STORYTELLER

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS Indian Education Newsletter October/ November 2024

Indian Education

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.

Navajo Kinder Cultural Presentation at Tres Volcanos:

Students in Mrs. Rhonda Cordova's Navajo immersion Kinder class on October 28th invited Mrs. Romero to facilitate a traditional foods workshop.

Students learned about Navajo stirring sticks and the cultural significance of having seven sticks tied together.

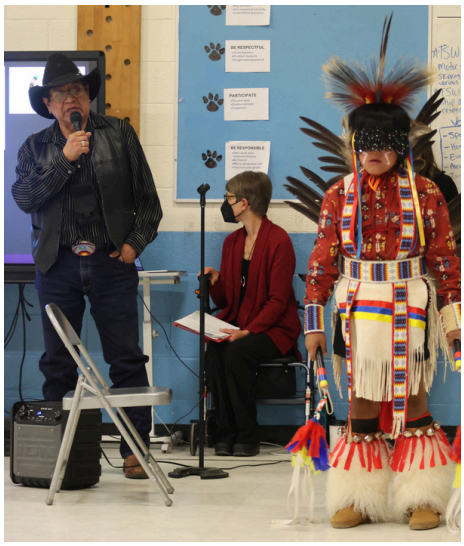
Students also learned how to winnow and grind corn. Then we learned how to prepare blue corn mush with juniper ash and the nutrients that come from it.

Next month the class will be learning how to make blue corn bread as part of a three sister meal that will also include beans and squash.

8th Annual Rock Your Mocs Celebration at Governor Bent Elementary

Students and staff at Governor Bent welcomed families and guests from across the District to their eighth annual Rock Your Mocs Celebration on November 15. Each of three assemblies began with a Land Acknowledgement and Recognition of Tribal communities, in which students and audience members were invited to stand as the name of their Tribe, Nation, or Pueblo was read.

A:shiwi/Zuni Language students from preschool through 12th grade came together under the direction of their teachers, Mila Padilla, Tina Gasper, and Sheryl Nieto, to present an opening blessing and sing songs in Shiwi'ma Bena:we (Zuni Language). High School students from Ms. Padilla's A:shiwi/Zuni III class and Ms. Johnson's Diné/Navajo III class served as announcers for the assemblies.



Governor Bent fourth grader Christina Ramirez (Diné/Navajo, Keetowah Band Cherokee, Mexican) performed Jingle Dress Dance for the third year in a row. Raider Routzen (Diné/Navajo, Haaku/Acoma, Hopi, Muscogee Creek, Laguna) returned to Governor Bent where he attended fourth grade to perform Fancy Dance. Raider is now a fifth grader at Lavaland Elementary. He was introduced by his great grandfather David Tune who also honored us with a blessing song.

Fifth grade students were recognized for their entries in the Governor Bent RYM poster art contest. Finalists Arianna Snell-Rodriguez (Diné/Navajo, Mexican), Maliah James (Diné/Navajo), Onyx Carter (Blackfeet), FelisiAnna Hernandez (Diné/Navajo, Mexican), and Lyla Pacheco (A:shiwi/Zuni, Kewa/Santo Domingo, Arapaho) had their drawings displayed on the assembly slide presentation as the announcers read their artist statements. Eight additional students received honorable mention recognition. FelisiAnna's drawing entitled The Hózhó and Lyla's drawing The Directions of the Dragonflies were featured on the school's 2024 Rock Your Mocs posters.

The assemblies concluded with a flute performance by Mr. Bernard Chimoni (A:shiwi/Zuni).
Mr. Chimoni was instrumental in starting the APS Indian Ed. Department's A:shiwi/Zuni Language Program and taught classes at Governor Bent for several years.

Rock Your Mocs was founded by Jessica "Jaylyn" Atsye of Laguna Pueblo on November 15, 2011 as a way for Native American and Indigenous Peoples to stand together worldwide while recognizing their Tribal individuality. At Governor Bent we celebrate Rock Your Mocs in honor of our Native/Indigenous students and families, and to recognize all Indigenous Peoples and Communities.

