

NATIVE BRUIN

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Interview with the New AISC Director

Tazbah Chavez (Owens Valley Paiute, Navajo, San Carlos Apache)

At UCLA, Angela Riley has held positions as professor of both American Indian studies and law. Recently she accepted her position as the director of the American Indian Studies Center, after earning a faculty position in the UCLA School of Law.

My first encounter with Angela Riley was as her student in my first class of my first quarter at UCLA, a course in Indigenous Cultural Resources. From the first day of class Professor Riley instantly became one of my favorite teachers in my academic career and remains so. She was consistently genuine, approachable, encouraging, and, most of all, one of the most intelligent and humble women I have ever met who is visibly passionate about her work. She led the class with encouragement and inclusiveness, a combination that is often rare in the world of academia. Professor Riley remains a woman I truly admire and have immense respect for. When given the chance to interview her I was eager to gain some down-to-earth perspective on what makes up this incredible woman, ranging from her own college experiences to what she has in store for the American Indian Studies Center.

Riley is Potawatomi and was raised in southwest Oklahoma on a farm in Kiowa County. She attended Oklahoma University for her undergraduate work and Harvard University for her law degree. Of her undergraduate experience Riley says her favorite part was the new intellectual world she was exposed to: "To that point, I had lived on a farm around twenty miles from the town of Mountain View, where I went to high school for my entire life. That town had about 800 people in it at the time (around 500 now). College opened up an entirely new intellectual world for me, which I readily devoured."

(continues on page 2)

INSIDE:



**HONORING 40 YEARS:
Symposium: A Celebration of 40 Years
Mayor Commemorates**

Pages 2-3

**NATIVE STUDENTS AND OUTREACH AT UCLA:
AIR Project Brings Awareness to ASU American
Indian Community**

Alcatraz: Back to Our Roots

**Native American Professional Development
Conference**

Taskforce Update

Pages 4-5

**AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS:
UCLA Professor and Local Chickasaw Speaker Win
2010 Bloomfield Book Award**

**AICC Award Recipients
Academic Success**

Page 6

VOICES OF THE PEOPLE:

Honoring Allies

Family Ties

Material Soul

Page 7

EVENTS:

**25th Annual Powwow at UCLA
2010 American Indian Youth Conference and
Basketball Tournament**

Page 8

(continued from page 1)

Although Riley devoured her new intellectual world, she also faced her least favorite moments of undergrad, like many of us do. She says, "I wasn't a typical Sooner. OU has a thriving fraternity/sorority system and is known as somewhat of a party school. I worked full-time during much of college, did my degree on an accelerated schedule, and went through the Honor's Program. So I felt and, indeed, was, really functioning outside of the mainstream. So I did not have a typical college experience, which made it all a bit lonely at times." I think many of us, having been or being students, can identify with the obligation to hold a job during college and the extra work we often take up when aspiring to the best of our potential.

Riley realized she wanted to become a lawyer during her undergrad. She explains, "I knew I wanted to continue my

studies at the graduate level, and I wanted to advance Indian rights. That was very clear to me. I was fortunate to have professors who really encouraged me in my endeavors and who, ultimately, convinced me I would be a good candidate for law school. They stood by me, and I am still friends with several of them today. They showed me what was possible."

Now at UCLA, as a professor and the director of the American Indian Studies Center, Riley is able to reflect on her experiences at UCLA, describing the university as "an incredibly vibrant and energetic intellectual community." A place where, she says, "it has been unbelievably rewarding to get to work with my own mentors, like Carole Goldberg [Law], and also to meet new, emerging scholars in American Indian Studies. Though the Native community is small at UCLA, it is filled with incredibly dedicated, passionate people,

from undergraduates to those who hold high administrative posts."

As for the American Indian Studies Center, Riley expresses, "For four decades, the UCLA American Indian Studies Center has maintained a reputation as one of the premier research institutes in the country devoted to American Indian issues. Today, we adhere to the goal of producing scholarly work of the highest caliber dedicated to addressing issues unique to Native peoples.

We are extremely fortunate that UCLA is home to a growing number of experts in fields from public health to linguistics to anthropology to law—to name but a few—whose work is devoted to indigenous issues. As such, the American Indian Studies Center has a pivotal role to play in advancing scholarly and community-based research that will be of benefit to the indigenous peoples of California, the Americas, and beyond." 🐾

US Census Bureau at a Glance

Eric Sanchez

The census is coming! On April 1, 2010, the Census Bureau will begin to count the more than 300 million people living in the United States, as mandated by law. The census is a safe, easy, and important process that will require the help and participation of every community in order to insure an accurate and complete count of the population. The results of this census will have direct impacts on the American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) community, especially the urban Indian community, so it is imperative that we cooperate with this important endeavor.

