

AIR News



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Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 15 years



AIR Summer Program in the Laguna Mtns.

ALPINE, California — Some of the greatest field trips that people may go on are not the ones where you go to an amusement park but the one where you go to location with a person who has a wealth of history and knowledge about that place. A person who can explain everything in the world to you about that place is what makes that place special. Our program was very fortunate that we had that person, in Carmen Lucas.

Carmen Lucas is Kwaymii (a village of the Kumeyaay tribes of the San Diego region) who lives on the site of the village where she comes from. Her village site is no longer recognized as an Indian reservation, but this place where she still lives is as rich in culture and history as any in San Diego. Carmen works as a Native American monitor to ensure dignity and respect is afforded to Native American remains and cultural items during construction type projects. She also participates in the Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee (KCRC), a group dedicated to seeing proper treatment is given to Native remains begin held by federal agencies. Carmen is also a self-taught expert in the local tribal cultural landscapes.



Carmen took our program on a tour of various sites within the Laguna Mountain range showing us the Kumeyaay regions that were traveled from the ocean to the desert during various times of the season. These patterns show that the Kumeyaay migrated within this region based on seasonal changes and therefore had many villages based on any given season. Their territory is vast; stretching from Baja Mexico to San Diego and Imperial Counties. We thank Carmen for sharing her knowledge. We all gained a greater understanding of the Kumeyaay culture by Carmen taking us into her home, the Laguna mountains.

What's inside:

AIR Summer Program in the Laguna Mtns	1
Kelsey Novi Says...	2
A Message from Wallis	2
Congratualtions to Natalia Orosco	2
Rachel's Corner	3
Bobby Levi	3





Kelsey Novi Say's...

Working with AIR Programs has been an all around enriching experience. When I was first asked to help with the program, I had no idea what to expect, since the last time I was around high-school aged students, I was in high-school myself. Nevertheless, I was more than happy to accept the position and experience what was to come. I could never have guessed how friendly, intelligent and witty these students would be. It was fulfilling to watch the interactions between students and mentors and see how those relationships grew. Not only did relationships flourish, but student's self confidence did as well. During our first meeting, we had introductions and I can still remember how shy and reluctant some students were to even share their name. Now, I never would have guessed any of our students had a shy moment in their life.

Overall, I feel that my short time so far with AIR Programs has been incredibly rewarding. I'm so proud to see the students overcome fears, such as heights when facing the ropes course. Or by showing their maturity when asked to complete tasks without supervision, like at the zoo. Lastly, I'm proud that these students are taking initiative for their future by attending AIR Programs in hopes to proceed to higher education and that I can contribute to their success.



A Message from Wallis...

Time flies when you're having fun! I can't believe the AIR summer program is already almost over. I had a really great time getting to know the students better. It's great to hear them talk about colleges and ask informed questions and I truly think that they are less intimidated by the admissions process. I hope the students will keep in touch and continue to be involved with the AIR program. The key to success in college, I believe, is to be involved in every aspect you can: classes, relationships with professors and other students, sports, clubs, and other organizations. The fact that these students chose to be in the AIR program already shows their motivation and desire to go above and beyond what's expected of them. I wish them the best of luck!



Thank you to the Department of Ethnic Studies at USD for all your support and the University of San Diego CASA Program for your contributions to our students



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Thank you to the Department of American Indian Studies at SDSU for all your continued support and commitment to our program...

Congratulations to Natalia Orosco

We wanted to take this time to congratulate Natalia Orosco on her upcoming marriage to Donald Beresford. Natalia has been with the AIR program for over a decade and has been so instrumental to our success that she now serves on our AIR Programs Board. She is a alumni of the University of California San Diego and has her graduate degree from San Diego State University and was our first awardee of the AIR Program Mentor of the Year.

No words can express how proud we are of her and on her upcoming marriage. She truly is a great friend of the AIR Program and is a great asset to our Tribal community within the San Diego region.

Again Congratulations to Natalia Orosco and Donald Beresford.





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Rachel's Corner

Rachel is a continuing student within the AIR Program and has agreed to write on her progress in the AIR Program. This is her first article.

Hello, my name is Rachael Venegas. I am fourteen and my cultural background is Navajo from New Mexico, and I just wanted to say that the AIR program really has an effect on me. I've been in the program for three sessions now and my sister and I truly can say that it does promote us to go to collage. Not only that but I'm learning at the same time I'm having fun, which is a great deal for me because I am the type of person who can't sit and listen to someone talk for an hour with no break. Also my communicating skills are improving; I am starting to ask questions instead of sitting with my head down. I'm way more into the program then I use to be, I guess it's because I've come out of my shell, I'm exploring a great place which is helping me to the future and I have a great tour guide, the AIR program and there working with me and showing me the better half of higher education. My little sister takes in a lot to; we get along better when we get out of the house and are at SDSU. The great times we have and all the things we learn. Like Dwight said we



have to look about school as being a big game, we just have to deal with it and try to make it fun. At first I didn't understand this, school couldn't be fun, but when I had more time to think about it I realized what he was trying to say, and I think that at the end of the program I can make my new high school a big game with many challenges that I can succeed, but only because I have three things: the support from my family and friends, the great knowledge I have and knowledge I gained from the air program and last but never least my pride, my native pride. I hold my head high and will continue to open that door to collage and give hope to others who didn't go that far, but you still have that chance.

Bobby Levi Says...

Bobby Levi is a first time student within the AIR Program and has agreed (from time to time) to write on his progress in the AIR Program.

Hello, my name is Bobby Levi, I am Cahuilla and Hopi from the Torres Martinez Reservation. This is my first year in the AIR Program and next week I will be getting my schedule for my freshman year of classes and talking to my counselor about this. What I will be asking him/her is about A-G requirements. Prior to the AIR Program I didn't know about required classes or courses to follow to get into college. By taking theses courses and talking about them with my counselor I can be on track to qualify for college right after high school. It's never to early to prepare.

I am learning a lot while in the AIR Program about college, culture, and how to approach things in order to succeed. Thanks...



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