



UpClose

May 2007

Published by the New Mexico State University Division of Student Success

American Indian Week a success



Courtesy American Indian Program
Traditional Pueblo Deer Dancers perform at the outdoor stage at NMSU.

Students at New Mexico State University commemorated American Indian Week with a week of well-attended events March 26–31.

The events included a Pueblo Throw, a traditional ceremony that represents giving back to those who have given to you. Pueblo Throws often commemorate feast days or healing ceremonies, and the gifts often represent the giver's accomplishments.

Other events included a lecture by guest speaker Dan Wildcat, philosopher and writer, on environmental activism; a discussion of Apache history led by guest speaker Fredrick Peso; a screening of "Raven Tales;" the Miss Native NMSU pageant; a Native American arts and crafts expo, and some American Indian dances. Yvette Aquilar of Santo Doming Pueblo was crowned Miss Native NMSU.

Student satisfaction survey shows strengths

Undergraduates are happy with the instruction they get at NMSU. They also enjoy the accessibility of advisors and professors and the feeling of safety on campus. These are among the findings of the Student Satisfaction Inventory, says Judy Bosland, director of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.

The survey, an initiative of the Division of Student Success and conducted by the national research firm Noel-Levitz, identified NMSU's strengths and areas needing improvement. To ensure participation of NMSU's 11,833 degree-seeking main campus undergraduates in the web-based survey, students could win iPods and other gifts. The incentives were effective—over 20 percent of students responded. For such surveys, a response of around 10 percent is considered successful.

Students rated the importance of and their satisfaction with aspects of their NMSU experience. NMSU's greatest strengths (categories highly rated in both importance and satisfaction) included instructional effectiveness, academic advising, and campus support services. Other categories, such as safety and security, received mixed responses, perhaps in part because this category included parking.

On the other hand, students were dissatisfied with the registration process, financial aid and tuition, faculty feedback, and graduate teaching assistants. This

- Continued on page 2

Inside this Issue

Page 2

Financial Aid organizes outreach

Page 3

CMI hosts film series

Patrick Natoni: American Indian Program

Summit for indigenous education

Page 4

NMSU serving military community

The Vice President's corner

Calendar of Events

Teaching Academy

For additional registration details, visit teaching.nmsu.edu or (505) 646-2204

May

3 Teaching Academy Gala

15 How Students Learn:
Strategies for Teaching from
the Psychology of Learning

21 Team-Based Learning

July

10 Design and Implementation of
Pedagogies of Engagement

ICT Training Services

For additional registration details, please contact training@nmsu.edu or (505) 646-5125

May

1 WebCT Basics

7 & 9 WebCT in the Afternoon

10 WebCT Quiz Tool

15 WebCT Content Module

17 WebCT Course Recycling

23 WebCT Basics

25 WebCT Assignment Tool

31 WebCT Calendar

(Self-paced/Online)

Academic Calendar

May (Spring semester)

7-11 Exam week
11 Last day of classes

12 Commencement
12 Residence Halls close
15 Final grades due

Summer I (May 25 - July 6, 2007)

25 Registration for new students
(Faculty report)
26 Residence halls open (noon)
28 Memorial Day holiday
30 Instruction begins

June

1 Deadline for registration/
course addition
1 Deadline for filing degree
application
15 Last day to drop with "W"
26 Last day to withdraw from
university

July

3 Last day of classes
4 Independence Day holiday
5 Residence halls close
6 Final grades due

Summer II (July 9 - August 15)

9 Registration for new students
(Faculty report)
9 Residence halls open (noon)
10 Instruction begins
12 Deadline registration/course
addition
12 Deadline for filing degree
application
26 Last day to drop with "W"

Financial Aid organizes outreach across state

Filling out financial aid forms can be a daunting task for any student. But for first-generation students, it can discourage them from attending college all together. This past February 24 and 25, however, many New Mexican students received FAFSA (free application for federal student aid) and financial aid guidance through College Goal SundaySM, an initiative organized by the NMSU Financial Aid Office.

The NMSU Financial Aid Office was awarded a three-year grant from Lumina Foundation for Education to coordinate efforts throughout the state. The grant was established to ensure that available financial aid reaches those who need it. Many eligible students never access this aid, largely due to lack of information and confusing application procedures. The program provides counseling and computer access for completion of the application to students and their parents, with low-income and first-generation students as the particular focus. College Goal Sunday currently operates in 34 states, with New Mexico joining this year.