An accurate count of the AI/AN population can help tribal governments, urban Indian organizations, nonprofits, and American Indian service providers plan for community services, economic development, growth of programs, and the expansion of new centers in order to accommodate a growing population. According to the 2007 American Community Survey, close to 80 percent of the AI/AN community live in urban areas, while about 40 percent of the AI/AN population was under the age of twenty-five, which is indicative of a young and metropolitan population. Census data directly affect how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to tribal, state, and local governments for services that affect our AI/AN communities. Here are the various areas in which the census helps to determine federal funding:

- Planning for AI/AN health care facilities, nursing homes, clinics, and the locations of other health services

- Directing funding for existing programs and services, such as AI/AN cultural programs for youth
- Identifying facilities/locations for AI/AN with disabilities, children, or the elderly
- Allocating funding for nonprofits, service-based providers, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood councils that provide direct assistance to the AI/AN community
- Distributing resources to new programs, services, and projects to meet new demands and scenarios

It is critical that the urban AI/AN community participate in the census. The census questionnaire was mailed to households after March 16, 2010. This questionnaire consists of 10-7 questions that ask about household information, age, sex, race, and ethnicity. It will take less than ten minutes to complete and will leave lasting impacts. Everyone in the United States must be counted, including newborns, children, and our elderly. By insuring an accurate count, we can provide for our community and for our future generations.

For more information, please contact Eric Sanchez, Tribal and Urban Indian Partnership Specialist at 818-510-5486 or eric.a.sanchez@census.gov.

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Symposium: A Celebration of 40 Years

Heather Torres (Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Navajo, Yaqui)

The Gathering of Native/American Scholars and Artists: A Celebration of Forty Years reception and symposium on October 22 and 23, 2009, began this amazing year of commemorating the achievements and planning the future of the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA. Filled with panels and presentations by some of the most respected and intelligent scholars in the fields of literature, law, and more, the event attested to the range of American Indian Studies (AIS) and its effect at institutions like UCLA. This event gave the community a chance to acknowledge and admire the work of many scholars involved with the AIS program and publications. Keynote speakers such as Greg Sarris added a lively dynamic to the conference, stimulating the minds of all in attendance. A group of Native high school students from Central High School, a site tutored by the American Indian Recruitment Project, was able to listen in and learn from the panel discussions, thus the symposium even enlightened future possible members of the AIS field in the next forty years. ☘



Staff members of AIR and Central High students. Provided by AISC Web site (<http://www.aisc.ucla.edu>).

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa Commemorates Native American Heritage Month

Gabriel A. Montoya (San Juan Pueblo)

As an American Indian studies major at UCLA (as well as a Native student), it is always reassuring to hear about events that recognize the Native voice. Last November, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa celebrated the opening ceremony of the city's Native American Heritage Month in downtown Los Angeles. The day included music and dancing by local Native American groups and the recognition for UCLA's American Indian Studies Center (AISC) on its 40th anniversary. The AISC's main objective is to promote research, education, and community service within UCLA academics. When Mayor Villaraigosa spoke, he emphasized the importance of understanding the American Indian culture and how it pertains to our lives, "This month, we learn a little about Native Americans and their contributions to this city and to the earth . . . we can all learn to live by their values and connection to the planet. The belief that the earth, the oceans, the trees, the animals and the rivers are all blessings from God and it is our responsibility to ensure they will be here for future generations."

Unknown to the general public, with numbers surpassing 140,000 people (who claim to have Native American ancestry), Los Angeles is home to one of the largest urban Native American populations in the country. The celebration continued with events such as the 3rd Annual Native American Heritage Month Community Powwow, the Intertribal Arts Marketplace, the stage production of *Carbon Black* by Native Voices at the Autry, the Native American Heritage Night sponsored by the Los Angeles Clippers, and the 3rd Annual LA Skins Fest, a Native American Film Festival. With events such as these, the American Indian population is taking an important first step in creating awareness of American Indian history and culture. ☘



Pictured Mayor Villaraigosa, Angela Riley, and members of American Indian Student Association. Provided by *Indian Country Today*.

