



Native Sons



Equipping Native Leaders to Reach Native Americans

KYRENE WILLIAMS

WEIRD FACTS

- In 1567, the man said to have the longest beard in the world died after he tripped on it running away from a fire.
- The longest time between two twins being born is 87 days.
- In 2007, Corey Taylor tried to fake his own death to get out of his cell phone contract without paying a fee. It did not work.
- Everyone has a unique tongue print, just like fingerprints.
- Light does not necessarily travel at the speed of light. The slowest ever recorded moved at 38 mph.

PRAYER POINTS

- New financial partners.
- Wisdom to minister effectively.
- The spiritual and educational growth of our students.

John & Theresa Flood US Missionaries to Native Americans

4820 W. Kristal Way.
Glendale, AZ 85308
Phone: (623) 518-6775
jflood@sagu.edu
b4theflood@me.com

Field Address:
US Missions
1445 N. Booneville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802
johnflood@usmissions.org

“They are redoing the high school, but there is still a high drop out rate. Kids don’t want to go to school or learn. There is not a lot of motivation to go to school or advocates for education.” Kyrene was talking about her Rez, the White Mountain Apache Reservation. She is an Elementary Education major and wants to return home to teach. She loves Language Arts and wants to teach English in Junior High or High School. If she does so, she believes she might be the only person from her tribe to do this. Beyond teaching she wants to enter educational leadership in order to impact the educational system. “There are so many issues on the Rez. I am only one person, but I can make a difference.”

Kyrene’s father went to tech school and her mother went to college for a while, but Kyrene will be the first in her family to complete college. Not every First Nation family is supportive of education, but Kyrene’s is. Her family sent her to a private Lutheran school on the Rez through 8th grade and helps her with her college tuition. She says, “You have to work hard and get good grades in a private school, because your parents are paying.” Her family is very proud and supportive of her. Her father’s involvement in tribal leadership inspired her early to desire leadership in order to help her tribe. She has been involved in the

Youth Council, Future Business Leaders of America, and has volunteered at the Tribal Education Office and youth camps.

Although aspiring to great things, it has not



Kyrene Williams

always been easy for Kyrene. She grew up in a loving supportive home and was especially close to her father. Her parents had older children from previous marriages, but these left home when she was very young; in many ways she grew up as an only child. He parents knew and served the Lord and raised Kyrene in the church sending her to a private Christian school. Her father was not only a civic tribal leader, but also a deacon in their church. Even so, when Kyrene was 10 her parents di-

vorced. “This was shocking and it’s when a lot of my behaviors began to change. I was sad and cried a lot. As I got older I found friends from another crowd, a crowd that was not so good.” Her mom moved to Phoenix and asked her father to stay in the house on the Rez with Kyrene. “My parents communicated for my sake, and this was great for a while, but I got way out of hand and my mom had to come back.” Her parents now share the house, though they are no longer married. She remarks, “This is almost back to normal, but it’s complicated.” Her parents stopped going to church when they separated. Her dad has since returned to church, but her mother only goes on special occasions.

Like so many children and youth, Kyrene’s parents’ divorce sent her into a tail spin. However, she eventually grew tired of getting into trouble and began going to the White River AG youth group (Marty Paxton is now the pastor here). She went only to hang out, but found the youth leaders, Chiefo & Alvena Parker and the youth group very welcoming. One Wednesday when she was 17 her parents had been fighting. She says, “This was the worst, because I did not know what to do, I felt that I

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Dec. 8th marked the last day of the fall semester here at AIC, at which point our students all returned home for the Christmas break. I love teaching here and mentoring our students, but this was an exceptionally difficult semester in terms of getting students to hand in their homework. I enjoyed my History of Pentecostal Theology class at AGTS and am working on the last research paper for it.

Theresa continues to enjoy teaching. Parents often specifically requested her for their children because of her combination of solid classroom management and creative and effective teaching. Her school has been approved for a building loan and hopes to begin breaking ground soon. Theresa hopes that as the school grows that she can become a full time administrator. Theresa’s mother is again with us for the winter.

Levi and Alicia are well. Levi took a preaching class at Fuller this semester and called me to critique each of his sermons. The professor indicated that he never gives “A’s” when the class began, but Levi received “A’s” for his first two sermons. The first was on Psalm 137 and all the commentators wrote “do not preach from this text.” The second was a first person narrative from the point of view of a villager in the Prodigal Son story. He preached his last sermon at an AIC chapel. Quite a few students responded to the altar call and one professor commented on how much he appreciated the sermon and Levi’s handling of the text.

Caleb is planning on visiting us early in the New Year, which we are looking forward to. He continues to enjoy being an EMT and is taking classes to become a fireman

as well. Please continue to keep him in prayer.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



could not turn to bad things again. I was the glue holding my parents together.” She attended the youth group that night, “But I was very hurt. Everything just hurt again. I went to the altar and cried and prayed. I felt a weight lift off me and I knew it was my time to dedicate myself to the Lord and to rely on Him rather than anything else.” Her rededication to Jesus was a break-through moment and she determined to go to church every time the doors were open. That night, when she returned home she decided to have a new attitude, a good attitude that looks to the Lord. “I decided to look at positive things and pray.”

Shortly after rededicating her life to Christ Kyrene came to AIC. Her church promotes the college and has a number of students here. She came and visited the campus with her mother. Pastor Marty was a student at that time working security. He gave them a tour of the campus and talked about the advantages of small classes and teachers that minister and help students as individuals. Her father liked the idea that AIC is a Bible college. Kyrene and her mother liked the idea of a small school that had a personal touch, “What Marty said I’ve found to be true, and it’s really cool.” When she was accepted at AIC her parents were very excited, “They gave me the lectures on life, boys, and all that (it took 7 days! Hahaha!) and told me how proud they were.”

