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Climate Transformation and Stewardship

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AISES *Healing the Earth Conference*

This year's conference will be addressing
"Land Stewardship" in different fields of
STEAM ranging from the forest conservation,
traditional ecological knowledge, and more!

February 15th, 2025

**2025 AISES
Healing the Earth Conference
Saturday, February 15
University of California, Riverside**

Healing the Earth Conference

Land Stewardship



WELCOME!



UCR's AISES Student Chapter and Native American Student Programs have hosted the several Healing the Earth Conferences. Each year the theme has changed to reflect the times, with the students of AISES leading the way. The theme this year was selected to be *Land Stewardship* which encompasses a diverse range of perspectives and approaches.

As such we asked our students their perspectives on *Land Stewardship* and how it connects to their traditional knowledge and the knowledge of their peoples. Please take a moment to hear a few of the student voices that led to this year's theme:

"As Native peoples we are the first engineers, doctors, scientists, artists, and philosophers on this continent. It is our duty and birthright to pursue fields in STEAM. Excellence in these fields, as well as all others, is not just a part of our culture, but IS our culture. We must continue to emphasize our excellence by acting as guardians of our traditional lands, and ensuring their preservation for all future generations of Indigenous peoples."

- **Nogwa Howard Smith (AISES President - Mechanical Engineering)**

"Land stewardship is an important way for us to stay connected to ourselves, our practices, and our people. We are meant to give back to the land, which can be seen in so many different ways. I believe that land stewardship doesn't have to only be seen in us physically caring for the land, but it can be seen through making changes in legislation, science, and education."

- **Quashaunna Toledo-Scott (AISES Student Council - Psychology)**

Traditional ecological knowledge, controlled burnings, and water conservation practices are among the methods through which native people have sustainably managed and preserved these lands. Given our expertise and longstanding stewardship of these lands, it is fitting and essential that our communities, as the original and most experienced practitioners of land management, play a central role in educating others about sustainable environmental practices today.

- **Huitzilil Anahuac (NASA Treasurer - Mechanical Engineering)**

To care for the land around us is more than just keeping a place habitable, it's keeping the ground we walk on ready for those who come after us, to respect the land of the animals and ancestors who were here long before us and preserve the beauty of nature's art.

- **Aiden Osorio (AISES Student Council - Entomology)**

Coming from a matrilineal society, land stewardship is a profound interconnected relationship with the land that goes beyond mere management or ownership, but a reciprocal relationship where the land is a breathing entity that sustains us physically, spiritually, and culturally. The land is my teacher, healer, and ancestor. Holding the memories, stories, and wisdom of the ancestors who came before us. Stewardship means preserving the ancestral knowledge and traditional practices that have been passed down through generations. This knowledge is not just a set of instructions; it's a way of life, a way of being that connects me to my community and identity.

- **Alikoi Parra (AISES Treasurer - Business)**

8:30- 9:30 (SSC Lobby)

- Registration and Snacks

9:30– 10:00 (MPR)

- Welcome, Blessing, & Birdsongs
 - NASP, Michael & Will Madrigal

10:10– 10:25 (MPR)

- Introductions
 - AISES-UCR Student Chapter

10:35– 11:20 (MPR)

- Keynote: Indigenous STEM and Ecological Engineering
 - Nicholas Rajen

11:35– 12:10 (SSC 229)

- Talking Story: Lessons from the Path of Studying Trees and Animals
 - Dr. Serra Hoagland

12:25– 1:00 (SSC 229)

- Healing the Earth Spotlight Speaker
 - Assemblymember James C. Ramos

1:05 – 2:00 (MPR)

- Lunch and Closing

2:00 (UCR Campus)

- Tour



Opening Prayer/Blessing **MICHAEL MADRIGAL**

Cahuilla Band of Indians



Michael Madrigal is a citizen of the Cahuilla Band of Indians and a graduate student in the Native American / Ethnic Studies program at UCR. He is committed to strengthening the life sustaining relations between Indigenous peoples and Land. He is the current President of the Native American Land Conservancy.



Cahuilla Birdsingers **WILL MADRIGAL**

Cahuilla Band of Indians



Will Madrigal and fellow birdsingers will open the day after the blessing with Cahuilla songs, welcoming our students, staff, faculty, honored guests and attendees to these homelands of the Cahuilla, Tongva, Serrano, and Luiseño peoples.



AISES - UC Riverside Chapter



The Student Chapter of AISES at UCR consists of students from various Native American communities throughout the United States and from other diverse backgrounds. AISES is committed wholeheartedly to showcasing academic excellence, and advancing Indigenous students in STEM. These students are dedicated to establishing strong ties with neighboring Native American communities in order to increase the representation of Native American students at UCR. AISES provides a rich cultural environment through which Native American students on campus can prosper. AISES coordinates and sponsors various programs throughout the school year, with the Healing the Earth Conference as their principal event.

