

UC San Diego Will Mark 'California Native American Day' with Five Fall Events Beginning September 25

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UC San Diego's fourth annual "California Native American Day" won't be limited this year to just one day—the celebration has been expanded to five separate fall events to enable such diverse activities as an appearance by an internationally renowned performer and a tribute to a San Diego City School icon.

"The committee is extending its programs and events through the fall quarter as a way to create and develop connections between UC San Diego and local Native Americans," said Ross Frank, Ethnic Studies chair, "and in the process educating the UC San Diego community about the history, issues and perspectives that should be part of our educational mission."

The celebration will kick off at 11:30 a.m. Sept. 25 at the International Center when Kristie Orosco, environmental director, Rincon Luiseno Band of Indians, and board member of the Native American Environmental Protection Coalition, will speak on "Nurturing the Seed." Her talk will cover the local native environment, including the traditional use of plants among the tribal communities of San Diego. The event also will feature Bird Singers and a blessing from a tribal elder. A workshop in the Oceanids Pavilion at 1 p.m. will follow the keynote speech.

On Oct. 20, the Cross Cultural Center will present the film "Drumbeat for Mother Earth" as part of its Social Justice L.E.N.S. series. Nancy Magpusao, event chair, said the film addresses environmental injustices of toxicity and its impact on indigenous communities. The purpose and working philosophy of the L.E.N.S. series is to facilitate Leadership development, Educational engagement, Networking and Service in community-building through film and multimedia. Maria Teresa Cesena and Traci Brynne Voyles of the Ethnic Studies Department will lead discussion following the noon movie.

James Luna, described by Frank as "internationally renowned and one of San Diego's hidden treasures," will present a "performative lecture" entitled "Phantasmogoria" at 6 p.m. Oct. 23 in the Comunidad Room, Cross-Cultural Center. "In a humorous and provocative way, Luna's performance takes up serious issues of Native American and American beliefs," Frank said. Whitney Baugher, head of the Native American Student Alliance, is chairing the event.

Vickie Gambala, who has been involved with the urban Native American community in San Diego County for more than 30 years, will be honored at a Nov. 6 meeting in the Student Services Center, Multi-Purpose Room. Gambala is director of the Indian Education Title V11 program for the San Diego Unified School District and has served on numerous boards and committees in the community. "Vickie is an asset to the Indian community she serves, and demonstrates dedication seen only in San Diego's finest leaders," said Robin Wilson, chair of the American Indian Faculty and Staff Association at UC San Diego. The 6 p.m. event also will include a performance by the Native American "Soaring Eagles" dancers.

Earlier in the month, young attendees at the Early Childhood Education Center/Mesa Child Development Center were entertained by a presentation, "Running Grunion," by Abel Silvas.

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