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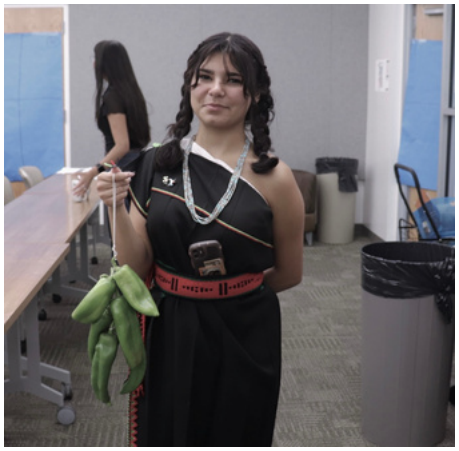
“Community and Connection: Uplifting Indigenous Students:” Urban Indigenous Youth Summit

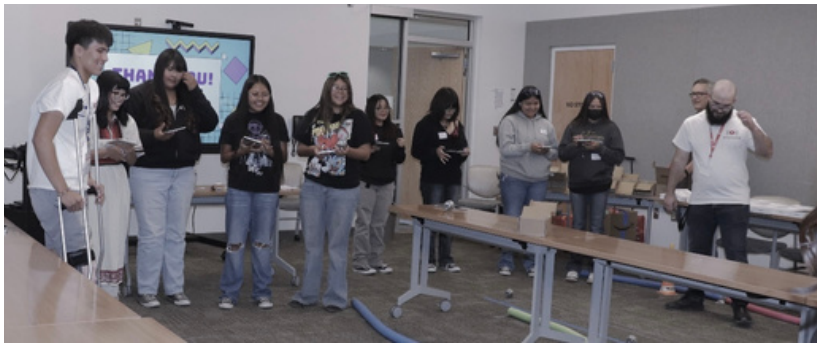
On October 4, 2024 Indigenous students and community members held their Third Annual Urban Indigenous Education Summit at the Berna Facio Professional Development Center in Albuquerque. Lucky guests were fed by Cleo’s Blue Corn Kitchen, which was sponsored by NISN (NACA Inspired Schools Network). The convocation was started by Warlance Chee, Director, Saad K’idlyé and the opening ‘in a good way’ was put on by Ms. Mila Padilla’s Shiwi’ma Bena:we (Zuni language) class. Introductions and Recognition of Leroy “Buster” Silva, MC Native American youth, families, and community were led by MC Leroy “Buster” Silva. Guests were entertained with an Indigenous Students’ Poetry performance piece with performers: Ms. Jessica Helen Lopez and NACA poets/performers: Sumayah Denetclaw, Maityaitsa Fry, Landon Largo, and Malaya Mteuzi.

Dr. Gabriella Durán Blakey spoke to the Tribal Leaders Summit and being a community partner for Native American Public Schools and the Student Success Initiative (APS). Phil Farson & Thorn Begay of the Indian Education Department (APS) as well as Kyle Tapaha, Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) and Native Leadership Collective of Albuquerque spoke to the Progress as a Result of Last Year’s APS IED Summit.

Before a wide-range of morning Breakout sessions, a Youth Leadership Panel discussion was led by Shannon Fleg with participants: - Wesley Cozad, Cibola High; Keira Farias, 9th grade, NACA; Scott Rosetta, 9th grade, NACA; Naamace Green, 5th grade, Bernalillo Elementary; Nizhoni Fleg, Albuquerque High and Halia Lansing from Explore Academy.

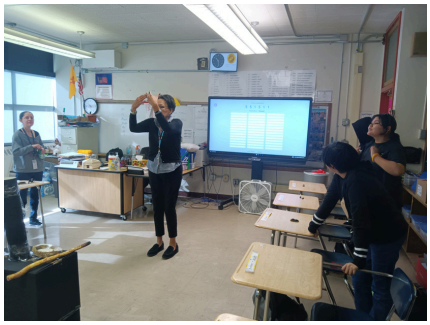


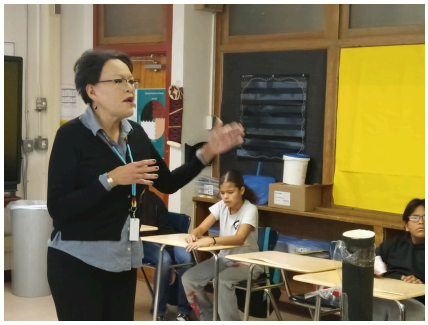
Breakout sessions included a variety of information throughout the day. Indigenous Knowledge Roadmap - Dr. Rebecca Moore; Voices As Our Strength - Shannon Fleg; Future Leaders: Becoming Indigenous Educators and Changing Our Communities - Jesus Chamberlain and Karina Todechine; Poetry for the People: Honoring Who We Are, Where We Come From and Where We are Going - Jessica Helen Lopez; Community Engagement with a Focus on Indigenous Traditional Foods, Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Traditional Ecological Knowledge Sharing - Shannon Romero, Monie Corona; Tres Volcanes K-6 Traditional Foods Cooking Club, and APS Indigenous high school interns/cooking class youth leaders; Native American Activism - Dr. Melissa Riley.



