

Washington

Eastern Washington University: American Indian program celebrates 35th anniversary

THIS YEAR THE AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES PROGRAM at Eastern Washington University will celebrate its thirty-fifth anniversary with much fanfare, including the rededication of the Indian Education Centre.

Established in 1968, the American Indian Studies Program services the needs of Native American students coming primarily from the seven major tribes of the region.

Many members of the Spokane, Colville, Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, Nez Perce, and Coeur d'Alene confederations have attended the centrally located university.

Eastern has educated many of today's educators, healthcare providers, social workers, business executives, tribal leaders, planners, writers, artists, and other professionals who have chosen to return to their Indian communities to practice their professions.

Each year as many as thirty to forty tribes are represented in the thirty-five year old program that bolsters courses in introduction to Indian studies, Salish language, planning, contemporary issues, literature classes, Indian cinema, and federal (Indian) law. Although the program survived for several years without a full time director, that position has now been filled by Deirdre Almeida.

Many exciting changes are occurring. These include putting into place a recruitment plan, mentoring program, additional student counseling and advising in academics, servicing financial needs of students based upon their income, subsidized housing, and reconstructing an academic program (currently students may minor in Indian Studies). And of course, tending to students' cultural needs with quarterly activities-all of this in the program's newly refurbished 'longhouse'!

The Indian Education Center has been over-hauled from the ground up and the American Indian Program anticipates rededicating the building to meet the historical as well as newest technological needs of students as early as Fall Quarter 2002. Friends, relatives, tribal leaders, local Indian celebrities, potential students and alumni are invited to visit Eastern Washington University at that time.

For more information contact, American Indian Studies Program, Eastern Washington University, 2 IEC, Cheney, WA. 99004, 509 359-2441. ☞

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