Welcome to the Native Voices newsletter!

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2019 NTFAQ Brings the Tribal Air Community Together

The 2019 National Tribal Forum on Air Quality (NTFAQ) was held, May 6-9, 2019, and hosted by the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, in southern California’s Temecula Valley. Surrounded by the stunning mountain vistas of the Pechanga Reservation, this year’s NTFAQ marked the 20th anniversary of the event which saw near-record numbers of attendees, as well as presenters, sponsors, and optional sessions to attend. With nearly half of all attendees being first-timers, there were many new connections made that will help tribes continue to build their programs, knowledge, and relationships in the coming year.

- 230 attendees representing over 131 different entities, including tribes and inter-tribal organizations, state and federal government agencies and others;
- 6 pre-farm trainings, 50 different sessions delivered by over 70 presenters & panelists;
- 30 exhibitors, including for- and non-profits, government agencies, and others;
- multiple field trips and excursions to both cultural and environmental highlights of the event. Tentative award ceremonies for the Tribal Healthy Homes Network and the Breath of Fresh Air AF Fun Run/Walk were highlights of the event.

Based on the feedback received, this year’s NTFAQ was a great success! Many attendees noted an appreciation of the diversity and quality of the presenters, particularly the breakout sessions on Climate Change and Indoor Air Quality, wildfire impacts, and methamphetamine contamination, with many positive comments commending the younger native presenters in the opening plenaries. Featuring native youth and young tribal professionals as speakers during the NTFAQ is something that many attendees found inspiring and refreshing, and we hope to continue to make the Forum a welcoming place for the younger generation of environmental stewards.

Other highlights of the event included an honor ceremony for retiring ITEP staff member Christy Nations, who will be retiring this summer. [See below for more from Christy], and the Vigil Masayesva Tribal Air Programs Excellence Award, which was presented to Gillian Gawne-Mittelstaedt of the Tribal Healthy Homes Network for her service and commitment to the health and well-being of tribes nationwide. The “Breath of Fresh Air AF Fun Run/Walk” now in its 3rd year, is proving to be one of the more popular activities around the NTFAQ. The event inspires attendees to engage in more community-building, with a focus on wellness and camaraderie (as well as some friendly competition). One attendee noted it as “a great tool to create a better atmosphere and increase the positive momentum of the Forum!”

There are many, many pieces that go into making an event like the NTFAQ a success, which rely on numerous people contributing their time, energy, and ideas to the endeavor. Even the smallest pieces make up the most significant elements that come together to make everything whole and successful. ITEP and the NTAA staff would not be able to conduct the NTFAQ without the generous contributions of the following:

Pechanga Tribal Council, Environmental & Cultural Department Staff; Pechanga Resort and Casino Management and Staff; Planning Committee and Volunteers; Sponsors, Exhibitors, and Vendors; All presenters, panelists, moderators, and other contributors. A number of resources and other information from the event can be found on the ITEP and NTAA websites, including video & photo highlights, conference program and presentations, and NTAA final summary report. Planning for the 2020 event will be underway soon and all are invited to join
Thoughts from a few NTFAQ 2019 Attendees

We asked a few of the NTFAQ 2019 attendees to share some thoughts on their experiences, and what they get out of attending the Forum. Here are their responses...

"Often in tribes we don’t know the answers to the questions we’re asking, and we have such a big collective of people that it’s good to say, ‘hey, has anyone had this problem?’ More often than not, the answer is yes. And once you find your own unique problems, people will start asking you the questions... Air quality is not as straightforward as water quality. There’s no set path in what the training should look like. We’re trying to get all the new people together to see what we’re doing, and so they can come and join us.”

— Yallen Cook, Air Quality Specialist, Grand Portage Reservation Trust Lands, Minnesota

"The biggest part is networking with other people... One time I went to a presentation and they were talking about mercury—specifically in fish—and they talked about a technique where they take a plug instead of actually killing the fish to get a sample... I brought that back for our water team, so it wasn’t just the air program that benefited, the water program benefited as well. One of the big reliefs I feel when I am here is that I can talk freely to people in my language and they understand... you can just talk and everybody picks up on it. There’s a freedom you feel from that— to talk with people who know. You just learn a lot talking with other people about their programs and what they’re doing; it’s the opportunity to learn new things you pick up on things that aren’t on the radar in your region but are in other places. You learn the bigger picture.”

