Happy 2016!

Native American Student Support Newsletter | January 2016

Native American Student Support (NASS)
A new name for Indian Education

After gathering feedback from parents, students and school administration, the program name, Native American Student Support (NASS), has been in use since December 2015.

“This is an exciting and important transition for our program,” states Rose McGuire, Program Manager, “our students and parents spoke and we listened.”

March Powwow Distribution
Tuesday, March 22nd, 3-5PM | Denver Indian Center Gym

NASS will hold the annual Denver March Powwow Pass Distribution on Tuesday, March 22nd from 3-5PM. Three-day passes will be available for students attending Denver Public Schools while supplies last. The distribution will be at the Denver Indian Center, Inc. (DICI) located at 4407 Morrison Road.

This year’s distribution will feature informational booths from the Native Workforce Program, American Indian College Fund, Denver Indian Health and Family Services and others. NASS staff will be available to answer questions about enrollment in Indian Focus Schools.

To receive a March Powwow pass, students ages 7 and older must have a 506 form on file with the Indian Education office. Blank 506 forms will be available at the distribution. Students 6 and under receive free admission to the Powwow and do not need to pick up passes. Plan to show up early! Only a limited number of passes are available!

Questions? Contact Rose McGuire at 720.423.2042 or RoseMarie_McGuire@dpsk12.org.

Welcome Darrick!

We are excited to welcome Darrick Silversmith (Diné/Navajo) to the NASS team! In his new role as the Lead NASS Partner, Darrick will work with students at East High School and George Washington High School. Darrick will also work behind the scenes to improve and develop programming for NASS.

Previously, Darrick worked for the American Indian College Fund supporting Native Scholars across Indian Country.

In his free time Darrick likes to hang out with his nieces Jen, Aleia and Nayah.

Welcome Darrick! We’re excited to have you on our team!

Student Academic Achievement Night

On January 27th, NASS will host an Honoring Ceremony for students who earned all 3’s and 4’s or a Term GPA of 3.0 or above. The ceremony will include dinner, a speaker, and presentation of awards. Students who competed in the Lakota Nation Invitational’s Lakota Language Bowl will also be honored.

NASS staff will contact eligible students in January. If you have any questions, please contact Rose McGuire at 720.423.2042.
STUDENTS ATTEND THE AISES NATIONAL CONFERENCE

In collaboration with the National Academy of Engineering, NASS and Colorado State University welcomed eight students to attend this year’s American Indian Science and Engineering Society’s (AISES) National Conference in Phoenix. During the conference, students had the opportunity to attend workshops in their fields of interest, network with professionals and hear from Keynote Speaker, Billy Mills.

"After my first AISES experience, my whole perspective on college and the importance of embracing my Native American heritage shifted in a different direction," stated Hailey Roberts Sophomore at South High School, "I met and talked to multiple people, and discovered new career paths."

A group favorite was the VEX Robotics Demonstration. "It inspired me to pursue a career in robotics," said Shree Johnson, Freshman at the Academy of Urban Learning. Nizhonii Mitchell, Freshman at South High School, also enjoyed the robotics demonstration. "It really sparked my interest! I'd love a career where I can build something fun and useful with robotics," Nizhonii declared.

AISES was a life-changing experience for all. Perhaps Izak Whiting said it best, "I love coming to AISES and getting to know people like me that are in a field I want to do in the future. I love hearing about their journeys and connecting it with my journey."

NATIVE VOICE: STUDENTS SHARE THEIR VOICE

Nine Native students shared spoken word poetry at Denver Public Schools’ (DPS) biannual Equity Boot Camp this fall. After months of preparation the group bravely presented in front of 200 DPS employees. Students Simako Marshall, Nizhonii Mitchell, Jena Sanchez, Anpa’o Locke, Rosine Mares, Malinda Medina-Johnson, Tywania Holly, Jerico Left Hand Bull and Alexis Vigil prepared tirelessly under the mentorship of Ara Cruz of Café Cultura. The poems were personal, speaking of culture and equity. "I live in a neighborhood where the gentrification spreads like a disease," began Jenaex, "gentrification became assimilation not too long ago...stripping us of an identity and a sense of who we are." Nizhonii spoke to stereotypes and cultural appropriation declaring, "stereotypes can influence one’s identity, stereotypes have influenced my identity... my regalia is not a costume." After the final poem, the room filled with applause in a standing ovation.

Following the Equity Boot Camp, the group presented at Hamilton Middle School and Café Cultura’s Open House. The students hope to continue sharing their voice this spring.

RHYIA JOYHEART MEETS WITH SUPERINTENDENT TOM BOASBERG

North High School Senior, Rhyia JoyHeart had the opportunity to meet with Tom Boesberg, Denver Public Schools (DPS) Superintendent. "It was a great opportunity to share feedback as a student," JoyHeart stated. In the meeting, she shared her personal story, how DPS contributed to her success as well as how the district could improve. "For me, it was important to hear Mr. Boesberg's vision to accelerate academic achievement and better support Denver families," Joy Heart continued, "programs like Indian Education have been vital to my success; I participated in these programs from an early age."

Rhyia is the Student Body President, the North Student Board of Education Representative and President of the Native American Student Association. After she graduates, Rhyia plans to attend Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado and will focus on Native American Studies as well as digital film camera operations. She will continue to educate Native and non-Native students about the culture of indigenous people. Rhyia strives to be a positive representative of her generation and native people.