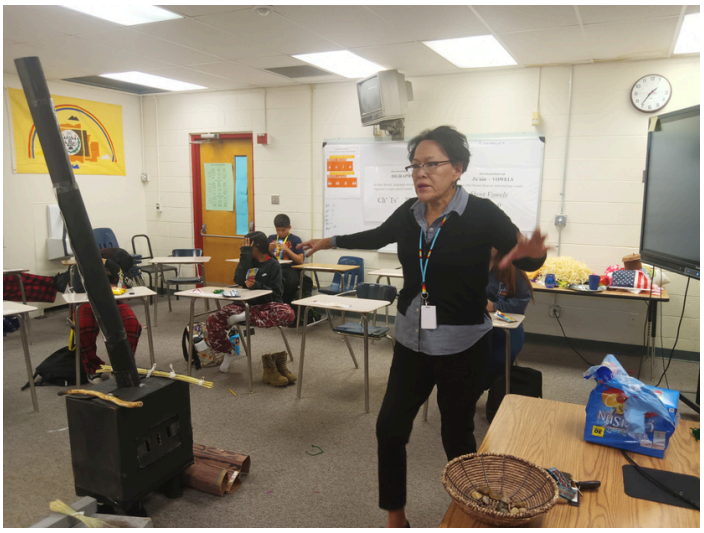
Followed by a Blessing by Karen Waconda-Lewis, Community Health Educator, Pueblo of Laguna, once again a delicious lunch was provided by Cleo's Blue Corn Kitchen and was sponsored by One Generation. The afternoon was full of more knowledge-sharing Breakout Sessions. This included: Indigenous Contributions - Dr. Melissa Riley; T'áá Hwó 'Ajít'éégo, It is up to you - Kaylee Bahe; Grounding Practices for Indigenous Youth: Navigating Contemporary Life and Tradition - Kaia Begay; Indigenous Computer Science - Shaniah Yazzie, Elliot Pfeiffer, Tyler Luis, and Angelina Demericas; Health, Wellness, and the More-Than-Human World - Jules McCabe, Alicia Lopez, and Dr. Melani Buchanan Farmer; Indigenous High School Intern Program from Albuquerque Public Schools Indian Education Department - Shannon Romero, Betty White, Tylor Martine, Kristalee Jaramillo; and Building Bridges with My Power with Sheldon Smith. The day came to an end with a Closing Blessing given by Norman Cooeyate, Associate Director, Center for Native American Health.

McKinley and Cleveland Celebrate Native American Heritage Month





ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Both McKinley and Cleveland middle school hosted Native Attire Day on Monday – November 25, 2024. Although a few students dressed in their traditional attire, the scene was still celebrated by many. On Tuesday – November 26, 2024, both schools had the pleasure to host the first Native American school board member for Albuquerque Public Schools, Ronalda Tome-Warito. The students were ecstatic to meet her and welcomed by shaking her hand followed by "Ya'at'ééh!" that echoed the classroom as the students entered. This show their honor and respect for Tome-Warito. They also learned that in the 100+ years of the establishment of APS, this is the first time the Native American students are represented on the school board. Tome-Warito shared her personal story and her heritage as a Dine' woman. She shared how her great-grandmother marched to Bosque Redondo in 1863 during the long walk at 7 years old. She preceded to talk about the boarding school era and how her mother was forcibly removed by missionaries to attend boarding school which was only 2 miles away from her home, but was only allowed to see her parents once a year. This was a review for the students as we had talked about these historical events as part of our Navajo Culture and Government standards. She ended her talk by giving each student two rocks. One rock represented our daily distractions, and the other represented what we are grateful for. Each student present participated. This ended with a "Beauty way" prayer that she taught the students.



Students from Janet Kahn School of Integrated Arts visit Big Jim's Kids Farm

This fall, students in grades 1st through 5th have been learning about the New Mexico flag symbol, Father Sun's Four Gifts of Love: Life, Time, Direction, and Seasons. For Life, students in grades 1st through 5th started growing pinto beans, which will be brought home before our winter vacation, where students will have the time to remember to practice Life-for-Life by giving it Sunshine and watering it. For Time and Direction, students in grades 2nd through 5th are looking at Earth's rotation and revolution in relation to the Sun. We still have the gift of Seasons to explore.

