



At Pala SCTCA TANF, A New Site Manager Brings Enthusiasm and Determination

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF



Racheal Bentancourt/Photo by Paul Miranda

When Racheal Bentancourt was 14, she started working at a Subway restaurant at the Torres Martinez Red Earth Travel Center.

Within four years, she was the manager.

Her rise – rapid for a teenager – wasn't unusual for Bentancourt. Throughout her life she has approached work with a natural enthusiasm and determination that colors virtually everything she does.

It's an approach that Bentancourt, 33, is now bringing to Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) Pala TANF. She was hired as SCTCA Pala TANF Site Manager earlier this spring, beginning work on May 1.

"My biggest thing is building trust among families," she said, sitting in her modestly decorated office at Pala TANF. A picture of Bentancourt with her nine-year-old daughter, Catalina Yaw'lapish Castellanos, is displayed in a golden frame on her desk. "A lot of times people come to us and they're going through very difficult times. I want them to know we are going to help them in every way we can. I want them to have reassurance that things are going to get better."

Bentancourt – who smiles often and laughs easily- intends to build that trust through community outreach, including more TANF workshops and events for families and children. She has already had several such events, including the Pala Fall Engagement in October and a first-ever forklift training session for TANF participants in September.

(Continued on page 2)

At San Diego State, AIR Celebrates 30th Annual Awards Banquet

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF

When Dwight and Devon Lomayesva began the American Indian Recruitment (AIR) program 30 years ago, it had just six students.

The program's first donation was \$400.

"And we thought that (money) would last for years," recalled Dwight Lomayesva. "We were hopeful."

Now – three decades later – more than 2,700 Native American students have attended AIR courses and special academic classes, including the AIR Honors Project. And many of those students have continued their education, attending colleges and universities throughout California and across the country.

All of this was celebrated in late October at AIR's 30th Annual Awards Banquet at the Tula Community Center at San Diego State University. The four-hour evening event drew more than 200 people, including tribal elders, educators, students and their families. Five Native

(Continued on page 6)



Grace Pimentel





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P.O. Box 1470
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E-mail: gtaylor@sctca.net
(760) 746-0901 Ext. 118

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The purpose of the Tribal TANF Newsletter is to provide the tribal communities with information about services provided by the TANF Programs and other important issues concerning our rural/urban communities and families.

SCTCA provides services to San Diego, Orange and Santa Barbara counties and the following reservations:

Agua Caliente	Los Coyotes	Santa Rosa
Barona	Manzanita	Santa Ysabel
Cahuilla	Mesa Grande	Santa Ynez
Campo	Morongo	Soboba
Ewiiaapaayp	Pala	Sycuan
Inaja/Cosmit	Pauma	Torres Martinez
Jamul	Rincon	Viejas
La Jolla	San Manuel	
La Posta	San Pasqual	

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Escondido Tribal TANF:
(760) 746-0901 Toll-free: (866) 428-0901

San Diego Tribal TANF:
(619) 460-3400 Toll-free: (866) 913-3725

Manzanita Tribal TANF:
(619) 766-9039 Toll-free: (866) 931-1480

Pala Tribal TANF:
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Bentancourt, outside her office at Pala TANF

– optimistic and friendly, courteous but firm – isn't by design or calculation. It's simply who she is.

"I've always been this way," she said, smiling broadly. "I feel like it's a passion of mine. I want to win people over. I want to help people."

It also isn't surprising, then, her previous positions reflected that determination to help others. Before she became Pala Site Manager, she had worked eight years as a Case Advocate at Morongo Tribal TANF. In that position, Bentancourt met with TANF families and their children, helping them with support services, job training, education and emergency funding.

After eight years, though, Bentancourt said she felt she had "mastered case management."

"I was waiting for a change," she said. But when the change came, and she had to leave Morongo to accept the position at Pala earlier this year, she admitted it was hard. "I cried whenever I thought about leaving my Morongo families," she recalled.

Before Morongo, Bentancourt worked five years at Riverside San Bernardino Indian Health Inc. Native Challenge. She spent considerable time at Native Challenge visiting schools and presenting a series of 16 lessons to students on teen pregnancy prevention, healthy relationships and preventing STDs (sexually transmitted diseases).

At the time, she wasn't much older than most of the teens she spoke to, establishing an easy and informal manner of communicating with them. "It was like older brothers and sisters talking to them," she recalled. "The kids responded well."

Now, as Pala TANF Site Manager, she remains determined to reach people through direct and personal communication.

"I am very excited and proud to be here," she said. "It's an honor to be in this position. I can help reach even more families, and our staff can help more families, and people will believe in us because they trust us."

"I want to bring the most we can for our TANF participants," said Bentancourt, who is a Luiseno descendant from Pauma and Soboba. "I want to give them more options, more contacts with other tribes and organizations – whatever they need, whatever we can do. I want our parents and families to feel we are offering them the best things we can to help them. I want them to feel welcomed when they come into our office, and relieved when they leave."

She also said she wants participants to see her and her staff out in the community frequently on the reservations where they live, so they know Pala TANF "is taking the time to get to know them. We are not just going to be in the office communicating only through paperwork."

