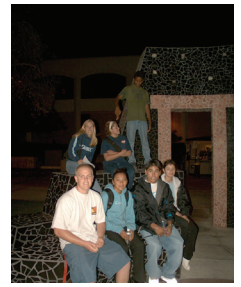




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AIR News

Aahan

“OUR MISSION IS THE PROMOTION AND SUCCESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS WITHIN EDUCATION”

Celebrating 30 years of community service to our Native Communities



AIR Proudly Announces our 2023 Student Honorees

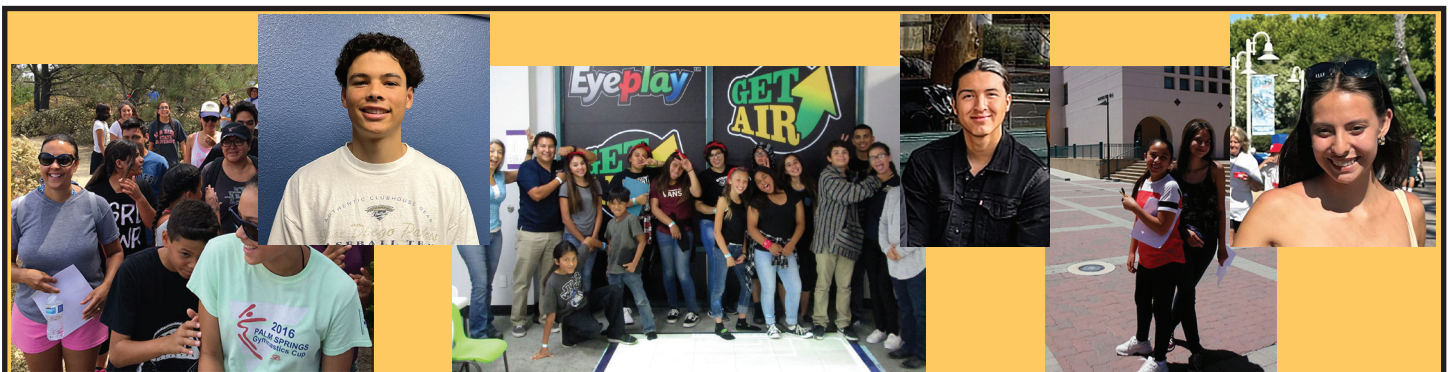
AIR Programs proudly announces our 2023 Student Honorees. Our Honorees are chosen based on their academic merit, their contribution to community, participation within AIR projects and their ability to inspire others. Each of these honorees embodies these qualities and more. Truly, each of these Native Students has dedicated time and care in their efforts towards their academics while actively engaging in our Native Communities. All of them have their sites on pursuing higher education and someday returning to our Native Communities to support a greater future for all.

This year’s Awardees come from throughout California (Northern and Southern) as they have sought to participate in many of our AIR Program Projects.

This year’s Honorees are:

- Abrianna L. Pingleton (Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians) / Joel Pete Jr. (Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria)*
- Grace K. Pimentel (Chiricahua Apache) / Eshpaa H. Leo-Saavedra (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel)*
- Gabriel Faulkner Jr. (Lumbee Tribe/Shoshone Bannock Tribes)*

Congratulations to our Honorees!



AIR Programs 30th Annual Awards and Fundraiser Banquet

Date: October 19, 2023 **Time:** 5-8 pm

Location: San Diego State University /Tula Community Center

Please join us for our 30th Annual Awards and Fundraiser to be held at San Diego State University. This year is special year for us as we celebrate 30 continuous years of community service.

