



# El Noticiero

Newsletter of the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education

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## Seventh Annual Native American Language Festival Conducted During NMABE Conference

By Louise Benally  
NMABE Board Navajo Representative

The seventh annual Native American Language Festival was held on Saturday, April 16th at the Embassy Suites Hotel, during the State Bilingual Education Conference. A total of seven schools from New Mexico and Arizona participated. The Festival gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their talents and skills in their Native language in both academic and traditional arenas.

It went off like a charm. By adopting the Gallup McKinley County's language festival format, parents, families and children were better able to enjoy the activities because of a more efficient use of time, which was greatly appreciated because many participants had very long distances to travel.

This year, all students performed in one room so that parents, friends, teachers and relatives could easily enjoy them. The festival began right on schedule at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 1:30 p.m. There were three competition categories: Singing, Dancing and Oral Performance. Singing included solo, duet or group. For the Dancing category, groups received bonus points if their peers were the singers for the dance group instead of a CD or tape. In the Oral Presentation category, individuals or groups competed in multiple oral formats such as performing a play, giving a speech or reading a poem or story in a Navajo language book. Trophies were presented to the winning schools during the luncheon.

Another enjoyable change to the festivities this year was a "fashion" show of Native clothing held during the luncheon. Ms. Georgia Manning, Navajo Language Support Teacher from Gallup McKinley County Schools, was the fashion emcee



Students deliver their oral performance during the Festival.

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## Improving ESEA Legislation for Language Minority Students

A coalition of Bilingual Education supporters, including the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education, is working to positively influence the writing of language in the current reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The coalition believes a reauthorized ESEA must specifically address the needs of English language learners in comprehensive ways, such as teacher preparation and provisions for two-way dual language education programs. This is critical and essential for all students to participate in and contribute to the promises of the nation.

The organizations--New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education, Dual Language Education of New Mexico, Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations, and Alliance for Multilingual Multicultural Education--acted on their shared beliefs that the No Child Left Behind Act has worsened the educational condition of most non-

English-background students and that many of the policy changes being advocated in the name of educational reform either ignore or are likely to exacerbate the students' plight.

Directors and representatives from these organizations have been meeting with Senator Bingaman, one of the key members of the Senate committee charged with developing a new ESEA. Thus far, there has been some agreement on a bipartisan bill in Washington, D.C. According to Peter Zamora, Education aide for Senator Bingaman, they expect to have "a markup of the bill by the middle of end of July."

The organizations also asked James Lyons, an education policy attorney and former Executive Director of the National Association for Bilingual Education, to prepare a legislative policy brief which describes:

- the population of students who are native-speakers of languages other than English (SOL) but who are

limited in their English proficiency (LEP);

- the academic performance of LEP students;
- how most schools fail SOL-LEP students;
- federal civil rights laws and court decisions respecting the educational rights of LEP students;
- fundamental research findings regarding the effective instruction of LEP students;
- the impact of NCLB on LEP students; and
- the proper role of language and culture education in a new ESEA.

You can study the policy and its 11 recommendations by going to [http://www.dlenm.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=6&Itemid=6](http://www.dlenm.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=6&Itemid=6). (DLeNM.org>advocacy>ESEA Reauthorization Brief).

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# NMABE Recognizes Bilingual Education Leaders at Hall of Fame Awards Banquet

The Annual NMABE Hall of Fame Awards Banquet, held during the conference, offers an opportunity to recognize those who have made important contributions to Bilingual Multicultural Education. This year, NMABE recognized individuals in five award categories:

## The Joseph M. Montoya Award

This award is named in honor of the late Senator Joseph M. Montoya, and is awarded to recognize a New Mexican who has made a significant contribution at the national level to Bilingual Education.