Bentancourt – who grew up "a TANF child in Coachella" with her mother, two sisters and a brother – said she prefers seeing participants and their families. If that's not always possible, she will call them. The personal approach isn't surprising. Bentancourt's demeanor

SCTCA Pala TANF Hosts Families at October Fall Engagement

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF



Nearly 20 parents and children attended the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) Pala TANF Fall Engagement in late October.

The late morning event was held in the tribal gym on the La Jolla Indian Reservation.

Corinne Biggs and Lizzie Lycett from the Indian Health Council's (IHC) My

Two Aunties program made a presentation during the event for parents and their children.

Biggs and Lycett spoke about effective techniques for effective and mindful parenting, according to Brenda Bequette, Education Coordinator at SCTCA Pala TANF. Among the issues discussed:

- Recognize who in your family you have as support.
- 24hoursinthelife-Knowingyourbabycanhelpyoushapeatypical day.
- Monitoring routine and recognizing where to adjust the schedule.
- Why routine is important for parents and children.
- Why do children cry or fight against a structured routine?
- How can parents cope with frustrations.
- Never punish a baby and how routine can reduce the need for punishment.

After the discussion, parents and children were able to take pictures at a black-background photo area. There was also music and a craft-making session for children and adults.

"I am so pleased parents and children came to our Fall Engagement," said Racheal Bentancourt, Site Manager at Pala TANF. "We want to bring our families together."

SCTCA Pala TANF staff who attended and coordinated the event included Bentancourt, Bequette, Marsha Ward, Maria Diaz, Renee Llanos and Song Camacho.



----- DISPATCHES -----

A Native Christmas



By Looks for Buffalo and Sandie Lee

Editor's note: This Christmas story was first published in the SCTCA TANF Newsletter in 2017.

European Christmas for Native Americans actually started when the Europeans came over to America. They taught the Indian about Christianity, gift-giving, and St. Nicholas. There are actually two religious types of Indian people in existence. One of these is the Traditionalist, usually full-blooded Indians that grew up on the reservations. The second type is the Contemporary Indian that grew up in an urban area, usually of mixed blood, and brought up with Christian philosophy.

Traditionalists are raised to respect the Christian Star and the birth of the first Indian Spiritual Leader. He was a Star Person and Avatar. His name was Jesus. He was a Hebrew, a Red Man. He received his education from the wilderness. John the Baptist, Moses, and other excellent teachers that came before Jesus provided an educational foundation with the Holistic Method.

Every day is our Christmas. Every meal is our Christmas. At every meal we take a little portion of the food we are eating, and we offer it to the spirit world on behalf of the four-legged, and the winged, and the two-legged. We pray--not the way most Christians pray--but we thank the Grandfathers, the Spirit, and the Guardian Angel.

We are taught as Traditional children that we have abundance. The Creator has given us everything: the water, the air we breathe, the earth as our flesh, and our energy force: our heart. We are thankful every day. We pray early in the morning, before sunrise, the morning star, and the evening star. We pray for our relatives who are in the universe that someday they will come. We also pray that the Great Spirit's son will live again.

...It is really important that these ways never be lost. And to this day we feed the elders, we feed the family on Christmas day, we honor Saint Nicholas. We explain to the little children that to receive a gift is to enjoy it, and when the enjoyment is gone, they are pass it on to another child, so that they, too, can enjoy it.

...If neighbors or strangers stop over to visit at your house, we offer them dinner. We bring out the T-Bone steak, not the cabbage. If we don't have enough, we send someone in the family out to get some more and mention nothing of the inconvenience to our guests. The more one gives, the more spiritual we become. The Christ Consciousness, the same spirit of giving that is present at Christmas, is present every day in Indian Country.

Looks for Buffalo is an Oglala Sioux Spiritual Leader, the full-blood Oglala grandson of Chief Red Cloud and White Cow Killer, and a Cheyenne Oglala Leader. Sandi Lee is a spiritual healer.

In SCTCA TANF Participant 2024 Calendar, A Different World Emerges Through Children's Eyes

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF

Grown men can learn from little children because the hearts of little children are pure. Therefore, the Great Spirit may show to them many things which older people miss. - Black Elk

In the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA) 2024 Calendar for TANF participants, there are many pictures and images of children.

It is, in essence, a children's calendar.

Not because any of the days, weeks, or months are any different – but because the calendar pages are filled with the smiles, laughter, determination and innocence of children. It is how they see the world – not how we as adults see it.

In one of the pictures, a little boy in bright red pants and a black-and-white shirt - with hair falling in his face - holds up a colorful blue drawing. He is happy, even joyful at his creation. What exactly it is may not be clear to the eyes of an adult – is it an owl? a heart? - but he certainly knows what it is, because he made it.

In another photo, several children – some young, some teens – show the gourds they made at an Honoring Our Grandmothers Gourd Art event. The gourds are on display on a table as the children stand behind, a mixture of smiles, pride, shyness and determination. The colorful creations show their ability to make something special for someone they love – a grandmother. Someone who

has held them, and loved them, and cared for them. That is what they know.

In yet another picture, a little girl smiles broadly, brush in hand, as she adds paint to her design on a piece of pottery. There is a look of accomplishment on her face. Her right hand gently holds the piece, already splashed with colors in a way only a child could put them together. That is what she knows.

