

AIR News



2 March 2009

Proudly serving the San Diego American Indian Community for 15 years

AIR Program Starts



SAN DIEGO, California — The AIR Program has officially started our Spring 2009 semester. We are always amazed, every semester, when we have so many participants for our after-school programs. With so many programs in which students can participate within, we are thankful that they have chosen ours to promote their pursuit of higher education. We have always stated that each of our student participants have the ability to challenge and compete with the best within our universities and colleges. Upon the completion of our first meetings and after talking with our returning and new students we are encouraged that these students will succeed and, with great hope, they will become our future leaders.

Programs started this semester, include our AIR Sr. (high school students) and AIR Jr. (6th through 8th grades) programs. They have come as far away as Jacumba (some 70 miles away-one way) and as close as within our own urban community. They travel dirt roads out of the Mesa Grande Reservation and come with an appetite for snacks provided by our program. In all, we are thankful for such a great turnout from every corner of San Diego County.

As discussed in previous newsletters our program cover tutorials, academic workshops, research projects and mentoring. With such limited time we attempt to cover a lot of ground but the reward is great, as implanted, is the notion of academics, success and the establishment of new friendships in an environment that is positive for all. We look forward in having a great semester-thanks.

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Problems A-G...

From our evaluations and in discussion with the majority of our students we are finding that our students do not receive information on academic requirements and preparation for college. Without such knowledge a student will not be able to qualify for a California University-out of high school. Therefore, we ask our students to pay close attention to our upcoming workshops on academic requirements. Use these workshops in combination in talking with your high school counselors and teachers in your pursuit of higher education and you find greater success in pursuing higher education.



To contact the
AIR Program email
us at :
info@airprograms.org
or visit up on the web
at:
www.airprograms.org

Going to College by Rose Vasquez (AIR Program Student)

Hi! My name is Rose Vasquez. I am a junior at Valley Center High School. I am Kumeyaay from the Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel. As a freshman going into high school I knew very little about college and how to get there. I didn't know about admission requirements, exams such as the SAT, or finances. I was totally lost. I believed that college was for "rich white-kids". I never thought of myself as potential college material and I never heard much about any native kids going to college.

I now know that colleges have A-G requirements that can be fulfilled during high school and require you to take either the SAT or ACT which helps when determining admission. I also know that money is not something that's going to keep me from college. There are several financial options available such as scholarships, grants, and loans.

I can say that with all the resources I am now aware of, I am going to college. In order to achieve this I am going to fulfill the A-G requirements, take the ACT and SAT subject tests, and take advantage of my financial options.

Through programs that strive toward American Indian education such as Career Motivation at the San Pasqual Education Department to AIR at SDSU and USD I have come to find that I am college material. I have also come to find that anyone can go to college no matter whom they are and where they come from because you and you alone decide if you are college material, no one else.



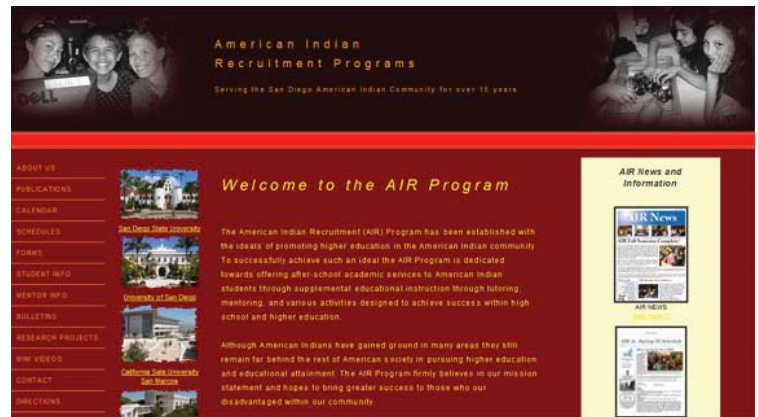
Thank you to our community partner USD, Dept. of Ethnic Studies for many years of your support.



