the Native Bruin

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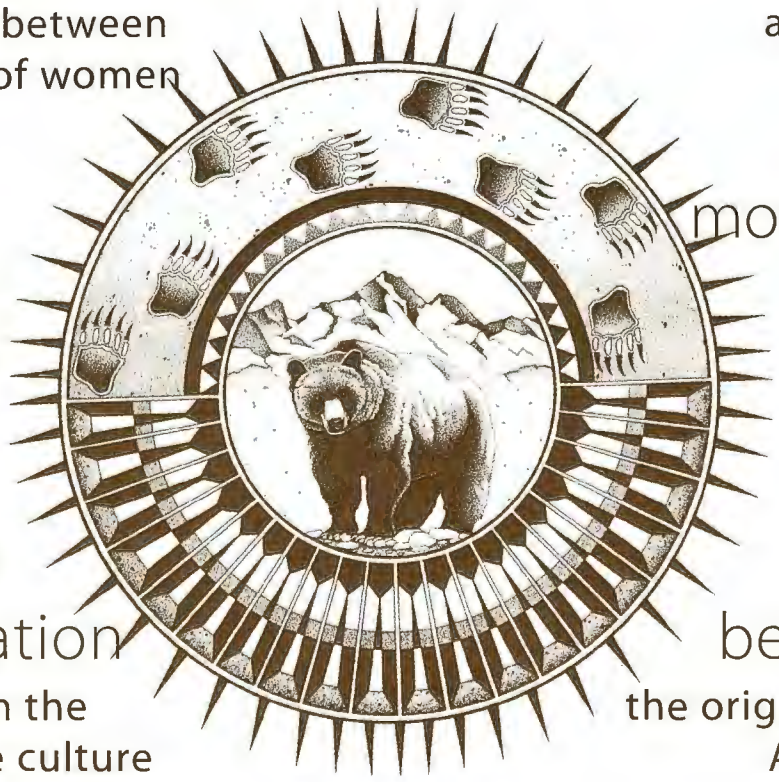

WInD woven circles

by julie garchow and bindi shukla

On Tuesday, November 7, Women of Indian Descent hosted a basket-weaving workshop in Campbell Hall. Betty Pulskamp, mother of WInD member Nora Pulskamp, instructed the workshop. Approximately fifteen women attended including members of AISA and MEChA. WInD planned this workshop in honor of Native American Heritage Month. Although basket weaving was initially difficult, all participants caught on quickly.

In order to make the baskets, the wood was soaked in tubs of water until flexible enough for weaving. Starting the basket seemed most difficult for everyone as they learned how to weave the pliable wood. The room filled with conversation while students worked on their baskets.

Whether the women were talking about different cultural traditions or how to move on to the next step in the weaving, there was a great deal of cooperation and warmth. Basically, the weaving consisted of creating a base, weaving small pieces of wood in a series of distinct patterns, and finalizing the project with a unique binding of all the intricate pieces of wood. Many women used different colors of wood such as a dark brown and a bright red. Each design reflected the creativity of the individual weaver. The concern for most women was getting the basket to actually look like a basket. For some, it was a simple task; however, many struggled to constantly soak and bend the pieces of wood. This stress was put aside once the final product was completed. Despite the variety in shape or color, everyone was satisfied with their work. It was a great learning experience, allowing women at UCLA to engage in the tradition of basket weaving and women time.

wakeup

poem by calvin b. hedrick

Wake up Indian
you're 15 minutes late
you missed the bus
That bus doesn't run on Ind'n time.
pick up your bottle
and get going.

You know your cousin was on that bus
The alcohol took him
swallowed him up, and off he went
you can't save him now, he's gone.

Wake up

The last dancer in your tribe was on that bus
he's gone too. You're late,
your chance to learn those dances is gone.

and the last speaker of your language,
she was on that bus too
she's gone for good.
you missed her, you're too late.

Wake up
Your grandmother was on that bus
She had stories for you
and you missed them, now they're gone.
Your children will never hear them.

Wake up
The last songs of your people were being sung on that bus
but you were sleeping
you were procrastinating
you were running on Indian time
15 minutes too late
Now they're gone.

Wake up

All the baskets were on that bus, all the regalia.
You missed it
it's gone, no one will make them again.

