

AIR News



16 March 2009

Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 15 years



Museum of Man

SAN DIEGO, California — This week the AIR Sr. Project visited the Museum of Man to gain a greater understanding of culture and culturally related objects that will help us in our topical research project. Our research is based on culture and our Native sacred sites and their destruction through environmental and man made based problems. Our research started with our mentors and our students defining culture and sacred sites and how we view them as Native people. This gave us some bearing on what we are researching.

This week we had the great opportunity to visit the San Diego Museum of Man to gain a hands-on observance of how the Museum defines and handles cultural objects. We are extremely thankful to the Museum as they gave us our tour after hours and through their private collections. Observed were traditional baskets made over a

century ago, along with other objects from all over the U.S. that are related to our numerous Native cultures.

One of the highlights of our tour and discussion was the contribution to the discussion that Carmen Lucas gave to our understanding of the local Kumeyaay culture. She is a lineal descendant of a local Kumeyaay village within the Laguna Mountains and maintains her residence on that site. Along with her, was Clint Linton, from the Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel, who set up the event. Mr. Linton monitors various commercial sites where possible findings of artifacts from the local tribes may be discovered. It is his job, under State and/or Federal law, to notify affiliated Tribes of any such discoveries. Both of their contributions to the tour gave our students a greater understanding of local cultures and why preservation of culture sites is imperative.

Finally, a very special thanks to Mr. Philip Hoog, Archaeology and NAGPRA Coordinator of the Museum for conducting the tour.

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PALOMAR COLLEGE Thank you to the Palomar College, Dept. of American Indian Studies for all your help.
Learning for Success



My Experiences Pursuing higher Education

by Rose Vasquez (AIR Program Student)

Getting to college will not be an easy task. First off, I had to fulfill the A-G requirements (what most Universities want you to fulfill or it's a no go). No problem. Thank goodness I took a look at those requirements 8th grade year when I was planning out my entire high school schedule, no thanks to a counselor. I planned my schedule in order to be eligible to get into a UC college. I suppose counselors believe they're mainly there for mental support more so than academic. I knew if I wanted to get anywhere I had to take responsibility for my own education.

Secondly colleges require you to take either the SAT or ACT. I will soon be taking the ACT plus writing as well as two SAT subject tests. I could not afford these because these tests are not exactly cheap. It was \$84 dollars for both tests. I wrote a letter to the San Pasqual Finance Department requesting this money. The deadline to submit the money had passed and I had to pay myself. I am still waiting for the check. Again, I had to take responsibility for my own education.

Right now I am trying to find a prep course to prepare me for the ACT and SAT tests. This is not easy because tutors are very costly. It is also hard to find a local tutor but I am determined to find one.

Finally, I would say that it is very challenging in preparing for a UC college but I stand strong and am willing to do what it takes.



AIR Tutorial Update

by Roberta Garcia (Youth Service Specialist)

Air tutorial has been off to a great start this semester. As in the past we have a great group of tutors to help our wonderful students. Each student seems to be enjoying their one on one work with a tutor. We are finding that many of the students are finishing their daily and weekly homework fairly quickly. Now the tutors are working with them on improving their challenged areas. We have already seen some improvement in spelling and other concentrations as well. Our teams of tutors have been able to come up with some great ways of helping the students, from playing hangman to practice spelling words and using flash cards and play money to help with mathematics.

The students are being challenged in new ways and the tutors all work together to help each tutor if they are unable to assist their student. It is all a collaborative effort which shows the students that working as a team is sometimes helpful. The students are not only having fun academically, but also by working on creative projects. They work on small art projects for while taking breaks from homework. The tutors have also found that the students work well when they know that they will be rewarded. These rewards can be as simple as saying words of encouragement.



AIR Program Mentor in Ireland (Part 2)

by Kate Gordon (Mentor)

As a continuing AIR Program Mentor, Kate Gordon is studying abroad in Ireland where she has cultural ties to the country. As part of our program, we encourage our students to look at their own culture and examine whom they are for their own knowledge and success. In this case, Kate is giving us an opportunity to share her experiences in learning more about her heritage and observing her culture. This is a two part article in which she is sharing her experiences.

(Continued from our last Newsletter): I then ventured to find Mary, the woman who had helped me. She started asking me about my trip to Ireland. I told her I would be studying Irish politics at the University of College Cork and living in Victoria Lodge. She was thrilled and she asked where I was from and if I had any friends with me. "You must be homesick so far away and alone, dear!" I assured her that I was fine. We talked for twenty minutes or so before I went to my room. "Won't you come back down this evening for some more tea?" she asked me. I nodded without hesitation.

When I sat down on my bed, the jet-lag began to settle in within minutes. I was so thankful for the warm welcome. Mary had treated me like I was her own granddaughter and made me feel right at home.



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

**Good Luck to
SDSU Mens
Basketball Team in
the NIT.**





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Thank you to the Sycuan Band
of the Kumeyaay Nation for your
support over these many years

AIR Tutorial Program

The AIR Program Tutorial Program has started and will continue to operate through the Spring. For more information please contact:

Renee White Eyes, Youth Service Specialist
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Thank you to the CILS for your
support over these many years

To our two
AIR Program
students thank
you for being
a part of our
program!



The AIR Program is a proud recipient
of ANA Funding for 2008



AIR Program Mentor in Ireland (Part 2-cont.) by Kate Gordon



(cont. from pg 2) Within the first hours of my arrival to Cork, I sensed several things about Irish culture, which I've found to be true. In many cases, people are quick to treat you like a part of their family. There is something more personal about the interactions that I have with my college professors, business personnel, and even taxi drivers than I have in the states. And it isn't strange when the woman working in the cafeteria says, "thanks, love, now how are you love?" after taking my order.

Though Cork is the second largest city in Ireland, it has a small town feel. There are lots of churches, big and small. The Catholic Church heavily influences Irish culture. Though people have distanced themselves from it in recent years, many Irish still share a close relationship with the Church. On Sundays, the city is quiet. The 12 o'clock mass at the chapel on the University campus is full of families. If I arrive 5 minutes past twelve, I have to stand in the back or sit against the pillars on the wall because it is so crowded. The priest seems to know all of the regular parishioners by name.

From what I have found, people are very proud to be Irish. They are happy to tell me about their history and talk to me about my Irish roots. When I tell them that I have second cousins in County Clare, which is about a 2 hour drive from Cork, they nod and say 'ah, yes, County Clare.' They love to share their stories and I love to listen to them, each one different and special in its own way.

I've realized that the cultural divide I prepared myself for exists more in my mind than in reality. Though the Irish have their own traditions and language, once you learn about their different traditions and understand them better, they don't seem so foreign at all. And then you discover that they parallel with certain traditions in your life or that they somehow connect to your own experiences. In my opinion, things only seem strange when you don't give yourself time to learn about them. I live with two Irish girls who are also studying at the University of College Cork, and the more I get to know them, the more I realize we have similar experiences.

In my time abroad, I think about the AIR program often. I miss all of the students and mentors very much. Through AIR and Ethnic Studies classes at USD, I have been able to learn about the American Indian culture. I am thankful that I have gotten to know many of the AIR students and been able to hear about their backgrounds. I have gained so much from working with the program and I love sharing it with the people that I meet here.

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