

“Indigenous Art Show--You Can Do Anything”
Funded by the Undergraduate Student Government iChange Initiatives Fund
Arizona State University Main
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2009

ASU students to host Native American arts event

Tempe, Ariz.—The Undergraduate Student Government, of Arizona State University, recently awarded project funding to a group of Native American students at main campus. The funding is impetus for the slated “Indigenous Art Show—You Can Do Anything,” slated for Thursday, April 23, 2009, from 6:30 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. Over 10 artists will convene on the Student Services Building lawn for an evening of music, poetry, live art and the unveiling of the You Can Do Anything collection of paintings from the students.

Thomas Greyeyes (Navajo), one of the artists spearheading the project, commented with a laugh as to why the event should take place, and added, “Because it needs to happen!” Greyeyes, a sophomore in intermedia, digressed and said the project reflects politics, identity and culture. “We’re saving ourselves,” he concluded.

Co-organizer, Julius Badoni (Navajo), a senior in American Indian studies, held a toy wooden airplane as a visual aid at interview time. “Art is like an airplane ...

[the] propeller is culture,” he began and then turned the propeller to wind the rubber band rod within the toy, “it keeps it going. [These] arts and sciences are needed or it won’t move and it will be dead. We’re defining ourselves, networking through arts.” Succinctly, without the culture, there is no change or movement, said Badoni.

Through the USG iChange Initiatives Fund, Greyeyes and Badoni



(L-R) Julius Badoni and Thomas Greyeyes. (Courtesy Photo)



(L-R) Lorenashley Buford, David Rabargo and Julius Badoni. (Courtesy Photo)

submitted a proposal for grant money to get the project underway. Out of the many campus organizations that applied, the “Native American” proposal was

chosen in mid-March 2009 by a committee within the USG. “We were chosen out of so many organizations,” said Greyeyes. The Native American group has, thus far, used the bulk of the iChange funding toward the purchase of supplies, paints and canvas for the contributing artists, who are all current ASU students.

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ASU students to host Native American arts event (Continued)

Lorenashley Buford (Seminole—*Yammasssee*), a senior in American Indian studies, was selected as a artist for the upcoming event. Already with canvas and supplies, “Ashley” said there is the aspect of educating the public with alternate images of Native America that are not the “stereotype” as per usual.

“Native Americans have always been on the forefront of creative expression,” said Ashley, referencing the personalized patchwork of her Seminole people. She will be using Seminole patchwork in her art for the show and it will be like a canvas garment, she enthused.

Another undergraduate contributing to the You Can Do Anything event, David Rabargo (Navajo), a freshman majoring in computer technology and animations, said he is excited to be part of the project because he gets to create whatever he wants without being asked, “Why did you draw a

Native?” Rabargo clarified that, in the past, onlookers of his art usually did not understand why he chose to draw about “depression” or historical events like the Navajo Long Walk. Rabargo said his work is “full of heart.”

Further, Rabargo said he is referred to by his family as “the lost one” because he does not know his Navajo clans. Still, he said his girlfriend and others are helping him to understand more about his culture and background.

The You Can Do Anything project also aims to engage the public by having event-goers add their touch to a mini-wall with the use of available paints or spray paint. The mini-wall will be part of the interactive aspect of the evening.

According to Badoni, Simon J. Ortiz (Laguna), a award-winning poet and writer, who is also a faculty professor in the ASU department of English, will be part of the evenings programming.

“If you’re Native American... [the event] will make you understand more,” said Rabargo. He also said the display of art may inspire others “to do art themselves, draw, write, sing—whatever gets you through life.”

In addition to all other features that evening, there will be musical entertainment and refreshments. The Indigenous Art Show—You Can Do Anything event is free to the public (excluding parking) and all are encouraged by the organizers to attend, meet the artists and ask them questions about their art. The evenings schedule will begin at 6:30 P.M., April 23, 2009, and will be located on the Student Services Building lawn (immediately northeast of Lemon St. and Forest Ave.).

[In-kind public relations by Rutherford Ashley, ASU Senior—English Literature.]

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