In February, volunteer financial aid counselors from institutions across the state along with community volunteers assisted students in Albuquerque, Clovis, and Farmington. "We had a wonderful success and served over 150 students and their families," says NMSU Financial Aid Outreach Coordinator Catherine Salcido. She credits advertising and the efforts of high school counselors for the high turnout. As an extra incentive to participants, two scholarships of \$500 each were given away at each site. NMSU's partners, mostly private businesses, sponsored the scholarships. The majority of students served will be the first in their families to attend college.

"We also had Spanish and Navajo speakers to assist students and their parents," says Salcido, recently attended the National College Goal Sunday Forum in Tampa, Florida. Salcido believes that this extra effort set New Mexico apart from other states. Due to these initiatives and the overall success of this first year, New Mexico received congratulations at the national forum.

Salcido hopes that next year, College Goal Sunday will double the number of outreach sites, eventually including Las Cruces, Santa Teresa, Roswell, Gallup, and Española. With more information and instruction available across the state, more financial aid will be used and, in turn, more students will be able to attend college.

The College Goal Sunday program was created by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc., and with supplemental support from Lumina Foundation for Education.

Student survey....

- Continued from page 1

information will be used to assess current and future programs. When completed, the report will be handed over to Dr. Carmen Gonzales, Vice President for Student Success, and Jennifer Hiatt, Assistant Vice President for Student Success.

Of the results, Bosland says, "I was pleasantly surprised by the positive results. Overall, the students are very supportive of NMSU and are pleased with their experience here."

For more information on this survey, contact Judy Bosland, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, at jbosland@nmsu.edu.

Summit seeks to improve education for indigenous students

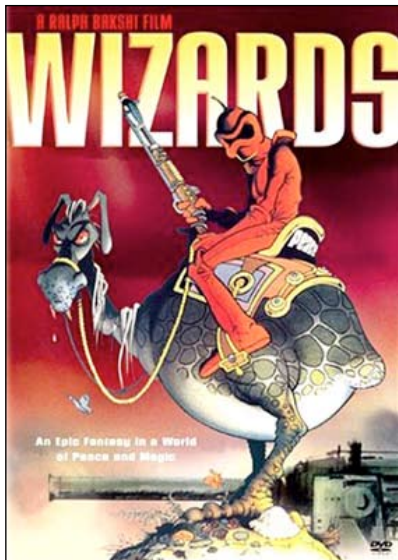
The first Bi-Annual Rural Indigenous Education Summit was held December 1–2, 2006, in Creel, Chihuahua, Mexico and brought together indigenous educators from Chihuahua, Mexico, and New Mexico to “share best practices in providing educational services to indigenous people,” says Director of American Indian Programs Dr. Don Pepion. The summit was organized by Dr. Erik Lopez, Stan Fulton Chair for the Improvement of Border and Rural Schools at NMSU’s Department of Education at NMSU, assisted by Dr. Pepion and Dr. Everett Egginton, Dean of International and Border Programs.

Lopez explains that the “goal was to build collaboration to enhance education.” Pepion adds that dialogue across borders will improve indigenous students’ access to education as educators, families, government officials, and community leaders exchange ideas.

December’s summit focused on the effect of language and culture on learning. The contributions of parents and civic leaders during this discussion offered new perspectives to educators. “Many participants expressed the importance of indigenous people being directly involved in the discussions. Several participants on both sides of the border indicated it was the first time they had connected with other indigenous people to discuss education,” said Pepion.

“This is an opportunity to build ties and communicate,” Lopez says, with the goal of enhancing indigenous education in the United States and in Mexico. The findings of the summit will soon be published.

CMI hosting film screening and discussion



Wizards by Writer/Director Ralph Bakshi was selected for the CMI Film Series.

The Creative Media Institute’s Film Series opened the doors of its THX Screening Room to NMSU students, faculty, and community members to screen and discuss film and animated features. The selections were chosen by CMI faculty members, who led discussions after the screenings.