The Eagle, the Hawk and the Bear were on that bus
The rivers couldn't wait for you, the pollution took them and all the forests are gone, destroyed.
The last ones, they're all gone.

and here you are
5 minutes late, procrastinating away your culture
10 minutes late losing your traditions
15 minutes too late to catch the bus and save your people.

Wake up.

There is still time.
15 minutes? You can catch it.
You have to run.
Wake up Indian
pick up your feathers
and get busy, we've got work to do
run and catch that bus.

Catch the songs and sing them,
catch the dances and dance them,
catch the regalia and bring it to life.
Find your grandmother on the bus and listen to her stories

Wake up

Save and protect the Eagle, and the Hawk,
Find the Bear and set him free.
Stop polluting the waters and stop the destruction of the forests
Bring the baskets home!

Pick up your cousin and break his bottle,
help him walk away.
Find out where you come from
So your children will know.

It's all on that bus, you can save it
but you have to wake up!

you have to be on time
look at the clock, think of your future
think of your children and
Wake up Red people, we've got work to do!

The Oral Tradition

by jason lewis

You have noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. The Wind, in its greatest power whirls, Birds make their nests in circles…the sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood and so it is in everything where power moves.
–Hehaka Sapa (Black Elk), Oglala (Teton) Dakota Elder

I had a terrible realization about my own understanding of Native culture recently. A woman called the American Indian Student Association to ask if a representative from UCLA could do a presentation in her classroom about American Indians. She said that she wanted to make the lesson about American Indians more appealing to the students instead of just reading to them from the book. She also mentioned that she felt unqualified to speak. My first response was how few of us are connected enough to our Native cultures and traditions to do a performance of any sort or speak emphatically about the history of American Indian culture. My second response was to refer her to someplace I knew would be able to offer her the resources she was looking for. And then I realized how readily I passed this opportunity on to somebody else, and that I really can't represent my own Native culture. I sat with that thought for a while but not long enough to really do anything about it. Then almost ironically, a similar situation occurred. A friend of mine who also teaches young students asked me if I would be willing to do a presentation. She asked with the same intentions that the other woman did and I was really struck. I thought, of course she would ask me to do a presentation, I always talk about being active in the American Indian community. This time, my response was different. I decided I no longer wanted to feel guilty about not being able to present my Native culture.

Always introducing yourself is a lesson I have learned from other Native people. I am Choctaw from Oklahoma, on my father's side. I did not grow up with that background and have never performed Native arts. I don't have any artifacts or regalia, and I certainly don't know any songs or stories related to my Choctaw heritage.

I have recently learned that, when Native people represent American Indian culture, they should portray and take pride in the diversity of *their own tribe's* people. This opportunity, of presenting in a class, clearly presented itself as the one I needed to research information and artifacts in order to represent Choctaw culture. With that in mind I began my search.

Reading led me to recognize a telling disrespect that I was demonstrating for the Choctaw and for myself. Chiefly, I realized that I was trying to find artifacts that I myself knew nothing about and then I was going to attempt to characterize them without making any connection with the actual people whose culture they come from. I was not, however, accepting the life that I have lived as an American Indian as representative of Native culture. My life is one outside of strong Native traditions, which happens to be where a *majority* of American Indians settle temporarily.

The questions I am about to ask all bear the origin of my sarcasm. How many people with only a small portion of Indian blood, maybe even less than 1/64, disassociate themselves because they envision American Indians as a past culture living in teepees, wearing feather headdresses, and shooting with bows and arrows? Or see the culture as something from their long gone past that they believe is no longer a part of them? Or they don't want to care because they are educated enough to know the high incidences of poverty and alcoholism within American Indian cultures? How many people who are half- or full-blooded Indian disassociate themselves because of the same misrepresentations?

The answers to all of these questions are not as important as the truths they tell. The truth is that even now we are still taught to assimilate to mainstream culture and accept history as written by Anglo historians, or…live in poverty. That is what I learned from my teachers, my history classes, and my half-blood Choctaw father. The simple fact that the educators who confronted me were asking for artifacts to make the presentations more interesting is very harmful. It tells young American Indians that their current cultural status as American Indians is irrelevant and unimportant, especially in urban areas where there are very few positive American Indian role models. Furthermore it tells the students that unless they look like or do the same things as the stereotypical Indian figure, they are not Indian. Is it not obvious why the rich traditions and languages of this land's indigenous cultures are fading away?

