The arrival of spring brings with it a bounty of new life, energy, and a promise of a brighter future. This is true for those students who will be graduating in the month of May, and although classes may be drawing to a close, the learning never ends. As individuals, we continue to learn and grow, striving to reach our full human potentials; whether that be through employment or the continuation of our higher education.

However, for those students and faculty members who will continue to be a part of the NMSU Grants community we should be looking forward to (and planning for) this year’s Fall Semester. We should be asking ourselves, how can we gain the most out of our college experience? What issues did we face this academic year, and how can we resolve and prevent such issues in the future? How can we as scholars of academia utilize our knowledge and experience to better serve the members of our communities? What responsibilities do we owe, not only to the members of our community, but to the world in which we live? As members of academia, these are the types of questions we should be asking ourselves.

Although we may have faced numerous challenges and difficulties this past academic year, we must remember that as a community we are resilient. Together we have overcome the numerous obstacles that have tried to hinder us from our goals and objectives in providing the best higher education possible for the community we serve. This is why as faculty members and students of NMSU Grants, we should be proud of our future graduates, for they represent a hope for a brighter future! As students of NMSU Grants, we hope that you continue to get the most out of your higher education experiences by challenging yourself to get involved with the campus community.

On behalf of the NASNTI Staff members, I would like to wish each of our Spring 2013 graduates a very big Congratulations!!

The April Leadership Council Meeting

The Leadership Council Meeting that was held Thursday April 4, 2013 was another great success. So far, all of the Outreach Centers and partnership programs working with the NASNTI grant program have reported outstanding achievements within their centers. As always, this is great news because as we move into our third year of the NASNTI Grant we would like to see continued growth and success.

Some of the achievements that have been accomplished within our program have included the successful creation of the Sacred Mountain Storyteller (which you are currently reading), preparations for the 2014 New Mexico American Indian Classic (NMAIC) basketball tournament, and the creation of the Summer 2013 Dual Enrollment Academies.

In addition, the Leadership Council was very excited and happy to learn that four students from the Laguna-Acoma High School were chosen to be semi-finalists for the Gates Millennium Scholarship. The names of these semi-finalists are Shawn Aragon, Dylan Lowden, Brent Riley, and Jacob Albert. So far we have received confirmation that Shawn Aragon has been chosen as a finalist to receive the Gates Scholarship. We are very proud of each these students who have made it into the semi-final selection process of the Gates Millennium Scholarship.
Message from the Director

It has been a memorable year, and an honorable blessing, to be working here at the NMSU Grants NASNTI Program. We have fulfilled our NASNTI grant objectives by providing GED, dual enrollment, and college success opportunities for the Cibola County and our NMSU Grants Service areas.

On behalf of the Native American Program here at NMSU Grants, I would like to thank the students, faculty, administration, partnerships, and leadership council for supporting our events and efforts in promoting a higher education to our local community. We are also very pleased to serve our outreach communities with our educational partnership programs, such as, the Pueblo of Acoma Department of Higher Education and the Tohajiilee Navajo Chapter. We have progressed to offer GED classes, dual enrollment opportunities, and offer college access to both of our NASNTI outreach centers. In addition, we have established educational partnerships with the Ramah-Pine Hill Oso Vista Ranch Project, as well as, the Pueblo of Laguna Partners for Success Program and the Thoreau Community Center. This has helped to ensure that community members receive educational opportunities.

We are eagerly looking forward to our Summer Dual Enrollment Academies! As we will provide additional support for our local high school students to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), Computer Science, and Southwest Studies. Also, our workshop proposal for the Native American Student Advocacy Institute has been accepted. We will share our success with other higher education programs and institutions across the nation. The Native American Student Advocacy Institute will be held at the University of Montana – Missoula and Salish Kootenai Tribal College, in the latter part of May. Also, our Native American Club will continue operating in the summer with several events which include a 3 on 3 basketball tournament and a music festival that will cap off the final days of the 2013 Spring Semester here at NMSU Grants.

We are planning to offer additional courses to our outreach centers this coming Fall Semester. In addition, we will continue to build upon the dual enrollment and GED programs. All of our efforts would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our great NASNTI Staff. I am blessed to have excellent staff members who contribute many hours of work and share a deep appreciation for our students and communities.

Also, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all of our supporters who have continued to support our progress with the NASNTI grant objectives. We look forward to ringing in another great school year this coming Fall 2013 Semester.