So many fantastic programs collaborate with us to support our Native Youth through our Restorative Justice Certification / Scholarships / Youth Court and Honorees. We invite you to become a sponsor for our Native Youth at our Banquet and hear the fantastic Native Youth we will honor. For more information on our Banquet please go to: <https://www.airprograms.org/air-fundraising>



Introducing our Honorees

Abrianna L. Pingleton (Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians)

I come from the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, but I currently live with my mother in Palm Springs where I attend High School. My passion is dance and I am part of our school's Dance Team and I train at a separate dance studio, called The Dance Program. I also enjoy theatre and I plan to audition for my school's upcoming musical. My favorite subject in school is English because I love expressing my thoughts through writing and reflecting on my feelings about various topics. Although I love reading, and generally do well in school, I do struggle with math and science as I find it too analytical to be interesting. The contrast between my creative and analytical side is apparent. Last summer, I had the opportunity to work for the Viejas Recreational Center. There, I assisted in supervising the children in our program, aged five to twelve. Our cultural program aims to educate children about our native culture. Activities included basket weaving, bird singing, and peon classes.

I have been involved with in AIR Programs since the summer of 2016. It's been fun. This last year I volunteered as a mentor, working with our Native Youth participants from all over San Diego County. I also participated in the AIR Programs Honors' Courses through UCSD. I was able to learn about Federal and Tribal Law, concluding with a moot court final, where I argued a court case. I have to say, I was nervous but, I did it!

As for my future plans, I hope to attend university in San Diego. My first-choice is San Diego State University. I want to major in theatre, with an emphasis on performing arts. I wish to get a degree in theatre because I want to work in an environment filled with a blend of live production and storytelling. A degree will enable me to learn even more about my art form and prepare me for the industry. Ultimately, I hope to bring my experience back to my community and enrich the lives of our youth with this amazing art form.

Eshpaa H. Leo-Saavedra (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel)

I am very fortunate and thankful to have been given many great opportunities in my life. I proudly belong to both the Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel and Pala Band of Mission Indians. Both Tribes are located in San Diego County and I often go to our gatherings and events. I have a wide variety of interests, that include MMA, boxing and Muay Thai, reading, and walking my dog for some additional exercise.

I have been participating in AIR Programs since I was little and I am fortunate to have an in depth understanding of institutions, such as SDSU and UCSD. More importantly, through AIR, I have learned a lot on various issues within Indian Country and I learned how to research these issues. I feel like I am an advocate for Native rights. With that, I had the opportunity to participate in AIR Honors Project and enrolled in UCSD's Intro to Tribal Legal Studies, SDSU's Writing and Rhetoric course with Tribal Governance topics, and the Palomar Academic Success course. To be completely honest, these were the hardest classes I've ever taken and considered quitting, but thanks to my mentor and my mom, I stayed and passed all of them! I am inspired and I think I can really do all this at a university of my choice.

Finally, this past summer I was given the opportunity to mentor in the AIR Summer Program. We had over 115 youth participants and it was great. I gave back to my Native community by helping the program and working with the younger Native youth. As I mentioned earlier, I am thankful for all these great opportunities and look forward to my upcoming future at a university that I apply to!



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





Joel Pete Jr. (Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria)

Since preschool, I've been captivated with the visual arts, which has motivated me to pursue and enroll in extracurricular art classes and clubs in school. Often, I use my artistic skills and abilities to express various parts of my identity, including my Native American heritage.

On my father's side, my sister and I proudly trace our roots to the Southern Pomo Tribe of California. My grandfather, Tony Pete, was the former eldest member of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a federally recognized community of the Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo Tribes. He always had a generous charm and kindness to him despite all of the berating hardships he went through in his life. Though my grandfather had been indoctrinated into boarding school in his early youth, and fought determinedly in three wars, his spirit remained youthful, proud, and kind. I remember my grandfather now in terms of how our ancestors sacrificed opportunities for us to rebuild what our people did not take for granted. By having this unshakeable and unconquerable spirit, our past generations have had, I am inspired to rediscover and reestablish our people's way of life.

As an AIR Program Honors student, I sought to embody my ancestors' spirits. In the program, I was exposed to various discussions about tribal court and law. I learned how Native courts function under their own laws under federal jurisdiction. In learning about tribal government firsthand, I was able to see how much progress my tribe made in rebuilding our indigenous nation and cultural practices.

