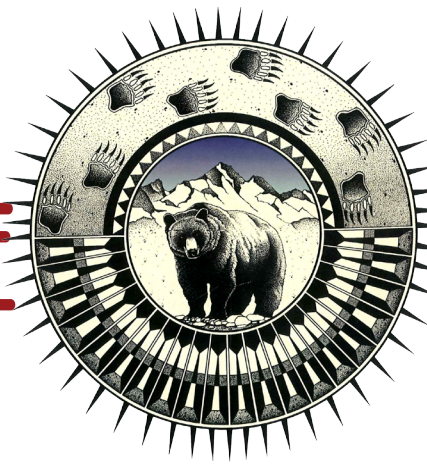


# NATIVE BRUIN



Spring 2019  
Volume 14 • Issue 1

»»»»»» A VIEW INTO AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENT LIFE AND CULTURE AT UCLA »»»»»»

## Letter from the Editor

By Kelly Wairimu Davis (Muscogee Creek)



This year has been very unique for UCLA's American Indian students. There were many victories, challenges, ups and downs. This year's *Native Bruin* is going to reflect the type of year that we have had: it is going to be more different than ever before. Unlike our usual updates on what's happening in the Native community on campus, this year's newsletter will be filled with creative pieces from UCLA's American

Indian students. Whether it be beaded jewelry or drum circles, art and creativity are so much a part of Native culture. I found it fitting that we dedicate this article to showcasing the incredible gifts from the UCLA American Indian community. Enjoy these pieces, as they are all one big collection of art in the form of a newsletter that encapsulates each individual's respective Native experience. A special thank you to all of the writers who shared their beautiful work with the community. 🐾

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## 2019 AISA Retreat





## River of Light

By Noelle Anderson (Tuscarora)



Today I feel as if I'm losing my voice, myself, and my control. My head hurts and my left eye burns every time light finds its way to it. I've been scouring this room for the last five minutes looking for something reflective. I feel like I'm going insane trying to look at myself. Something's there that I can feel, but I don't know what it is.

While I slept, I felt like I was underwater, reaching for the surface and calling out. But when I woke up, nothing was the same and I was off terra firma, on a small rebellion ship filled with bright minds, fighting against the embargos and blockages to planet A-H-0137. I don't know how I got here but everything has been a mess since then. And not only that, this annoying voice coming from the back of my head keeps trying to talk over me.

Everything feels vaguely sore. But my left eye actually hurts.

I hear the door depressurize and footsteps hesitantly enter the room.

"Andromeda?"

I turn around and see a group of people, an engineer and two medics, and one more, not in any particular uniform. They seem familiar in a part of my mind that I am not. But then again, a couple of them were there when I woke up. I don't know how to respond, I shift from side to side. I take a few steps forward, then I sit down.

"How are you doing?"

I can't really think of a response, but I motion for them to close the door. I blanket my face with my arm and turn my head away from them. One of them, the youngest looking one, approaches me. Up close she looks my age. I don't think that comforts me at all. I can feel my limbs tense up. My head is pounding and I feel more confused by the second. I want to sit in the room with my swirling thoughts, until I'd be alone with nothing in my mind.

I don't think about them. I look out the window and the light of the stars felt softer than normal. There's a river of light just a little beyond the outermost planet of this solar system. I remember learning about it in space orienteering classes. I remember coming home, and being told a story about them.

*Long ago, the people of the sky, who lived in the vastness of space, gathered around a river of light that collected at the edge of this solar system. They sustained themselves off its light and were able to live in the dark.*

*One day, someone who had everything to gain and not much to lose came and watched the lights. Knowing the importance of these lights as a guide to the rest of the cosmos, he decided to steal the light. The moon of the closest planet,*

*who had been watching the thief had warned him, "Your greed will leave you with no one but yourself to blame, and when you die, no one will remember your name."*

*The thief looked at the moon, and howling with greed, said, "I've no loyalties to no one but myself."*

*The moon had grown antsy, and hoping to stop the thief repeated, "Your greed will leave you with no one else to blame." Not knowing how to get the thief to listen the moon continued, "You fear no evil because you blind yourself to it, and surround yourself with your own selfishness."*

*The thief thought a minute this time before replying, "I am not evil, but I am not good. I'm tired of the light shining down on everyone. I'm tired of the light on me. I have thought long and hard and you cannot change my mind, so if I curse us all to darkness, I'll save myself and all like me."*

*Saddened by this declaration, the moon had given up, and said, "Everything will rise up and devour you."*

*Despite the warning the thief took the lights from the river. When he had gone, only bits like embers were left behind.*

I don't remember what happened to the thief. I don't think anyone does. But I know that's why the lights from the river barely remain, the brightest embers remained as stars. Even with the loss of the river, the stars illuminate this place so well. Why is this part of space so bright?

