STORYTELLER

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS Indian Education Newsletter April, 2023

Mission

By working together with schools, parents, and communities, APS Indian Education Department develops enhanced and supportive Indigenous educational opportunities for American Indian/ Alaska Native students by increasing knowledge of Native values through teaching language and cultural differences.

Volcano Vista Native American Student Union

On March 2nd, 2023, over 180 Volcano Vista High School students gathered to participate in an event sponsored by the Native American Student Union, bringing attention to the pressing issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

This event was a part of a larger movement to shed light on the epidemic of violence against indigenous women in the United States. According to the National Institute of Justice, Indigenous Women are more than twice as likely to experience violence than any other demographic group in the United States.

The event at Volcano Vista High School was meant to raise awareness about this issue and encourage individuals to take action. Alexandria Lujan, President of the VVHS NASU, worked in tandem with the club's Public Relations officer Emma Smith and school administration to ensure the success of the event.

"It's important that we as a community come together to raise awareness about this issue and support the families of those who have been affected by it," said Elizabeth Summers, VVHS NASU co-sponsor.

"Watching our community of students work together with such a purpose to foster wellbeing through a cultural identity is impressive," said Mike Torres, VVHS NASU co-sponsor.

The event was successful in bringing attention to this important issue and encouraging individuals to take action to address the violence against indigenous women in the United States.

JAG Students travel to Florida for National Competition

Students from left to right

Hailey Martinez (Diné) Cibola
David Notah (Diné) Cibola
David Vigil (Jicarilla) Cibola
Jasmine Mitchell (Diné) Cibola
Nilaya Deschene (Diné) Del Norte
Samantha Eswonia (Diné) Del Norte

Students from Del Norte High School and Cibola High School had the opportunity to travel to Orlando, Florida for the National Jobs for Americas (JAG) conference in April 2023. This second annual Career Development Conference (CDC) had over 900 students from all fifty states. The CDC offers a college and career fair, workshops (*to build leadership skills*), and several competitions. Students, Nilaya Deschene and David Vigil, competed for two voting delegates. They were nominated by their teachers. Hailey Martinez and David Notah were the first students (ever from NM) to submit applications and apply for national positions. You can see their speeches here:

- Campaign Speech from Hailey Martinez: https://photos.app.goo.gl/H8VgEKjsNEhQgQBT6
- Campaign Speech from David Notah: https://photos.app.goo.gl/LECgvskrzvknE1rC8

Jasmine Mitchell was the state winner for the public speaking competition! Hailey and David made it through the preliminary rounds and both did an outstanding job! At the conference there were several key note speakers and entertainment. For fun, the students also got to attend Universal Studios, vist local sites, and enjoy meals at various restaurants. For most of these students, this was their very first time traveling out of the state of New Mexico. Everyone they met them complimented how well they represented the state of New Mexico.

NATIVE AMERICAN 15th ANNUAL FASHION SHOW

On April 6, 2023, the APS Native American Student Leadership Council presented the 15th Annual **Native American Fashion Show** at the UNM Continuing Education Auditorium. The show featured top Native American fashion designers, and over 30 models. In addition, entertainment included performances by Levi Platero (Blues) and Tu Sicka (Hip Hop). The Career Enrichment Center Cosmetology program provided hair and makeup for the models.

The designers this year included Daniel Pedro (Zuni), New Sun Sage Designs (Acoma) and JG Indie (Navajo). In addition, Penny Singer and Shirley Pino were honorary designers. These designers were picked based on personal integrity and willingness to work with students. We attempted to give APS students priority when selecting models, and there were no requirements other than being willing and able. This year we had models representing many ages and tribes.

The Council always includes entertainment to break up the show and feature local talent. Levi Platero, who is a blues musician from To'hajiilee, New Mexico, and Lorenzo Begay (Tu Sicka), a Hip Hop/Rapper and Highland High School Graduate, were the featured entertainers.