These programs made me realize a new branch of opportunities that lie ahead for a unified nation of strong-willed people and how I can contribute to that dream as a member of our great tribe. I plan to pursue and refine my writing abilities, as well as my artistic skills, in college, so that I may be able to support and give back to my community through advocacy and creative expression.

Grace K. Pimentel (Chiricahua Apache)

I take great pride in my history and cultural affiliation as a Chiricahua Apache. My top priority is pursuing Higher Education. Unfortunately, as native people, we often do not have this opportunity or even have the opportunity to finish High School. My grandparents worked very hard their whole lives trying to provide for their families. Their dedication to our family inspires me to work hard and to never take for granted that my focus can be on my studies, instead of making sure my family doesn't go hungry. From a young age, my parents always tried their hardest to ensure a nurturing home environment. My parents have always pushed me to pursue my ambitions, and they have always been very supportive of my future ambitions, whether it was becoming the first female President of the United States, a scientist, or a sports doctor for UCLA (If I had known better, I would have said an SDSU sports doctor). My parents have always been my cheerleaders and pushed me to try my hardest at everything I do. Whenever things got hard for me, or I would complain or get discouraged, my mom would always tell me, "You can do hard things." I didn't always understand what that meant, but the older I get I realize how important that statement is in my life.



My dream for my future is to obtain a joint degree as a MD and JD at Stanford University. Originally it was a conflict in my mind on whether I would become a doctor or a lawyer. Becoming a Doctor has been a lifelong dream of mine, and taking my first AIR course (Intro to the Tribal Legal Studies) was a huge eye-opener for me. It led me to a world of study I never considered before and ignited a new and unknown passion of mine! After that course, I had a great desire to become a lawyer, as well as a doctor.

Through my involvement in AIR Honors' courses, I've learned that sometimes helping someone by giving them justice, is just as important as giving them physical healing. Unfortunately, representation is something not every American has access to, and I want to be able to bring a voice to the people that don't have any.

One of my interests is playing the piano. In the future, I do not see myself as a concert pianist, but the piano is a fundamental instrument that works both sides of your brain. I love how piano music includes every genre, and any message you portray can be shared on that instrument wordlessly. I am also a vocalist, and I have been training since 2018. It is one of my favorite hobbies! It could be argued that music can convey a message in a way that words sometimes cannot.

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.





Gabriel Faulkner II (Lumbee Tribe/Shoshone Bannock Tribes)

I proudly belong to both the Lumbee Tribe and Shoshone Bannock Tribe, but like so many, I live outside of my Tribal Territory. Currently, I live in North County San Diego where I go to school. As for my interests, I play high school football and I like to play video games on the weekends. I also enjoy family time, which consists of hanging out with my dad and watching football. I consider myself to be easy going, and I enjoy making friends as I go along in life.

I graduate in 2024 and college has always been something that was discussed. Higher education is something that will be part of my future. Like so many, during my elementary and middle school years, I was part of the AIR program. Through AIR, I have been able to meet other Native people who strive for advancement in the Native communities. Most recently, I have been fortunate to participate in the AIR Honors Project, taking SDSU's Writing and Rhetoric course and Palomar's Academics course. These university level courses will help me be better prepared for college. I know that I also have the support of my parents and AIR to help me prepare for the next level of education, which makes me

confident that I can succeed. I know that organizational skills are required to be successful in college and I think that high school, sports, AIR and my family are helping me to learn life skills to achieve my goal of earning a degree. I will be applying to SDSU and CSUSM as my universities of choice.

AIR Programs Fall Honors Courses Enrolling Now / Accepting late applications

The Tribal Youth Court (TYC) project, is a diversion-based project that serves our San Diego County Tribes challenged with incidents of juvenile delinquency. The Intertribal Court of Southern California (ICSC) has developed a Native Youth Peer Diversion Court, where Native Youth will have the opportunity to hear and assist in the adjudication process of the juvenile offenders. To accomplish this, American Indian Recruitment (AIR), along with ICSC, has developed the Native Youth Peer Decision Makers (Peer Decision Makers) training project that will engage our Youth Decision Makers and guide them in their decisions within the Youth Court.