The 2011 award winners are Senator Pete Domenici and Senator Jeff Bingaman. Senator Domenici was unable to attend due to a long-standing family commitment; he sent his regrets. Mr. Gabe Long, Senator Bingaman's Albuquerque Office Assistant, received the award on the Senator's behalf, and thanked NMABE. Both senators have made important contributions to legislation for Bilingual Education in Washington, D.C. over the course of their careers.

## The Matías I. Chacón Award

This award was named after the late State Senator and created to recognize an individual who has made significant contributions to Bilingual Education at the state level. Senator Matías Chacón, from the Espanola area, introduced the present Bilingual Multicultural Education Act 34 years ago.

The 2011 recipients are Senator John Pinto and Dr. Veronica García, the first New Mexico Secretary of Education to receive it and a strong supporter of NMABE and Bilingual Education.

Senator Pinto and Dr. Veronica C. García's contributions to Bilingual Education in New Mexico are noteworthy. Their work on behalf of Bilingual Education will be featured in the next edition of El Noticiero. Mr. Jesús Moncada, NMABE Board President for 2011-2012, presented the award to Dr. García. Louise Benally, NMABE Navajo Representative, and Willard Zunie, NMABE Zuni Representative, presented the award to Senator Pinto.

## The Teófila Trujillo Award

This award is named in honor of the late Teófila Trujillo, who made a significant contribution to parental involvement in Bilingual Education programs. This year, the NMABE Board established two categories

for this award: the individual category and the community organization category.

This year's individual recipient is Ms. Laura Greer. Born in El Paso, Texas on August 4, 1976, Laura is the younger of two children. Her parents moved to the United States from Guanajuato, Mexico so that she could have a better life. Her father became an automotive mechanic and her mother a factory worker. Her parents did not know English, so this forced her to learn the language by herself. In high school, she felt a strong calling to learn the history of her ancestors. In 1995, she joined the military where she had to prove herself as a strong Hispanic woman. This is where she learned to stand strong and be proud of who she was. After serving for 5 years in the military, she decided to leave and form a family. As her first child was growing up, she realized how important it was for her child to know her roots.

She now has four children. Laura makes time to be an active voice and support at school. She can often be seen with her two babies in the double stroller and her older children carrying whatever materials are needed for the day's work. She is tireless, honest and dedicated to providing support for not only her children but all children around her.

Ms. Mercedes Sandoval, NMABE Board Parent Representative, presented the Teófila Trujillo Award to Ms. Greer.

The community organization award winner is the grassroots organization, Somos Un Pueblo Unido. It was founded in 1995 to protect and expand immigrants' rights. With a base of close to 2,000 members, Somos is unique to the state—the only community-based and immigrant-led organization actively committed to preparing immigrant leaders to promote worker and racial justice.

In the last fifteen years, Somos has provided leadership development training and opportunities for thousands of immigrant students, families and workers to engage in local and statewide legislative advocacy. Among the organization's most far-reaching achievements is the spearheading of three state laws that allow undocumented immigrant workers to obtain driver's licenses, to provide additional labor protections to all workers who are victims of wage theft, and to give undocumented

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# El Noticiero

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## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

**No. 35:1 Fall 2010: October**  
(Conference Edition)

**No. 35:2 Winter 2011: January**  
(Board News, Bilingual Education Day, Call to Action)

**No. 35:3 Spring 2011: April**  
(Institute Announcements)

**No. 35:4 Summer 2011: July**  
(Summer Activities)

Monthly Inserts/Wraps with *Language Magazine*

# Update from the American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center

by Penny Bird

Program Manager, American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center

In collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department's Indian Education Division and several Pueblo tribes, the American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center (the Center) held a Tribal Language Summit and an Early Childhood Heritage Language Summit at the Santa Clara in Espanola. The two-day event (March 31 and April 1) focused on community and family initiatives to maintain Native and other heritage languages.