The real truth is that education is not always helpful. However, I do not blame today's teachers entirely for being unaware of how to represent American Indian culture. It is the way all of us have been educated. It is not helpful but it is happening. The real question, now that we've placed blame, is who is responsible for making change? The only answer is ourselves.

The only Indians that are not to blame for being disconnected are the youth that are still stuck in an education system without strong role models to promote their own cultures. The strong role models need to be us. If you are reading this you are capable of contributing to the needs of your culture by learning about it the right way, and sharing the stories (knowledge) with youth. That is the traditional way, the right way, the Indian way.

montezuma's Revenge

by ryan trammel

People should remember that an honor isn't born when it parts the honorer's lips, it is born when it is accepted in the honoree's ear.
–Glenn T. Morris, Colorado AIM

In the 1920s, San Diego State University established a sports program, but had no mascot to represent it. The school officials and student leaders thought long and hard for a name until they finally came up with one. It was a name that was meant to invoke fear in opponents from other schools. It was the "perfect" name: AZTECS! The students loved it so much they wrote to the school newspaper that it was ideal because "the Aztecs were semi-civilized, cannibalistic savages" who "reaped fear into other civilizations." They were "conquerors," and with a name like Aztec, they could dominate and "conquer" their opponents. From that point on SDSU was known as the Aztecs, and their mascot's name was Monty Montezuma (named after Moctezuma).

At the time, the faculty, staff, and students were overwhelmingly Anglo. No one bothered to ask the "semi-civilized savages" from the depths of Mexico if they would "be honored" by being made a mascot. It didn't matter anyway; the Spaniards "mercifully" put the Mexika (Aztecs) "out of their misery" and the ones who had the great fortune of living were "civilized" through forced conversions to Catholicism and put to work for slave wages (if they were lucky enough to get paid), with little or no human rights.

Let's fast-forward almost 80 years later to San Diego State University. A group of students from the Native American Student Alliance (NASA) brought forward a resolution to the university AS (Associated Students) board demanding that the use of the Aztec mascot be done away with by the end of the 2000–2001 academic year. Discussion ensues, and at the end of that discussion a vote of 21-8, with one abstention, for the removal was passed.

Many students were not happy with the decision to remove the mascot. A group of students were so unhappy that they started a "Save Monty" campaign on campus. They argued, "why should a bunch of sniveling minorities take away Monty Montezuma from us!" "Don't they see, by having the Aztec as a mascot, we are doing honor to those great people." It is ironic how a group of people can elevate "semi-civilized savages" whose "ritual sacrifices of virgins" and "cannibalism" invoked fear in their "enemies" to a people who are considered "great."

NASA approached the prominent reservations in the San Diego area and received no support. Sadly, many of our Native sisters and brothers feel that it is a Mexican issue; this could not be farther from the truth. If we continue to believe that these imposed borders are the dividing line between us, then the European master plan of divide and conquer is truly coming to fruition. Let us not forget that we were all living together on one land before the European invaders came.

Perhaps the most bitter irony of this whole situation is that this issue has pitted Xikano against Xikano. There are Xikano sisters and brothers on both sides of the issue. Friendships have been strained, communication has been lost, and we are now more fragmented than before.

If one is to look at how Monty Montezuma is depicted, s/he will see blatant stereotypes. First of all, the skin color is a bright red. I understand that we are the red people, but we were not that red. As a matter of fact, the color is brighter than a red crayon. Another problem is that the depiction has a ferocious snarl. It only reinforces the stereotype that the Mexika were "ferocious" and prone to violence. Are we to assume that our ancestors walked around with a ferocious snarl all day? If anything, that snarl was showing our reaction when the European invaders came.

Perhaps the root of this whole issue is respect. We as Xikano/Indigenous people have not been respected since the invasion 508 years ago. We cannot mistake token honors and half-hearted apologies as forms of respect. We are not honored to be a mascot. We do not feel respected in today's society, and we will continue to struggle and fight until we are respected.

The Academic Senate met and passed a resolution to modify the mascot so all the offensive aspects could be removed, and to recommend that more education about the Mexika be offered so the students and faculty of San Diego State understand who they were and what they were about.

