Students have been very busy and active at Wilson Middle School the past semester. At a school-wide assembly on October 25, 2007, twenty-nine native students received Honor Roll certificates for having GPAs at or above 3.0 for the first nine weeks of school. The students are:


7th Grade: Christian Curley 4.0, Isaac Chavez 3.6, Stephanie Hernandez 3.0, Eli Mangus 4.0, Miranda Lee 3.9, Shawny Jamon 3.4, Ashley Johnson 3.3, Chelsy Ledesma 3.3, Feliciana Avalos 3.2, Kyle Francisco 3.0, and Jose Owens 3.0.

8th Grade: Samantha Barbone 3.5, Victoria Ghahate 3.8, and Heather Navasie 3.6.

Ohiyesa students have been working on math activities and just finished making cultural artifacts as presents. Before the holiday break students learned to manipulate and paint clay to make holiday hangers and magnets. Students say they enjoy working with their hands and using their creativity to do things. Students also have been working on math activities and games. They were successful in turning the game Scrabble into a math game by using the letters to represent numbers and using a calculator to add their scores to see who won.

Wilson Middle School’s Literacy Strategies class, 1st period Native American Studies, has specific goals and objectives. The first strategic goal is that they will demonstrate their understanding of the school-wide vocabulary by achieving 80% or better on the 14 weekly vocabulary assessments and are making great progress on their reading and writing assessments. Another goal of first period class is to score the highest on the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment tests to help meet Adequate Yearly Progress for all native students. All students work hard on achieving this goal because they want native students to be thought of as intelligent.

Bernice Gutierrez, Wilson MS, Resource Teacher

Ohiyesa students making “gloop” from L to R: Brianna Billie, Tyra Boxton, Steve Stephenon, and Shalaine Trujillo.

5th period WIM class playing a literacy game called “Chunks.” Students are Dru Anderson, Kyle Francisico, Elauoise Victoriano, Taylor Reano, Jovon Jojola, and Brenden Plummer.


Mission
“By working together with students and the communities, the Indian Education Department will develop enhanced and supportive educational opportunities for Native American Students while teaching respect for language and cultural differences.”

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IPC Meetings
• March 10, 2008 6:00 p.m. at City Center Title VII public hearing
• March 17, 2008 6:00 p.m. meeting at Tohajiilee Chapter
• April 21, 2008 6:00 p.m. meeting at Governor Bent ES
• May 19, 2008 6:00 p.m. meeting at Highland HS
• NO MEETING IN JUNE 2008
• July 21, 2008 6:00 p.m. meeting at City Centre

Effective and Efficient Systems
Winter Stories Entertain and Teach

Storytelling among Native Americans has been going on for generations. Winter is the time for storytelling and this year the Highland High School Native American Leadership Council once again presented the Winter Stories series. This year included an evening presentation at the Highland Performing Arts Center and presentations at EG Ross and Hodgin Elementary Schools. The students were greeted with open arms and dazzled kids and staff, both native and non-native alike.

Putting together a program such as this is no easy task. It involves researching stories, rewriting stories to make them appropriate for younger kids, memorizing stories, and portraying the characters in the stories. In addition, there is a sound and light crew. “It is a valuable literacy and skill building activity and the students love it!” said Mr. Williams, Council Sponsor.

Storytelling is not only to entertain, but also to teach. “By having actors portray the characters in the story, it helps them paint a picture and adds to the excitement,” commented Yvette Romero (11th grade Navajo), one the storytellers. Casey James (11th Navajo) who played Coyote in several of the stories said that in order to be a good actor “you can’t be shy and you must be confident. In addition to Coyote, some the characters portrayed included Deer, Rabbit, and Turtle. Some of the lessons taught are to listen, be consistent, and to be honest with yourself and others.

The storytellers assume a leadership role when it comes to their stories. They must prepare the story, learn it fluently, and are responsible for assembling the characters in their stories. When asked the biggest challenge that confronted him, storyteller Matthew Luxon (9th grade, Sioux/Zuni) said, “nervousness, but once you get out there, you overcome it.” Nicole Martin (11th grade, Laguna/Navajo) said a good storyteller must “have good eye contact, speak so you can hear, and have knowledge of your story.”

Both commented on how storytelling helped them learn more about their culture and allowed them a chance to interact with others.

In the future we want to improve our Winter Stories series by picking the best of the best and adding new stories. We also want to put on more performances and visit more schools.

John Williams, Highland HS, Resource Teacher

INDIGENIZING A CURRICULUM

By Larry W. Emerson
February 2008

The term, Indigenous, applies to a broad group of Native people. For example, in the United States, we, Native people, are called “American Indians”, “Native Americans”, “Alaskan Native”, or “Native Hawaiians”, while in Canada we are called “Aboriginal” or “First Nations”. However, the term “Indigenous” is an inclusive term that transcends such definitions and allows us to identify worldwide as a wider similarly situated group, while keeping true to our local knowledge and identities.

