all our community partners and those who volunteered their time within our program. Truly this was a community effort.

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

Overall Student Participants: 164 (total)                      Student participant hours: 1873.84 hrs.  
 Mentor/Community Participants: 198 (total)              Mentor/Community hours: 3247 hrs.  
 In-Kind donated hours for volunteer Mentor/Community in dollar value: \$53,575.50  
*(The estimated value of volunteer time estimated as \$16.50 - Bureau of Labor)*  
 Total Student and Mentor/Community Participants: 362

# AIR Summer 2012 Program Concludes

Overall we believe that a person with stronger cultural identity is more inclined to be empowered to excel in academics and in their personal lives. Cultural identity comes in many forms, it comes from our ceremonies, cultural artifacts, prayer, and much more. In the case of Indian Country it also comes from family and community. During this summer we created our community of mentors (community volunteers)

and our students. Together, we looked at concepts of culture in which our Tribal communities gave to the world. Concepts embedded in science, cultural sites (petroglyphs and submerged sites), and art. We also introduced academic workshops for our students to understand how to pursue higher education, to be



motivated through our mentors that they can succeed in higher education, and to understand that our community (mentors and volunteers) will be there to assist them in their pursuit.

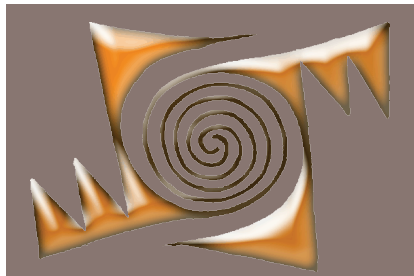
We accomplished all this and had a great time doing it. We thank all those who have given their support to our program and those who have volunteered to make this program the great success it was.

Overall Student Participants: 56 (total)  
 Mentor/Community Participants: 49 (total)



Thank you to Sharp Business Systems for your support of our program.

Thanking the Administration for Native Americans for their work and support for our program. The AIR Program is a 2011-12 grantee under ANA.



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