This Fall we are collaborating with UCSD to offer Introduction to Tribal Legal Studies, a 3-unit course. This course provides a broad overview of the most important issues involved in tribal legal studies, including an overview of tribal government, the history of tribal court systems, legal structure of tribal courts, tribal court criminal and civil jurisdiction, roles in tribal court systems, due process, appellate courts, the Indian Civil Rights Act, Public Law 280 and the Indian Child Welfare Act. Students receive an introduction to the basic concepts of legal studies with emphasis within contemporary tribal legal issues. The course addresses tribal common law and traditional dispute resolution methods, including the examination of the incorporation of custom and tradition into the Tribal court system.

This course will be online and mentor assistance will be provided to the students.

Course: Law 40074 Intro to Tribal Legal Studies - 3 units / **Univeristy:** UCSD

This course is also available online. For High School Students 9-12th grades.

Format: Online in an asynchronous format (weekly assignments)

Dates: Starting: Oct 2nd, 2023 / Ending: Dec. 9th, 2023

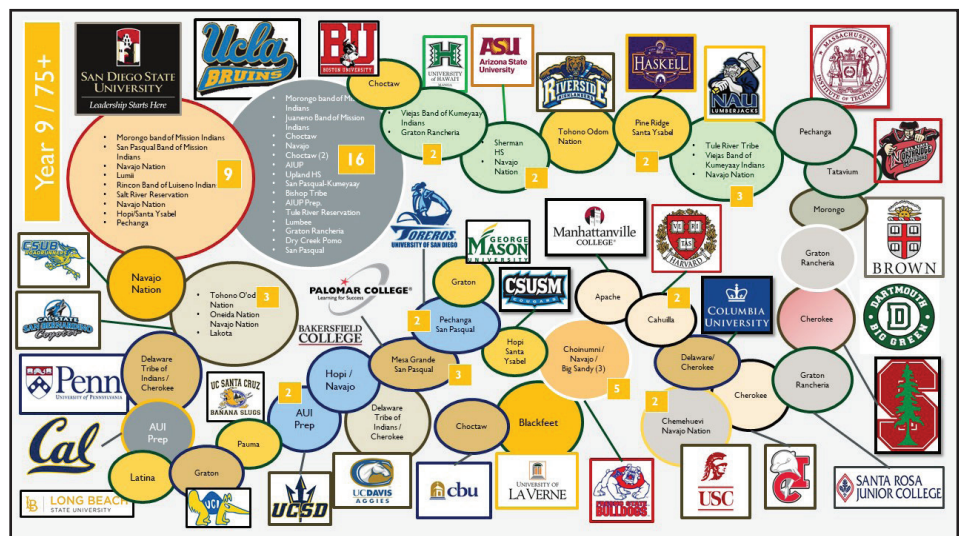
Registration: AIR Programs Honors Project (google.com)

For more information visit our website at: www.airprograms.org

We started with a small group in 2015 and over the next 9 years our students have been going to some of the top universities in the Nation.

Having these courses from our pool of universities are making our students stand out, as it shows their dedication to academics.

Numbers reflect only those who we could track. There are many more whom we did not have the opportunity to track.