This calendar, month by month, is filled with such images: Children at play, children together, children creating,

children with family and friends, children gathering, and laughing, and smiling. Many of these images are at events held by SCTCA TANF, or SCAIR, or by instructors contacted by SCTCA specifically to teach the children some aspect of their Native American culture. It is an education that has gone on throughout the years, at SCTCA events large and small, and the children see it all, and remember as much as they can.

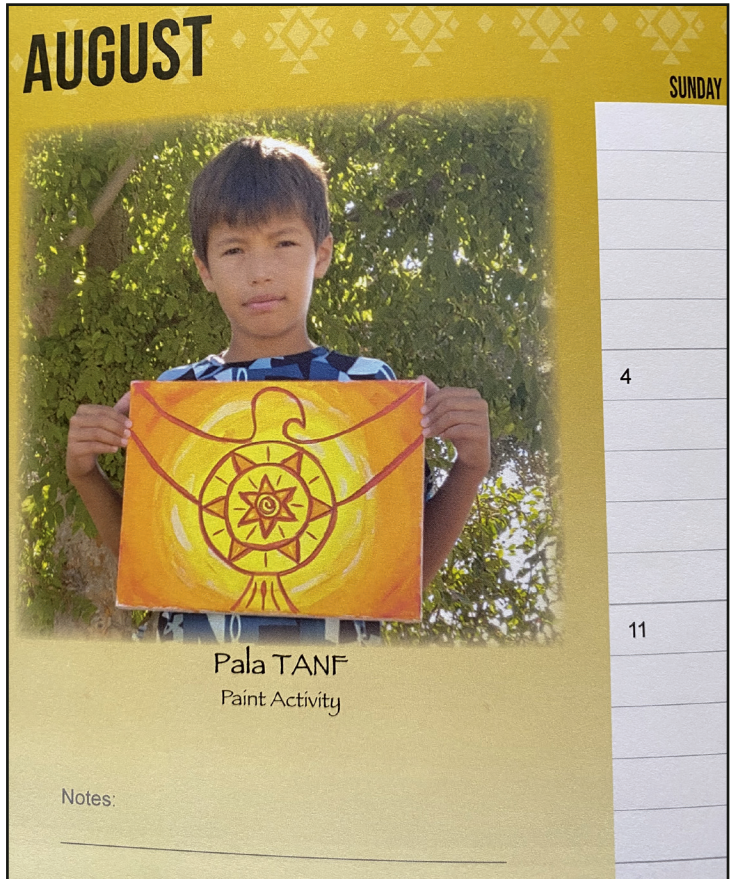
And one of the most important parts of this culture is how our children see the world. They see it not only in the lives they lead with their families but also in the traditions they are taught, the words they hear, the love they feel, the moments when their young voices are heard.

In the images throughout the 2024 calendar, children are showing their parents, their grandparents, their brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and cousins and all other family members, who they are. "The greatest power is the Creator. But, if you want to know the greatest strength...That is gentleness," said Chief Leon Shenandoah.

Children are gentle, and in their hands lies a great strength that lasts generations.



SCTCA TANF staff who worked on and contributed to the 2024 TANF Participant Calendar included Sonserrie 'Song' Camacho, Chairwoman of the Calendar Committee, Pala TANF; Catherine Almandarez, San Diego TANF; Aleemah Jagers, Escondido TANF; Tony Alvarado, Pala TANF; Velma McDermott, Orange County TANF; Laura De La Torre Baeza, Orange County TANF; and Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF. The calendar cover art was designed by De La Torre Baeza. Tribal Print Source printed the calendars.





Eshpaa Leo Saavedra



SCTCA TANF staff table, left to right, Aleemah Jagers; Karin Giron; Desiree Jasso; and Laura De La Torre Baeza

American students received awards at the celebration, honored by AIR for their academic accomplishments and tribal community involvement.

The five individuals who received Student Leadership Awards were Eshpaa Leo Saavedra, lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel; Grace Pimentel, Chiricahua Apache; Joel Pete Jr., Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria; Gabriel Faulkner Jr., Lumbee Tribe/Shoshone Bannock Tribes; and Abrianna L. Pingleton, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians.

“It is with great joy we honor tonight some of our Native youth who will someday be part of many leaders bringing our tribal communities towards a greater future,” said Devon Lomayesva.

All five students delivered remarks after receiving their awards (Pete Jr. made his via Zoom from Northern California). Each one of them thanked their families – especially their parents, brothers and sisters- and praised the AIR program.

“Whenever things got hard for me, or I would complain or get discouraged, my mom would always tell me, ‘You can do hard things,’” said Pimentel. “I didn’t always understand what that meant, but the older I get I realize how important that statement is in my life.”

Saavedra noted that he had been a mentor in the AIR Summer program. “We had over 115 youth participants and it was great,” he said. “I gave back to my Native community by helping the program and working with the younger Native youth.”

In his Zoom call, Pete Jr. said AIR had helped him to recall his ancestors’ spirit. “In learning about tribal government firsthand, I was able to see how much progress my tribe made in rebuilding our Indigenous nation and cultural practice.”

