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AIR News

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“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.



This year we honor 4 students, selected as our “Student Leadership Awardees for 2020” - Congrats!!!

We are honored to announce our “Student Leadership Awardees” for 2020. Each student has been chosen for their participation in AIR Programs for at least one academic year, demonstrated academic excellence, and shown leadership within their community. Each of our students have accomplished this and continue to show their care for our communities and excel in high school. We are extremely proud of our seniors who have done the work to get to this level. We are honored that they have been a part of the AIR family and we look forward to their leadership in the future. Please read their bio’s and their accomplishments. Congrats!



(These are some of the many universities that our students have been accepted to in the last 4 years years)



Student Leadership Honoree

Karli Martinez (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians) / (AIR Programs 2019-2020):

Ms. Karli Martinez is from the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians located in Valley Center, CA. Academically, she is an honors student and participates in school projects as she is an editor for the school yearbook, plays lacrosse and is culturally involved in functions within her Tribe. As part of our AIR Program, she has decidedly opted to participate in our American Indian Youth Engagement Court (AIYEC) to assist as a peer decision maker in helping our Native youth who have had a challenging path. Here, she has taken university level courses in restorative justice from the University of California, San Diego and San Diego State University as part of a training curriculum aimed at understanding how restorative justice works within our Tribal communities. Clearly, her commitment to her academics and community demonstrates her care and compassion for others and makes her a leader within our community.

Student Leadership Honoree

Temyal Nuvanumcy Lomayesva (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel/Hopi) / (AIR 2007-2020)

Ms. Lomayesva is a Tribal member from the Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel and is also a descendant of the Hopi Tribe. Ms. Lomayesva holds culture close to her heart as she goes back to her two homes (Santa Ysabel and Hopi) on a regular basis. Like many she has listened to her elders and gained her cultural lens from them. Through this she is grounded in her cultural belief and understands that our communities are based in community service so that all are included and should enjoy a greater future, together. Her service to community includes helping in a winter coat and backpack drive to Tribes, helping in her Tribe's Annual Traditional Gathering, and mentoring younger students within AIR Programs, among others. Temyal enjoys bird dancing and making bird skirts for friends and family that allows her to express her artistic interests through culture and tradition. Academically, she is an honors student and has been a part of programs through our partnership with UCLA, in taking coursework in restorative justice and our San Diego State University course on Writing and Rhetoric within Tribal Governance Perspectives. Her ideals on juvenile justice has propelled her to lobby the California State Legislature for funding to invest in youth courts in 2019, where she was recognized by State of California Representative James Ramos (San Manuel Band). Temyal's courage to fight for those who need a voice and care for our Tribal communities gives us great hope for Tribal leadership within Indian Country.



Student Leadership Honoree

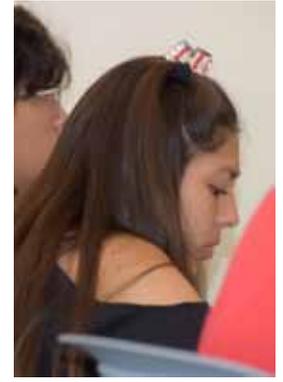
Eshash Morales (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians) / (AIR Programs 2012-2020):

Ms. Eshash Morales is from the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians located in Valley Center, CA. She has participated within AIR Programs in many of our projects throughout the years which encourages academic success and pursuing higher education. Eshash has a great passion for participating in her cultural events and gatherings within the San Diego region which empowers her to represent our Tribal communities to the best of her abilities. Previously, she was crowned as Junior Miss Valley Center First Princess, while currently she is involved in the Native Club and Associated Student Body (ASB) at Valley Center High School. To provide greater equity for our Native people she has used her position on ASB to invite and showcase bird singers and dancers, fancy dancers, and drummers every Friday during Native American Heritage month. Currently, Ms. Morales is participating in our American Indian Youth Engagement Court (AIYEC) to assist as a peer decision maker in helping our Native youth who have had a challenging path. She is currently taking restorative justice coursework at the University of California, San Diego, to assist her in understanding how restorative justice can work within our Tribal communities. Her overall goal is to work within the health field so she can come back to her community and work in helping those who are in need. Truly, her aspirations to succeed and to work within her community demonstrates great character and a great hope for our future.



We thank Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP, and SCTCA for their sponsorship of our American Indian Recruitment Programs.

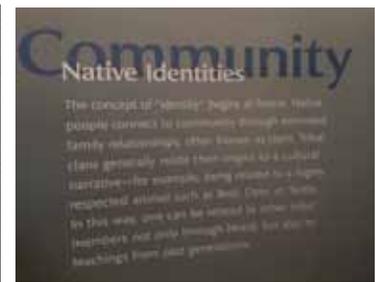
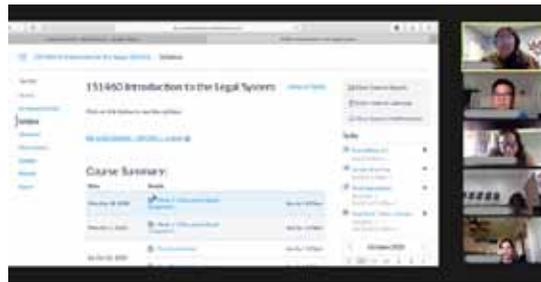