Although all these things transpired, the ultimate decision about the mascot issue rests on the shoulder of President Steven Weber. He is expected to make his decision on Thursday, November 16th. Most likely he will follow his heart and go with the money and preserve the mascot, but the fight is not over. If anything the fight has just begun at SDSU. This issue cannot and will not die because we owe it to our ancestors and our people who are alive today. We owe it to our native indigenous people all over Ixachitlan to continue the fight because our collective well-being depends on it. Mexika Tiahui!*

*see editor's note on next page

sacrifices for Education

by calvin b. hedrick

It is raining today in Los Angeles. It doesn't rain much here, but when it does you notice how it cleans layers of unhappiness from the disfigured face of this once beautiful land. I am here for an impressive degree. I sit and think about the 40 percent of myself that I had to leave behind to come here. When Indian people leave home to go to school they leave behind part of their life and begin to live in two worlds.

My people are from Northern California. To ensure the survival of my people, I am educated in the ways of my oppressor. To survive we must learn the rules of their game. We go to law schools to make and change laws, we become doctors to ensure the health of our people, we become teachers so our children will learn the truth, a truth we were not given.

When I went to grade school I knew that I was Indian but I didn't know what that meant. I only knew that to John Wayne I was a "bloodthirsty savage." I did know one very important thing: I knew my grandmothers and grandfathers gave me the blood that makes me Maidu. I now know that the stories I listened to for hours at my grandmother's kitchen table provide an education that I could never learn at a university. This is the way we learn, from the stories of our people; that is the way my grandmother was taught before she went to Stewart Indian School, a boarding school in Carson City, Nevada. She was made to forget more at that school than she learned; she lost her culture, she lost her language. And I am forced to seek out my culture instead of learning it from birth. I have seen changes in children when they are given some of their culture, when they learn to dance or sing, when they are taught the stories of their people. When they find their culture they are proud of who they are and they are more likely to find success. When we find our traditions we know that we are more than just citizens, social security numbers, students, and employees.

I am a student at UCLA, and it is hard being away from a place and a people I want so desperately to be close to. I was told by a family member recently that few of our people get the chance to come to a university like this, so I should remember that and succeed. Education is one of the most important things in my life because I know that I will learn the things that I need to know to lead my people in to the future. I respect these people who are giving me this knowledge. But the most important thing I have ever learned I did not get at school: I learned who I am.

It is still raining, still cleansing this place, still opening holes in the sky. Inside I am still Maidu. It is said that you can't stop the rain. Indian people are like the rain: you cannot stop us. We will survive and strive for success. We will become educated, we will learn the rules of their games, and most importantly we will keep our culture alive.

editor's note

by Ralph DeUnamuno

In November 2000 SDSU President Stephen L. Weber announced that the Aztec and "Monty" would remain as the official mascot of the University. The student community at SDSU continues to be divided on the issues of "Monty" and the "honorable" representation of Indigenous peoples in sports and media. On campus the Native American Student Association (NASA), Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan (MEChA), and other student of color student advocacy groups continue to struggle against White and Latino Greek letter organizations that make up the bulk of the "Save Monty" student faction on campus. In April 2001, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights called for the end of the use of Indian names and mascots by non-Indian schools, colleges, and universities. The commission further stated that the use of Indian names and mascots might violate anti-discrimination laws.

After pressure from local Southern California Indian nations, Native American and Chicana/o community organizations, student groups, and the statement by the Civil Rights Commissions, President Weber rearticulated his November decision on the mascot issues. On May 15, 2001 Weber issued an open letter stating that SDSU will no longer use the Aztec or "Monty" as a mascot. "Monty" will now be institutionally recognized as Montezuma and he will be the University "Ambassador" of higher education and Aztec history and culture.

The situation remains the same at SDSU—just reworded and conflated. My question to President Weber, SDSU students and alumni, and all others who see no "harm" in a Native American mascot is: among a group of Lions, Tigers, Bears, and Indians, which one does not fit? WE ARE MORE THAN A MASCOT!

hawaiian rice

by natasha saelua

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs plays a central role in defining and pursuing Hawaiian self-determination. It was created in 1978 to help improve the lives of Hawaiians. OHA is funded mainly by revenues from ceded lands and taxpayer money. OHA targets general awareness of issues relevant to the Hawaiian people including federal obligations related to land use, Native rights, cultural practices and sovereignty. The case *Rice v. Cayetano* was brought by Harold Rice. It was challenged by the state of Hawaii's process of electing OHA trustees.