Bulletin and Research Page are up!

The AIR Program website is still progressing and growing. Our Bulletin Board and Research pages are up and ready for viewing. The Bulletin Board Page is designed to help drivers and community to know what are program "day agenda" is and directions to our location. The research page is for both mentors and students to look at our research assignment so that they can either use our overall findings or work within the projects parameters.

Overall, we are progressing in our development of our website so that everyone can see what we are doing, our progress, and our success.



AIR Program Mentor in Ireland (Part 1) by Kate Gordon

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 three part article in which she is sharing her experiences.

My experiences in Ireland have been incredible. I have always felt a special tie to Ireland because of my Irish heritage; my great grandmother emigrated from Ireland when she was in her late teenage years. She left to escape an arranged marriage, and traveled alone on a ship to America. Other relatives of mine still live in Ireland and make their living in the farming industry.

On January 2nd, 2009, I began my journey to Cork, Ireland. I remember pressing my face against the plane window as the flight made its descent. I saw nothing but green, green, green. There were huge fields of all different shades of green and tiny houses in the midst of them. The sky was full of fog and not a ray of sunlight could be found through the clouds. I had seen pictures of Ireland at my grandmother's house, read books about Ireland, and seen Irish films, and so it was no wonder that I instantly felt a connection to the island as I flew onto the green fields. (cont. pg 3)

PALOMAR COLLEGE
Learning for Success



Palomar is a partner of the AIR Program. Thank to the Palomar College, Dept. of American Indian Studies for all your help.

Thank you to CSUSM for your support and participation within our Program

The AIR Program is proud to be partnered with San Diego State University, Department of American Indian Studies. We thank the Department for their belief in our American Indian Community and our program. Truly, our community is stronger with their support and determination.



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY



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AIR Sr. and AIR Jr. programs are still accepting students

We have an exciting schedule that will cover our topical approach in motivating and improving our student participants academic pursuits. We look forward in partnering with the University of San Diego, San Diego State University and California State University, San Marcos. Finally, we look forward in seeing our new and returning students. Please look to our website for locations and schedule.



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

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
(760) 315-3940 or email: rwhiteeyes@airprograms.org



Thank you to California Indian Legal Services for your support

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



AIR Program Mentor in Ireland (Part 1-cont.) by Kate Gordon



Kate Gordon

I took a taxi from the airport to 'Victoria Lodge,' the apartment complex I was supposed to be living in for the next 5 months. When I arrived, the buildings looked empty and the reception office was closed. I had one big suitcase and I pulled it with me around the complex to investigate. How was I going to get into my room when there was no one to give me my key? I suppose I should have expected that on a Saturday morning the reception office would be closed. I would not be able to check in until Monday morning. So there I was-- alone with no phone and no idea where I was going to stay for the next two nights.

Lucky for me, a van pulled into the parking lot. Two older women and three younger girls emerged from the car and I recognized their American accents. "This is my chance!" I thought. So in my sleepless state, I told them what had happened. They couldn't have been more understanding. It turned out that they were from an East Coast study abroad program and they offered me a ride to a nearby bed and breakfast.

'The Garnish House.' It was a little bed and breakfast, with illuminated pine trees on each side of the entrance. An older woman came to the door and I again explained my situation to her and asked if I would be able to stay for two nights. "Oh, of course love, don't worry. We'll take care of you." She offered me tea, and I gladly accepted.

I had almost froze standing outside for so long and anything warm sounded wonderful. She escorted me into the living room area. I sat down on a big armchair next to a fireplace. There was one other boy in the room who appeared to be busy on his laptop. A couple minutes later, a huge silver platter with scones, different kinds of pastries, tea, milk and sugar was placed in front of me. I felt like a princess! "Now take your time dear, and when you're ready to go to your room, let me know." I took my time and if I remember correctly I finished 3 scones, 2 chocolate pastries, and a piece of brown bread. (I guess I was hungry?) And I drank 3 cups of tea....

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