AIR Project Brings Awareness to ASU American Indian Community

Michael Benitez (Mexican) and Teresa Caro (Mexican)

This quarter the American Indian Recruitment (AIR) Project at UCLA was invited to present at the 11th Annual Conference of the American Indian Studies Association at Arizona State University. The AIR Project presented a panel discussion entitled “Indigenous Student-run/Student-initiated Sustainability, Resilience, and Community—A View of American Indian Recruitment.” The presentation panel consisted of Eva Thomas (AIR Project Director), Michael Benitez and Heather Torres (AIR Staff), Elizabeth Fasthorse (American Indian Student Association [AISA] Retention Coordinator), and Teresa Caro (AISA Outreach Coordinator). The AIR panel talked about the importance of early outreach, retention, and access projects such as AIR, the history of American Indian organizations, the Student Initiated Access Center at UCLA, and American Indian activism in Los Angeles. AIR then discussed its mission statement of addressing the needs of the Native community by providing information and services that help at-risk Native students attain higher education as well as the need for more of these related efforts in tribal communities. The panelists shared anecdotes about their past experiences with recruitment and how they have used those experiences to motivate AIR students.

The AIR panelists received a positive response from the audience. Attendees included undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and a previous AIR student. They appreciated the effort AIR has put into promoting self-empowerment by developing culturally relevant programming for its students and exposing educational opportunities to Native youth. One audience member



Pictured (L to R) Professor Duane Champagne, Elizabeth Fasthorse, Teresa Caro, Leya Hale (former AIR student), Michael Benitez, Heather Torres, and Eva Thomas. Provided by Teresa Caro.

applauded AIR’s consistent dedication to its work, despite recent budget cuts that have deeply affected AIR and similar projects. Lori Laiwa, a graduate student at UC Davis, thanked the panelists for working with Native students at a continuation high school.

AIR is optimistic that its presentation inspired attendees to implement programs with a similar vision in their respective American Indian communities. 🌱

Native American Professional Development Conference

Elizabeth Fasthorse (Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians)

Held on January 10 and 11, 2010, the second annual Native American Professional Development Conference was geared toward Native American professionals and the development of Native student leaders from different campuses. This conference was a way to network with those professionals and gain insight on the current issues of Natives in higher education, such as increasing the Native student population at UCLA and other California campuses. In addition, establishing resources on other campuses with these professionals and students is a way to share your experiences and collect ideas for new and exciting programs or events at your campus. The privileges that come with this networking are rewarding and valuable in creating professional relationships that can only be an asset in developing yourself as a Native professional. 🌱



Alcatraz: Back to our Roots

Heather Torres (Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Navajo, Yaqui)

The American Indian Student Association (AISA) at UCLA spent Thanksgiving Day traveling to San Francisco in order to participate in the Indigenous Peoples Thanksgiving at the Sunrise Gathering on Alcatraz Island. We followed in the footsteps of UCLA Indian students forty years ago who made the infamous trek from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

The ceremony, an annual event held every Thanksgiving, commemorated the 40th Anniversary of the Occupation of Alcatraz by a group of Indian protestors in 1969. The occupation was a stand for social justice and the fair treatment of Indian people.

UCLA student ancestors were part of the fight for social justice; more than eighty Native students participated in the occupation. They came back to Los Angeles with a newfound understanding of their identity, their roles as Native students, and the importance of Native activism. With that positive spirit and pride, the students who occupied Alcatraz returned to campus and formally created the politically motivated AISA as it exists today. Their vision later sparked the development of the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA and American Indian graduate programs in the form of master's degrees, law degrees, and joint degrees at UCLA graduate schools. Those students fought for and received a voice for Native students.

This Thanksgiving, AISA traveled to Alcatraz to honor and celebrate the students of 1969 and their accomplishments, particularly to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the AISA and the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA. The annual Sunrise Gathering honored the descendents of the original occupiers with

song and dance. In addition, elders spoke about the occupation's long-term effects on Indian people. AISA members shared the same blessings, sage, prayers, and sunrise together with thousands of people, Native and non-Native, and felt the presence of the original occupiers.

"AISA took a journey back to our beginning. It really grounded us in an understanding of our roots as an organization," said Tazbah Chavez, fourth-year American Indian Studies major. "The take-over of Alcatraz was a movement that inspired change for Native people in regard to policy, culture, and preservation. The trip served not only as a tribute to those before us but also as a journey back to our roots. We come from a legacy of revolutionary people and that is something to be proud of." 🐾



Photo: Members of the American Indian Student Association. Provided by Eva Thomas.



STOP THE PROMISES, START THE ACTION Increase American Indian Representation at UCLA Now!