Sincerely,
Shawn Secatero, PhD.
We begin this month with an amazing turn of events. The Thoreau Community Center (TCC) was surprised with the return of our eight missing laptop computers! We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the people who have supported us through this difficult ordeal with your words of encouragement and prayers. We Thank You!

With the return of our computes, we are now ready to start our GED/ABE Program. We have more than 30 community members, both youths and adults, who have been planning on completing their GED. We will continue to support and work with these individuals to help them accomplish their dreams & goals of obtaining a higher education.

In the coming months we will continue to move forward towards more success for our community by incorporating various programs and events. Such as, this past Easter Community Event that helped create a wonderful relationship with the surrounding community schools and programs. A few of which include, St. Bonaventure School’s Playground Development, the Department of Behavioral Health, and along with the Gallup McKinley County School’s District Johnson O’Malley Program.

As the weather is warming up, it is heartfelt to see that more of our local youth are participating in our local TCC programs and events, which help the community to share ideas and success stories, as well as, build a network of support and a sense of community.

In addition, we are proud to announce that one our high school seniors, Bennett Francisco, has received the Bill Gates Scholarship. We would like to congratulate you Bennett on this amazing opportunity to further your education, and bestow your knowledge to your community! We are still anticipating the confirmation of several other student scholarship applicants.

Future Thoreau Community Center Events

GMCS Youth Festival, April 30- May 2nd
Ahehee Shima Event, May 10 (9:30am-12pm)
Honoring Native Life Gathering, May 22 (6pm-8pm)
Honoring Native Life Summit, Albuquerque (Indian Pueblo Cultural Center) 8 am - 4pm
In the month of March, 131 Ramah Navajo community members came in to use the computer lab at the Oso Vista Ranch Project office for various projects. Some of our community members enrolled with NMSU Grants came in to do their work on-line for college courses. Some came in to check their email, while others came in to apply for food handler permits; the rest came in to do job searches and to update their resumes.

Students enrolled in Photography classes used the laptops to edit their photos and work on power point presentations. Other people who came in were happy that the computer lab was accessible for their daily use, instead of waiting in line for a computer to become available at the local school library.

With the Oso Vista Ranch Project’s 2013 Tax Season being concluded, the latest figures show that the Oso Vista’s Tax Help NM Program volunteers did 281 free tax returns which gave $382,403.00 in tax revenue back to our community.

The latest up and coming Oso Vista events and classes for financial literacy and computer basics for the Ramah Navajo community are as follows: Weekly Financial Literacy Classes begin on May 7, 2013 at 5:30 pm at the Oso Vista office. The first topic will be, An Introduction to Bank Services, as well as, a Computer Basics Class scheduled for May 1, 2013 at 5:30pm.

Computer Basics classes at Oso Vista will include topics such as Internet basics, email basics, social media, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and working with Microsoft Power Point. We look forward to working with the community members we serve during the month of May, and are anticipating another month of great success!

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Here at the NMSU Grants Campus Student Success Center, we have been busy tutoring and advising students as they prepare to take their final exams. We also have multiple time slots for students to meet with our advisors about preparing for their finals at the end of this Spring Semester.

The tutors we have available, will be posting helpful tips and resources on the Student Success Center Page of the NMSU Grants website. Simply click on the Facebook link to access this helpful information from our tutors. Don’t forget to friend us to access helpful advice and links to our tutors.

As we begin to end the semester, the Student Success Center will be receiving a fresh coat of paint that will be both inviting and relaxing. This will give students the opportunity to hangout in between classes in a comfortable environment with new cozy chairs and ottomans to socialize and study with other students.

We encourage students to participate in our Student Success Center page on Facebook.com, and wish them luck on their final exams.
Cibola County Student is the Recipient of the Gates Millennium Scholarship

Shawn Aragon, a 17 year old high school senior from the Pueblo of Acoma, was chosen to be a recipient of the Gates Millennium Scholarship. The Gates Scholarship is awarded to 1,000 students nationwide who demonstrate outstanding academic success and promise with regards to attaining a college degree. Once selected, a student can be a recipient of this scholarship up until they graduate and receive a Bachelors Degree. Furthermore, if the student has demonstrated great academic success as an undergraduate student, this scholarship can be awarded to that same student to help them pursue a Masters or Doctorates Degree.

The Gates Millennium Scholarship is very competitive. To be named a recipient is a very outstanding achievement all together. When asked how he felt when he first learned that he was a recipient of the Gates Scholarship, Shawn replied, “At first I didn’t believe it until I read the letter I had received which said, ‘Congratulations you have been selected to receive the Gates Millennium Scholarship!’ I was with my mom when I told her about the letter and both of us were overwhelmed with great joy and excitement. After the initial disbelief and the state of shock, I felt a flood of so many emotions; it was very overwhelming.”

