

A Scholar's Pace

By: Cheyenne Grabiec

What does it mean to be an Indigenous runner? How do we use running to navigate the higher education system and our everyday lives?

These are some of the questions that Amanda Cheromiah (Pueblo of Laguna) seeks to answer in her film, *A Scholar's Pace: A Running Narrative of Indigenous Feat*. She said that the inspiration for the film came from Dr. Sheila Nicholas (Hopi) in a class on Indigenous Epistemologies, ways of knowing. Dr. Nicholas had recently returned from a trip to Carlisle Indian School and began talking to the class about her clan father Lewis Tewanima (Hopi) who attended Carlisle. Despite the conditions of boarding school and being so far from home, Lewis stayed connected to his culture through running and eventually represented the United States at the Olympic Games. This story of resilience really appealed to Amanda because it reminded her of how she found running to help her achieve healing from past traumas.

When she began recruiting interviewees for the film, she reached out to individuals whom she already knew or followed through social media. It was through these first few interviews that she built more connections to other Indigenous runners from the community whom she never knew before. While recruiting for interviews she decided to not only include current runners, but also individuals who were avid runners in the past; once a runner, always a runner. At the completion of her interviews she had a total of 11 Indigenous runners, all of whom are associated with higher education in some capacity.

Amanda will debut her film on May 5, 2019 at the event, *A Scholar's Pace & Resiliency Through Running*, at The Loft Cinema in Tucson. This event will also feature a film by Alejandro Higuera (Pascua Yaqui) who is one of the individuals featured in Amanda's film. Alejandro's film *Resiliency Through Running* is a documentary about the Pascua Yaqui Tribe Flag Run which took place in the summer of 2018 to commemorate the 40 year anniversary of the tribe's federal recognition (for more about the run see page 15).

Amanda's goal is to be able to travel to different communities in Indian Country, including her home community of Laguna Pueblo, to show the film. She hopes that youth will be able to see how running is a part of our culture as Indigenous peoples, how it can be used to achieve healing, and how youth can tell a story about themselves through photos and videos; a process known as digital storytelling.



Alejandro Higuera, one of the featured runners in Amanda's film will also screen his film at The Loft Cinema on May 5, 2019
Video frame from: Amanda Cheromiah



For more information visit:
<https://loftcinema.org/film/a-scholarspace-resiliency-through-running/>

Flyer created by: Kalene Bigknife