Gala Dinner Celebrates AISC’s 30th Anniversary

by Therese Hickey (Eastern Cherokee)

On November 10, the UCLA American Indian Studies Center celebrated its thirtieth anniversary with a gala dinner at the Double Tree Hotel in Santa Monica. The dinner celebrated thirty years of scholarship and research, and raised money for the Yellowthunder Scholarship Fund. More than 300 people affiliated with the Center attended.

The evening began with a welcome and acknowledgment speech from Duane Champagne, director of the American Indian Studies Center. After the ceremonial blessing, performed by Pala Indian Angelo Lovato, dinner was served and Navajo God’s Eyes were given as awards. Professor Carole Goldberg, professor in UCLA’s School of Law and director of the Joint Degree Program in Law and American Indian Studies, delivered a heartfelt speech upon acceptance of her award. Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians Tribal Chairman Mark Macarro, 1964 Olympic Gold Medalist Billy Mills, the San Manuel Indian Nation, and California Senator Tom Hayden also accepted the prestigious award. Mills, the first American Indian to win the 10,000-meter competition in the Tokyo Olympics, proclaimed the need for further action on the part of Indian youth and continued progressive activity from American Indians. He received a standing ovation.

The evening concluded with the Intertribal Bird Singers, Robert Levi, and dancer Vince Whipple. Among those who attended were filmmaker Valerie Redhorse (Naturally Native); Angie Berhns, director of the University High Springs Foundation; Tongva Tribal Chair Martin Alcala; Hanay Geiogomah; members of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court; Buffy Sainte Marie; and students and alumni from UCLA and UCSB.

AISC Administrative Assistant and Master’s candidate Elton Naswood confirmed that the event was a “definite success.” He added, “The main purpose of the event was to come together as a community and let everyone know that we’re here as a resource so we can enhance our ability to give back to our colleagues, friends, and communities.”
Retention of American Indians Now

by Rovianne Leigh (Western Cherokee)

RAIN (Retention of American Indians Now) would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to all UCLA’s incoming and returning students. We’d like to take this opportunity to tell you about our unique student-initiated and student-run program. Founded by concerned students in 1990, RAIN is the main retention project at UCLA for Native American students. Although we specifically target Native American students because of their historically low representation and retention rates at universities across the nation, RAIN has always served a diverse student body.

RAIN provides a holistic approach to education through culturally specific peer counseling focused not only on academic success, but also on personal and community development. Through one-on-one peer counseling, academic workshops, weekly study halls, exam and resource files, and our mentorship program SUN (Supporting Undergraduate Natives), RAIN offers students an opportunity to enhance their educational experience at UCLA.

The RAIN staff is dedicated to ensuring that our students obtain their degrees from UCLA. We also hope that pathways for continued involvement in the Native American community on and off campus will be identified during the students’ college careers.

You can get more information about RAIN by calling (310) 206-8043, emailing Rovianne Leigh at rleigh@ucla.edu, or stopping by the Student Retention Center, located in 203 Men’s Gym adjacent to Taco Bell. We look forward to serving incoming freshmen, transfer, and continuing UCLA students in any way we can. Good luck in all your endeavors during the 1999–2000 academic year!

AIR Welcome

by Jason Lewis (Choctaw)

American Indian Recruitment (AIR) would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone to the 1999–2000 year at UCLA. AIR is a community outreach project that strives to teach Native youth the importance of higher education. We are excited about this project, and would like to share some of the changes that have occurred in AIR this year as well as the opportunities available for you to become involved in community outreach.

This year’s directors are working hard to redevelop AIR goals and methodology to better fit the needs of potential UCLA students. One big change is the AIR funding source. We feel it is important to be associated with UCLA’s Student Initiated Outreach Committee (SIOC) and are therefore seeking funding through the SIOC. This association is beneficial for AIR’s development because it offers a number of resources through other campus outreach projects.

AIR will be conducting weekly site visits to high schools in the Los Angeles area, including the downtown American Indian Clubhouse. We will be offering services such as tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and academic workshops, and are always looking for more volunteers to help with these services. For more information on getting involved with AIR, please contact Jason Lewis at jbstar@ucla.edu or Robin Bueno at bueno@ucla.edu.
AIGSA Community
by Mandy Broaddus (Nakota/Lakota)

As an American Indian graduate student at UCLA, and as the 1999-2000 president of the American Indian Graduate Student Association (AIGSA), one of the things I find most valuable in the educational environment here is our strong community. Past, returning, and new students have all proven to be invaluable components, and we look forward to continuing in this important tradition.

