



Washington State University
David Williams

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WSU Junior an Ambassador for Native American Health Research

by Rio Fernandes

David Williams is working hard to advocate for the work being done by the American Indian Health Research & Education Alliance (AIHREA) to the people of WSU and Washington.

Williams (Gila River Pima), a junior, and an athletic training major here at WSU, serves as one of six ambassadors for AIHREA nationwide. Selected back in January, he's worked diligently spreading news of the good things the organization is doing for the Native community.

AIHREA is a group of organizations whose mission is to improve the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of American Indians. They are striving to bring together Native American communities and medical fields and look at how they can improve the health of Native Americans, said Williams.

The two primary organizations in AIHREA are the Center for American Indian Community Health at the University of Kansas Medical Center and the Center for American Indian Studies at Johnson County Community College located in Overland Park, Kansas.

Williams's cousin connected him to the ambassadorship last year because she knew of his passion for leadership and the medical field.

"It's given me the chance to get my hands into the research opportunities out there for Native Americans. It's helped with my leadership skills because I have to take initiative to find people to contribute to the research," said Williams.

The ambassadorship serves as a scholarship, but receiving the money is contingent on the amount of work put forward by the ambassador, explained Williams.

The main goal of the ambassadorship, is to grow public awareness of AIHREA, said Williams.

"The organization operates on reservation based research, which means they (AIHREA) want people from the tribes to be part of the research and give input on the research they want, so it's all for the people," said Williams.

Promoting AIHREA has taken Williams all around Washington, including to the Lummi and Quinault reservations and even various reservations in his home state of Arizona.

Workshops are William's biggest tool in trying to spread the word. He presented one here at Washington State in the Native American Student Center, using a PowerPoint, handouts, and interaction with the audience to help get his message across.

Williams has been promoting not only the program, but also trying to find someone to follow in his footsteps.

"My main focus is trying to get other people involved. I've gotten a chance to be a part of it and it's been a great experience. I think it's something other students should be a part of," said Williams.

The end of William's ambassadorship is coming quickly, and he is grateful for the opportunity he was presented.



David Williams shared a little of his language along with information about AIHREA in his presentation for students in the Native American Student Center.

"I'm mainly focused on finishing strong, and really doing this ambassadorship well," said Williams.

More info on the [American Indian Health Research & Education Alliance \(AIHREA\)](#).

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