Also for Life, students in grades Kindergarten through 5th went to the Big Jim's Kids Farm for a day. We explored composting and dug for composting worms, as a way to fertilize soil for gardening. We looked at the homes of honey bees due to their importance in pollination. We had the choice to plant a sunflower seed or pinto bean in a small cup to bring home. We observed animals that rely on vegetation and we were allowed to play and run around in an alfalfa field. Then we chose a small pumpkin to carry home. All the students had an outdoor experience in the Sunshine. A big THANK YOU to all the CHAPERONES that helped make this trip possible: Student's PARENTS and GRANDPARENTS, and I.E.D. Staff.

Cibola JAG CAREER Association Induction and Installation

On October 30, 2024, Cibola High School's Jobs for America's Graduates Career Association held its annual Initiation and Installation Ceremony. Members and officers alike were sworn into the association and pledged to uphold the organization's commitment to high standards of professionalism as they embark on a year-long journey of leadership development, career exploration, and civic and community engagement. Students, family members, and other guests, were welcomed by music performed by JAG student, Matthew Soto, and members of the guitar club: Michael Lueras, Alucard Schadegg, Nathaniel Saldana, Carlos Romero, and Tyler Sanchez. The ceremony commenced with a blessing by Mr. Jerry Gee, followed by welcoming remarks from principal, Dr. Finke. Our keynote speaker, Jered Lee, shared important lessons about the importance of family and place. Students remarked that his comments about his young son's wisdom about starting the day with chores meant that your day would probably get better was funny and a positive way to look at a lot of things.

With former president Jasmine Mitchell and former VP of Service Learning joining us to emcee the event, our Career Association was able to continue the tradition of bringing back officer alumni to swear in new members and officers. This year, we have our largest group of officers ever. Congratulations to President: Wes Cozad, Secretary: Nevaeh Orr, VP of Service Learning: Kenzie Toadlena, VP of Civic Awareness: Deondre Simmons, VP of Career Development: Alayson Pinto, Public Relations Officer: Lia Garcia, Parliamentarian: Koko Mariano, Treasurer: Kaiden Martinez, Director of Social Activities: Jasmine Pyne, Historian: Sam John, and Social Media Manager: Abbi Toadlena.

Kneeling from left to right: Deondre Simmons, Sam John, Lia Garcia, Abbi Toadlena
Standing from left to right: Veah Orr, Alayson Pinto, Wes Cozad, Kaiden Martinez, Koko Mariano, Jasmine Pyne, and Kenzie Toadlena

Steps for Hope

Lia Garcia, Cibola JAG Public Relations Officer

On November 24, 2024 our own Cibola JAG hosted Steps for Hope, a Run/Walk fundraiser for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. For a few weeks, members and officers planned this fundraiser so that much information could be shared to help raise awareness about this epidemic.

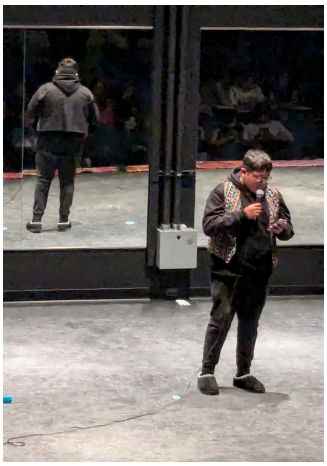
Through the preparation for this fundraiser, we were able to learn about specific women's stories and the importance of the MMIW epidemic here in New Mexico and the United States. To share each MMIW individual's story, we had students research and share the MMIW individual's story on a card that our walkers and runners could wear and represent during our event.

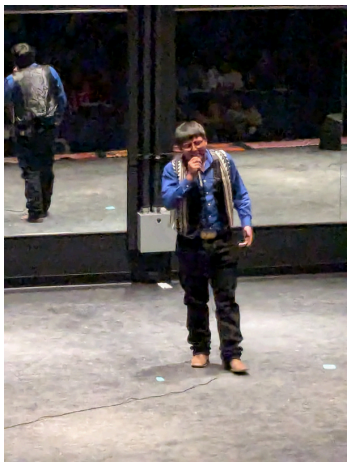
We fundraised money to donate to First Nations Community Healthsource. All proceeds will support women experiencing housing instability, who have left or need to leave a violent home, and need help with food, clothing, transportation, etc. Our Cibola JAG Career Association raised $890 to donate, and we are so thankful for those who donated and participated in our fundraising event.

