

Spring  
2016

# INDIGENOUS READER

VOL. 17  
ISSUE 1

## In this Issue:

- Welcome Home Bison!
- Gift from Little Owl Family
- Teaming up with Little Shop of Physics
- Student Outreach & Recruitment
- Native Women's Circle
- Native American Heritage Month
- Upcoming Events
- Message from the Director

## Welcome Home Bison!



November 1st marked the celebration of National Bison Day and the beginning of Native American Heritage Month. We honored the occasion with the release of ten bison onto the prairie of Northern Colorado. After an absence of over a century, a herd of bison were returned to the Soapstone Prairie Natural Area and Red Mountain Open Space area. This project does not only have profound scientific implications, but has great cultural significance as well. The bison represents the heart, the life, of many Native cultures. Fortunately, many members from the Native American Cultural Center (NACC) have been able to become involved in the project in various ways. Researchers reached out to the Native community asking how they would like to be involved with the return of the bison. We became

involved in all ways possible! Prior to the release, members from Native tribes throughout the west gathered at the research pen for a cedar blessing. The blessing welcomed the bison back to their home, cleansing the bison, the land and the caretakers. On the day of the release, a spiritual leader from the Crow Nation offered a prayer at the sight of the release. Then, four men from the Pawnee, Crow and Navajo tribes drummed Pawnee going-home songs. Many members from the NACC were able to attend the release, including the Director, Ty Smith, the Assistant Director, Tiffani Kelly, and a few students. A few of the students, Amanda Interpreter, Arielle Quintana and Miranda Kurtz continue to help with research on the ecological effects that the bison have on the prairie and the social value of the bison. As a community, we welcome the bison back home!



## Gift from Little Owl Family

The Native American Cultural Center would like to thank Solomon, Kacy (CSU B.S. 1993), Uriah and Mya Little Owl for their generous contribution to support our programs and services. The announcement and award of this \$2,000 check came at the conclusion of Solomon's presentation about the cultural significance of the American Bison to the Crow Nation held last November. Gifts such as this ensure the continuation of programs geared specifically toward the retention and graduation of Native American students at Colorado State University. This gift has also initiated giving from

others who also have the same compassion and commitment to higher education.

If you would like to increase the Little Owl's impact by making your own gift to the NACC, please visit the following link: <https://advancing.colostate.edu/NACC>



## Teaming up with Little Shop Of Physics

One of the many opportunities that the Native American Cultural Center provides is the chance for students to assist in community outreach programs. The annual trip to Pine Ridge Reservation in conjunction with the Little Shop of Physics at CSU is one of these programs. This year the collaborative group consisted of the Native American Cultural Center, The Little Shop of Physics at CSU, Ogalala Lakota College and Northwest Passage High School. The trip occurs over Fall Break every year and lasts for about three days. The purpose of this trip is to get students excited about science and encourage them to consider attending college. This year, the NACC recruited four students: Brooklyvon Descheny, Abby Clark, Johnny McCraigie and Danita Ordaz to attend the trip. Tiffani Kelly, the Assistant Director of the NACC office, was the head facilitator for the

group of recruited students. The group arrived at Pine Ridge on Sunday night and participated in a fun ice-breaker and game night. On Monday and Tuesday, the group started the Little Shop of Physics workshops bright and early at Oetrich School District and Wolf Creek School. Periodically throughout the day, the group visited classrooms and provided the students with little gift bags filled with mini scientific experiments for them to experiment at home. The visits were a success as the group saw approximately 800 students in the workshops before packing up to return to Fort Collins.



## Student Outreach & Recruitment = Summer Fun!

One of the programs the NACC facilitates is called the Native American STEM Institute. This program is unique because middle school and high school students from the Denver area team up with mentors (hired through the NACC) to tackle science topics such as fire ecology, watershed restoration and engineering concepts. These students not only get to explore CSU's Mountain Campus, but they also get a collegiate experience by spending a week living in the CSU residence halls with the college student mentors. The program's emphasis is to demonstrate how math and science are used to create the designed world. The Native American STEM Institute mentoring positions will fill quickly, so if interested, please stop by the NACC office and visit Tyrone Smith or Tiffani Kelly!

**Program date: June 12th-18th 2016**

Another highly recommended program for CSU student involvement is the Native Education Forum which is facilitated by Leslee Lavato from the Office of Admissions.

Photo: Native STEM Camp June 2015 at CSU's Mountain Campus



Photo: Native Education Forum July 2015 at the Horsetooth Reservoir

*As one of the seven Student Diversity Programs and Services here at CSU, NACC is centered around four primary advocacy and service areas which include recruitment, retention, graduation and community outreach. If you are involved with the office, you know we truly value our outreach and recruitment programs, especially those that cater to the indigenous populations here in the U.S. As students come back from winter break, most are already looking forward to the next break or, should we say, summer break? If you are one of the students counting down till the next break, here are a couple of exciting opportunities you should count on!*

*Apply for the Little Shop of Physics and the Native STEM Institute before spots fill! Come by NACC; speak with Ty or Tiffani!*

*To Apply for the Native Education Forum, please contact Leslee Lavato from the Office of Admissions!*

*leslee.lovato@colostate.edu*

The Native Education Forum is a five-day intensive summer program for students completing their sophomore or junior year of high school. In this program, students gain valuable knowledge in the university application process and research issues critical to Native American/Indigenous communities. Students who participate in the Native Education Forum earn one free CSU credit hour and may be eligible to receive the Partnership Award to attend Colorado State University.