— Natalie Cummings, Air Quality Program Manager, Forest County Potawatomi Community, Wisconsin

"The first day we went over the grant process. I run a CAA 103 grant, and there was already a lot of information there—just in the first hour of being at the conference. It’s going to help me write the grant for next year because I knew I wanted some projects in there but I didn’t know how to word it. Everybody should come... if you’re an air quality technician, come. If you work with Tribes, come. Even if you’re a Councilman for your tribe, you should come. These are problems that everybody’s facing and air quality is a health issue, not just an environmental issue, not just about the grass or trees. It’s about you and me and our kids and the next generations that come, everybody should be here.”

— Taylor Hall, Air Quality Coordinator, Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska, Kansas

"Coming in and starting a new program has really been a challenge. [NTFAQ] has been an opportunity to connect with a lot of tribal air program professionals here... it is a great one-stop shop for me in terms of trying to gain information to help in the development of the program. What I think is so unique in that I honestly think we can all stand up and say that our goals are the same—protecting human health and the environment... and from there, I think we need to celebrate all the different programs that are out there. There’s such a uniqueness in terms of issues that all environment folks and air folks here are really trying to address. And that’s the way it should be. It really diminishes the uniqueness of the tribe and the particular situation when we think about that uniformly...”

— Scott Hansen, Environmental Services Director, Catawba Indian Nation, South Carolina
Thank you all for attending! See you next year!

“IF tribes are new to air, rTF is a good place to get a broad overview. It provides everything from ambient air, to climate change, to upcoming rules, to how tribes are running their own programs, to indoor air quality, to technical support—from monitoring to emissions inventory development. For tribes that have been around (air) for a while, it’s a good way to see what other tribes are doing so you can grow your program. You not only have rTF or EPA or the state agencies, but you also have each other. Tribe to-tribe support is so invaluable for tribes as they’re starting their (air) program even when they’ve been working in their programs and they come up against a wall. It’s an important way to provide resources for tribal governments, and besides, it’s just a lot of fun.”
—Laura McKinney, Group Leader of the Community and Tribal Programs for the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards for the EPA, Research Triangle Park, NC

“I came to rTFAQ because we have an air monitoring system in our reservation. It’s really important for me to keep updated on what’s going on with new air quality technology. This year I attended the Smart Technology session and was heard about the new air monitors that are out—you can travel with them. They also have smaller ones where it reads different things rather than just pm2.5. Other things people get out of the conference is to be able to see the other reservations and how they’re running their programs, and the different cultural aspects and plants they have. We have a two thousand year-old oak called the Great Oak, things of that matter where you travel you should respect the environment and the earth...”
—Kathy Moses, Cowlville Confederated Tribes Environmental Trust Program, Public Information Officer for Mount Tolman Fire Center, Confederated Tribes of the Cowlitz Reservation, Washington

“Currently on issue I want to raise awareness around is meth and the effects of meth in homes...We’re helping to bring more awareness and we have a lot of people come to our table at the Networking Session...If you’re new to air with your tribe or in the EPA department, come to rTFAQ. Also, rTF’s online website is good. They have a lot of free training for somebody who’s new to their position, whether it be air, water or solid waste. I am also a member of the TAMS Steering Committee, we have a lot of things that are bring to the table. The TAMS Center has a loan program so if you don’t have it in your budget to buy equipment, TAMS has an opportunity to lend you equipment. It’s a great networking place here at rTFAQ, not only for that but to learn more about rTF, rTFAQ and TAMS.”
—Camille Duckbear, Cowlitz Air Alliance Coordinator, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, South Dakota

“I came back this year because I am trying to get as much information as possible, I’ve networked a lot, and I know a lot of people who can help guide me along the way. I think it’s all my favorite. I get excited and overwhelmed about all the different break out sessions and things like that. It’s a lot of knowledge. I feel really good because I’ve met a lot of people along the way so when I got here last night and this morning I felt happy to be grateful to know so many people. It’s really nice.”
—Crystal Romero, Ohio-Minnesota Environmental Department, Oklahoma

**Thank you all for attending! See you next year!**
American Indian Air Quality Training Program (AIAQTP) In-Person Training Courses

Participants for the Air Pollution Technology course in Flagstaff, AZ, March 12-15, 2019

Spring 2019 has been very rewarding for the AIAQTP training staff. Many individuals completed multiple courses over the last couple of months. AIAQTP had the honor of training and engaging with 84 participants from the following courses:

- Air Pollution Technology in Flagstaff, AZ
- Air Quality in Alaska Native Communities in Kotzebue, AK
- Air Quality Planning for Wildland Smoke in Boise, ID
- Air Quality Project Planning, QAPPs, and Grants for Alaska in Anchorage, AK
- Introduction to Tribal Air Quality in Flagstaff, AZ

Participants for the Introduction to Tribal Air Quality course in Flagstaff, AZ, June 4-7, 2019

At the AIAQTP courses, participants engaged in small group activities, gained hands-on experience in labs, and learned from both the instructors and other participants. Participants in courses went home with new knowledge in: criteria pollutants, air toxics, pH, climate change, indoor air quality, green cleaning, QAPPs, program management, work plan development, wildfire smoke risk, community outreach/education, air monitoring technology, and monitoring systems. Days were packed with lectures, activities and in some courses evening homework. As participants continue to progress through ITEP training courses, new friendships are made and bonds are created to strengthen tribal air quality programs. Thank you to all our participants and instructors!

ITEP’s American Indian Air Quality Training Program (AIAQTP) has a full slate of courses coming up! Planning for FY2020 in-person courses is in progress, to view the schedule and to download a course announcement and application go to nau.edu/airquality. Upcoming courses are also listed in the section below.

Additional in-person trainings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Course Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Pollution and Ecosystems</td>
<td>July 23-26</td>
<td>Flagstaff, AZ</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>R and Environmental Data Analysis</td>
<td>August 6-8</td>
<td>Temecula, CA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment as a State (TAS) for Air Quality</td>
<td>September 10-11</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
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<td>Indoor Air Quality</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAQ Diagnostic Tools</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meteorological Monitoring</td>
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Stay tuned at [http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/Training/training_air for more updates](http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/Training/training_air)
**Online Training Opportunities**

The following self-paced, online courses are currently available through ITEP:
- Residential Building Science Review
- Building Performance: Improving IAQ in Cold Climates
- Quality Assurance Fundamentals / QAPP Series
- Radon Fundamentals
- Emissions Inventory Fundamentals / Advanced *
- Tribal Data Toolbox Version 5.1 *
- Partnerships and Community Outreach **
- Tribal Strategic Planning: Ensuring Successful Development of Your ETEP **

*Requires instructor approval.
** Fee-based courses.

These online courses contain assignments, quizzes, videos, examples, downloadable spreadsheets, and other resources. While they are self-paced, each course provides the opportunity for individual interaction with subject matter experts.

See [www.nau.edu/tep/elearning](http://www.nau.edu/tep/elearning) for details or email professional@nau.edu with questions.

**Tribal Air Monitoring Support (TAMS) Center**

*Fundamentals of Air Monitoring Course*

In April, the TAMS Steering Committee selected Tennille Denetdeel (Navajo Nation) to replace a Steering Committee member who was unable to complete their term. Tennille has been working with the Navajo Nation EPA Air Quality Control Program since 2010 as a Senior Environmental Specialist. Welcome, Tennille!

The TAMS Steering Committee met in March at the Learning Center and discussed several issues and initiatives including:
- Setting up subcommittees to begin development on the next TAMS Technical Services Needs Assessment and the Regional Air Monitoring Equipment Inventory
- Working with EPA Office of Air and Radiation (OAR) to develop a Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET) workgroup for tribes.
- Lastly, the TAMS Center is working with several tribal staff to develop a new data management tool called Quality Review and Exchange System for Tribes (QREST). This tool will be designed and developed to assist tribes with air quality data management, validation, and reporting. Stay tuned for more details and information!

*TAMS Steering Committee Meeting Updates*

Sixteen (16) tribal professionals attended the Fundamentals of Air Monitoring Course held at the TAMS Center on April 11-18 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Michael King (TAMS) headed the course as lead instructor with Darold Wallick (Pala Band of Mission Indians) and Stan Baldwin (Shoshone-Bannock Tribes) present as tribal instructors. Participants received information and hands-on engagement on a variety of air monitoring equipment.

Additional information on the TAMS SC and the TAMS Center can be found at [www.nau.edu/tams](http://www.nau.edu/tams) or by calling the TAMS Center at (702) 784-8264.