Native American Student Programs



Native American Student Programs (NASP) office is to provide educational, cultural, and social support for UCR students, specifically for Native American/American Indian Students. The NASP office coordinates a variety of activities and programs designed to expand education awareness for our UCR campus as well as the local communities. Additionally, NASP encourages the development and enhancement of leadership and interpersonal communication skills through active participation of students, which makes it possible to plan, organize, and implement innovative programs that promote and educate the campus community about the uniqueness of Indigenous Peoples.

HEALING THE EARTH KEYNOTE: **INDIGENOUS STEM AND ECOLOGICAL** **ENGINEERING**



NICHOLAS RAJEN

(Diné-Oneida)



Indigenous Science underpins society at local to global scales - corn and potatoes alone saved the world from hunger, indigenous women worked to bring the dawn of the computer age at Fairchild semiconductor, and many medicines have been based on and even stolen from indigenous people and communities. Settler society has been eager to steal this knowledge, and sadly not only without credit but with an active attempt to erase and squash the origins and people who learned and hold this knowledge. However this land holds memory, and it is undeniable that Indigenous knowledge must be utilized, revitalized, and respected on a kinship basis if we are going to continue to solve challenges and questions facing people and the planet. Looking at the earth and focusing in to knowledge and food systems of indigenous people, we will explore how to heal Temalpax (from the earth). Particular focus will be given to Native American food forests (and food deserts, food grasslands, etc), and the management of the Colorado River before 1492 and after 1500.

For more information on Nicholas and his work:

[HTTPS://LUCIDCATALYTICS.ORG](https://lucidcatalytics.org)



Nic Rajen (M.S. UCR Materials Science and Engineering 2018) is Kin'yaa'aanii (Towering House) and born of the people of India (Diyin Beegashi Diné), and has a career marked by laboratory and computational research, and presently soil science and Agroecology as a Natural Resources Specialist working with Intertribal Agriculture Council. An outspoken advocate for Indigenous STEM+MAP (Medicine Art and Psychology), he collaborates with fellow UCR and NASP Alumni on youth science outreach, and is a member of the AISES Region 2 Professional Chapter. He is originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. Nic visits home as often as possible and currently lives in Perris with his wife's family and their two daughters. Nic worked together with NASP, student orgs including NASA, and dear friends to help restart the UCR AISES chapter.

TALKING STORY: LESSONS FROM THE PATH OF STUDYING TREES AND ANIMALS

DR. SERRA HOAGLAND

Pueblo of Laguna



Dr. Serra Hoagland is an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Laguna and earned her PhD in Forest Science from Northern Arizona University in 2016. She received the AISES Professional of the Year Award in 2020 as the most promising scientist and is active in various intertribal organizations.

@SERRAHOAGLAND



Dr. Hoagland will inspire the audience about the power of Indigenous voices in conservation today. By sharing the lessons she has learned along the way, Serra will ‘talk story’ and inform attendees about her past experiences. The lessons shared will help us as a collective group towards healing the earth for future generations.



HEALING THE EARTH SPOTLIGHT

SPEAKER

ASSEMBLYMEMBER JAMES C. RAMOS



(Serrano/Cahuilla)



Assemblymember James C. Ramos, a lifelong resident of the San Manuel Indian Reservation and member of the Serrano/Cahuilla tribe, became the first California Native American state lawmaker in 2018. He currently represents the 45th District. Ramos is a member of the Serrano/Cahuilla tribe. As a child, Ramos lived with his family in a mobile home in one of the most poverty-stricken areas of the county. To help support his family while attending school, he worked in fast food restaurants and as a janitor in the San Bernardino City Unified School District. He received an Associate Degree in Business at Victor Valley College, a bachelor's degree in accounting at California State University, San Bernardino, and a Master of Business Administration degree at the University of Redlands. Ramos accumulated broad experience in many levels of community and government matters. Ramos' commitment to public service led to a number of firsts: first Native American named to the California State Board of Education, the San Bernardino Community College Board of Trustees, and the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. He is the former Chairman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, with a deep commitment to the preservation of California Indian culture.



Assemblymember Ramos is the first and only California Native American legislator in the state. During his tenure as Assemblymember he has championed various issues including mental health, environment, education, and public safety to name a few. He has worked tirelessly on addressing the preservation and protection of cultural resources and the landscapes that are tied to the Native Nations. Prior to his work as an Assemblymember, he worked as the Chair of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on Environmental issues such as the designation of the Sand to Snow Monument alongside then Senator Feinstein.

For more information on Assemblymember Ramos and his work:

[HTTPS://A45.ASMDC.ORG/](https://a45.asmdc.org/)

43RD ANNUAL

MEDICINE WAYS '25

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REGISTRATION & MORE INFORMATION
COMING SOON:
[NASP.UCR.EDU/EVENTS/MEDICINE-
WAYS-CONFERENCE](http://NASP.UCR.EDU/EVENTS/MEDICINE-
WAYS-CONFERENCE)



AISES-UCR and Native American Student Programs Present



HEALING THE EARTH CONFERENCE



SAVE THE DATE

February 7th, 2026

School of Medicine
Building 2
UC Riverside



Attend next year's AISES
Healing the Earth Conference
addressing different perspectives
of Native Medicines both
contemporary and traditional!