Kyrene came to AIC with a couple of her friends from church, but it was hard being away from home and she still felt that she was the glue that holds her parents together. Around the time she came to AIC her sister’s son, Ish’keen” began living with them. “They do a lot for him as my little brother.” In some ways he is now the glue for her parents and

he often pushes her father to take him to church.

There came a point, about a year and a half into her studies, when she was tempted to give up. She says, “I think I just got lazy. I told myself, ‘I can’t do it, it’s just too much. I can find a job at home.’” She talked with her sister who told her not to come back, “There is nothing here and you have already completed a year and a half. Keep going, don’t do this to our parents, they are working so you can be in college.” After her sister’s encouragement, Kyrene thought about all the friends she had made here at AIC, about the many young women she knew back on the Rez who were at home babysitting their siblings, who had become pregnant out of wedlock, and of the fact that if she dropped out she would not be able to accomplish her goals. “I thought it was a crazy idea to think about leaving.”

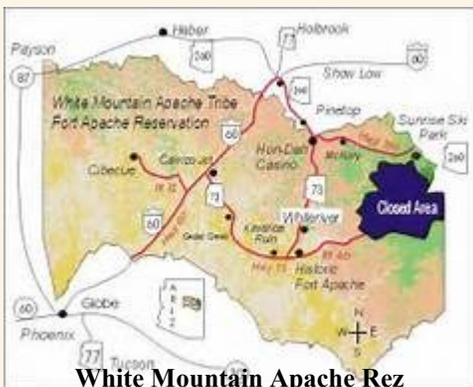
She has noticed changes and growth in herself since coming to AIC. “I am more independent, more confident. On the Rez you can get a job based on the people you know. I stayed on campus last summer and got a job working with the Boys & Girls Club of Scottsdale. “I was proud that I did this on my own. It was very different than on the Rez. On the Rez 5 people are running the whole program, they are looking for funding while trying to help the kids, and its all Native children. Here, the children come from diverse backgrounds, there are people dedicated to just finding funding and others dedicated to working with the kids. On the Rez it’s more of a process to get things done.” This past summer she worked with preschoolers through 6th graders. “I liked the 3rd graders best, they are still young enough to be fun, but old enough to play board and card games with.”

When talking about the public schools on the White Mountain Apache Rez Kyrene notes that many par-

ents send their children off the Rez to get a better education (“I wish they did not have to do that.”) and some, like her parents, send their children to a private school on the Rez, but there are not many of these. She notes that the public high school she attended had many students that would simply walk out of class, and that others were passed only because of their involvement with basketball and football. Some try to do well, but more do not. “People do not see the need on the Rez. They need help.” Kyrene plans to go back and ask, “How can I help? What can I do?” She believes there is a need for stability in the Tribal government and education. “The drug and alcohol rates are insanely high. There is a high teen pregnancy rate. Girls become pregnant and give their babies to their parents while they go out partying. Later they might go on and get their GED, which is good, but their parents are still watching their children. Without a stable home kids do not feel they need to do what they are told and they don’t have (self-) discipline.” Kyrene hopes to go back and make a difference in these areas.

Her favorite classes here are the “Methods Classes.” These focus on specific subjects and the students create curriculum and lesson plans on each subject. “You get insights on the subjects and what to teach. These classes prepare us to teach on all subjects and are like ‘pre-teaching.’”

Kyrene plans to invest her life into others. Thank all of you for your investment into her life and many like her in your support of our ministry here at AIC.



White Mountain Apache Rez

The Apache call themselves *Ndee* (nnn-day) which means “The People.” The White Mountain Apache are a part of the Western Apache and are related to the people of San Carlos, Payson, and Camp Verde as well as to the Chiricahua, Mescalero, Jicarrilla, Lipan, and Kiowa Apache.

The White Mountain Apache Tribe has about 15,000 members and the town of Whiteriver is the seat of the Tribal government. The Rez covers over 2600 square miles and covers terrain as diverse as the Salt River Canyon in its southwest corner to the sacred peak of Mt. Baldy (11,400 ft. elevation). The Rez includes some of the richest wildlife

The White Mountain Apache

in the state including elk, bear, wild horses, turkey, javelin, panthers, and wild cattle. It includes over 400 miles of streams and is home to the Apache trout, a species the Apache brought back from the edge of extinction.



Mount Baldy

The Tribe owns and runs the Fort Apache Sawmill which reopened in 2014 after years of being shut down. It employs in excess of 120 people and logs 99% of its timber from Tribal lands.

As Kyrene noted, finding work on the Rez is often a matter of who you are related to and who you know. Politics is an important fact of life on the Rez. Kyrene explained to me that people judge others based on their name, family, and where they live in town. Knowing the right person can

Tourist ski in the mountains, hunt and fish in the forests and rivers, and gamble at the HohDah Casino.



The Salt River Canyon

make the difference in finding a job, housing and so on. If you are not liked by newly elected tribal council members you can lose your job.

Drugs and alcohol problems are a serious problem on the Rez and when I visited there were numerous stores and small businesses with multiple drug addicts and alcoholics panhandling or asleep at the business entrances. Infrastructure was, and continues to be, largely ignored by the federal and state government and so The



Trophy Elk

White River Rez, like many others, has much work to do to recreate vital and healthy communities.