Faulkner said he was pleased he had been able to participate in the AIR Honors Project, where he took Writing and Rhetoric course at SDSU. “These university courses will help me be better prepared for college. I know I also have the support of my parents and AIR to help me prepare for the next level of education, which makes me confident I can succeed.”

In her remarks, Pimentel told the crowd she has been involved in the AIR program for nearly seven years, expressing a “passion” for theater and dance. She worked as an AIR Mentor last year and has participated in the AIR Honors courses. Although she now lives with her mother in Palm Springs, Pimentel said she “hopes to attend university in San Diego.”

“My first choice is San Diego State. I want to major in theater, with an emphasis on performing arts,” she said.

SDSU President Adela de la Torre and San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan also attended the banquet. Both delivered remarks prior to the students receiving their awards, with Stephan emphasizing the

academic accomplishments of AIR students and de la Torre praising the program's "commitment to education, community and Native American students."

The SDSU president also pointed out the large poster at the far end of the conference room that showed all the universities and colleges AIR students have attended since its inception 30 years ago.

Before the Awards Banquet began, several students in attendance received Micro-Certificates in Restorative Justice from the University of California San Diego and ICSC. The certificates were presented by Intertribal Court Judge Angela Medrano, Cahuilla Band of Indians, and Morgan P. Appel, Assistant Dean of Education and Community Outreach from UCSD Extension.

After the certificates were presented, Birdsingers led by Paul Cuero, Campo Band of Mission Indians, and Steve Banegas, Barona Band of Mission Indians, sang several traditional Native songs in honor of all those receiving awards.

Dwight Lomayesva pointed out that "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 sights on pursuing higher education and someday returning to our Native communities to support a greater future for all."

AIR was founded by the Lomayesvas in 1993. The program "aimed to change Indian education by increasing high school graduation rates, promote higher education and create a network of Native people who will work towards improving our tribal nations," according to the Lomayesvas.

Since its inception, the couple noted that "over 2,700 Native youth have gone through our program and they have come from all over Southern California. Students have gone on to be admitted to Stanford, Brown, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Arizona, Humboldt State, UCLA, San Diego State, University of San Diego, Brandies University, Georgetown, California State University San Marcos and many others," the two said in a joint statement.

"However, our greatest measurement of success is seeing our students participating in cultural events and choosing to give back to their community as nurses, Tribal Police, or within their tribal administration. Today, you can see AIR students participating in Tribal Government, as Tribal Council members and as Tribal Chairman."



Above, Angela Medrano; below, AIR Banquet room



AIR Banquet Student Honorees: In Their Own Words

Editor's note: The five students honored at the 30th Annual AIR Banquet all delivered remarks during the evening ceremony. Prior to that, each submitted brief statements about themselves, their families and their educational intentions. The statements were published online in the October edition of AIR News. Here are excerpts from all five honorees, in their own words:



Abrianna Pingleton, holding her AIR Award, with her family

Grace K. Pimental, Chiricahua Apache:

I take great pride in my history and cultural affiliation as a Chiricahua Apache.

...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.

...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.

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.

...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.

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

At Domestic Violence Walk, A Story of Childhood Abuse Leads to Guilt, Shame – and Forgiveness

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF

Cathy Ornelia has been married 37 years to a man she describes as “completely wonderful.”

She has five children and seven grandkids.

It’s a life she could not have imagined when she was a child.

At the age of five, she was sexually abused by her babysitter.

She never told her mother.

And she didn’t tell when her mother’s new husband – her stepfather – began sexually abusing her when she was nine. It lasted six years, until she was 15.

Ornelia’s story – one of abuse, darkness and, ultimately, forgiveness – was told near the end of the 2nd Annual Intertribal Domestic Violence/Resource Fair on the San Pasqual Indian Reservation in mid-October. The event – which drew about 100 people - was sponsored by the San Pasqual Native Women’s Resource Center.

Dozens gathered for an early morning walk on a trail near the San Pasqual ball field, where the event was held. There were several booths with exhibitors providing information about domestic violence, counseling, medical and physical services and other resources. The event also featured several speakers who spoke about the impact of domestic violence on their lives and the lives of tribal members.

Ornelia, *Akimel O’dham*, was the last to speak, and her remarks were direct, powerful and emotional.

She said she was raised in Whittier, California, by a single mom. It was a babysitter who first sexually abused her when she was just five. “When you’re that young – you don’t know what to do,” Ornelia recalled.

When she was nine, her mother married. While her mother was at work, Ornelia said, she was left home with her stepfather, who did not work. He was also an alcoholic.

“My stepfather – when we were alone, he would do heinous things to me. Where could I go? What could I do? I didn’t have a safe place anymore. My mother – she worked all the time. I didn’t want to say anything to her.

“I struggled. I never smiled, I never engaged with people. I hid what was happening to me.”

The ongoing sexual abuse caused her to lose all sense of self-worth, Ornelia said.

“For a long time, I felt like there was a message on my forehead that said, ‘Abuse her, she’s not going to say anything.’”

The abuse lasted six years, until she was 15. That’s when her mother found out about it, and threw Ornelia’s stepfather out of the house.

But when that happened, her stepfather’s family blamed her for everything, Ornelia recalled.

“They told my mother I was the cause of all the problems,” she remembered. “They came over to our house and were yelling and screaming and saying all these horrible things. My mother told me to go upstairs, I didn’t need to hear this.”

