



Felise Tagaban (left) and Amanda Cheromiah (right)

Native SOAR (Student Outreach, Access and Resiliency) is a multi-generational service learning mentoring program that is offered through the College of Education at The University of Arizona. The goal of the program is to help bridge the gap between Native American communities, college enrollment, and degree attainment by using a two-tiered mentoring model. Undergraduate students not only have the opportunity to mentor local Native middle school and high school students, but are also mentored by campus graduate students and local professionals.

The program is currently overseen by Amanda Cheromiah (Pueblo of Laguna) and Felise Tagaban (Diné and Tlingit). Amanda is a life-long Native SOAR mentor; she was a part of the original cohort of students during her undergraduate years and has been consistently involved during her time as a graduate student. In the spring of 2018 she was appointed as the director for Native SOAR, while still maintaining a mentorship roll with students enrolled in the class. As a Graduate Assistant, Felise works on student recruitment, community relations and engagement, and curriculum development and management. Both Amanda and Felise are graduate students in Higher Education at The University of Arizona.

One of the highlights of the Native SOAR program is the use of digital storytelling. Digital storytelling is the use of multimedia (photos and videos) to share personal stories and ideas. As Indigenous peoples, storytelling has been a part of our culture since time immemorial. However, as time has passed and technology has progressed so have our mechanisms of storytelling. Students in the program are given the opportunity to create videos about their Native SOAR experience to share with The University of Arizona community as well as their home communities.

To see student digital stories visit:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-m7z4WHuqC8LB1ryvw93PcA/videos>

"Native SOAR is a program that I wish I had during high school. I would have had more resources in my hand while starting out college. This program allowed me to mentor and be mentored for the first time. I developed great relationships and connections with other Native people from different generations. Native SOAR has helped me see where I want to be and that is helping my community for a better future."

- Patrick Ebalarosa (San Carlos Apache)



Patrick (left) and his Native SOAR mentor Dr. Tommy Begay (right)



For more information visit:
<https://www.coe.arizona.edu/native-soar>

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