



AIR Newsletter

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SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Special points of interest:

- AIR Jr. to start 10/21
- Students wanted for AIR Sr.
- Renee's Corner
- Pre-evaluation results



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VIEJAS BAND OF KUMEYAAY INDIANS

PALOMAR COLLEGE Learning for Success

AIR Sr. Starts

AIR Sr. started on October 13, 2008 at San Diego State University. This marks our 15th year of operation and servicing our American Indian Community and we are still going strong. It is amazing, on those students, who want to participate within our program as we have students traveling as far away as Jacumba (a small town that is 70+ miles from SDSU) and we thank them for their patience as they drive to our program. It goes to show that students want to, at the very least, see differing options in life, which includes higher education.



This year our research topic is on the transfer of lands from the federal government to the public and we look at the "take over of Alcatraz by AIM" to examine this issue. We also take a look at coalition building with other groups to expand our American Indian rights through the Sacred Sites initiative. This may sound like an odd combination but American Indian Rights, in light of a hostile Supreme Court, must seek alternative means to pursue justice and rights that were given through treaty. An example can be found where environmental groups and sacred sites issues combined to get land set aside away from commercial use to preserve them and their cultural value.

We look forward in having a great semester and we are still taking students who may want to come to our program. See you on Monday.

AIR Jr. to Start on October 21, 2008 at SDSU

We are set to start our AIR Jr. Program at SDSU on Oct. 21 (Tuesday) and we are accepting applications. Last year was the first time we ventured into servicing students from 6-8th grades. What we found, is that there is a large group of students who are truly interested in pursuing higher education at that age. Our main



reason for the development of this program was statistically, these are the ages where students lose their motivation towards education and consider different avenues in life to take. Therefore, we are inclined to believe that we need to consider this age group as an at risk age group in which we need to give them academic services to them so that they can meet their potential in life by pursuing higher education. We have a great program and we look forward in seeing you on next week.



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Renee's Corner

by Renee White Eyes



When I was first hired by AIR in June, I had no clue what I was getting in to. I had never met any of the students, had no idea what the program was about, and did not really know the staff. So when I showed up on the first day of the AIR Summer Program, I was a bundle of nerves! I even think I started shaking in my black sandals when the students started showing up. However, my nerves were soon forgotten as I started talking with some of the students. There is nothing quite like the energy of young students, and their energy was contagious! I soon found myself looking forward to seeing these students and had a nice surprise when I found that one of the students was part Lakota, just like me. I soon found my niche with the group and started to really get to know the students and the mission of AIR. I soon realized that what AIR is trying to do is exactly what I wanted to do, get Native students in to higher education and build up their self-esteem. I feel it was a match made in heaven. With our AIR Sr program underway, I was happy to see the high school students. Now, I am excited to meet the AIR Jr. students and get that program started!

AIR Report on Academic Services by Renee White Eyes

Part of our ANA grant requirements is to conduct a pre-evaluation of our students. We wanted to see what our Native youth knew about financial aid, community colleges, and universities. With our first AIR Sr. meeting concluded, we have the results from our pre-evaluation. The students have an idea about financial aid and what consists of, but when it comes to the difference between community college and a four year university, most of the students did not really know. A strong portion of the students didn't really know the difference between the UC University and the CSU University, or what a degree program was (what a BA/BS is). Therefore a preliminary question which can be developed from this: *"How can our Native students succeed if they don't know the basics when it comes to higher education?"*

These preliminary findings (findings which we have mostly assumed-throughout these years) have promoted our program to develop workshops within our meetings and (in light of the preliminary evaluation) they have become a very important tool within our program. Conducting workshops covering all of these aspects of higher education helps break down any myths of higher education and give students important information that they will need when it is time to go to college. We suspect that the more the student knows about higher education the better he or she will do when the decide to pursue it.



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Thank you to Sycuan Resort and Tribe for your generous support towards our Fundraiser Banquet