## Tribal Language Summit

The Summit brought together tribes receiving funding from the NMPED via the Indian Education Act (IEA). Walter Dasheno, Santa Clara Pueblo Governor, gave the invocation, noting the importance and value of his own ability to learn and speak the Tewa language, growing up in a community of elders who had so much knowledge to share with the young people. Since the language was not written, the spoken word was the only means to share knowledge and the history of the people. "Rely on your own ways of teaching," he said. "Tribes need to support their language efforts and to commit funds to assist the language teachers."

Mr. Regis Pecos, the keynote speaker, summarized the history of the Pueblo experience, emphasizing what they have had to do to survive the colonization of their lands by European empires. He reminded those present about the importance of the language throughout all these changes as "language ties the people to their core values." Language also contains the knowledge of the land and important places that remain sacred to the ways and ceremonies, as they are referred to in songs and stories. He also emphasized the need to guard against outside control and power with respect to Native languages, and that "self-determination" as represented by federal and state policies have presented tribal communities with challenges. Citing Head Start as an example, tribes embraced the education it brought, but did not foresee the consequences--that it would also take away their languages. He asked us to think about what we are doing differently today, "when we are in control of our own programs. Are

we able to administer these programs so that they are making our children stronger, or have these programs taken the responsibility away from us?" He suggested that a funding formula be developed to support tribal language programs through the IEA. Mr. Pecos also stated that tribes/tribal leaders had to make a commitment by ensuring that every tribal budget have resources to fund native language initiatives. "Think about what our communities will look like in the future and what our children will inherit from us."

Three breakout sessions focused on three main areas of concern: Tribal Language Policies, Language Planning and Teacher Certification.

- Tribal Language Policies: Most tribes have a memorandum of agreement or understanding (MOA and MOU) with the state or with local school districts to establish native language programs which serve as the main policy guide, along with the tribes' own internal processes. Most tribes have yet to develop specific language within their tribal organizations and administrations regarding their own native language.
- Language Planning: Participants shared the status of their local programs. They found that there is always much more to do in a process that is "never-ending."
- Teacher Certification: This was a major issue for all programs due to varying situations encountered, and because it is the first step for tribal programs wishing to begin school-based language programs. The need for evaluating fluency in speakers, skill levels in teaching and knowledge of cultural norms further complicates certification of native language teachers.

This summit helped the planning committee recognize the need to regularly support tribal/native languages. The planning committee will seek resources and support to continue these discussions and to help one another become both stronger advocates and teachers of their languages

## Early Childhood Heritage Language Summit

This second summit, entitled "Celebration of Diversity in New Mexico" brought together a coalition of organizations, including the New Mexico Association for Educators of Young Children, the Parent and Infant Study Center, Dual Language Education of NM,

the Institute for American Indian Education and the Center. This meeting expanded the tribal language planning committee's work by emphasizing inclusion of any tribal/heritage language as a valued component in all early childhood programs

There was great interest and a tremendous response to this summit--170 people pre-registered for the event--causing the venue to overflow with participants. Nationally-recognized educator and researcher Dr. Lily Wong Fillmore, the keynote speaker, spoke to the need for language development in all languages and the importance of heritage languages in the socialization of children in various cultures.

Two parent panels further emphasized Dr. Fillmore's important message:

- Parents from the Pueblo of Jemez, along with principal investigator from Arizona State University Dr. Mary Eunice Romero-Little, shared their experiences with the Photo Voice Project. In this project, the parents of Head Start children in Jemez reflected upon and documented through photos the important knowledge and values their children need in order to "be Jemez." With a montage of beautiful pictures taken throughout the term of the study, they were able to demonstrate the meaning and worth of their language and culture, and what needs to be taught to their children for them "to be Jemez" and participate in the wonderful life they still have.
- The second parent panel represented various cultures, including Hispanic, Venezuelan, Russian, Polish and Vietnamese. They talked about why they want their children to develop and maintain their heritage language and what they envision as a result. There was heartfelt commitment from these parents as they shared their experiences in being a "minority among minorities" in seeking to maintain their language in the context of contemporary pressures toward assimilating into the mainstream American way of life.