So far Shawn has expressed that his overall interests lay in the field of medicine. He is currently looking forward to attending the New Mexico State University main campus during the Fall 2013 Semester. He is planning to major in Pre-Medicine. Shawn has expressed that eventually he would like to transfer to Stanford University where he will continue to study medicine.

“I want to go to school for either Pharmacy or Neurosurgery. I definitely want to do something within the field of medicine, because in the future I would like to come home and work for the local Indian Health Services (IHS) Hospital.” Shawn has stated that, “Helping the members of my community is something I want to do in the near future.”

Story continued on pg. 7
The Acoma Outreach Center has had a lot of great success within the month of April. Rachelle and I are happy to report that two of our current ABE students have successfully passed a portion of their GED Exams and are ready to graduate from the GED program. We are confident that these two students will complete their GED courses and exams by the month of June.

In addition, we have successfully enrolled four new students into our ABE program. We are looking forward to working with each of these individual students, as we have extended our in-class testing by one additional week. It is our hope that this extended week of in-class testing will help our students study and prepare for their official GED exams.

So far the activities for the month of April have included participation in the Pueblo of Acoma Spring Break Outreach Program & College and Career Fair. This was held at the Acoma Community Center April 8-11, 2013.

The Spring Break Outreach Program was a great opportunity for the local youth to learn more about different colleges and career options. Several of the activities presented for the youth included: presentations on Suicide Prevention and Awareness, Home Safety, School Bullying, Social Networking, the History of Acoma, Healthy Nutrition, Science Activities, and the History of the American Flag.

The overall purpose of the Spring Break Outreach Program was to encourage the youth to continue their education and pursue a college degree by inspiring them to pursue different avenues of education that peak their interests.

The Acoma Outreach Center has received positive feedback from the students and community members who utilize our services. Many of our students do come in to utilize our Outreach Center to get help with their homework, build their resumes, and check their email. In the end, Rachelle and I look forward to this coming month as we anticipate an abundance of future success.

-Ergil Vallo Jr

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The Acoma Adult Education Center has two tutors available to help assist you in achieving your academic goals. We are ready and willing to work with any and all students.

Ergil Vallo is a professional tutor who specializes in writing and Sherri Howeya who specializes in math.

We are located in the Acoma Department of Education building and please feel free to contact us:

Acoma Adult Education Center
49 Pinkshaari Dr.
Pueblo of Acoma, NM 87004
(505) 552-6077

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What does this mean to you?
It means that if you are a current student of the GED program and have not yet passed all five subject areas of the GED by the start of January 2014, you will have to start all over again using the computer based GED program. Meaning your scores will be wiped clean!

In addition, the cost of test taking is expected to increase dramatically!!! Students will no longer be charged a $27.00 fee but will be charged $140 per test.

The Acoma Adult Education Outreach Center, in collaboration with the New Mexico State University Grants Campus, is offering free GED services to the Pueblo of Acoma Community.

We are ready and willing to work with any community members who are interested in attaining their GED or pursuing their goals of a higher education! We currently offer tutoring services for Math and Writing, basic computer skills, and assistance with college or dual enrollment applications.

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GET YOUR GED BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!!!
There is no doubt that Shawn will continue to excel in his efforts to pursue a higher education. He has already been ranked within the top 5% of his high school class, and is also a member of the National Honor Society. Additionally, he is the Secretary of Student Council and a member of the Future Educators of America (FEA). Shawn’s favorite hobbies and activities include cooking, beading, painting, having fun with friends, and traditional dancing and singing.

“Tradition plays an important role in my education and life” Shawn explained, “I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to learn my Keresan language while attending the Laguna-Acoma High School, because so many Acoma students don’t have that same opportunity to. I would say that it was one of my favorite classes, along with English and Math.”

When asked what has contributed most to his overall success in receiving the Gates Scholarship, Shawn replied, “Self motivation and the determination to get the rigorous application done, because it requires more information than any normal scholarship application package. Also, I believe that school has helped me to learn how to prioritize my activities, and having great people to support me such as, Dr. Shawn Secatero, Rachelle Simpson, Marsha Leno, my counselor Debbie Sanchez, and my family have helped me to achieve my goal of receiving the Gates Millennium Scholarship.”