In 1980, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was voted into existence. Rice asserted that this procedure violates the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments which establish "one-person, one-vote." Federal District Court Judge David Ezra ruled against Rice, stating "while Native Hawaiians are not now a federally recognized tribe, they nevertheless have a special relationship that removes the question of voter eligibility in a special election from heightened constitutional scrutiny." Judge Ezra's decision was upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which found OHA's voting restrictions "not primarily racial, but legal and political." The case was taken up and argued in October 1999, and the final decision was handed down earlier this year.

The importance of *Rice v. Cayetano* will not be in the overturning of a state procedure, but in the battles that follow. There still must be found constitutionally permissible ways for the United States and Hawaii to provide assistance to Native Hawaiians. There are four alternatives available to these entities:

1) to recognize Hawaiians as an Indian tribe or as the tribe's constitutional equivalent;
2) to invoke the special programs for Alaska Natives as proof that Congress can act on behalf of Natives;
3) to discover in the Constitution grounds for special treatment of indigenous people;
4) or to invoke constitutionally permissible affirmative action.

In the long run, the Supreme Court's ruling can and will extend to other areas in Hawaiian social life, and the distinction of Native Hawaiians—the group of people who lived on those islands before the arrival of other groups—must be maintained. The United States must also be held accountable, in truth as in words, to the crimes committed against the Hawaiian people, and steps toward this end have been established by the Apology Bill of 1993. However, this decision will stem the movement toward Hawaiian sovereignty because of the way the Court applied the strictest scrutiny to the case.

in the beginning... Ani'-Yun'-Wiya

by crystal robert

This is the story of the first Cherokee man and woman, Kana'ti and Selu. Kana'ti and Selu had one son who was mischievous, but who followed the wishes of his parents. He was a lonely child and often longed for a brother or sister to play games with. One day, while Selu was at the river washing game that Kana'ti had recently brought home, a mysterious boy arose from the river laughing and ran off into the forest. Kana'ti captured the mysterious boy and they named him Wild Boy. Kana'ti and Selu raised the boy as their own and tried to tame Wild Boy, but their efforts failed and he remained mischievous.

One day the two boys followed Kana'ti to the mountains, where he went hunting for turkey and deer. Their father never failed to bring home enough game to feed the family, so the boys' curiosity made them want to know how their father was able to do this. Kana'ti went through some brush, cut through a thicket and climbed a mountainside where he reached an enormous rock which was showered by a ray of sunshine. He lifted the rock and a deer ran out. Kana'ti shot the animal quickly while the boys secretly looked on with amazement at their father's skill.

A few days later, the boys went back to the rock and lifted it, trying to imitate their father. Unfortunately, the boys were not quick enough and before they could kill the first deer, another one came out right after it. The boys were frightened and ran off before they could replace the rock. When Kana'ti returned to the rock, all he found was a jar of bugs that the boys had left behind. To punish the boys for their mischief, Kana'ti released the bugs onto the boys and told them that because of their bad behavior the family would sometimes have to go without food and would have to look for game all over the woods from then on.

Selu always brought the family corn and beans from a storehouse near their home. The boys spied on their mother one day and learned how she was able to bring the vegetables to the family every day. She stood in front of a basket and rubbed her stomach around in a circle while asking the spirits to bless her family. Suddenly corn appeared in the basket and as she touched under her arms, beans filled the basket also. The boys thought she was a witch and they plotted to kill her. Selu dreamt that her children wanted to kill her and the spirits told her that she must tell them that she knew of their intentions. Before she died, she told the boys to clear the lands and drag her body around the ground seven times. They were also supposed to stay awake for two days, and when they awoke from their sleep on the third day, there would be plenty of corn for them. The boys were lazy, and only dragged Selu's body around the ground twice and then they went to sleep. Because of the boys' laziness, the Cherokee people now have to plant corn on their own, and even then, it will only grow in certain places.

indian health care in los angeles

text by nancy reifel

Eight years before I came to California, I was a dentist for the Indian Health Service clinics in South Dakota. In that part of the country all the Indian clinics are managed by the federal government. We were all government employees and followed government procedures and policies. When I came to Los Angeles I found a very different system.