**Get Your AQS Questions Answered!**

The Air Quality System (AQS) is the EPA central repository of ambient air monitoring data. If you submit your air monitoring data to AQS, you might have some questions on AQS. Every two months, Pamela McIntyre of the AQS Helpline hosts an online question and answer session for AQS tribal users. The question and answer format allows users to pose questions and Pamela then demonstrates the answer in AQS. You can either email your question before the session or ask your question during the session. If there are not any questions posed, Pamela uses the session to refresh your memory on different aspects of AQS.

If you are an AQS tribal user, you should already be receiving emails from Pamela every two months that announce these sessions and include the link to log into these sessions. These sessions are usually held the second Wednesday of every other month at 2 PM Eastern. Below is a schedule of upcoming sessions:
- **Wednesday, July 10, 2019** at 2pm Eastern, 1pm Central, 12pm Mountain, 11am Pacific, 10am Alaska
- **Wednesday, September 11, 2019** at 2pm Eastern, 1pm Central, 12pm Mountain, 11am Pacific, 10am Alaska
- **Wednesday, November 13, 2019** at 2pm Eastern, 1pm Central, 12pm Mountain, 11pm Pacific, 10am Alaska

The AQS Calendar of Events lists upcoming sessions. You may also contact Pamela McIntyre at mcintyre.pamela@epa.gov if you would like to be added to the email announcements.

**Environmental Education Outreach Program (EEOP)**

*Monitoring Air Quality*

At the recent National Tribal Forum on Air Quality, there were a couple of presentations on monitoring wildfire smoke using a low-cost sensors from Purple Air. Orly Stampfer, a University of Washington PhD student in Environmental and Occupational Health, describes her research using the Purple Air monitor.

*Using low-cost monitors for Tulalip Tribes wildfire smoke preparedness* By Orly Stampfer, University of Washington
As wildfire season approaches, low cost air sensors could be useful in monitoring changes in indoor and outdoor air. Tulalip Tribes Air Quality and Community Health staff are developing a smoke response plan, which combines new air monitoring data with the development of various communications channels. Local air quality data may be more meaningful to the community than regional data, and these new air monitors are intended to provide local, real-time data to community members.

### The Process
We initially purchased four low cost Purple Air monitors, which contain two particle counters (Plantower sensors) that measure the number of particles per volume of air. Based on that count, the monitors estimate the mass concentration of PM1, PM2.5, and PM10. The Purple Air monitors can be connected to WiFi and display real-time data on a publicly accessible map.

We worked with the local air agency (Puget Sound Clean Air Agency) to co-locate the Purple Air monitors with the closest FEM. Based on a 6-week co-location capturing a wide range of PM2.5 levels, we calculated sensor-specific calibration equations based on linear regression parameters derived from hourly average data. Without applying the calibration equations, the Purple Air PM2.5 estimates tended to be higher (sometimes twice as high) as the FEM. With the application of the calibration equations, the Purple Air PM2.5 estimates were similar to the FEM. The Purple Air map displays the uncalibrated data. We are interested in:

- Differences in ambient PM2.5 across the reservation
- How indoor air quality compares to outdoor air quality during periods of wildfire smoke
- The feasibility of establishing a clean air shelter to be used during periods of wildfire smoke

To start addressing these questions, we placed one monitor outside on one side of the reservation, monitors indoors and outdoors at the early learning center on the other side of the reservation, and one monitor indoors at a teen center gym nearby the early learning center that could potentially be used as a clean air shelter. We recently purchased a fifth monitor which we placed outside of the gym. We did not have time to co-locate this new monitor with the nearby FEM, so we plan to apply an average calibration equation based on the equations for the other four monitors.

During this upcoming wildfire smoke season, we expect that the Purple Air data from the early learning center will be useful in informing decisions about when children should spend time outside. While the real-time data displayed on the map is uncalibrated, so the absolute numbers may not be useful, the comparisons between the indoor and outdoor monitors can still be meaningful. The data from the teen center could be used in a similar way to inform decisions about indoor vs. outdoor activities.

Next Steps
Our next steps include exploring ways to easily share and display calibrated data so that the monitors estimate the mass concentration of PM1, PM2.5, and PM10. The Purple Air sensors) that measure the number of particles per volume of air. Based on that count, the monitors estimate the mass concentration of PM1, PM2.5, and PM10. The Purple Air monitors can be connected to WiFi and display real-time data on a publicly accessible map. The data from the teen center will be useful in informing decisions about when children should spend time outside. While the real-time data displayed on the map is uncalibrated, so the absolute numbers may not be useful, the comparisons between the indoor and outdoor monitors can still be meaningful. The data from the teen center could be used in a similar way to inform decisions about indoor vs. outdoor activities.