Even knowing his cruelty, I can now imagine what kind of pain the light could have caused him. And I forgive the thief just a little. ☘

## UCLA's American Indian Student Association Exposé (kind of an exposé but not really, I mostly just wanted to use the word "exposé")

By Josh Lyda (Chickasaw)



AISA was a mess this year. I feel like I could compare the beginning of AISA this school year with Miley Cyrus because it came in like a wrecking ball. Almost too much happened at the beginning of this school year, so much so that this article is going to be almost as unorganized as AISA was,

and this article will be very unorganized, so that's saying a lot; I mean look at how long this sentence has been going on, it's ridiculous. It all started my first quarter at UCLA when I transferred in because I was literally a general body member of AISA for one week. No one wanted to take one of the two paid board positions in AISA, so I had to do it. My sister had that position before me, so obviously I was the perfect person for it; who cares about the fact that I just got to UCLA and knew very little about AISA or the projects I was supposed to be funding and reviewing on the committee I had to sit on for the position. This escalated at the end of that school year when elections

## Bless u!

By Meadow Fuller (Luiseño)

There's this word in Luiseño, *mómyam póomik*, which we say after someone sneezes. The word *mómyam* means white people and the word *póomik* is a directional word. So when someone sneezes, we are literally saying to give the disease to the white people. Below, I've imagined a situation in which *mómyam póomik* would be particularly useful. Parts of this little story are in Luiseño, but most of it is in English.

"*Míiyu, noná,*" said Soledad.

Carlo, who didn't hear the door open, was surprised when he heard his daughter, Soledad, greeting him.

"*Míiyu, no\$wáamay,*" Carlo responded. "*Micha \$u 'íiq?*"

"*elée!* I'm sick," Soledad managed to squeal out before she sneezed. Soledad's shoulders bowed over themselves and her eyes were foggy. Standing there before him, Soledad resembled her mother more than Carlo wished to admit, which only made him worry more.

Carlo moved toward his daughter and placed a hand on her shoulder. "*Mómyam póomik, no\$wáamay.*"

Then suddenly, like a gentle hand had guided his creation toward him, Soledad stood up straight, and her chin resumed its usual position tilted upwards. Almost immediately after that, the pair heard a loud thud outside their door.

They went outside *pomki*, their house, and saw *ya'ásh mómyam*, a white man, lying on the floor. He was dead. Lying next to him was a gun, and several large trash bags.

Soledad stood over the body. "*elée!* He had come to steal from us."

"*ohóo,*" Carlo said. Then he said to himself, a little quieter than he had in his agreement with his daughter, "If only *mómyam póomik* had worked a little better a few hundred years ago." 🐾



## Authenticated Seller

By Meadow Fuller (Luiseño)

When I was about 15, my school's basket weaving instructor picked me and a few other kids to go to a college nearby and weave for some white people. We were set up under a tent in the middle of campus, and most people just stopped and looked, but some asked questions.

"How long have you been weaving for?" some would ask me gently.

"Not long," I would reply, my head held up so high it nearly tipped me backwards. I was so proud of it all then.

The key to basket weaving was to keep the weaving material, the juncus, wet. That way, when I started weaving with it, pulling it through the hole to create a stitch, the juncus wouldn't break. The process of weaving was something I was so used to that I found myself lost in a trance that was soon broken by a loud snapping sound. I looked down at my basket, surprised to see that my juncus had broken. I reinserted another piece of juncus, but that broke too. No matter how careful I was, the juncus kept tearing.

I started to undo the stitches that I carefully laid before, and as the materials came out of the basket, I stuffed them into my mouth. I kept ripping, chewing, and swallowing the basket materials until the basket was no bigger than a quarter. I did it quietly, no one noticing anything was wrong until my head jolted forward and I threw it all up.

As I was being walked back to the car, I thought about what I'd do with the basket once I finished it. Probably sell it on Ebay. I decided to title it something good, something that'll really drive up the price. "Authentic Southern California Indian Traditional Basket: All Materials Passed First Through the Squaw's Body in Traditional Ceremony." 🐾





## UCLA

By Secora Sanchez (Cherokee)

Time away from family I say  
 Are days I put my actions at weigh  
 Whether it's a mile ran halfway  
 Or the feelings my words convey  
 I say I over think some days  
 And it's due to times my thoughts stray  
 But as I sit in this cafe  
 Attempting to build my resume  
 I know my actions will head way  
 To a degree and my family's okay  
 All of this thanks to UCLA



## My Name Is Not

By Secora Sanchez (Cherokee)

They say watch your step, keep your head up  
 Little do they know, my name is not buttercup  
 I am strong and fierce in my name and ways  
 The name Secora will earn it's praise

Until then, I continue to step in the path I chose  
 For it is me who has something to prove  
 My education will get me that far  
 Along with a wish on the next shooting star

I wish for my strength and confidence to build  
 For in my culture and pride I will be fulfilled



## EVENTS

### 20th Annual Youth Conference and Basketball Tournament at UCLA

March 15-17, 2019 marked the 20th consecutive Youth Conference and Basketball Tournament hosted by UCLA's American Indian Student Association. Middle and high school students from tribes across the United States took part of this event at UCLA.

### 34th Annual Pow Wow at UCLA

May 4-5, 2019  
 Location: UCLA North Athletic Field  
 Free and Open to the Public  
 Gourd Dancing: 11 AM  
 Grand Entry: 12:30 PM

2019 Powwow Committee:  
 Coordinator: Noelle Anderson  
 Vendor and dancer coordinator: Cesar Barreras

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