

# Building an Educational Forum for Ha:šañ Prep Students

by Anahi Herrera

An invaluable component of SWEHSC's commitment to highlighting solutions to environmental health issues faced by Indigenous communities is the provision of a space for indigenous youth to further their understanding of such issues and to express their ideas for solutions. As part of our collaboration with Ha:šañ Preparatory and Leadership school, we have provided an after school environmental health club for dedicated students with the motivation and desire to broaden their understanding and awareness of environmental health issues in Native American communities. Through this after school program, students engage in discussions about recent and ongoing environmental justice issues and are encouraged to interview academics and members in their communities in order to learn about the subject matter from various perspectives.

This program is unique as it provides students the opportunity to apply their talents and skills in *Indigenous Stewards*. Students with an array of talents from writing, editing, photography, etc. find an encouraging environment and opportunity to put their skills to use while further developing their understanding of environmental health issues that are relevant to their own lives.



*Students critically think as a team to solve the "Life Span of Trash" activity at the Environmental Health Youth Conference (Photographed by IngriQue Salt).*

Students empower and encourage each other to share their ideas and to think critically about the current state of their environment and community. In addition, this program also serves to further students' academic growth and familiarity with the University of Arizona through on-campus activities and interactions with renowned UA faculty members. Students develop confidence in their academic skills and become more excited about their futures in higher education.



*Students working together on activities at the Environmental Health Youth Conference at the University of Arizona (Photographed by IngriQue Salt)*

## Artist Bio - Ryan Smith

by Gilbert Lujan Rivera, Jr.

### Education

Bachelors of Fine Art; Emphasis: Illustration, The University of Arizona 1994

Certified 2-D Art, The Institute of American Indian Arts 1987



### About Ryan

Ryan is Chemehuevi and Navajo and a member of the Colorado River Indian Tribes in Parker, Arizona. He has participated in Indian art markets such as the Heard Museum Guild Indian Art Fair and Market and the Prescott Indian Art Market. In 1996, he illustrated *Tribal Force* which was the first mainstream comic book created by a Native American writer and artist. He currently resides in Tucson, Az and works as a high school teacher at Ha:šañ Preparatory and Leadership School and as a Freelance Artist/Illustrator.

*Smith enjoys time at the Ha:šañ Environmental Youth Conference (Photographed by IngriQue Salt).*

### The Cover

"As you know, water is a vital resource as it is used for drinking, farming, livestock, and recreation. Therefore, accidents such as contaminants being spilled into our streams, lakes and rivers threaten these water systems as they harm fish, wildlife, and the environment."