### Purple Air Sensors in Rural Alaska

As the green dot appears on the Purple Air map indicating a new online air sensor, I feel a sense of excitement: this means data for Dr. Jingqiu Mao at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to study devastating Alaskan wildfires. More importantly it is also data for Alaskan tribes to monitor the air quality of their communities in real time.

While talking to an interested tribal leader recently, they became very excited about the prospect of the installation of a Purple Air sensor so that they can better serve their Elders. Often times it is our Elders who are most affected by poor air quality. Knowing the particulates in the air and the pollution from wildfires, road dust, or dust storms will alert the community to check on their Elders more frequently, and even move them out of that region if the pollution becomes too severe. The future data can also be used to apply for air quality grants and/or additional funding. It is intended to be another tool for tribal members and tribal councils to use at their discretion.

The installation of Purple Air sensors is very easy. With access to WiFi and an outdoor power source you have all the requirements to set one up. A contact that I talked to asked me, “Well how many days will it take you to construct the air sensor?” I smiled while responding that the sensors are actually about the size of a large coffee cup and need only one screw (or zip tie) to secure them in place. They also come with a long power cord for issues such as impenetrable siding or limited outdoor outlets that I have found can often come in handy. After Dr. Mao tested air sensors all winter in Fairbanks, Alaska, we can also say that they are quite weather resistant even to extreme temperatures and snow.

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"Local air quality data may be more meaningful to the community than regional data, and these new air monitors are intended to provide local, real-time data to community members."
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so interesting. Even here in ITEP, like with Nikki Cooley, there was an article more traditional Navajo culture. I really believe I learned some of who I am when I married my first which he taught to his children. I regret as an adult now sometimes: I should have been taught from the Fort gatherings like powwow.

What is most memorable to you about the Auberle interviewed me. A week later used to send out paperwork, or it would be published was to process timesheets for all the teachers that we hired from the reservation. So that was my move to Flagstaff, Durango, or Taos. And somehow, Flagstaff was meant to be, that's where Creator wanted me to be. I was so lucky to have been hired at Northern Arizona University with the Education Support Programs working with high school students for ten years before working with ITEP. During the summer times we would have Native American students on campus and my

What I've learned is how important it is to be who I am, a Native American woman and I'm very proud of that. I was never taught that when I was a child. It took ITEP and going to Native American schools to process timesheets for all the teachers that we hired from the reservation. So that was my move to Flagstaff, Durango, or Taos. And somehow, Flagstaff was meant to be, that's where Creator wanted me to be. I was so lucky to have been hired at Northern Arizona University with the Education Support Programs working with high school students for ten years before working with ITEP. During the summer times we would have Native American students on campus and my

It has been a great honor to be invited into rural Alaskan communities to facilitate their addition to this air quality project which serves children, Elders, and all people. As I make my way around to rural Alaskan communities, I see the beauty and peace that living in those regions provides. Being able to connect and preserve the people and land from wildfires and other air pollution is the driving force behind this project.

What do you hope to accomplish during your term with ITEP? The ITEP Matriarch, to Retire

Christy has worked with ITEP from its very first days, back in the early 1990s, serving as an assistant to ITEP’s Director, Virgil Masayesva, and Curriculum Coordinator, Dr. Pat Ellsworth. Having worked with other programs on campus for a number of years, Christy’s knowledge of the various programs and staff helped ITEP establish a foothold on the campus, which has continued to grow in the 27+ years since. Overall, Christy has served as a mentor for many of the staff and native youth that participate in and support our programs. She volunteers to help many different needs within our community at large, always an eager representative and volunteer not only for NAU as a whole, but also for initiatives related to veterans, elders, and the natural environment.