Less than two years later, her mother died after a long illness.

Within a few years, Ornelia said, she began a relationship with a guy who physically abused her.

“There were bruises – I hid them,” she said. She didn’t leave him until the abuse reached the point where he bit her nose – which was something she couldn’t hide or cover up.

“I decided I had to get out of that relationship,” she said.

Even after she married her husband Paul a couple of years later, Ornelia admitted the abuse she had suffered for all those years caused her to ‘self-sabotage’ her marriage.

“I thought to myself, ‘I’m so messed up, I know I’m going to mess up my marriage, I know I am going to mess up my kids,’” she said. She and

her husband sought counseling because, Ornelia said, she didn’t want to continue “raising my children in my bitterness, anger, shame and embarrassment.”

The counseling saved her marriage, Ornelia said.

And then, decades later, her stepfather - the man who had abused her throughout her childhood – became ill with cancer two years ago. She visited him, and told him that she was okay.

“I forgave my stepfather,” she said.



Cathy Ornelia, left, with Roxy Aguilar

He died the next day.

Ornelia spoke at his funeral – at the request of her stepfather’s family, who had once dismissed her suffering and blamed her for all that had happened. She spoke only of good memories, never mentioning what her stepfather had done to her.

After it was over, Ornelia recalled, she felt “that this tremendous burden had been lifted off me.”

“I knew I was free,” she said. “I realized if we don’t heal, if we don’t forgive, we can’t live freely.”

Ornelia, now 57, said she now lives her life with a completely different view of who she is.

“I’ve come a long way, I’m getting there, I’m better than I was yesterday,” she declared. “I am not a victim. I am a victor.”



On Indigenous Day, Safari Park Hosts Hundreds of Native Americans

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF

The huge, helium- filled yellow balloon drifted far above a crowd of Native American children at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in San Pasqual.

“I want to go on that!” one little boy said, pointing at the yellow balloon drifting against the deep blue sky.

His mother wasn’t so sure.

“That’s pretty high,” she said, kneeling next to him, her hand on his shoulder. “Maybe next time.”

He nodded, still staring at the sky.

The mother and son were two of hundreds who attended Safari Park’s third Indigenous Peoples’ Day Celebration on Oct. 9. Throughout a sun-drenched morning and afternoon, Native American families and their children roamed the trails and valleys of Safari Park, peering into the lion’s den and gorilla enclosure and taking pictures when one of the animals stirred.

As in previous years, the event was also a celebration of Kumeyaay culture. The park – which opened five decades ago – lies on what was once the land of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians. This year’s Celebration drew over 1,000 tribal members and their families



Birdsingers at Safari Park on Indigenous Peoples' Day

Tribal members arrived at the park and were given free admission, free parking and meal and snack vouchers. Once inside, the guests listened to stories about the ancient Kumeyaay culture told by local tribal elders and educators. Early arrivals saw an opening ceremony. Birdsingers also were at the park, singing traditional Native songs at various times during the day at the spacious Benbough Amphitheater.

At the close of the day at Safari Park, there was a closing ceremony and blessing, ending a day of celebration, culture – and seeing many, many animals, birds and reptiles.

Two years ago, after the first Indigenous Peoples' Celebration at Safari Park, Johnny Bear Contreras, a San Pasqual tribal elder, had said the celebration "was more than I was hoping for."

"Walking through it, I felt proud – proud of what we all were able to accomplish and pull together. It felt good," he said. Contreras had been working with Safari Park beginning in 2020 to arrange the event. He also attended this year's Celebration.



A Visit to the White House – And a Question – Set the Stage for Native American Citizenship

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF

“Mr. President, there have been so many discussions of the so-called Indian Problem.

May not we, who are the Indian students of America, who must face the burden of that problem, say to you what it means to us?”

– Ruth Muskrat, addressing President Calvin Coolidge in December, 1923

One century ago, a young Native American woman named Ruth Muskrat visited the White House.

The Mount Holyoke college junior was part of a group called the Committee of One Hundred. The committee (formally named the Advisory Council on Indian Affairs) met with President Calvin Coolidge to discuss issues facing Native Americans.

During that meeting, Muskrat – a Cherokee- delivered a speech. In her remarks, she turned to the President and asked him a question.

The White House Historical Association recounted the moment:

*“During the White House visit, a young Native American poet and Mount Holyoke junior named Ruth Muskrat addressed President Coolidge and presented him with a copy of *The Red Man in the United States*, a book describing the adverse economic, educational, religious, and cultural challenges facing Native Americans. In her speech, she spoke frankly to President Coolidge, beginning with this pointed question that framed her speech:*

“Mr. President, there have been so many discussions of the so-called Indian Problem. May not we, who are the Indian students of America, who must face the burden of that problem, say to you what it means to us?”

Muskrat continued her speech, providing an answer to her own question: “The old life has gone. A new trail must be found, for the old is not good to travel farther. We are glad to have it so. But these younger leaders who must guide their people along new and untried paths have perhaps a harder task before them than the fight for freedom our older leaders made. Ours must be the problem of leading this vigorous and by no means dying race of people back to their rightful heritage of nobility and greatness. Ours must be the task of leading through these difficult stages of transition into economic independence, into a more adequate expression of their art, and into an awakened spiritual vigor... We want to become citizens of the United States, and to have our share in the building of this great nation, that we love. But we want also to preserve the best that is in our own civilization.”

