

Grand Canyon Music Festival

2020 Lewis Prize for Music Infusion Award

Winner: President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award

NewMusic USA New Music Educators Award

Winner: Governor's Arts Award

Paula Cullison
Arizona Women's Partnership
13058 North Surrey Circle
Phoenix, AZ 85029

January 29, 2022

Dear Ms. Cullison and Arizona Women's Partnership,

We are deeply grateful to the Arizona Women's Partnership for your continued generous support of the Native American Composer Apprentice Project (NACAP).

The unprecedented challenges brought on by the pandemic have continued to affect our communities. At the start of the 2021 school year, Navajo Nation schools made the decision to prohibit outsiders from visiting their schools, and they eliminated all field trips for students.

Disappointing as that decision was, we still had remote learning options in place from the pandemic's start and were able to continue with instruction for students at our Navajo partner high schools in Chinle, Whitehorse, Tuba City, and Greyhills Academy, and at Hopi High School.

Successes:

- Like during last year's pandemic experience, we found that remote learning took longer than usual. In a normal year, we expect by mid-January to have completed most of the private lessons with the students. This year, to date, NACAP's teaching composers, Raven Chacon (Navajo Nation) and Michael Begay (Navajo Nation and NACAP alum), have tutored students from Chinle High School, Hopi High School, and Whitehorse High School in the art of composition. In-person workshops with the Catalyst Quartet were able to take place at Hopi High. Our Tuba City partner schools are slated to begin in mid-February. With no in-person activities allowed, Tuba City Boarding School arranged for an on-line program with the Catalyst Quartet for their students.

- **Yo-Yo Ma** invited two of our NACAP students, Arika Morningstar and Christina Shupla (Hopi Nation) and Raven Chacon and Michael Begay to join him on November 11, 2021, at the Grand Canyon for a day of musical and cultural sharing and exploration. Our 2 students wrote new music for him, which he performed, and Michael and Raven shared some of their music with him as well. Attached are a few photos from the day.

- The Native American Composer Apprentice Project has been chosen by the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation as part of their first **SHIFT: Transformative Change and Indigenous Art** cohort, a program to provide resources and mentorship to Native artists.

- **“Original Score: A Native Perspective on Music,”** a podcast by and for NACAP students and produced by Michael Begay (a NACAP alum and teaching composer) at KGHR, Navajo Radio in Tuba City, highlights NACAP students, their lives, aspirations, and music. It is available on Mixcloud and we hope to develop wider distribution to share our students’ voices with a wider audience.

- Our partnership with **Shelter Music Boston** continues, with NACAP students involved in a paid commissioning project to create new music inspired by the writings of Shelter Music Boston’s constituents, to be performed by SMB’s artists this summer.

- Our partnership with the **Heard Museum and Central Sound at 8** continued, with Central Sound at 8 recording NACAP students’ works at the Heard Museum, to be premiered on their future PBS programming.

NACAP 2021-2022 is ongoing, finding ways to connect with our students and work around the challenges of these times. NACAP has been an anchor for these youth, a way to express themselves and find some connection to normalcy.

Recent NACAP student news:

Gemal Benallie received a scholarship to study composition at Boston University’s 2021 Tanglewood Summer Institute.

Please feel free to contact me, by phone or email, if you have any questions or would like additional material about NACAP.

Thank you again.

Your support means so much to us and to our youth!

Clare Hoffman
Grand Canyon Music Festival
917-856-0196
clareflute@verizon.net

Participants: Hopi High School 15 composition students; Chinle High School 8 composition students; Whitehorse High School 5 composition students; Tuba City/Greyhills Academy 4 composition students; Tuba City Boarding School 100 students

“This is something they do for themselves. It can pull a suicidal kid out of a dive.”
- English teacher, NACAP Partner School.