In anticipation of Christy’s departure, we asked her to share a few thoughts with readers:

“My mother is from the Fort McDowell Apache Nation and my father is Navajo, from the Red Water Flows Together Clan. I was born in Phoenix, AZ but I did not want to live there. My father was raised in the Canyon del Muerto and that’s my original home. When I got married I moved from Chiricahua, Arizona to Flagstaff, Arizona with my family. At that time, my husband and I were thinking, ‘we can move to Flagstaff, Durango, or Taos.’ And somehow, Flagstaff was meant to be, that’s where Creator wanted me to be. I was so lucky to have been hired at Northern Arizona University with the Education Support Programs working with high school students for ten years before working with ITEP. During the summer times we would have Native American students on campus and my job was to process timesheets for all the teachers that we hired from the reservation. So that was my start and my foot in the door at the time. I camped in the ITEP job opening on campus and they used to send out paperwork, or it would be published on a bulletin board. Virgil Masayesva and Bill Auberle interviewed me. A week later, they told me that I had gotten the job.”

What is most memorable to you about the air quality training courses? "I started going to the air quality trainings and a lot of them were far away. One of my favorite places was Wisconsin, it’s so green there, and going to the different places in Alaska: Bethel, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. That was a great experience for me: seeing and meeting different participants from the villages there. I also went to New York, Chicago, Las Vegas, Seattle, Oklahoma, and Washington for example. Working with ITEP I took me all over.

It was the elders that I really enjoyed because a lot of my favorite artwork subjects are elders. I would talk to them. One lady from Alaska talked about the wild berries that grew and how she used to pick them when she was a little girl, and now it’s not plentiful anymore due to climate change and the permafrost melting. I didn’t know what permafrost was. Another dear person I met was Rosalie Kalistook. Her grandpa made earrings and the hook wasn’t metal, it was real walrus tusk. She gave me a pair of white tusk earrings which I cherish a lot and still have. Another elder was Clarence Mojados from Pala, California. I was a driver for a field trip and we went out to the Grand Canyon. For a lot of the participants it was their first time and they ‘never seen the Chasm. We went to the gift shop and I was standing there with Clarence and he said, ‘I’m going to get some earrings for a good friend, which one would you choose Chrisy?’ And I was looking at them and said ‘I like this one, it’s copper. It represents the state of AZ...’ It was really nice, it had little deer on them. So he went and he bought it, and then he came back and said, ‘here you go...’ I really liked Clarence. There are other elders that I met throughout the states but I can’t remember their names, [they’re] real special people.”

What have you learned about yourself after all these years working with ITEP and tribes? "What I’ve learned is how important it is to be who I am, a Native American woman and I’m very proud of that. I was never taught that when I was a child. It took ITEP and going to Native American gatherings like powwoos, to really find the true me. My parents didn’t teach me that, I knew I was from the Fort McDowell/Yavapai Nation through my mother, and that my dad’s side is Navajo. Boarding school took out the Native American piece of who he was and he was more Westernized which he taught to his children. I regret as an adult now sometimes: I should have been taught more traditional Navajo culture. I really believe I learned some who of me when I married my first husband because his family was very traditional and I was taught why things happen and even how to do this, not to do that. Now I listen to some of the [training] participants and their stories are so interesting. Even here in ITEP, like with Nikki [Cooley], there was an article by her about climate change and how plants for ceremonies are changing. The plant arrival times are changing, I see that, even down in the Canyon del Muerto."
the more we teach them now, the more they are prepared to help our communities in the future.

Emphasized the hands assisting with student outreach.

Information is on young person’s intern in the summer of 2020. The experience will both be valuable for you but also will help a

Assessing tribal air quality data and developing climate adaptation center projects.

University of Alaska, Fairbanks (AK); Southwest Environmental Health Center, University of Washington (WA); Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (MI); Navajo Nation EPA (AZ); Big Pine (CA); and Northern Central Climate Adaptation Center (CO). Intern projects include: developing a.

Well done everyone!

In my internship, I learned to “make it work.” (Learned a lot of other things too, but that is what I am going to miss most about my work with ITEP.)

Hello everyone, it’s finally summer here in Flagstaff. We had our last snow storm on May 23rd, then skipped right into summer. I hope your summer is off to nice start. So how did you like NTFAQ 2019? For those who attended, thank you for joining us this year. I enjoyed seeing everyone and meeting new folks.

I am grateful to the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, and their Chairman and Council members for welcoming us to their homeland so warmly. A special shout out to Kelsey Stricker, who coordinated the efforts of her staff in the Environmental Department, as well as those of the Band’s Cultural Department and Casino Sustainability staff. They went above and beyond to accommodate all our requests and really made it a memorable event.

The facilities were extraordinary, set in the misty mountains of southern California, and the staff were attentive and friendly. I attended several workshops and learned a lot of new things. Thank you to all the presenters, and to the entire 2019 Planning Committee, who spent many months working on the details to make the NTFAQ 2019 a wonderful event.