Heather Torres (Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Navajo, Yaqui)

Last April the American Indian Undergraduate Taskforce (AIUT), which is comprised of UCLA alumni, students, and the Native community, organized and performed an action to protest the low admissions rate of American Indian undergraduate students to UCLA. Stemming from the action, UCLA's administration has assisted in the hiring of Angela Riley, who as of July 2010 is the director of the American Indian Studies Center, and met other demands made by AIUT. Ensuring forward movement of the demands of the AIUT, a meeting with the chancellor and his colleagues this past February indicates a commitment to further their efforts in increasing the number of Natives on the UCLA campus.

The needs of the American Indian community on and off campus are reflected in the five demands drafted by the taskforce that were given to the chancellor and his associates last April:

1. Increase the number of enrolled American Indian/ Alaska Native (AI/ AN) students at UCLA.
To be determined! The number of AI/AN applicants has increased.
2. Hire a designated American Indian recruiter/ liaison.
Still in the works! AIUT is working closely with UCLA admissions representatives.
3. Hire an American Indian Studies Center director by June 2009.
An acting associate director was hired. Angela Riley is the first full-time director in more than eight years!
4. Support UCLA AI/ AN students by designating a center for centralized services in order to monitor and ensure AI/ AN persistence to graduation.
Still in the works!
5. Meet once per quarter with the American Indian Student Association (AISA) and the UCLA American Indian Undergraduate Admissions Task Force.
AIUT and AISA have and will continue to meet with the chancellor and his colleagues.

UCLA Professor and Local Chickasaw Speaker Win 2010 Bloomfield Book Award

Kari Lewis (Chickasaw)

Pamela Munro, a UCLA professor of linguistics, and Catherine Willmond, a native speaker of Chickasaw residing in the Los Angeles area, recently received the 2010 Leonard Bloomfield Book Award for their work on *Let's Speak Chickasaw: Chikashshanompa' Kilanompoli'*. The 2009 book, formatted as a textbook, is the first complete grammar of the Chickasaw language. It is especially successful in its accessibility to a wide audience.

Munro and Willmond met in the fall of 1977, and Munro explains that this book has in some ways been in the works since then. It was not until after the two published *Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary* in 1994, however, that serious work on *Let's Speak Chickasaw* began.

Both authors are pleased with the outcome of their book. Munro says that she is thrilled that Chickasaw Nation Language Program in Oklahoma has been able to use the book to teach Chickasaw. Willmond reflects that although she likes the book, creating it was difficult because, at times, there were discrepancies between her Chickasaw and the Chickasaw of younger speakers who were educated in English. She says of the language, "Some words [are a] little different [than the] way I say it, but it's there [in the book]." 🐾



Professor Pamela Munro and Catherine Willmond (Chickasaw). Provided by Kari Lewis.

AICC Award Recipients

Heather Torres

The American Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICC) is committed to the higher education of American Indian people. According to the AICC directory, since 1999, the chamber has presented scholarships to deserving students that are funded by monies raised through the Native American Heritage Month luncheon, special meeting raffles, and donations.

Two UCLA students received scholarships:

Elizabeth Fasthose (Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians)

Vivian Garcia (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)

Academic Success

Heather Torres

Golden Key International Honour Society, founded on November 29, 1977, is an academic honor society that recognizes and encourages scholastic achievement and excellence among college and university students from all academic disciplines. Three American Indian Recruitment staff members were invited and initiated into the society this past winter.

Michael Benitez, Site Coordinator: Central High (Mexican)

Ty Coughenour, Community College Coordinator (Lummi Tribe in the Pacific Northwest)

Heather Torres, Higher Education Awareness Coordinator (Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Navajo, Yaqui)

Congratulations to all these students and their achievements!! 🐾

Honoring Our Allies

Eva Thomas (Tohono O'odham, Cherokee, Ojibway)



Pictured Teresa Caro (Mexican). Provided by Heather Torres.

Passionate. Committed. Hard working. These are the kind of attributes needed to be a student leader. Teresa Caro has displayed all these qualities and more during her term as the American Indian Student Association Outreach Coordinator (AISA OC) advocating for the organization and volunteering for the American Indian Recruitment (AIR) Project, an outreach program that works with Native youth in Southern California.

Born and raised in the Los Angeles area, Caro (Mexican) is majoring in sociology and minoring in American Indian studies (AIS) and civic engagement. "I chose sociology as my major because I have always been interested in human development and different social groups in society," says Caro, "I see myself going into education and working with the youth as either a teacher or a counselor."

Caro explains, "I picked the AIS minor because all throughout my education

before UCLA, I didn't learn much about American Indian history or culture. I felt there were a lot of issues facing this community, and I wanted to educate myself. I felt it was important, so I chose a minor in AIS studies to make up for all the years I didn't learn about American Indians."