Now, as graduation day approaches, Shawn reflects upon his own personal high school experience and offers this advice to other students of the Cibola County area, “Don’t give up! Stay on task because it’s only going to be rewarding in the end. Even when times get rough, don’t give up, because in the end you will be able to receive scholarships and attend any college you wish to go to. In addition, always remember who you are and where you come from, because that is who you will always represent.” When asked what he will take away from his high school experience, Shawn replied, “The memories, the friendships, the hardships and challenges that have helped me to grow as a person, and the overall lessons I have learned about self determination and perseverance.” With that said, we here at the Sacred Mountain Storyteller wish Shawn Aragon the best of luck in his future endeavors, Congratulations Shawn!

Hello everyone! We would like to share with you that our To’Hajiilee ABE Outreach Center is running very smoothly with the enrollment increasing. We have a total of 35 GED students as of April 30, 2013. Out of the 35 students we have at least 7 students who attend classes 3 or 4 days out of the week. These students are working very hard in learning and studying in all subject areas as they would like to be fully prepared before they take their official GED test. Their goal is to take their official GED test in the fall and pass the test, as they are fully aware of the changes to the cost of testing which will increase in January 2014. We are very proud of our students who are taking the time out of their busy schedule to attend classes. An official date has been schedule for our one week Educational Summer Program on August 5 – 9, 2013 that will be taught by a group of Columbia University Native American Students. We are very thankful that they were able to consider our To’Hajiilee Community as one of their selecting sites. This gives our Navajo children in learning more information about the educational opportunities that are available away from home. We are very excited and looking forward to working with them.

The few events that are coming up within our community include the annual To’Hajiilee EMS week from May 19 – 25, 2013 that includes Mini bike safety class, Fun – Run Walk, Career Day, etc., and the local To’Hajiilee Community School end of the year festivities which are FACE (Family and Child Education), Kindergarten, Fifth Grade, and Eight grade promotions, Sports Banquets for Elementary, Mid-School, and High School Students, and High School graduation.

We would like to thank Louis and David for installing the AccuTrack here at our outreach center. Thank you!

To’Hajiilee ABE Staff
Get ready for our Spring and Summer Event!!!

Fry Bread Contest
Car Show
Kids Games

Saturday, May 11, 2013
9:00AM - 1:00PM
Fidel Gym - NMSU Grants Campus
Basic Ingredients will be provided

Everyone is Welcome to Join!!!

ALCOHOL & DRUG FREE EVENT!!
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THEFTS, ACCIDENTS, OR INJURIES.

Frybread Contest
Kids Games
Fun! Fun! Fun!

Saturday, May 11, 2013
10:00AM - 4:00PM
Fidel Gym - New Mexico State University - Grants Campus
Hosted by: NMSSC - Grants Campus Native American Club
Sponsored by: Associated Student Government

For More Information, Call
NMSU Grants House @ (505) 287 - 6699
Krystal Miller @ (505) 287 - 6672 / 382 - 3300
Vyon Quinn @ (505) 288 - 8248

2013 Summer Dual Enrollment Academies

Computer Science Academy:
June 3 - 13, 2013
- Learn what it takes to create a marketable business plan using the latest computer programs
- Entrepreneurial tactics and skills
- HANDS-ON projects
- Explore native medical qualities and healing herbs

Science, Math, Engineering, Technology Academy:
June 17 - 27, 2013
- Learn about the natural environment and its impact on health and wellbeing
- HANDS-ON projects
- Explore native medical qualities and healing herbs

Southwest Studies Academy:
July 22 - August 1, 2013
- Learn why people settled in the southwest, its culture and history
- Learn the construction of an adobe horno oven and the works of agricultural planting

Eligibility
- NMSU Grants Service Area Resident
- Enrolled at least half-time in high school
- Be an incoming high school Freshman thru Senior attending a BCS School.
- 2.25 CUM GPA or higher

Application Process
- Complete NMSU Grants Dual Enrollment Summer Program Application
- Send Official High School Transcripts
- Complete the NMSU Grants Dual Credit Form and Application for Admission
- Review and sign NMSU Grants Student Code of Conduct with parents

TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE
For Acoma, Laguna, and Tohajiilee residents.

* Each Academy includes a field trip and free lunch.
A Very Sad Farewell to
Hola and Ninja

The NASNTI Grant Program is sad to report that two of our beloved turtles, Hola and Ninja have passed away on April 18, 2013. Even though they lived a very short life, they were both given a proper burial.

Our condolences go out to the staff members of the NASNTI Program who lives were touched by their presence. Hola and Ninja are preceded in death by their siblings Lola and Kung Fu.