The eloquence of Muskrat’s answer had an unexpected and immediate impact.

After her speech, she was invited to dine with Coolidge and his wife Grace. During the luncheon, Muskrat continued to express the importance of granting citizenship to Native Americans. The *New York Times* noted both the President and his wife were impressed not only with Muskrat’s determination but by the “force and clarity” of her words.

What followed in the months after Muskrat’s visit to the White House was an unprecedented move by an American President: Coolidge asked the United States Congress to grant citizenship to all American Indians. In June of 1924, Coolidge supported and signed the Indian Citizenship Act. An amendment to the Act eliminated a proposal to require Indians to apply for citizenship. Instead, the Act granted all Indians automatic U.S. citizenship.

Most American historians have largely ignored or dismissed the importance of Muskrat’s influence on Coolidge’s move to grant citizenship to Indians. Some insist he was leaning towards doing that anyway, based on the military service of thousands of Native Americans in World War I. Others claim Coolidge had demonstrated significant interest in American Indians throughout his presidency, including his creation of the Advisory Council on Indian Affairs. He was also the first sitting President to visit an Indian reservation.

Such claims do have some justification. But World War I had ended more than five years before Muskrat’s White House visit, and Indians still had not been granted citizenship. In contrast, just six months after Muskrat’s personal meeting with the President, the Indian Citizenship Act was approved by Congress.

While it may not have been the sole reason Coolidge pushed for passage of the Act, Muskrat’s speech – and the unforgettable impression it left on the President – was certainly historically significant. And the fact it was delivered by a young Cherokee woman in her twenties was nothing short of remarkable, especially considering such a thing was virtually unheard of 100 years ago.



President Calvin Coolidge accepts a book presented to him by Ruth Muskrat, Cherokee, at a White House ceremony in 1923.

In a black and white photograph of the event at the White House, Coolidge is shown standing with members of the Advisory Council. He is staring directly at the camera, as are all the men. Muskrat is standing next to the President, holding the book she had presented him earlier.

She is the only woman in the picture. And she isn't looking at the camera. Instead, she is looking intently at Coolidge, her unsmiling gaze a portrait of Native American determination.

Ruth Margaret Muskrat, born in Cherokee Territory in Oklahoma in 1897, lived the rest of her life as a Native American educator, writer, activist and poet. She authored dozens of books and stories and received numerous awards and honors for her life-long contributions to Native American culture.

She died in June of 1982 at the age of 84, nearly 60 years after her historic visit to the White House.

Seven Native American Girls on Wildcats Volleyball Team

By Gary P. Taylor, SCTCA TANF



From left: Destiny Castellano; M.J. Stoneburner; Hunter Taylor; Ezabel Castellano; Wóm'Şi Stoneburner; Şunla Ortiz; and Kylee Brady

In the fall, there were seven Native American students on the Warner Springs High School Wildcats volleyball team.

It was an impressive athletic accomplishment, especially considering there are only six girls on the volleyball court at any one time.

And these girls know each other quite well, since all seven of them are from the Los Coyotes Indian Reservation.

The girls are Destiny Castellano, M.J. Stoneburner, Hunter Taylor, Ezabel Castellano, Wóm'Şi Stoneburner, Şunla Ortiz and Kylee Brady.

Volleyball season is over, but the group played some memorable games, winning and losing together as teammates- and as tribal members from Los Coyotes.

Class Calendars

Two Directions, Inc.

Sept. 1st-Dec. 31st, 2023

2023 CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Space #8 Classroom 1 Classes				
	Life Skills 9:00-11:00 am Laura Rizza (Soft skills, Building Healthy Families, Social skills, Survival skills, Employability, Finances, & more)			Tribal Culture 9:00-11:00 am Heather Turnbull
Break 11:00-11:15				
	Culture Class 11:15-1:15 pm Heather Turnbull (Ribbon Shirts & skirts, gourd projects, Moccasin making, cradleboards, and much more)		Tribal Culture 11:15-1:15 pm Heather Turnbull (Basic Beading, Lazy Stitch, Applique, Rosette, Peyote stitch, gourd stitch, brick stitch, Loom work, & more)	Indep. Tribal Culture 11:15-1:15 pm
Break 1:15-1:30 pm				
	Independent Culture 1:30-4:30		Indep. Tribal Culture 1:30-4:30	

Two Directions, Inc.

Sept. 1st— Dec. 31st, 2023

2023 CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Space #8 Classroom 2 Classes				
9:00-11:00 Study Period	9:00-11:00 Study Period	9:00-11:00 Study period	9:00-11:00 Study Period	9:00-11:00 Diploma / HiSet/ *ABE
Break 11:00-11:15				
11:15-1:15 Study Period	11:15-1:15 Study Period	11:15-1:15 Study Period	Diploma / HiSet/ *ABE 10:30-12:30 Josh M. (WASC accredited diploma program, HiSet 5 series and GED 4 series test prep; state-endorsed high school equivalency certificate, ABE; basic skills development, writing & math)	Diploma / HiSet/ *ABE 11:15-1:15 Josh M. Skills, college assessment prep, college, community college and online course support)
Break 1:15-1:30				
1:30-4:30 Study Period	1:30-4:30 Study Period	1:30-4:30 Study Period	1:30-4:30 Study Period	No classes <small>*Adult Basic Education</small>

Two Directions, Inc.