Last year, Caro learned about the AIR Project when taking DeAnna Rivera's class Working in Tribal Communities. She started to volunteer for AIR and began attending the weekly AISA meetings. She quickly made friends and was nominated to be the AISA OC, which acts as a student liaison between the AIR Project and AISA, the sponsoring student organization.

In addition to her duties as a full-time student and AISA OC, Caro is an integral member of the 11th Annual Youth Conference and Basketball Tournament Planning Committee and a student worker for Professor Rivera and the Tribal Learning Cultural Education Exchange Project.

When asked how she balances her schoolwork and leadership responsibilities, Caro replies, "Sometimes it doesn't feel like work. This is what I see myself doing in the future and I enjoy doing it. It is important that I am involved in these things. Sometimes I get caught up and forget to read for class but I want to make sure I am putting in 100 percent. If you commit to something, you want to make it happen."

Teresa Caro makes it happen, and we honor her passion, commitment, and hard work. She is a wonderful ally for the American Indian community. 🌟

Family Ties

Gabriel Montoya



Gabe's father, brother, and Gabe. Gabe's brother, David Montoya, completed the joint degree program, earning his J.D. and MA in AIS last year. Provided by Gabriel Montoya.

My name is Gabriel Montoya, and I am San Juan Pueblo Indian. My father's family is the American Indian side of the family. I am in contact with many family members who live around the reservation that is located in New Mexico. Unfortunately, my sources of information are quite limited. My parents, in my younger years, incorporated few aspects of the culture into everyday life so that I could be informed about my own culture. This lack of information gave me the support to pursue American Indian studies (AIS) as a major. I transferred from Orange Coast College to UCLA in my junior year so that I could major in AIS in order to expand my knowledge of American Indian culture. I am currently the vice president of the American Indian Student Association, an organization that fights to make the voice of American Indians on campus more prevalent. 🌟

Material Soul

Drowning in a rainbow . . . drowning in a rainbow . . .
 Twigs of conformed minds . . . parade in their conformed apparel.
 So I search for the world in which reality manifests.
 Thousands of anti-social vessels collide, and shift amongst each other.
 Consumed by the achievement of a single piece of paper.
 Diversity? Same mindset, same taste, same attitude.

—Anonymous Native

25TH ANNUAL POW WOW AT UCLA

May 1–2, 2010

HEAD STAFF:

Bear Springs Singers—Northern Drum
 Sooner Nation—Southern Drum
 David Patterson—Head Man
 Tiffany Jackson—Head Woman
 Victor Chavez—Arena Director
 Lambert Yazzie—Head Judge
 Michael Reifel—Master of Ceremonies
 Jimi Castillo—Spiritual Adviser
 California Golden State Gourd Society
 Mountain Cahuilla Bird Singers

LOCATION: UCLA North Athletic Field

INFORMATION:

FREE ADMISSION
 Dancing and Singing Contest
 Miss UCLA Pageant
 Attendees encouraged to bring own canopies and chairs
 Absolutely no alcohol or drugs allowed
 No overnight camping
 Parking \$10/day

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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 E-MAIL: powwow@ucla.edu
 PHONE: 310-206-7513
 FAX: 310-206-7060

2010 AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH CONFERENCE AND BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Sandy Castro (Salvadorian)

This year, the American Indian Student Association held the 11th Annual American Indian Youth Conference and Basketball Tournament. As coordinator for this wonderful event, I have to say that it was a success! We had students come from local areas in Los Angeles, Northern California, Arizona, and Nevada. The conference was held from March 19 to 21, 2010. We had a great turnout of new presenters who gave workshops in areas such as healthy relationships and learning Chickasaw. We also had two live performances: Culture Shock Camp and Bunky Echo Hawk. The students who came to the conference really enjoyed the performances, and the performers had a great time as well. The basketball tournament this year had extremely talented teams that were passionate about the playing. I would like to thank everyone who helped support the Youth Conference and Basketball Tournament including the volunteers, presenters, and programmatic support. Thank you all, and look forward to the Youth Conference next year!

Winners:

Girls—Calney from Reno, Nevada

Boys—Fort Mojave

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

For upcoming events, visit the following websites:
AISA www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/americanindian
AISC www.aisc.ucla.edu
IDP-AIS www.americanindianstudies.ucla.edu



- ❖ AISA and AIGSA Frybread Sales
- ❖ “Brown Bag” Presentations
- ❖ RAIN Workshops
- ❖ AIR Site and Outreach Visits
- ❖ ...and much more!



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