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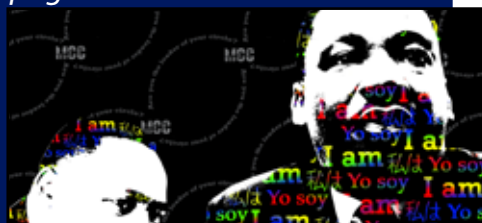


December 2008

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ReDefining American History NAHM Events Put a Different Spin on History

Native American Heritage Month was celebrated with events throughout the month of November. Attendance was well over 50 people at each of the four events.

On November 12, Chumash storyteller Alan Salazar came to Cal Poly and spoke about his culture. He began with the modern history of the traditional Chumash canoe called a tomol. In 2001, Salazar and other Chumash people paddled one of these traditional plank canoes from the Channel Islands Harbor to Santa Cruz Island, the first such trip in 200 years. Prior to this trip, the last few working tomols were destroyed at sea during the late 1800s. Salazar told the Chumash creation story of the rainbow bridge, as the modern-day canoe trip followed the same path of the Chumash people crossing the rainbow bridge.

Salazar also discussed the importance of including everyone in a story circle, even if you do not necessarily agree with their opinions. In light of the campus of events at the time, hearing this from a Chumash elder resonated with

deeper meaning for many present.

Dr. Inés Talamantez came to speak on November 17. Her discussion centered around the topic of Native American religious studies, focusing on how it fits into a modern context. This passionate professor from UC Santa Barbara also spoke of the importance of respect and change. She emphasized her belief that today's youth have the power and ability to create great change, but she also reminded the audience of the need to show respect for the past, the environment, and your elders along the path.

The month's final event was the showing of the film, *Imprint*. The film won three awards at the 2007 American Indian Film Festival: Best Picture, Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress. The film follows the experiences of a Lakota woman's conflict between her contemporary attorney's lifestyle and her traditional family history. Following the film was a discussion lead by members of Cal Poly's American Indian Student Association, who encouraged students to consider the inner and intrapersonal conflicts that can arise between a blending of cultures.



Above: Mr. Salazar discussing the Chumash tribe. Right: Dr. Talamantez during her discussion.



Coming Up in Winter Quarter

Winter quarter is still a month away, but the MultiCultural Center already has several events lined up.

The quarter starts out with Another Type of Groove on January 7, 2009. Poets are also scheduled for February and March that coincide with Black History Month and Women's History Month, respectively.

February is Black History Month, and this year's events are centered around a performance arts theme. Events include a Gospelfest, a jazz tribute to Langston Hughes, a traditional Black fraternity and sorority step show, and films about other arts related topics.

The annual Change the Status Quo conference is scheduled for Saturday, February 28. A conference sponsored by Student Life and Leadership, in conjunction with other Cal Poly clubs, offers students a variety of workshops that encourage students to learn more about common

and controversial issues in order to promote action and change.

Similarly, the MCC will host a Cross Cultural Meeting, diving deeper into issues regarding race, culture, and privilege. This is an all-day Saturday, February 21, 2009 event, an RSVP is required.



PREVIOUS YEARS' EVENTS

Top: Hip hop activist M.K. Asanti. Middle: African dance instruction at a Cross Cultural Meeting. Below: Omega Xi Delta Fraternity at last year's step show.



December's ATOG:

100% Organic Cotton ATOG shirts available at the door



Two-time National Poetry Slam Champion

BA Communication Studies
MA Communication Studies
emphasis in Critical Performance Studies
PhD Performance Studies
candidate

Javon Johnson

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008

7:30p - 10p

Chumash Auditorium



The American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) and American Indian Student Association (AISA) are the two American Indian based clubs on Cal Poly's campus serving Cal Poly's smallest minority population. I spoke with the Co-Vice President, Analisa Garcia-Snyder, about AISES and AISA, and found out more about the club and her culture.

AISES's mission is to support American Indians and Native Alaskans in the science and engineering fields. The club provides academic support for students in some of Cal Poly's toughest major, and provides members with scholarships based on their academics. The club, along with the American Indian Student Association (AISA), provides students with a social and cultural support. They participate in many of the MultiCultural Center's events, including Culturefest, PolyCultural Weekend, and Native American Heritage Month.

Outside of campus, AISES participates in the annual AISES conference and in pow wows throughout the state, including pow wows hosted at Stanford University and by the local Chumash tribe.

Last April, Cal Poly's AISES hosted the California conference, and had attendees from California's other chapters located at UC Santa Barbara, Stanford University, UC Los Angeles, the University of Southern California, and Arizona State University. Along with student attendees, many parents also came to San Luis Obispo as a way to show their support and pride in their student's achievements.

This year's conference will be held at Arizona State University (ASU), one of the largest chapters of AISES in the country with over 250 members. Garcia-Snyder's own connection to ASU goes back further than a conference, since her own mother graduated from there, receiving her diploma in full Navajo regalia.

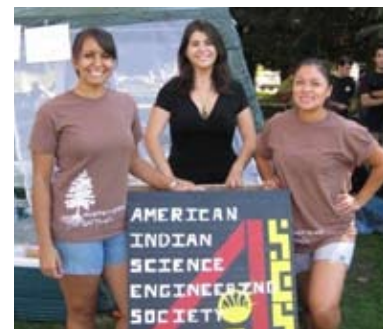
Club members represent over 10 different tribes, from nations like the Navajo, Apache, and Blackfoot. Garcia-Snyder has helped other members trace their lineage and apply for their Native American certification, which she herself recently completed. She said that it can be difficult when all you have to go off of is a picture, but even then it becomes more interesting in trying to figure out where the picture is from based on details such as jewelry, dress, artifacts and objects in the background. If you're lucky enough to have a relative's name, and know that person served in the military, there is a government database that has the names of all Native Americans who have served in United States wars. Garcia-Snyder is actually in the process of establishing a database of current members' own tribal cultures and has asked club members to come back from the break with a page of tribal traditions and customs. This encourages students to find out more about their own culture, while learning about others'.

Native American students make up 0.8% of Cal Poly's population, but few have full Native American heritage. Garcia-Snyder says that it can be difficult finding and

recognizing other Native Americans. For that reason, AISES and AISA always provide information about their organizations at every public event that they participate in and rely a lot on word of mouth and the advocacy of their advisors.

"We want to form a tribe of our own," says Garcia-Snyder.

AISES and AISA meeting on alternating Tuesdays, from 11am to 12pm. Visit AISES's website at <http://aises.calpoly.edu> or contact the club president Thomas Miller at tpmiller@calpoly.edu or AISA club president Jonnie Reinhold at jreinhol@calpoly.edu.



TOP: Dinners allow members to experience each other's cultures. MIDDLE: Sharing Native American food with the campus at Open House. BOTTOM: Representing Native American culture at Culturefest.