Sept. 1st—Dec. 31st, 2023

2023 CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Space #39 Computer Lab Classes				
Self Paced Class 9:00-11:00 Staff	Computers 9:00-11:00 Staff	Computers 9:00-11:00 Staff	Intro to PCs 9:00-11:00 C. Illingworth	Computers 9:00-11:00 J. Murphy
* Classes offered but are not limited to; Introduction to Computers, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, QuickBooks, Keyboarding, Accounting, Business budgeting, Business Ethics, Business Management, Business Professionalism, Payroll Management, Small Business classes, Business Branding, Business Writing, Career Training, Entrepreneurship, Language Arts, Legal Classes, Medical Billing, Office Skills, and more classes.				
Break 11:00—11:15				
Self Paced Class 11:15-1:15 Staff	Computers 11:15-1:15 L. Rizza	Computers 11:15-1:15 Staff	Intro to PCs 11:15-1:15 C. Illingworth	Computers 11:15-1:15 J. Murphy
Break 1:15-4:15				
Self Paced Class 1:15—4:15 Staff	Self Paced Class 1:15—4:15 Staff	Self Paced Class 1:15—4:15 Staff	Self Paced Class 1:15—4:15 Staff	Computer Class closed @1:15 pm on Friday's

TWO DIRECTIONS COMPUTER LABS ARE OPEN AT ALL TIMES DURING BUSINESS HOURS.
MAKE SURE TO SIGN IN AND OUT TO RECEIVE WORK PARTICIPATION HOURS.

35008 Pala Temecula Road PMB 4 Pala, CA 92059
Phone (760) 749-1196 Fax(760) 749-9152
Email : staff@twodirections.com

OFFICE CLOSURES:

**Monday, December 25, 2023
for Christmas Day.**

DECEMBER 2023 CALENDAR

BG ASSOCIATES INC.
210 S. JUNIPER ST., SUITE 212
ESCONDIDO, CA 92025

PH: (760) 737-0113 MONDAY-FRIDAY
FX: (760) 737-0581 8:30AM-4:00PM
WWW.BGASSOCIATESINC.COM

FOR CLASS INFORMATION, CONTACT KAYLEIGH at
KGUACHENA@BGASSOCIATESINC.COM.

**BG ASSOCIATES INC.
PROVIDES INDIVIDUALIZED
LEARNING TO
ACCOMMODATE THE
SCHEDULE & NEEDS OF
PARTICIPANTS.**

**CLASSES & TIMES ARE
SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>IN PERSON CLASSES</p> <p>*OPEN LAB / JOB SEARCH / APPLIED SKILLS 8:30AM-4PM (VARIES BY CLIENT)</p> <p>VIRTUAL CLASSES</p> <p>IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL</p> <p>ABE/GED 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>SPANISH 9AM-11AM (available online/app & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>PHILLIP ROY: HEALTH CARE TERMS 9AM-11AM (lessons can be emailed)</p> <p>KEYBOARDING 9AM-12PM (available online & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>APPLIED SKILL PRACTICE (GED) 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>*TUTORING ASSISTANCE (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY) via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p>	<p>IN PERSON CLASSES</p> <p>*OPEN LAB / JOB SEARCH / APPLIED SKILLS 8:30AM-4PM (VARIES BY CLIENT)</p> <p>VIRTUAL CLASSES</p> <p>IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL</p> <p>ABE/GED 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>SPANISH 9AM-11AM (available online/app & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>KEYBOARDING 9AM-12PM (available online & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>SELF-SUFFICIENCY: FINANCIAL FREEDOM 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>*TUTORING ASSISTANCE (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY) via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p>	<p>IN PERSON CLASSES</p> <p>*OPEN LAB / JOB SEARCH / APPLIED SKILLS 8:30AM-4PM (VARIES BY CLIENT)</p> <p>VIRTUAL CLASSES</p> <p>ED2GO.COM/ COURSES IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL</p> <p>LIFE SKILLS: (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting) 9-11AM WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE 11:30AM-1:30PM</p> <p>ABE/GED 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>COMPUTER SKILLS (GENERAL) 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>KEYBOARDING 9AM-12PM (available online & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>*TUTORING ASSISTANCE (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY) via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p>	<p>IN PERSON CLASSES</p> <p>*OPEN LAB / JOB SEARCH / APPLIED SKILLS 8:30AM-4PM (VARIES BY CLIENT)</p> <p>VIRTUAL CLASSES</p> <p>IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL</p> <p>ABE/GED 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>COMPUTER SKILLS (GENERAL) 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>SPANISH 9AM-11AM (available online/app & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>APPLIED SKILL PRACTICE (GED) 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>MATH/ENGLISH REFRESHER 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>*TUTORING ASSISTANCE (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY) via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p>	<p>IN PERSON CLASSES</p> <p>*OPEN LAB / JOB SEARCH / APPLIED SKILLS 8:30AM-4PM (VARIES BY CLIENT)</p> <p>VIRTUAL CLASSES</p> <p>ED2GO.COM/ COURSES IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL</p> <p>ABE/GED 9AM-11AM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>SPANISH 9AM-11AM (available online/app & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>PHILLIP ROY: WELDING TERMS 9AM-11AM (lessons can be emailed)</p> <p>KEYBOARDING 9AM-12PM (available online & can be tracked by instructor)</p> <p>APPLIED SKILL PRACTICE (GED) 11:30AM-1:30PM (via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p> <p>*TUTORING ASSISTANCE (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY) via Zoom, Google Meet, or other form of virtual face to face meeting)</p>