I would like to welcome back our returning students and extend the warmest of welcomes to the incoming students as together we seek to create a new and more vocal community presence on campus. As we engage in individual academic pursuits, it is essential that we also remember our unique group as we work together to enhance awareness and involvement among ourselves and the student body. AIGSA is here to aid in these processes in any way possible, as well as to provide an open and supportive environment in which ideas and concerns can be shared.

AIGSA will continue its involvement in the American Indian Studies Center Lecture Series, inviting and welcoming speakers to campus. The lectures provide an excellent opportunity for students to engage with outside speakers who are highly knowledgeable in their respective fields. We will also further our involvement with the Graduate Student Association (GSA), affording our community greater exposure and opportunities to participate in various functions. In addition, AIGSA will be participating in the UCLA Powwow and graduation festivities.

AIGSA will continue its role as an important and vocal body in the UCLA community at large. As we participate in all our endeavors and support of one another, let us work toward another active and motivating year. Good luck and best wishes to everyone!

Pinamaya (Thank you).

1999-2000 AIGSA Officers

President
Mandy Broaddus (Nakota/Lakota)

Vice-President
Andrea Veiga-Ermert

Secretary
Rebecca Thorp

Treasurer
Ben Perez

AISA Welcome
by Tiffani Devine (Tule River Yokuts)

He-yuk!

Hello and welcome! On behalf of the American Indian Student Association, I would like to inform everyone about AISA and invite you to join in its activities.

AISA is a student-run organization that actively works towards recruitment and retention of Native American students at UCLA. We offer many opportunities for Native students to be involved with on-campus activities that directly serve our community.

With the end of affirmative action in California, the Native community is facing significant decreases in enrollment in institutions of higher education. As a result, we are suffering due to a lack of representation and therefore must be active in supporting ourselves and future generations to change this downturn. AISA's first priority is to inspire Native American students to become active on campus. We sponsor many activities that allow students to learn from the foremost leaders in our community, including lectures, workshops, panel discussions, outreach, and the annual powwow.

AISA also governs two student-run projects designed specifically for Native American retention and recruitment, the Retention of American Indians Now (RAIN) and the American Indian Recruitment project (AIR). In addition to retaining ourselves, we must always give back to the community; it is the Indian Way!

If you have any inquiries about AISA or its activities, please feel free to contact me by email at tdevine@ucla.edu or at the AISA office, 310-206-7513.

Y'etra nim yokuts.

1999-2000 AISA Officers

President
Tiffani Devine (Yokuts)

Vice-President
Robin Bueno (Oglala/Lakota)

Secretary/Treasurer
Jason Lewis (Choctaw)

2000 Powwow Director
Lorinda Mall (Western Cherokee)
Harvard Medical School’s Four Directions Summer Research Program

by Sahar Nouri (Turtle Mountain Chippewa)

This summer I had the precious opportunity to participate in the Four Directions Summer Research Program at Harvard Medical School. This program is designed to give biomedical exposure to Native American students interested in pursuing a career in the field. Here, I was able to receive excellent laboratory experience, attend seminars, shadow physicians, and get involved in various exciting activities.

I worked in an immunology lab where I mastered techniques of ELISA (Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay) as well as skin grafts. I was given my own research project, which I worked on forty hours per week. I was required to write an abstract and present my data at the end of the summer. In addition, the students and I had the opportunity to shadow a variety of physicians, ranging from internal medicine to pathology to surgery. For instance, I shadowed an emergency physician as well as observed a thoracic surgery. We also were able to meet many highly esteemed people who gave us valuable advice on medical school admissions. We were involved in numerous exciting activities such as traveling to powwows, spending July 4 at the Esplanade, fishing at Cape Cod, and taking a weekend trip to Montreal. All of the students felt a sense of togetherness as we had weekly communal dinners followed by volleyball. Finally, the students and I were able to attend the Association of American Indian Physicians Pre-Admissions Workshop.

An AISES Summer in D.C.

by Eric Jojola (Isleta Pueblo)

The day after I graduated from San Bernardino Valley College I boarded a plane bound for Washington D.C. Two weeks before, a phone call woke me to say that the application I had sent in several months prior to AISES, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, had been passed on to the Federal Aviation Administration, and that they wanted to take me on for the summer. Would I be willing to fly out to D.C. to work a ten-week paid internship? “Yes,” I said, not knowing exactly what I was getting into.