**Program date: June 7th-11th 2016**

## Native Women's Circle

Native Women's Circle is a program through the Native American Cultural Center that nurtures group, individual and cultural support for the women of the NACC. Students and community members are always welcome to attend. This program is a collaborative space where all attendees add input into what they wish to participate in each semester. Native Women's Circle was busy this past Fall semester participating in events at Colorado State as well as in the Fort Collins community. The group would often meet in the NACC to work on the semester long-term project which was making shawls. However, the group would occasionally meet for different activities throughout the community such as participating in the Fort Collins art walk, assisting in shucking corn for the annual Harvest Dinner, and attending a CSU volleyball game. During Native American Heritage Month, Native Women's Circle not only attended events as a group, but also hosted an event in collaboration with the Ethnic Studies Department on the representa-



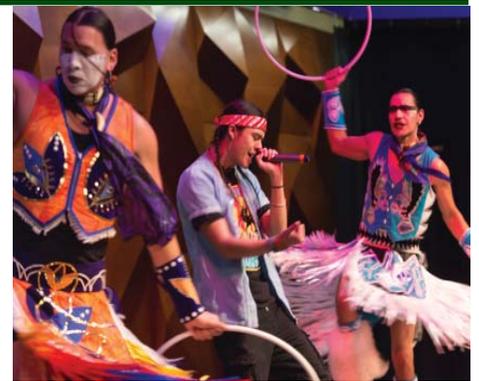
tion of Native women in the media. In the first meeting of the Spring 2016 semester, Women's Circle discussed plans to be just as busy and involved as in the Fall semester. The long-term semester project that the group will be working on will be beadwork and finishing shawls from last semester. Additionally, possible events that Native Women's Circle may partake in this semester are attending the annual Women's Conference at Colorado State, learning how to cook fry bread and visiting museums together. Native Women's Circle meets every Thursday from 5-7pm in the Native American Cultural Center (Lory Student Center room 327). If there are questions about getting involved, please contact Danita Ordaz at [dxordaz@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:dxordaz@rams.colostate.edu) or contact the Native American Cultural Center. To keep updated on all activities that Native Women's Circle will be doing this semester, like us on Facebook at Native Women's Circle at NACC CSU.

*Top Photo: Women's Circle Beading 2016  
Bottom Photo: WC w/Frank Waln & The Sampson Brothers 2015*

## Native American Heritage Month

The 12th annual Native American Heritage Month kicked off in November 2015 with a variety of programs and events for all students at CSU to participate in. The purpose of Heritage Month is to focus on sharing the knowledge and culture behind Native American heritage. One of the largest events of the month was the 33rd Annual AISES Pow Wow that started the celebration at the beginning of the month. This year, we saw around 1,500 people attend the Pow Wow, which was one of the largest Pow Wows we have had. The following weeks were filled with a variety of programs including lectures with prominent leaders in our community, Native Women's Circle hosting a documentary and discussion, the Duhesa Art Gallery Reception, the annual Harvest Dinner and a new collaborative celebration with the Laramie

Foothills Bison Conservation herd, featuring a special presentation by Solomon Little Owl. The highlight of the month was a hip-hop concert with Indigenous roots featuring Lakota artist Frank Waln & the Sampson Bros. Another new collaboration this year was with the Rams Horn Dining Hall. The chefs and staff created a special plate featuring Indigenous dishes with modern techniques. They also included signage around the dining hall sharing fun facts about Indigenous foods. Each year seems to get bigger and better, and we love celebrating our heritage with the CSU and Fort Collins community. We are looking forward to another great celebration coming up in Fall 2016. See you there!



## Upcoming Spring/Summer Events for 2016

February 22 @ 3:00 pm

NACC (LSC 327) hosts Disability Dialogues: Disability and People of Color

February 23 @ 3:30pm - 6:30pm

Duhesa Lounge Opening Reception for Cannupa Hanska

February 24

Denver Public Schools Visit

March 13-18

Little Shop of Physics trip to the Four Corners

June 7-11

Native Education Forum

June 12-18

Native American S.T.E.M. Institute

*NACC is open from 8:00am - 5:00pm during the summer!*

*Colorado State University is an equal access/equal opportunity university.*

## Message From the Director



Warm greetings from the Native American Cultural Center Office! On behalf of our office, I would like to extend congratulations to all 2015 Fall semester graduates and their families!

Indigenous Reader returns to highlight various programs and activities from the Summer and Fall semesters. We just completed a successful Fall semester and our programs are operating efficiently and effectively. You will read about exciting Summer and Fall programs and events. Our K-12 outreach programs remain a top priority and we will be welcoming high school students from Denver Public Schools for our Native American STEM Institute this June. The return of the American Bison to Soapstone Prairie Natural Area was an emotional and uplifting experience. The Little Owl family has a long history of supporting education and we thank them for their generous gift. I hope you enjoy reading about these and others in this issue.

Warm regards,

Ty Smith



Like us on Facebook: Colorado State University Native American Cultural Center