Indian clinics in California are managed by a tribal or Indian organization. You can find two Indian health care programs in the urban Los Angeles area. Each of these projects is meeting the challenge of improving health care for our widely dispersed and multitribal community in different ways.

The American Indian Health Project has its main office on Temple Street in Los Angeles. Four years ago, in the fall of 1996, United American Indian Involvement started this project with public health nurses. The nurses were charged with helping American Indian families find good health care at nearby clinics. The Project has grown substantially since then. Now you can find many special programs at the American Indian Health Project: diabetes education, child welfare, parenting, and youth after-school programs. There is a comprehensive multidisciplinary mental health and substance abuse program. Public health nurses are still assisting American Indian families throughout Los Angeles County from Lancaster to Long Beach.

The Southern California Indian Center has an office in Commerce and in Garden Grove. The organization has been active for many years in political action to improve the welfare of American Indian children. In 1998, the Mobile Wellness Van began operating out of the Commerce office. For the first year the van offered screening, physical examinations and health education. Today the program does primary medical care. The Van is open two days a week at the Commerce office, one day a month in downtown Los Angeles, and goes to pow wows throughout the area.

Also, if your home is on a reservation with an Indian Health Service clinic or a tribal clinic, you may be eligible for contract care. Each Indian clinic has funds reserved to pay private practice physicians and hospitals if a person has a problem the clinic cannot treat. Federal regulations also allow these funds to be used to pay for medical services for reservation residents who are temporarily away from home to attend school. Check with your reservation clinic to see if you are eligible for contract care.

FYI Rural Southern California is the home of five Indian Health Centers

East of Los Angeles, The Riverside/San Bernardino County Indian Health Program operates seven health centers (most of which are in Riverside County).

The Southern Indian Health Council is a consortium of eight tribes located near San Diego. They operate a health center in Alpine.

The Indian Health Council is a consortium of nine tribes. They operate two clinics: one in Santa Ysabel and one on the Rincon Reservation.

The Sycuan Band of Diegueno Indians operates a clinic near El Cahon to serve both its tribal members and casino employees.

Traveling North, in the mountains above Santa Barbara, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians operates a small clinic.

A directory of all Indian clinics in the U.S. can be found at www.ihs.gov
To volunteer your services to the American Indian Health Project call Yvette Pardo at: 213-202-3970.

shattered whiskey

poem by naseem rafi

Broken butterfly wings
fall crystal clear
to the blazing ground,
petals battered by
the wind flutter
lifelessly with
desperate sound,
amid the raindrops
salt does clash,
in the drowning
water not splash,
the tasteless heat
of the sun
swallows any
cool breeze flowing
beneath the shadow
of the moon
melt drops of
whiskey pouring down
the eyes of men
like tears from
the river of death,
fingers tapping
against heartbeat,
blood gushing through
smiles of defeat,
the clock is
running backwards
timing all
our shattered
priceless needs.

Calendar of events

coming attractions for spring 2001

Monday, May 21st
AISA Officer Elections
5:00p.m.

RAIN Workshop:
Stress Management
Meet at RAIN at 6:30p.m.
to explore the stress
relieving qualities of yoga

Saturday, May 26th
Shifting Paradigms:
SIOC/CRC Conference

Sunday, June 3rd
RAIN Mentorship
Workshop:
Tour of the Museum of
Tolerance
2:30–7:30 p.m.

Friday, June 15th
AIS Graduation Ceremony

Monthly Brown Bags TBA

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Retention of American Indians Now congratulates the graduating class of 2001!

Grant Blindbury
Diane Garcia (Apache)
Therese Hickey (Eastern Cherokee)
Eric Jojola (Isleta/Tiwa)
Zach Lopez (Apache)
Jonathon Malagon
Renee Meza (Aztec/Maya)
Mary Ragsdale (Potawatomi)
Crystal Roberts (Western Cherokee/Teton Sioux)
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Melissa Yasaga

RAIN was created by AISA in 1990. It is a peer counseling program geared towards American Indian students and tries to promote academic success for a diverse student body.