I arrived in Ronald Reagan National Airport Saturday morning, January 5. I was met by an AISES representative and led to a group of Native students standing around a pile of luggage, waiting for a bus to take us to American University.

Located in Tenely Town, D.C.’s consular district, AU became our home for the summer. Approximately sixteen AISES interns occupied the fifth floor of Lett’s Hall, along with a larger number of Native students there through WINs, another program. All the students came from various backgrounds and parts of the country, and were each placed at federal agencies best matching their educational or professional interests. AISES generally placed its interns at the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Commerce, or the Federal Aviation Agency. A sense of camaraderie was quickly established as we got to know each other through hastily organized excursions into the city, and we gradually learned to live and work together as a community.

I was placed in the Air Traffic and Airspace Management office of the FAA headquarters. I had no idea how an English major happened to be placed in an office full of aerospace scientists, engineers, and former air-traffic controllers, but I resolved to make myself useful and learn as much as I could. I learned about their project to reduce air traffic noise over the Grand Canyon in consultation with several local Native tribes. I read and collated the complaints of more than 400 letters written by angry Americans to protest the Colorado Airspace Initiative. I briefed management, created an address database, and wrote a general response letter which was mailed out under the signature of Bill Marx, the FAA’s manager of Environmental Programs.
Four Directions continued

where we met many Indian doctors who shared their experiences and gave us important helpful advice on medical school admissions.

The Four Directions Summer Research Program made a huge impact on my life. I was able to get hands-on experience in the laboratory setting as well as observe the physicians in a hospital setting. I met many wonderful people who gave me important advice on medical school. Finally, I spent the summer in the exciting city of Boston where I made many special friendships. I encourage anyone interested in pursuing a medical career to apply for this highly beneficial opportunity.

AJSES in D.C. continued

Along with my fellow AISES and WINS interns, I attended a congressional hearing on the creation of the American Indian Educational Foundation, a federal organization designed to solicit and accept private funds for Native American K-12 schools. The CIA received us for a recruiting tour of their headquarters at Langley. We spent weekends exploring Virginia Beach and New York City, and we watched Fourth of July fireworks from Capitol Hill.

I left D.C. with many good memories and fondness in my heart for the people I met there. I had never interacted with other Natives outside of my own family before, and through the internship I discovered a sense of community I previously never knew existed. I have much gratitude for AISES for providing me with such a great experience.

The Cabazon Band of Mission Indians Visits UCLA

by Jason Lewis (Choctaw)

The Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, located in Indio, California, has grown in less than twenty years from a tribe supporting itself by selling cigarettes out of a single-wide trailer to a tribe sustaining a casino, a bowling center, a bio-mass burning center, and a tire recycling center. This amazing growth is only furthered by the leadership that the Cabazon Band exemplifies. They are on the forefront of tribal sovereignty issues and have made courageous efforts politically to maintain Native representation on a statewide and national scale. In October, leaders from the Cabazon Band visited UCLA to share the success of their efforts and to begin a relationship with the American Indian Studies Center. They talked about their history and discussed the projects that they are currently working on. Their progress is amazing, and it was inspiring.

The Cabazon band is currently representing two major political projects, the first of which is the Salton Sea Restoration Project. The Salton Sea is the largest body of water in California. It was accidentally created by man in 1909 and soon became a key water source in the flyway of migratory birds. It is now posing dangerous environmental threats because of unsafe runoff. The Cabazons are working intensively with the federal and state governments to instill the restoration necessary to save the sea. The other project that the Cabazons are strongly advocating is the nationwide repatriation project. They are a local voice trying to enforce the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) throughout the nation. We expect them to appear at UCLA's Fowler Museum soon.

The Cabazons have a couple of major projects in the works on their own reservation. They have a small library with plans for expansion, and are planning to build a museum that would tell the story of the Cabazon Band and the Mission Indians. The museum will have three major focuses: first, to tell their traditional creation and migration stories; second, to serve as a business resource to other Natives by highlighting the success of their own socioeconomic development; and third, to serve as a memorial for the genocide that occurred. This third focus will represent the real numbers of North and South American genocide and will surely bring controversy, which is their intention.