AIR Programs Updates 2023

| Course *Indicates Covid-19 challenges in Implementation | Student Passage rate |
|--|----------------------|
| Introduction to Legal Systems-UCSD (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel / Hopi / Morongo Band of Mission Indians) | 83% |
| Introduction to Tribal Legal Studies (UCSD): (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians / Chickasaw) | 75%* |
| Writing and Rhetoric and Tribal Governance (SDSU): (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Morongo Band of Mission Indians / Chickasaw / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Pomo Dry Creek Rancheria / Delaware and Cherokee people) | 77%* |
| Introduction to Legal Systems-UCSD (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Jamul Indian Village / Navajo / Cahuilla Band of Indians) | 94%* |
| Introduction to Tribal Legal Studies (UCSD): (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Jamul Indian Village / Navajo / Cahuilla Band of Indians / Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Nation) | 83%* |
| Writing and Rhetoric and Tribal Governance (SDSU): (San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Jamul Indian Village / Navajo / La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians / Pauma Band of Mission Indians) | 90%* |
| Introduction to Legal Systems-UCSD (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel / Pechanga / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Apache / Pauma Band of Mission Indians) | 100%* |
| Introduction to Tribal Legal Studies (UCSD): (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel / Pechanga / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Apache / Pauma Band of Mission Indians) | 100%* |
| Writing and Rhetoric and Tribal Governance (SDSU) Lumbee / Apache / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians | 82% |
| Coun10 College Success Skills (Palomar College) Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation / Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel / Lumbee / Apache | 87% |
| Introduction to Tribal Legal Studies (UCSD): Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians / Graton Rancheria / Apache / Viejas Band of Mission Indians / Choctaw / Fernandoño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians / Los Coyotes Band of Luiseno Indians | 90% |
| Writing and Rhetoric and Tribal Governance (SDSU) Pechanga Band of Mission Indians / San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians / Pauma Band of Mission Indians / Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel / Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria / Pala Band of Mission Indians / Choctaw | 90% |
| Totals: Tribal Nations Participating/Ave. Passage Rates: 20+/-88% | |

Passage for online Adults in Community College, in CA (in a 2015 study): ~60-65%
 Programs with 70%+ are considered high achieving
https://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_615HJR.pdf



Initially our collaboration started with the concept of utilizing existing university level courses that were based in Tribal Law and Governance and adapted them for our Native youth. We had great success in our implementation of this program. In 2019, we were afforded the opportunity to further engage our Native youth with our more recent community-based partners (ICSC/UCSD/ SDSU and Palomar College) in training the Peer Decision Makers for the Tribal Youth Court. Here, they utilize their knowledge in restorative justice to participate as a peer jurist within the Tribal Youth Court at Intertribal Court of Southern California located on the Rincon Reservation.

We show our passage rates which demonstrates our students understanding of the topics and their success in taking advanced university coursework.

Passage for Honors Courses on Average: ~88%

What are students gaining through this? They are gaining the following:

- Students are gaining Academic credits at the universities in American Indian Studies
- Students are gaining dual credit at most (not all) High Schools based on articulation policies of the school district
- Students are gaining knowledge in Tribal Restorative Justice ideals, Tribal Governance and Leadership
- Our Youth Peer Court collaboration is creating an extensive pool of Peer Decision Makers who may utilize this as community service
- Students are gaining a second look within university admissions based on university coursework

| Projects / Spring | Stat: Students | Stat: Mentor / Coordinator / Community |
|--|----------------|--|
| AIR Honors: AMIND 120 (Spring 2023) | 16 | 3 |
| AIR Tutorial | 2 | 2 |
| AIR Summer | 77 | 39 |
| Honors Course1 | 9 | 4 |
| Totals: | 104 | 48 |

Overall Participants (Q1-Q3): 152




AIR PROGRAMS
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 San Diego CA 92168
 info@airprograms.org



AIR Summer 2023 Complete!

AIR Summer is complete!!! This year was extraordinary as we had a record number of students and community member participate within our summer project. With over 115 participants we spent the summer exploring the topic of Tribal Environmental Protection. We discussed and sought out tangible ways our Tribes can protect their lands from non-native destructive efforts, while reviewing Tribal preservation efforts.

Our summer included field trips to the “Museum of Us” and being allotted to see their exhibits and (with approvals) some archived items that fit within the theme of our summer project. Further field work included Coastal Farms (for food sovereignty and non-damaging efforts to grow foods) and a visit from Dr. Bronner’s to discuss environmentally safe ways for economic development.

We understand that Indian Country is both vast but is also a small community, where we all know one another, so throughout the summer we encouraged a lot of socialization of our students with one another through activities that allowed to share and learn more about each other. We cannot say enough how honored we are to have had our participants spend the summer with us. Looking forward to Summer 2024!

AIR Programs Board

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