The Series included screenings of *The Science of Sleep*, *Wizards*, *Infernal Affairs*, and *Bladerunner*. The screening of *Wizards* featured a special discussion by its writer and director, Ralph Bakshi, who answered questions about the 1977 cult animation classic and about the film industry.

“For too long the mega-media sites, New York and Los Angeles, have held educational dominance over the masses.... Animation and film are fields where skills can be developed by any person in any location with the proper training and opportunities...so that anyone can compete. I love to see a wide range of people animating and sharing their experiences,” said Bakshi.

Having a forum such as the Film Series to discuss film and animation creates further opportunity for NMSU and the state to advance in the industry. CMI plans to continue the series in the fall.

Profile: Patrick Natoni

American Indian Program Guidance and Recruiting Coordinator Patrick Natoni knows that his program can help American Indian students be successful



at NMSU. So his work is aimed at making sure students use the services offered by the Program such as orientations, tutoring, advising, career enrichment programs, and assistance with medical forms. He also works to make sure American Indian students meet students with similar backgrounds because this networking is a critical step toward making them feel a part of the NMSU community.

Natoni’s views are in line with the mission of the American Indian Program, which is to provide programs and services designed to enable American Indian students to successfully achieve their post-secondary goals. Through recruiting events, information sessions, and one-on-one meetings, Natoni recruits and retains NMSU’s American Indian students and creates the community structure that helps all students succeed.

Natoni is from Thoreau, New Mexico and is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. Natoni graduated from NMSU in 1998 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration majoring in marketing and international business and he plans to begin working toward a Master’s degree this summer. Before beginning his work at American Indian Programs in June 2006, Natoni worked at the NMSU Admissions Office.

News and Events

For national and international events, visit the *DE Clearinghouse Conference Database* [www.uwex.edu/disted/conf/]

For recent distance education headlines, visit *Daily News* at Distance-Educator.com [www.distance-educator.com/news/]

For news for university faculty members and administrators, visit the *Chronicle on Higher Education* [www.chronicle.com]

For recent campus technology headlines visit *Syllabus* [www.syllabus.com]

About UpClose

UpClose is published by the NMSU Division of Student Success.

Milton Hall 185
MSC 3WEC
(505) 646-4692
distance@nmsu.edu

Editors: Dr. Carmen L. Gonzales and Melody Munson-McGee

Staff: Cassandra Berman, Laura Grant, and Phillip Johnson

We welcome your ideas, comments, and suggestions for UpClose.

NMSU serves military students and families who serve the nation

Military service members and their families face difficult academic choices because frequent relocations can interrupt educational pursuits. When students have to move and change universities, they often lose course credits as they fit their past coursework into a new menu of requirements at a different institution.

One of the military's solutions to this problem is the Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC). SOC institutions accept courses from a network of affiliated institutions, allowing military members and their families to begin a program at any SOC member institution confident they can complete their degree with coursework from other institutions. About 1,800 colleges and universities are members of SOC, and NMSU recently expanded its membership in SOC to include the Las Cruces campus and all NMSU community colleges.

NMSU's efforts to join SOC shows a "commitment to fair, equitable, and effective policies and practices that recognize and deal with the special conditions faced by military students who want to obtain a college education," according to Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges President Kathy Snead.

Associate Vice President for Student Success Roberta Derlin, added "We have a large military population based in southern New Mexico and West Texas who are interested in continuing their education. NMSU's course offerings in Las Cruces, at our community college campuses, and online can help these students achieve their academic goals."

The Vice President's corner



When skateboarding first hit campus, students whizzed by on their way to class, leaving in their wake predications of dire accidents involving great bodily harm. But young people are naturals at learning, and students soon honed their sport and their jumps to new heights. Student wheels since have included Segways, Rollerblades, mountain bikes, and most recently, freeline skates, which combine the motion of snowboarding with the tricks of skateboarding.

It is our job to serve these students, who are quick to adapt, create, innovate, and push the performance of techniques and tools to new limits. Our challenge as educators, as a Division, and as a University, is to keep finding our own ways to improve how we help our students learn and succeed. Our reward comes when we help students channel that boundless energy and creativity into a professional and intellectual passion that will sustain them as adults.

Dr. Carmen L. Gonzales
Vice President for Student Success
Dean of the College of Extended Learning