In the future the Cabazons hope to further their relations with UCLA, possibly through internships and scholarships. They expressed great interest in having students participate in tours of their reservation and facilities as well as learn more about the Salton Sea Restoration Project. They also hosted a powwow November 26-28. If anyone would like further information regarding their projects or tribal history, the Cabazons have left informative videos for viewing at the American Indian Studies Center Library.
Indigenous Organizing for the New Millennium

by Rovianne Leigh (Western Cherokee)

On Saturday, October 30, the University of California and Occidental College co-hosted the Council of Indigenous Nations and Organizations of the Continent’s (CONIC) conference titled “First Nations in the New World Order: Indigenous Organizing for the New Millennium.” CONIC is one of many Native groups that have come together across the hemisphere to confront the challenges communities will be facing in the next century. Since its founding in 1990, CONIC has worked to protect human rights, promote sustainable development, demarcate traditional lands, and strengthen new democratic units through the transnational mobilization of indigenous groups of the Americas.

Topics discussed at the conference included cultural revitalization, political mobilization, autonomy and democratization, ethnodevelopment, land and the environment, and human rights. The goal of the conference was to promote the exchange of ideas and information among Native peoples, activists, students, teachers, and members of many diverse communities throughout the world.

The conference began with a blessing. More than 100 people gathered outside on Kerckhoff patio, many holding sacred prayer sticks, while Martin Alcala (Gabrielino/Tongva) blessed the conference and gave everyone in the circle an opportunity to cleanse themselves with sage. Duane Champagne, director of the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA, delivered the opening remarks. “The challenge for Native peoples is to become entrepreneurial,” Champagne said. “The challenge is to create capitalism with a heart and with respect,” he added. “We need to build our own economic organization while still honoring the environment, our traditions, and our ancestors.”

Panels throughout the day included speakers from Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Alaska, and Canada. One of the main issues raised was land ownership. Today, many of the worlds’ resources are located on indigenous lands.

“Before colonization, land was owned by the community,” Manuel Castro said, a panelist for the Confederation of Indigenous Nations in Ecuador. “After colonization it was converted to ownership and the indigenous peoples were slaves and workers,” he added. “This system still exists today, not totally, but it still exists.”

Self-determination, self-government, and sustainable economic growth were also cited as extremely important goals for all Native peoples as we move into the twenty-first century. To further this end, CONIC confirmed the convocation of the First International Indigenous Summit, which will be held in Mexico in the year 2000.
Celebration of Two-Spirit People

by Naseem Rafi

National Coming-out Week on campus is a time to recognize and highlight the different sexual preferences of the many people who make up the UCLA community. This includes all the diverse cultures that paint the face of the university, which have been long overlooked and thoroughly unacknowledged in such matters. In conjunction with Coming-out Week at UCLA, the American Indian Student Association (AISA) and MEChA held the Two-spirit Lecture on Monday, October 18. The Two-spirit Lecture included a film and a panel of speakers who discussed the concept of sexuality and gender as it pertains to the indigenous peoples of North America.

The conference began by showing the film *Two-spirited People*, a documentary describing the concept of a two-spirited person or a “berdache,” the term for an androgynous person who is classified as neither man nor woman. The film displayed the significance of berdaches’ roles in the tribes, as they are considered to be chosen by the Creator as special beings who take on both gender roles.

The panel included Elton Naswood, administrative assistant at UCLA’s American Indian Studies Center; Lester Brown, a professor at Cal State Long Beach; Keeli Tebeau, an undergraduate student at UCLA; and Michael White Bear Claws, from the Medicine Wheel Circle. After the film, the panel discussed the film and shared their personal experiences and backgrounds in relation to what it means to be a two-spirited person. Keeli Tebeau described her struggles and achievements as a two-spirited Native American woman growing up in the greater Los Angeles area, while Elton Naswood recounted a conversation he had with his aunt, years earlier, in which she conveyed to him her support for his role as a two-spirited individual on the reservation. Lester Brown spoke about the book he authored entitled *Two Spirit People*.

Despite the wide range of experiences, as each of the panel members spoke, the positive connotation of a two-spirited being was reinforced, with the embracing of both gender roles looked upon as a strength, not a weakness. Michael White Bear Claws best summarized the comprehensive view on the subject when he said, “Sex does not fill a tradition.” On the contrary, most indigenous tribes view sexual orientation as a component of an individual’s role within the tribe, and not as the defining aspect of the individual’s being. As made clear by the panel’s discussion, among the People, berdaches are not in any way estranged for their uniqueness, but rather celebrated for their capacity to embrace two spirits.

The discussion of the panel did away with the mainstream taboos usually attached to such issues of sexuality and gender, and made clear the meaning of being two-spirited as defined by the indigenous tribes. The Two-spirit Lecture provided an opportunity for indigenous peoples to speak of an issue that has often been otherwise disregarded, and in doing so, celebrated what it means to be a two-spirited individual. The lecture appropriately came to a close with the offering of a prayer by Michael White Bear Claws, whose tranquil voice offered words of harmony for all races, sexes, and genders.