We are also so proud to have generous members, officers, community, and school partners that helped with the event. Albertsons and Smiths donated snacks and drinks for our refreshment table. Caroline Willeto (grandmother of Alayson Pinto,VP of Career Development) and Sean Andrews (CHS Student) were very generous in making pottery donations for our prizes for our walkers and runners. We had a very successful fundraiser and are so grateful for all the help and support that was given to our Cibola JAG during this event.

West Mesa Navajo Cultural Demonstrations

This November, commemorating National Native American Heriage Month and student lessons; Ms. Chiquito's Navajo Language classes from West Mesa High School performed cultural demonstrations for students, staff and community members to learn from and be entertained by. Featured performances were of the Navajo Basket Dance, Navajo Sash Belt Dance, and Navajo Ribbon Dance. The audience also listened to students' tales of becoming adults as in the Kinaaldá, the "rite of passage" for a Navajo girl becoming a woman. At closing, Mr. John Williams ,on guitar, was accompanied by a Dine' students singing ensemble and finished off with a Round dance which included audience members.





Regalia Day at Volcano Vista

Students at Volcano Vista High School participated in “Regalia Day” on Friday November 22nd, during Native American Student Union Pride/Spirit Week.
They are Isabella Day, Zilla Platero, Leah Perea, Sakoya Sells, Natalie Browne, Azalea Platero, Mileena Sandoval, Joni Estonactoc, and Olivia Cabrera.

Some Candid Photos from the Tribal Leaders Field Trip

Indigenous History from a Vantage Point: November

In November 1950: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) promoted its relocation program with mixed effectiveness, including poorly produced materials like a flier featuring a caricature of a Native man. Despite limited funds, the program attracted significant interest, with many Native Americans applying to relocate to cities. Relocation officers met their quotas, often advising individuals to relocate without financial support, reinforcing the idea that urban living was necessary for a better future.

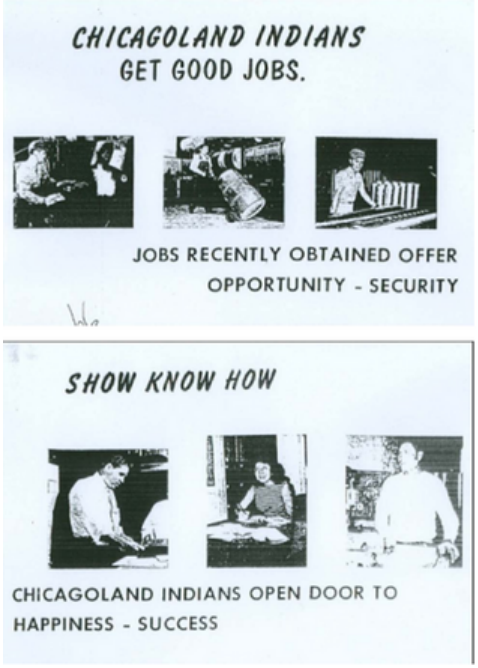
In contrast, white veterans benefited from government programs that provided housing loans and education through the GI Bill, while many Native American veterans were redirected to the BIA for relocation assistance instead of receiving these benefits. Native individuals faced barriers to accessing loans for homes on reservations and encountered racial discrimination in urban housing markets, highlighting the program's role in urban assimilation while perpetuating racial inequalities.

Key Points regarding Native Americans in November 1950:

Urban Relocation Program:
The government was promoting the Urban Relocation Program, encouraging Native Americans to move to cities like Chicago, Denver, and Los Angeles. While it promised assistance with housing and jobs, it often fell short in preparing individuals for the complexities of urban living.

Assimilation Policy:
The primary aim of the relocation initiative was to integrate Native Americans into mainstream white culture, frequently at the expense of their traditional communities and cultural practices.

Dispossession of Land:
The policy also threatened tribal lands, as reservations were dismantled and sold off, leading to significant loss of ancestral territories.

Challenges Faced:
Many Native Americans who relocated to cities encountered unemployment, discrimination, housing difficulties, and cultural disconnection due to the lack of support systems and understanding in urban settings.

Impact on Children:
Native children were particularly affected by these assimilation policies, with many being forcibly removed from their families and placed in boarding schools or adoptive homes, resulting in cultural loss and often abuse.