This fashion show has been an important part of the Leadership Program that has grown from a 30 min show, to what is now, an hour and a half of highly structured and planned out production. Not only does this acknowledge our appreciation of culture and style, but also gives participants an opportunity to exercise personal self-discipline, organization, confidence and presentation skills. Lastly, it allows the Leadership students an opportunity to demonstrate Native American Values including generosity, mastery, belonging, and independence.

Jefferson Jets won First Place in National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair (NAISEF)

Three students from Jefferson Middle School participated in the National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair. The Engineering and Science Fair was held in Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma on Saturday, April 1, 2023.

Layla Perry, Harold Rogers, and Jaylie Bradford entered the following projects “Nasty Pollution” and “Hand Toss vs Robot” in the competition. Teacher sponsors Jay Penn, Shannon Johnson, and Jana Antonio-Cheung worked with these students and served as chaperones along with their parents.

The project “Hand Toss vs Robot” won First Place in the Engineering Category: Robotics/Intelligent Machines.

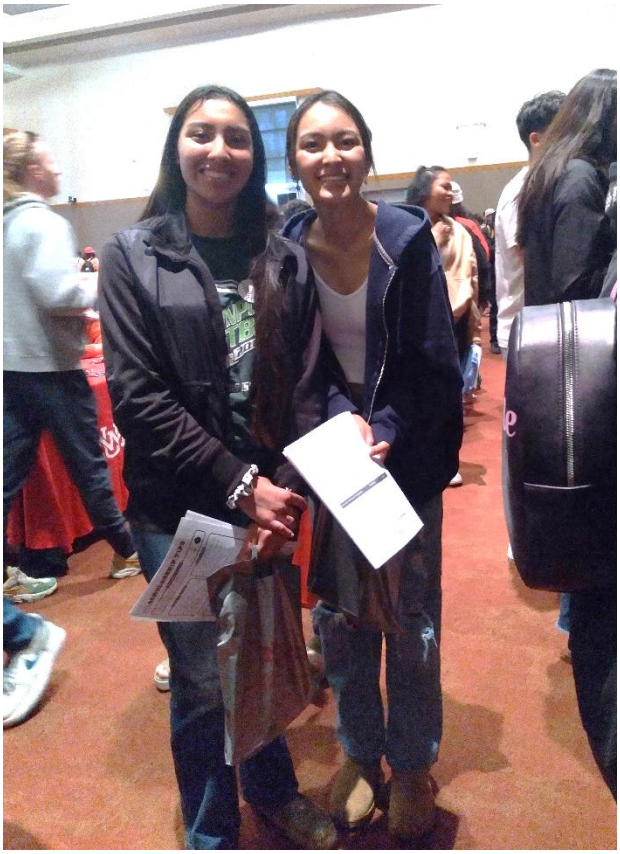
The team’s hypothesis “Human hand toss will perform better than the robot in launching discs into a basket” was supported when the experiment yielded the robot’s average success rate of 34% compared to the 54% average success rate of hand toss done by 20 Jefferson MS students.

By comparing the performance of a robot equipped with flywheel launching and disc-intake mechanisms, and human hand toss in throwing discs into a basket, the team’s experiment aimed to provide insights into the strengths and limitations of robots and humans in performing specific tasks.

Harold and Jaylie collaborated with the Robot Jets team in designing and building the robot with Lucas Hatch as their programmer. It took them 4 ½ months to build the robot, do experiments, write their findings, and organize their presentation board.

The team was very grateful to the sponsorship of NAISEF in funding the trip to Oklahoma and the guidance of AISES program organizers: Rennea Howell and Chloe Smith.

Opportunities to compete in the Science and Engineering Fair at the National level has inspired and propelled the students toward STEM related careers in the future.

American Indian Junior Day at UNM

Students from Atrisco Heritage Academy High School, Eldorado High School, and Manzano High School received the opportunity to go to the American Indian Junior Day at UNM on April 26, 2023. Students learned about admission, financial aid, student life, and more. They had a fun Jeopardy like game and some of the students won fun prizes including a bag and UNM red sun hat. It was a great day for students to start planning their future!