Rhyia is Northern Arapahoe and Eastern Shosone from the Wind River Reservation.
SCHOOL CHOICE ROUND ONE  ROUND ONE OPENS JANUARY 5th

Planning to enroll your child in a different school next year? Round One for SchoolChoice opens January 5th and closes January 29th. Round Two will open in mid-March and close at the end of August. Parents who wish to enroll their child in a different school should follow the steps below:

- **Complete the SchoolChoice form.** Forms will become available on January 5th both online and in your child’s school office. Still need a copy? Feel free to give us a call at 720.423.2455 and we'll be happy to mail you one!
- **Submit your completed SchoolChoice form by 4PM on January 29th.** Round One SchoolChoice forms MUST be turned into the requested school or submitted online through Parent Portal. If you are requesting multiple schools, separate forms must be completed for each school.
- **Students are assigned first come first serve.** Turn in your form early to ensure enrollment in your first choice.
- **Interested in enrolling in an Indian Focus School?** Complete a Focus School application and a 506 Form. Find these on our website or call us and we’ll mail you a copy. Our website can be found at www.indianeducation.dpsk12.org.
- **When enrolling your child in a new school, don’t forget to only check American Indian ethnicity on the enrollment form.**

Still have questions? The Office of Choice and Enrollment Services can be reached by phone at 720.423.3493 or by e-mail at schoolchoice@dpsk12.org.

Our office is also happy to help! Contact Julia Anderson at 720.423.2455 or at Julia_Anderson@dpsk12.org if you need assistance.

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STUDENTS COMPETE IN LAKOTA LANGUAGE BOWL

Students enrolled in Denver Center for International Studies’ Lakota Language Level III competed in the Lakota Nation Invitational’s (LNI) Lakota Language Bowl this December. The Middle School team consisted of Sophie Dresel-Martin, Aileen Jones, Mical Vitry, and Star Her Many Horses. High School competitors included Jeremiah Francis, Piper Hunt, Anpa’o Locke and Preslino Martinez. After months of preparation, the team headed for Rapid City along with their chaperones Kimmila Locke and Eileen Masquat. The Middle School team competed almost immediately upon arrival. Although they didn’t make it passed the first round, their spirits were not dampened! Students could not hold back their excitement when they heard Lakota spoken in the hotel elevator and raced to Kimmila’s room to tell her, “That’s exactly what I wanted,” exclaimed Locke, “For my students to be exposed to language outside of the classroom!”

The following day, the high school team competed and successfully completed three rounds. While neither team placed, the experience of competing and being at LNI was a great opportunity. “My motivation in going to LNI was not to compete, but to give my students exposure to Lakota,” Locke said, “I overheard a student comment that she had never heard so much Lakota spoken in everyday places!” Kimmila extends her gratitude to all who donated, “With your help, my students were able to have an amazing time learning and interacting with the Lakota language! Thank you is completely insufficient in conveying our gratitude...Philâmâyaye!”

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RUNNING THE SAND CREEK MASSACRE HEALING RUN

**Gabrielle Medina | Senior at Thomas Jefferson High School**

On a frigid November morning I took part in a healing run to commemorate those who perished in the Sand Creek Massacre. The Sand Creek Massacre occurred on November 29, 1864, near the small town of Eads, where over a hundred Arapahoe and Cheyenne Indians, mostly women and children, were murdered by U.S. soldiers. I felt the need to partake in this run because little has been done to memorialize the innocent lives lost.

On the morning of the run it was below freezing, but as we moved through the city streets of Denver, everyone exuded strength which pushed me to move through the icy air. There was a sense of unity as everyone kept the same pace as we approached the state capital. Some participants shouted war cries to allow the spirits of those who passed on that day to heal.

 Participating in the run was exhilarating and I would not pass up the opportunity to run it again. It was in fact a healing run because it gave me a sense of pride in my heritage.
HELPFUL RESOURCES

Comcast Internet Essentials

Your family may be eligible for affordable internet through Comcast Internet Essentials. Eligible families must meet the following criteria:

1. Have at least one child who qualifies for the National School Lunch Program.

2. Have no outstanding debt to Comcast that is less than a year old. Families with outstanding debt more than one year old may still be eligible.

3. Live in an area where Comcast Internet Service is available but have not subscribed to it in the 90 days.

To apply visit www.apply.internetessentials.com or call 1-855-846-8376.

Tribal Enrollment

To determine if you are eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe contact the tribe, or tribes, you claim ancestry from. It is the individual tribes who set tribal enrollment requirements.

A good place to start is by visiting the following website: www.doi.gov/tribes/trace-ancestry

DCIS Fairmont's Principal, Anne Jacobs receives "Native Americans 40 Under 40" award

In November, the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAI/ED) awarded Anne Jacobs the "Native Americans 40 Under 40" award. The award honors leaders in Indian Country who demonstrate leadership, initiative, and dedication.

Congratulations Anne! Thanks for all you do for our students!

DCIS Fairmont Students Make Gingerbread Tipis!

Students attending DCIS Fairmont made Gingerbread Tipis this December. DCIS Fairmont is one of NASS's Indian Focus Schools. Students enrolled in Focus Schools participate in groups with other Native students in their school.

To enroll your child at DCIS Fairmont you'll need to complete a Focus School application, a 506 form, and a SchoolChoice form. For more information on enrolling your child at DCIS Fairmont, contact Rose McGuire at 720.423.2042.