Indigenous is a term that describes original inhabitants before their subsequent colonization or annexation by settler people. Indigenous people were culturally and linguistically independent or largely isolated from subsequent influence of the claimed governance by a nation-state.

Most recently, Indigenous people share histories, cultural knowledge, and new ways of recovery, survival, healing, and decolonization. We share insights regarding the recovery of voice and vision, new ways to protect Indigenous knowledge, ancient, yet new research and knowledge construction methods, and legal frameworks that both preserve and enhance Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and self-determination. Most recently, the United Nations adopted principles regarding Indigenous rights.

Because Indigenous peoples are original inhabitants of the lands taken over by nation-states, because we share a common pre-colonial and non-modern history, culture, and political, and because of colonization itself, we grapple with and engage certain dynamics and dichotomies that partly characterize what is called Indigeneity. These dynamics and dichotomies include the Indigenous – western, the traditional – modern, the colonialized – decolonialized, or the oppressor – oppressed.

Intrinsic to Indigenization are processes or methodologies designed to engage these dynamics and dichotomies by privileging Indigenous voice and action. Indigenization centers cultural and political action in an alternative worldview and set of values that counter the negative discourse and representations caused by settler peoples. Indigenization methods are first created for us to understand how to live clearly in the Native world and secondly how to engage modernity or the western world.

Firstly, to Indigenize a curriculum means to ground it in the Native world so that learners can gain a clear perspective and understanding about the Native world and how to live in it, having understood its historical, cultural, political dimension and story. Secondly, it is to offer a critical lens, rooted in Indigenous culture, values, and language, by which to examine, for example, the dynamics and dichotomies described earlier.

An Indigenous curriculum privileges and engages Native epistemology and pedagogy to convey critical principles, concepts, and meanings that embody age-old practices such as sustainability, relationality, metaphor, restoration, regeneration, ceremony, ecology, place, kinship, and community. In doing so, a culturally and linguistically relevant way of learning is offered the learner whose task is not only to strengthen his/her understanding of the Native world, but also to acquire learning tools to engage modernity.

An Indigenous curriculum may also facilitate the acquisition of western learning tools as well so that a Native learner is bi-competent, being able to function in both worlds. Living in two worlds is a complex activity and requires complicated two-way decision making skills along with intense process-oriented learning skills.

However, if one remains rooted in a pre-colonized, non-modern worldview, he/she has an excellent chance of knowing this world with values of beatitude, harmony, and balance that embrace communal sustainability, regeneration, and restoration.
In the months of November and December several Native American activities were presented by and for students. The first Native American Parent Night was for parents of students in the Native American reading program. The students presented activities they do in the classroom. The students did an outstanding job of illustrating what goes on in the Native American reading classroom. Students who presented were:

- Kiana Curley
- Wacey Tsosie
- Ian Avila
- Samantha Jimmie
- Leonel Abeita
- Connor Keetso
- Jasmine Torbio
- Brent Johnson
- Antonio Dedios
- Michael Masawiestewa
- Alexandra Light

Also as part of the program we enjoyed the Jingle Dancing of Sariah Werito, Shyann Chischilly, and Sabrina Youpee.

There will be another Parent Night in the near future for all Native American parents. The program is in the planning stages and information about a date and time will be sent home.

**Native American Leadership Assembly**

In November an assembly was held for upper grade students which was lead by the Highland High School Native American Leadership Council. The students from Highland presented a program consisting of a wide variety of Native stories and dances. The Highland students provided an excellent program that was enjoyed by all. After the assembly the students met with Native students and discussed their program.

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**Native Games**

In December, Vince Weirto gave a demonstration of Native American games for several Native American students. The demonstration was to help Native students understand how games are related to values and ceremony. We are planning on having Vince back with us to demonstrate other games and activities parents can be involved in doing.

**Radiant Rams**

This past semester several Native American students were selected as Radiant Rams. To become a Radiant Ram you must be selected by a classroom teacher for good character. At press time these are the students identified.

- Drew Benallie selected for Citizenship.
- Preston Toribio selected for Responsibility.
- Jacob Jimmie selected for Caring.
- Ronald Masawiestewa selected for Caring
- Congratulations to these students for their accomplishments.
- Samantha Roy selected for Respect

**Physical Education**

Demonstrating trustworthiness, leadership, good judgment and helping others select students of the week in Physical Education. The following were selected as students of the Week in PE:

- Samantha Jimmie
- Sarahh Werito
- Nicole Shack
- Aaliyah Wilson
- Wacey Tsosie
- Jasmine Toribio
- Zane Pacquin
- Samantha Roy
- Desirae Tsosie
- Leonel Abeyta
- Shane Henry
- Sabrina Youpee

*James Jones, E.G. Ross, Resource Teacher*