



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS: Rick Peoples
Public Information Officer
Riverside County Office of Education
Telephone: (951) 826-6642
Cell: (951) 453-1322
Fax: (951) 826-6199
Rpeoples@rcoe.us

Kenneth Shoji
Office of Public Affairs
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
Ph: 909.864.8933
kshoji@sanmanuel-nsn.gov

Ray Lopez
President
Sherman Indian Foundation
(951) 276.6325 Ext. 205
rayrale@yahoo.com

SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS DONATES \$2.5 MILLION FOR CAREER TRAINING ACADEMY AT SHERMAN INDIAN HIGH SCHOOL

Unique Partnership Among Riverside County Office of Education, Sherman Indian High School, and San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to Establish Career Pathways Program for Native American Students

Riverside, Calif. May 13, 2010—The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians announced a commitment of \$2.5 million to a program of career technical instruction offered by the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) for students of Sherman Indian High School. A press conference and announcement was held at the school in Riverside this morning and included officials from San Manuel, the United States Department of the Interior, RCOE and Sherman Indian High School administration and foundation and concluded immediately before the school's graduation ceremony.

This unique partnership of tribal, school and county entities was forged to address a need for Native American students to develop career pathways that will contribute to new opportunities for Native students and continued economic development of Native American communities. A forward thinking program, the career pathway includes an energy and utilities component that includes a "green" jobs program, preparing students in the emerging renewable energy industry.

“Education, employment and a sense of identity can prepare Native students to overcome negative obstacles which disproportionately affect Native Americans,” said Chairman James Ramos. “Native peoples on a whole face disparities in health, employment and community development. It is our hope that the pathways set out through this partnership will enable these students to make a brighter future through increased employment opportunities.”

The 2000 Census data show 25.9% of all American Indians and Alaska Natives are living below the poverty line. In contrast, the national poverty rate was 12.4% ^{□□}.

The training program for Sherman Indian School will include state approved courses that meet graduation requirements and teach skills in five career industry pathways. The five training areas will be health sciences, public services, hospitality tourism and recreation, energy and utilities, and agricultural and natural resources.

"This partnership is a blessing that will improve the quality of education for our students," said Sherman Indian Foundation President Ray Lopez. "San Manuel understands the importance of vocational education as a component of the overall Sherman experience and we will do our part to make sure we fulfill the promise of this partnership."

The program is being administered by RCOE's Career Technical Education unit in a special partnership with San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the Sherman Indian Foundation.

“The Riverside County Office of Education is pleased to be a partner in this program and I want to thank the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for their support for education,” said Kenneth M. Young, Riverside County Superintendent of Schools. “This program fits with our pledge to help all students become academically successful, graduate, and prepare for college and the workforce.”

The program is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2010 and will be funded for two years.

About Sherman Indian High School

The Sherman Indian High School is a federally-funded school located in Riverside that serves 350 students from across the United States. RCOE serves more than 420,000 students in 23 K-12 school districts throughout Riverside County offering fiscal and administrative support, instructional training, and other special programs, including Career Technical Education. Students from over sixty (60) tribes are representing, coming from over twenty (20) states throughout the nation. Sherman Indian High School is administered through the Bureau of Indian Education within the U.S. Department of the Interior.

About Sherman Indian Foundation

The Sherman Indian Foundation is a tax-exempt non-profit (501c) dedicated to the support of educating the high school students who attend Sherman Indian High School, a Bureau of Indian Education administered boarding school located in Riverside, CA. To this end, individuals on the Foundation as well as the larger body seek fiscal support along with other resources to assist the School in meeting its mission. The Foundation views its role as being that of a special trust; therefore, the Foundation manages the resources entrusted to it with extreme care and professionalism.

1. American Indian College. Fund Did You Know. Wed, 13 Jan 2010
<<http://www.collegefund.org/about/didyouknow.html>>.

About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

The San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. The Serrano Indians are the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys and mountains who share a common language and culture. The San Manuel reservation was established in 1891 and recognized as a sovereign nation with the right of self-government. Since time immemorial, the San Manuel tribal community has endured change and hardship. Amidst these challenges the tribe continued to maintain its unique form of governance. Like other governments it seeks to provide a better quality of life for its citizens by building infrastructure, maintaining civil services and promoting social, economic and cultural development. Today San Manuel tribal government oversees many governmental units including the departments of fire, public safety, education and environment.

###