Professor Lester B. Brown, California State University Long Beach.
Perception
by Rebecca Thorp

Growing breathing waiting to be extracted
A piece of you that
Rivets who you are

A mass a growth a disease
They rape from my insanity
A piece of me

Language stories tradition
Perplexed by your complexity
They took it all from you

Rape torture fumigate
My world has begun to self-destruct
My body is about to erupt

Taken from my breast
Removal at their request
A disease that may infest

Extraction conformity
America adamantly states
Your difference is your disease

United Christianized Stupefied
Removal fills their ease
A knife the numbness stitches to heal the wound

A part of me
Now on display
For science to consume

Self assassination
Self mutilation
Billboards of Angeline

Blood-stained pillow
Life is real now
Hitler has revealed his sorcery

Commodification
Simulation
What is real now

Scars greet my child
Real and painful
Yet a part of me still remains
To speak against the pain

Stripped of life
To know the free
Alienated from her misery

She takes it back
Her laugh life
Language History

To reveal her presence
She bears the scars
Of extraction
Of extinction

We show the scars
Our battle wounds
Of what it is to be
A woman

 настоящее
Un-Knowing/Derstanding

by Crystal Roberts (Sioux)

The wind whispers
Through my ears...

And it speaks.

It speaks of untold voices heard long ago.

Voices thought to be forgotten
Thought to have vanished...

By uncolored hands.

Hand that misunderstood...

A people connected to the soul of the Earth.

Hands that took away...

One people's,
All the people's...

Very soul.

Now.

The people must speak.

Must teach.

To those who have...

The hands who misunderstood.
The hands who took away...

A people still searching for their soul.

The Creation Story of Kawaigame or Lake People
(Laguna Pueblo, Central New Mexico)

by Debra Haaland (Laguna Pueblo)

Every year during Holy or Easter week, some men of the Pueblo, including our tribal officials, gather in the council chambers and recount the creation story and the way in which the people came to be at Kawaike. Women are not allowed in the meetings at this time, so we have relied on information given to us by the privileged men of Laguna Pueblo.

All the Indians lived as one, in the North, in an underground place called Ship'op. The Mother deity created the Indian people, the game animals, and the universe. Their father was the creator of the non-Indians and domesticated animals and helped create the universe. Ship'op was a place where the people were well provided for by the Mother and her spirits. The ground was fertile and gave forth a wealth of sustainable food. One day the Indians were told it was time to leave Ship'op and travel south.

They obeyed. Yet along the way, they had forgotten to pray and work for the Creator, taking their gifts as rights and not blessings.

Their world soon became difficult. They suffered famine and drought. When all was almost lost, the people sent word with Hummingbird to ask for direction from Earth Mother. She sent word for the people to work, pray, make prayer sticks, and sing. They heeded her advice. Soon the rain fell, the seeds sprouted, they were once again contented, and their journey resumed.

The people eventually came to a cliff. As they passed their belongings down the cliff, they said, "hah-we-nu guisti," which means "hand it down to me." This passage became the Laguna village called Guisti or Paguate.

The Lagunas, at first, traveled too far south. As the religious leaders conversed, a dispute arose. Eventually, the people split into two groups. One group turned and went back toward the North. The other group continued south to a place called goo-wa-wu-me, which the Lagunas now believe to be Guatemala.

The religious leaders, instructed by the Mother, said they would know their final destination when they came to a place where the paths cross. During this time, the Father had not decided on the direction of the rotation of the earth, and this place is where the sun had marked a cross, near a lake or Kawaike.

The Laguna people settled and prospered. The mother village of Laguna was home to all Kawaigame for many years until agriculture began the formation of other villages around the mother village. Today Kawaike has six villages.
Each year the American Indian Student Association holds an annual powwow, which includes arts and crafts booths as well as food booths. Everyone is welcome to come watch the events and at certain times to participate as well.

This year the theme for the fifteenth annual UCLA Powwow is "Approaching a New Dawn." It will be held all day Saturday and Sunday, May 6-7, at the North Athletic Soccer Field on the UCLA campus. The UCLA Powwow is one of the largest student-run events on campus and thus takes an entire year to plan. The rewards of this labor of love are unforgettable memories, togetherness, special insights, and new friends that will last a lifetime.

If you are interested in working on this event, please contact Lorinda Mall at (310) 206-7513!