Student Leadership Honoree

Eric Chang (Cherokee and Delaware Tribes) / (AIR Programs 2018-2020)

Mr. Eric Chang is from the Delaware and Cherokee people. His ethnicity also includes that of Asian and European decent. Academically, he is an honors student and a member of the high school debate team. Within debate, he feels that this helps him logically formulate his ideas, while challenging others with a healthy exchange of ideals. Eric would quote Margaret Heffernan, "For good ideas and true innovation, you need human interaction, conflict, and debate." Mr. Chang has been a part of the programs through our partnership with UCLA, in taking coursework in restorative justice and our San Diego State University course on Writing and Rhetoric within Tribal Governance Perspectives. His experiences combine his passion for debate with his restorative justice coursework and he has mentioned that his future may be within the field of law or politics. Finally, Eric participates and is passionate about being part of his scouting program. Being a member of the Boy Scouts of America has helped to teach him important life lessons, such as generosity, trustworthiness, and kindness. These central values have helped him to become a better person, and shape the person he is today as an effective leader among his peers. Eric is mostly grateful to his grandmother who kept the Native American connection in his family. "Because of her, Native culture has always been an important part of my life, and I have always wanted to expand my knowledge on it".



Update: AIR Honors Project - Continuing Academic Success Among Native Youth

In our last newsletter we introduced this year's academic coursework in our collaboration with the Intertribal Court of Southern California, the University of California, San Diego, San Diego State University and AIR Programs. This collaboration is part of our American Indian Youth Engagement Court (AIYEC) Project where we are all vested in developing a Native Youth Peer Court. In preparation for the peer court we have developed coursework/training on restorative justice. Our first course was to familiarize our participants with the US legal system in order to develop the comparison and contrast with Federal Indian law and Tribal law. Our results are as follows and in contrast with our pilot and finally with Community Colleges:

- Introduction to Legal System (1 unit) – UCSD Extension/ 95% passage
- 2019 Pilot Program, academic year results: Average ~ 76% passing all courses.
- California Community Colleges adults taking online coursework, roughly 60% passage.

Our result continues to affirm our process and delivery of our training/coursework. We will always continue to state, "Our students can compete with the best on an academic level with students across the country and in specialized programs offering more than our public-school system."

A special thanks to the Intertribal Court of Southern California, San Pasqual Indian Education, Pechanga Education Counseling and Resources, SDSU American Indian Studies, SDSU World Campus and UCSD Extension.



We thank the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians for supporting our AIR Programs, bringing needed services to our Native Communities.



27th Annual American Indian Recruitment Programs Awards & Fundraiser Banquet

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Virtually from San Diego County

2020 has become a year like no other. There have been great challenges facing our Native youth from differing ideology, to race and to our isolation in our everyday lives. We could have never foreseen the outcome in December when we were planning our next Annual Awards Banquet and Fundraiser. Unfortunately, our location at UCSD has had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 shut down of campus buildings open to the public. Although this is disappointing, it is a necessary circumstance so we remain safe and our community safe from this virus.

However, we know our students will never have the opportunity to be recognized at this point in their lives for all their great achievements they have accomplished so early in their lives, therefore we opt not to cancel our event but to hold it virtually via Zoom to honor them.

We ask that our community join us to give them praise and to wish them well on their next segment in life as they pursue higher education.

We will continue to raise funds to support our Native youth through our many programs as we have in the past. It is your support that has allowed our Native youth to enjoy academic and culturally based programs that will someday create our future leaders towards a stronger Indian Country.

- Date: November 19th
- Location: Everywhere via Zoom Time: 5:30 pm

Please visit our website for sponsorship opportunities and further banquet information and updates at www.airprograms.org



AIR Programs AIYEC Project is under a grant from the Administration for Native Americans. We thank them for their belief in our Native Youth and our Project.



Challenges of Learning within the Era of COVID-19

As mentioned before we have had many challenges this year due to COVID-19. When they closed the universities, we lost many of our mentors who had to leave the region. Our mentors were our backbone to assist our Native youth in our many projects. Our AIYEC training/courses had to be reconfigured in the middle of the course to adopt to total online learning and without the usual support we are used to having. Contact with our participants became a major issue as our regional education centers no longer had contact with them. Native youth had become pseudo parents as some had to watch their siblings while parents sought work. So severe were all these challenges that we were forced to cancel our summer project which for the last several years saw more than 50 participants per year.

Through all this there is hope.

We did complete our pilot program, with the help of very understanding instructors. As mentioned above, we saw that our success rate (76%) exceeded that of the community colleges in California (~60%). Our mentors are working with us virtually and we have expanded their use into virtual tutoring to our Native youth participants. Finally, we have completed our first course with nearly all rising to the challenge of the university academics to pass the course.

Like Indian Country itself, we have adapted to the situation but never lost sight of our goal to assist and empower our Native communities.

Visit our Facebook site and like us at:
<https://www.facebook.com/AIR-American-Indian-Recruitment-Program>



AIR PROGRAMS
PO Box 880471
San Diego CA 92168
info@airprograms.org



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