SCAIR, Inc.
239 E Main St • El Cajon, CA 92020
Monday-Friday • 8:00am-4:30pm
888.21.SCAIR • 619.328.0676
www.SCAIRInc.org



SCAIR
Southern California American Indian Resource Center, Inc.

DECEMBER 2023

**SCAIR Weekly Calendar
Serving the Native American
Community Since 1997**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00am-4:30pm	8:00am-4:30pm	8:00am-4:30pm	8:00am-4:30pm	8:00am-4:30pm
<p>Daily services: Career Training Computer Training Academic Tutorial Cultural Education Emergency Supportive Services Life Skills Training Youth Services</p>	<p>Daily services: Career Training Computer Training Academic Tutorial Cultural Education Emergency Supportive Services Life Skills Training Youth Services</p> <p>Coffee with the Director 12/5 - 10-10:30am</p> <p>Wintertime Trainings 12/5, 12/12 - 10am-2pm</p>	<p>Daily services: Career Training Computer Training Academic Tutorial Cultural Education Emergency Supportive Services Life Skills Training Youth Services</p> <p>Momentum Training 12/15 - YouTube release</p>	<p>Daily services: Career Training Computer Training Academic Tutorial Cultural Education Emergency Supportive Services Life Skills Training Youth Services</p> <p>TUPE at SDAIHC 12/7 - 4:00-5:30 pm</p> <p>TUPE at MLK comm. ctr 12/21 - 6:00-7:00pm</p>	<p>Daily services: Career Training Computer Training Academic Tutorial Cultural Education Emergency Supportive Services Life Skills Training Youth Services</p>

TUPE at Ballard Center
12/5 - 6:00-8:00pm

By appointment only:
Counseling Services
Youth Academic Tutorial Services
County Approved Typing Tests

*After hour tutoring and counseling requests available based on availability of instructors and clinicians

Please visit www.SCAIRInc.org for more information about SCAIR's programs:

- Native Networks Program
- Tribal TANF Program
- American Indian Education Center (AIEC) Program
- Sacred Pipe Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Program
- HOWKA Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Program



Santa Ynez

Santa Ynez – SCTCA TANF • 185 W. Highway 246, Suite 102, Buellton, CA. 93427
 Office Hours Monday - Friday, 8am–4:30pm • Phone: (805) 688-1756 • Fax: (805) 688-6827

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Office Hours: 8AM - 4:30PM	Office Hours: 8AM - 4:30PM	Office Hours: 8AM - 4:30PM	Office Hours: 8AM - 4:30PM	Office Hours: 8AM - 4:30PM
	CAREER DEVELOPMENT 10AM - 1PM*	PARENTING 1PM - 3PM*	CAREER DEVELOPMENT 10AM - 1PM*	
JOB SEARCH**	JOB SEARCH**	JOB SEARCH**	JOB SEARCH**	JOB SEARCH**

* By Appointment Only ** Must be Pre-Approved

Manzanita

Manzanita SCTCA Tribal Training Program • 39 A Crestwood, Boulevard, CA
 Phone: (619) 766-3236

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Culture/ Entrepreneurial Class 9AM–12PM	GED Prep 10AM–1PM	World of Work 9AM–12PM	GED Prep 10AM–1PM	Tutorial 9AM–12PM
Native Arts & Crafts 12:30PM–3:30PM	Computers 10AM–1PM	GED Prep 12:30PM–3:30PM	Computers 10AM–1PM	
	Parenting Class 12:30PM–3:30PM			

Commodity Distribution Schedule December 2023



FOOD DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 2023		
DATE	LOCATION	TIME
DECEMBER 5, TUESDAY	MESA GRANDE SANTA YSABEL	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 7, THURSDAY	CAMPO	10 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 11, MONDAY	SAN PASQUAL	8 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 13, WEDNESDAY	LOS COYOTES LA JOLLA	8:30 AM – 9:30 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 14, THURSDAY	RINCON	8 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 18, MONDAY	PECHANGA PAUMA	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM
DECEMBER 19, TUESDAY	MANZANITA/LA POSTA OLD CAMPO	9:30 AM – 10:45 AM 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM
DECEMBER 20, WEDNESDAY	PALA	9 AM – 11 AM
DECEMBER 21, THURSDAY	VIEJAS BARONA	9 AM – 10 AM 11 AM – 12 PM



Coming in January:

- Best SCTCA TANF Newsletter Pictures of 2023
- Where the Jobs Are in 2024
- Film Review: *Killers of the Flower Moon*