I’m going to miss the people I work with, I’m trying not to feel down or get sad. I’ll also miss going places and traveling. My last travel was to Pehcanga [for NTF]. I’ll miss meeting new people and seeing the people I’ve already met, the Airhead family.

Plans do you have for your future?

Flagstaff is my home now. My original home is Canyon del Muerto, that will always be my home. I will miss all of you. When I go to places, like NTF, I see young participants. I remember one person from Mississippi who looks like he’s fifteen years old and is running an air program. It was the first time I saw this participant and we kept hugging each other; he’d come the next day and that was his ‘good morning’ to me. These people are so young and they’re working with tribes on air, recycling, waste, and others. I like seeing that because they’re going to start a new generation of keepers of the land.

Ever since I started working at NAU the people that I’ve worked with come to mind. I see their faces, I remember Virgil [Masayesva]. Then came Pat [Ellsworth], then Carol [Seumptewa], and Terry Baxter... and ITEP just grew. All these people that passed through the doors of ITEP, I am going to miss working with ITEP and its people.

What also I love about retiring are the little gifts—it’s encouraging me and pushing me. I’ll get up early in the morning with a cup of coffee, I have a deck that faces east, and once the sun comes up and I’ll look at the sky. The sun isn’t up yet and I’ll think, ‘How did you do that God? How did you blend that pink and orange into the dark purple sky?’ It’s so beautiful, and there’s the moon…if I could just capture this on canvas… And I will.

For anyone wanting to share parting thoughts or well-wishes with Christy, feel free to contact her at Christy.Nations@nau.edu or by phone at 928-523-7792.

From the Executive Director...

Hello everyone, it’s finally summer here in Flagstaff. We had our last snow storm on May 23rd, then skipped right into summer. I hope your summer is off to nice start. So how did you like NTFAQ 2019? For those who attended, thank you for joining us this year. I enjoyed seeing everyone and meeting new folks.

I am grateful to the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, and their Chairman and Council members for welcoming us to their homeland so warmly. A special shout out to Kelsey Stricker, who coordinated the efforts of her staff in the Environmental Department, as well as those of the Band’s Cultural Department and Casino Sustainability staff. They went above and beyond to accommodate all our requests and really made it a memorable event.

The facilities were extraordinary, set in the misty mountains of southern California, and the staff were attentive and friendly. I attended several workshops and learned a lot of new things. Thank you to all the presenters, and to the entire 2019 Planning Committee, who spent many months working on the details to make the NTFAQ 2019 a wonderful event.

Well done everyone! Here is our highlight video of the NTFAQ 2019—we look forward to seeing you in 2020!

As we move into summer here at ITEP, we always look forward to our student interns being placed with us and our partner organizations, EPA offices, and other agencies throughout the country. How many of you had an internship in college? I had several, but my most memorable one was with the CIA in Washington DC. Yes, the Central Intelligence Agency. My friend has a great saying, “make it work.”

In my internship, I learned to “make it work.” (Learned a lot of other things too, but that is what I’m allowed to say.) Back to our ITEP’s interns, I’m excited and honored to announce that we have

Ta’Kaiya and I were two of less than 10 that showed up. (Evidently, there was another text message that went out that said that the service had been moved to Effiel Tower, which we missed.) As fate would have it, I was able to have a long conversation with her on that cold and wet morning. We stood and talked about all the incredible work she was doing.
At 13, she was already a celebrated activist, actor, song writer, singer, United Nations star, and overall, very wise young warrior. Needless to say, I was incredibly impressed. What struck me most was her ability to speak about incredibly difficult issues like climate change with poise, grace and hope. This 7th generation leader, I noticed, has that gift. Of course, being who she is, she had her film crew with her that morning. So, we got a shot of us standing in solidarity for our Indigenous Peoples.

I met her again in Washington at the Canoe Journeys celebration. She’s still an amazing young lady with a very bright future. If you want to meet her, I’m happy to announce that Ms. Ta’Kaiya Blaney will be a guest speaker at the 2019 Tribal Lands and Environmental Forum (TLEF2019) in Palm Springs this August. Here’s more information on TLEF2019: Have a great summer!

Upcoming Events

**TLEF2019**: August 19-22, 2019, Palm Springs, California: http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/Conferences/conf_tlef#registration

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