

Ha:sañ Environmental Health Sciences Conference

By Kiana Kaye / Photos by IngriQue Salt



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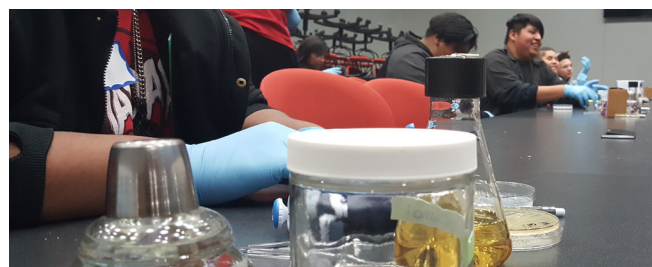
The Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center (SWEHSC) is a part of a variety of communities and organizations, which influences native youth through higher education and culture. In May 2017, SWEHSC staff members worked on contributing a full day of activities and workshops for Ha:sañ Preparatory and Leadership School students and faculty. Thirty-five high school students ranging between ninth to twelfth grade came together to engage with professors, staff, and student at the Ha:sañ Environmental Health Science Conference.



Ha:sañ youth enjoying an elimination game

Throughout the day, students participated in six different workshops that integrated environmental literacy, college preparation, traditions through science, and how to maintain a positive mindset towards education. A hands-on activity led by Kimberly Danny, first-year PhD student and researcher, gave students insight towards the importance of land reclamation in mining and environmental justice. The activity used muffins and materials to simulate the mining process for ores and other natural resources. With the activity keeping students busy, Ms. Danny continued to teach students about the importance of protecting the environment and properly reclaiming reservation land.

What the Ha:sañ students also enjoyed were the connections from University of Arizona undergraduate students mentoring them throughout each session and lending advice about what it is like being a Native American student on a large campus. Mentors had backgrounds in language studies, environmental studies, science, and public health and are leaders on UA campus. Workshops were led by presenters who have been involved with the Native American communities surrounding Tucson. All presenters influenced Native scholar empowerment through culture, environment, and education in their workshop activities.



Dr. Gerardo Lopez engages youth into science through his session, the "Mindset". Students exploring possible opportunities in higher education.



Convening the day with the Ha:sañ Closing Song outside in the grass way of Bio5 Institute