In the afternoon, participants had the opportunity to reflect upon their own practices by discussing three questions:

(1) What can Early Childhood (EC) educators do to support culture and language maintenance among children from diverse heritage backgrounds?

(2) What do EC educa-

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for the Navajo “models” while Ms. Belinda Tsebatsaye, Bilingual Education Director for the Zuni Public Schools, was the emcee for the Zuni “models.”



**Student models Native clothing.**

NMABE thanks the planning committee for all their hard work in preparing a successful Festival. Louise Benally from the Gallup McKinley County Schools chaired the committee of five including Emilia Vigil, NMABE President, Belinda Tsebatsaye, Bilingual Education Director for the Zuni Public Schools, Lena Benally-Smith, Federal Programs Director for the Bloomfield Public Schools, and Herbert Frazier, Johnson O’Malley Program Director from the Central Consolidated Schools. For next year, the committee’s goal is to involve any and all tribes that offer a local Bilingual Education Program to showcase their students’ language and culture skills.

NMABE also thanks the judges who devoted their time on a Saturday to serve students at this important event:

1. Ethel Ellison, Navajo Language Teacher, Gallup McKinley County Schools
2. Cornelius Redhouse, Navajo Language Teacher, Gallup McKinley County Schools
3. Lena Benally-Smith, Director, Federal Programs, Bloomfield Schools
4. Arlene Romero, Education Administrator, Bilingual-Multicultural Education Programs, New Mexico Public Education Department, Santa Fe
5. Dr. Virginia Daniels, Retiree, Albuquerque, NM

**Participating schools**

- Gallup McKinley County Schools: Tohatchi Elementary, Thoreau Middle, Crownpoint Middle and Tse’yi’gai High
- Central Consolidated Schools: Kirtland-Ruth N. Bond Elementary and Newcomb High
- Window Rock School District: Tsehootsooi Dine Bi’olta’ Elementary

**The Winners**

**Singing**

- 1st Place: Tse’yi’gai High, Gallup McKinley County Schools
- 2nd Place: Tsehootsooi Dine Bi’olta’ Elementary, Window Rock School District
- 3rd Place: Kirtland-Ruth N. Bond Elementary, Central Consolidated Schools

**Dancing**

- 1st Place: Tsehootsooi Dine Bi’olta’ Elementary, Window Rock School District
- 2nd Place: Tse’yi’gai High, Gallup McKinley County Schools
- 3rd Place: Tohatchi Elementary, Gallup McKinley County Schools

**Oral Presentation**

- 1st Place: Tohatchi Elementary Gallup McKinley County Schools
- 2nd Place: Tsehootsooi Dine Bi’olta’ Elementary, Window Rock School District
- 3rd Place: Tse’yi’gai High, Gallup McKinley County Schools



**Students demonstrate Navajo language skills.**

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immigrant students access to in-state tuition and financial aid at our public higher education institutions. Providing a constant and organized voice for the challenges and concerns of the immigrant community is what has made Somos successful in creating institutional change, and it is what has distinguished its contribution to New Mexico.

Ms. Emilia Vigil presented the award to Somos; Ms. Marcela Díaz accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

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tors need to learn so that they can become supportive of these families?

(3) What challenges do EC educators face in supporting diverse families?

Participants shared ideas, such as bringing parents and community members into the classroom to conduct activities with the children; pairing language speakers with non-speakers to provide instruction; and utilizing the resources in the community to a greater extent. They also discussed challenges in bringing other languages into the learning environment such as the lack of speakers, limited materials and the need for more professional development. While it seemed a daunting task to some, the greater conclusion was that more had to be done to respect children’s heritage languages. Many asked about next steps and what they could do to further these efforts.

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On that same page, you can show your commitment to necessary changes in the reauthorization of ESEA by endorsing the policy as an individual and/or member of an organization that supports our second language learner community. Be an advocate for our ELLs; endorse the policy now!