

# AIR News



12 November 2009

Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 16 years



## AIR announces: Annual Community Leadership Award Recipient

SAN DIEGO — The AIR Program officially announces our Annual Community Leadership Award Recipient for 2009. This year's "Community Leadership Award" is being presented to Dr. Michelle Jacob Ph.D. (Yakama), Asst. Professor

at the University of San Diego. Michelle has been one of the greatest catalysts for our program and its success within these last few years. Because of her assistance, our program has been able to expand and help more American Indian students than ever before. For her contribution to our program, her dedicated help, and her active participation within our program we cannot think of anyone else who has shown such leadership within our community while making our program greater and stronger.

Our "Community Leadership Award" is chosen from those who work with our Native youth in San Diego County, have worked within our community for more than a year, have inspired and motivated those to pursue a greater future, and has helped the American Indian Recruitment Program. Michelle has accomplished this and more while teaching and being a mentor to many of the Native students at the University of San Diego.

It was four years ago when Dr. Jacob approached our program and inquired about establishing such a program at the University of San Diego. Through her determination we established our first program at USD in the Spring of 2007 and continue to this day. Once thought of as the University on the hill that many within our community never really understood, we now think of USD as a place where many of our student participants feel welcome. She has bridged the gap of higher education at USD and the American Indian community by establishing programs geared towards the inclusion of our community and the AIR Program. Within the American Indian community where high school graduation rates are among the lowest in the nation and where those who graduate from high school see only 1 in 4 of those go on to pursue higher education, you can see the significance of Dr. Jacob's contributions to the AIR Program and our overall American Indian community.

We wish to thank Dr. Jacob for her dedicated work within our community and within the AIR Program. We cannot express enough of our gratitude towards her.

Reflecting back onto our first meeting with Dr. Jacob, it truly seems that we can change the world by just taking that first easy step in meeting and developing a partnership to improve our American Indian community.





## Johnnie's Corner

*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, Johnnie Venegas has agreed to contribute to our newsletter.*

Dwight told my mom about the AIR tutorial program. He said it could really help me and Rachael with our work and school. When Rachael and I went to AIR tutorial we both got partners. My partner was Renee. Renee was very helpful but one day she couldn't make it so Roberta helped me. Roberta helped me with my chemistry. I learned all the vocabulary and when I went to school and took the test I got a B but I was not satisfied so I took it again and I got an A. It really changed my grade. When I first started AIR tutorial I had a bad grade in my class but tutorial pushed me forward to do my work and the practice really helped. After my test, I raised my grade to a C. Later my C became a C+. Now I have confidence in myself and I know that just by practicing my material my C+ can turn into an A by the end of the semester. Because AIR tutorial

helped me I want to thank the AIR program and also my partners Renee and Roberta. I also want to thank Danielle for helping me write this essay.

## AIR Tutorial by Kate Gordon

*Kate Gordon is our Youth Service Specialist and Coordinator of the AIR Tutorial Project. From time to time she will be writing updates on the program and its progress.*

AIR tutorial continues to make progress as we move into the month of November. It is growing in size, and we now have more students participating within our program. The students are working hard with their tutors to complete their homework assignments and study for any upcoming tests. Our tutorial program helps them focus on their academic goals and become more organized. Students have been working on keeping a clear agenda of what they have to accomplish each day of the week in their classes and within their homework. Keeping a planner is a great tool to use as a student and will be useful in high school and higher education. Greater achievements within our program are being able to work with students as their advocates in speaking with their instructors on issues of homework, curriculum and grades. Through this process we have been able to work with some students in raising their grades by a full letter grade! Incorporated within tutorial are mini-workshops designed to give them additional skills needed within the framework of their education. This week we are working on presentation skills as this is a requirement of both grade and high school curriculum and within higher education. We are looking forward to students giving presentations on what they have learned. They have been practicing hard by writing down notes for their speech on index cards and presenting in front of their tutors. We will be filming the presentations so that the students can watch their speeches after they have given them.



Thanking our community partners:  
SDSU Dept. of American Indian  
Studies, USD Dept. of Ethnic Studies,  
CSUSM Student Outreach

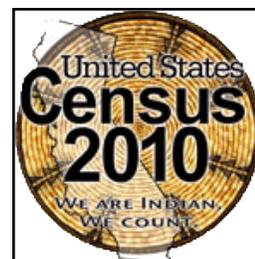


SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY



Cal State San Marcos

*Stand up and Be  
Counted  
Census 2010*





*American Indian  
Recruitment  
(AIR) Programs  
P.O. Box 880471  
San Diego, CA 92168*

*www.airprograms.org  
info@airprograms.org*



## AIR Tutorial Program

The AIR Tutorial Program is accepting students throughout the year. This is one of our newer programs that has had great success in working individually with each of our student participants. The program is held in a safe environment on the campus of the University of San Diego, with qualified tutors and staff from the university. The location poses a terrific opportunity for research, study, and academic support.

For any information on our tutorial program contact:

Kate Gordon (Youth Service Specialist-Site Coordinator) at [kgordon-10@sandiego.edu](mailto:kgordon-10@sandiego.edu) or

Dwight K. Lomayesva (Director) at [info@airprograms.org](mailto:info@airprograms.org)

## From our research

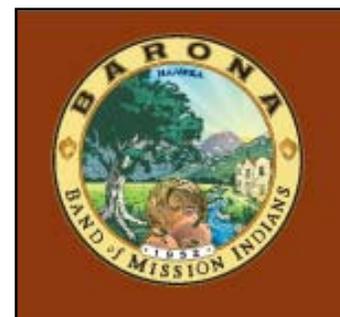
In our "News for Students" section within the AIR Program website ([www.airprograms.org](http://www.airprograms.org)) we have been seeing more and more environmental issues being brought to the forefront as great concerns for the health and welfare of our Tribal Nations. Current environmental findings are seeing radioactive waste being found within the water tables in New Mexico and affecting our Tribal Nations as they extract water from that same source (see: Toxic waste trickles toward New Mexico's water sources, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-radiation-newmexico1-2009nov01,0,6423820.story>). Tribes are being pushed by big corporations to sell mineral rights while leaving toxic air pollution affecting the air quality within the respective reservation (see: Coal mines, power plant give Navajos income, controversy, <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2009/11/02/20091102navajo1102.html>). These are just a few incidents our research topic attempts to target as we go forward within this Environmental Justice project.



Our research has defined our unique status as American Indians and our reservation development. We have also researched that the overwhelming percentages of tribes remain poor and easy targets for big corporations to push for mineral rights within tribal lands. The end result is that their needs to be a concerted effort to understand these issues within Indian Country and protect our Native people who are seemingly victims of mismanaged and damaging sales of our minerals on Indian lands. Within the following weeks we will be studying those who are working on the forefront to protect these rights for our American Indian communities so that we may all live a greater and healthier life.



**Thanking the Barona Band of Mission Indians for their generous contribution to our Annual Fund-raiser Banquet on December 2, 2009 at the Harrah's Rincon Casino.**



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