



All Things Ignatian



Student Support Services Cultural Immersion Service Trips on Jesuit Higher Education in the 21st Century

Student Support Services (SSS) participants annually participate in fall and spring break cultural immersion trips to reservations on the Cheyenne River, Navajo, Oglala Lakota, Rosebud Sioux, and Winnebago reservations. The Immersion program is a mentoring program housed in SSS and implemented by SSS students. The program is designed to help facilitate college access and readiness through programming efforts within Native American reservation communities across the United States. SSS students develop presentations for students in grades 5 through 12 that focus on college access, college readiness, and resources for college.

The Program

SSS students through the immersion truly demonstrates Creighton's commitment to living our mission. Service to others, the importance of family life, the inalienable worth of each individual, and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity are core values of Creighton. These core values are woven into the immersion. SSS immersion participants develop leadership skills as they promote access to higher education for Native American elementary through high school students. The SSS participants also learn about the Native American culture and provide community service.

Some of the presentations made by the SSS immersion participants include:

- ❖ *Resume Development and Career Exploration*
- ❖ *Essay Development and Writing Personal Statements*
- ❖ *Mock interviews and how to prepare for college or scholarship interview*
- ❖ *Financial Aid and Scholarships, including the Gates Millennium Scholarship*
- ❖ *ACT preparation, College Readiness, and the Importance of College*
- ❖ *Time Management, Study Skills, and Work Ethic*
- ❖ *Goal Setting, Asking for Help, and Motivation*
- ❖ *Attendance, Being Punctual, and the Importance of First Impressions*

Some of the SSS immersion service activities include:

- ❖ *For the hospital conducted a community survey on the use and impact of high sugar beverages*
- ❖ *Cleaned and organized the Ambulance Services, Domestic Violence Shelter, and Wellness Center*
- ❖ *Attended Recovery Center Meeting and engaged in a shared dialogue*
- ❖ *Painted various rooms the Senior Center and Domestic Violence Shelter*
- ❖ *Talked to and played games with youth participating in after school programs*
- ❖ *Assisted senior citizens with crafts, ran a youth carnival, and helped at a food bank*

The final piece of the immersion trips, and what truly makes them immersions, is the participation in cultural events to increase our student's cultural competency and awareness.

Some of the cultural activities SSS immersion participants experienced include:

- ❖ *Residing with Host Families in the community and sharing meals with Native families*
- ❖ *Attending Sweat Lodge Ceremonies and eating traditional foods*
- ❖ *Reservation Cultural Tours, Horseback Riding, and Playing Traditional Tribal Games*
- ❖ *Community presentations on Tribal history, culture, and contemporary issues*

Outcomes

The success of the immersions is evidenced by the number of students participating, growth at site locations, and the expressed desire of the reservation communities we served to see our return. For 2010-2011 academic year 53 SSS students served 1,114 Native American youth attending 11 different schools.

2010 Fall Cultural Immersion Service Trips

Location	SSS Participants	# Schools Visited	# Students Assisted
Eagle Butte, SD	10	1	226
Rosebud and Pine Ridge, SD	8	4	199
Winnebago, NE	8	2	237
Chinle, AZ/Gallup, MN	6	3	196
TOTAL	32	10	858

2011 Spring Cultural Immersion Service Trips

Location	SSS Participants	# Schools Visited	# Students Assisted
Winnebago, NE	10	2	122
Rosebud and Pine Ridge, SD	11	4	137
TOTAL	21	6	256
SUBTOTAL	53	11	1,114

Want more? Contact Jessica Swisher at jessicaswisher@creighton.edu



Immersion participants posing with the senior Gates Millennium Scholarship eligible applicants at Chinle High School

Sponsored by the Creighton University Jesuit Community, in association with the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality.