Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Santa Clara Day School in the Pueblo of Santa Clara, New Mexico, will play host as the featured site in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Net Day 1999. Santa Clara Day School and18 other BIA funded schools from eastern Maine to Washington's Olympic Peninsula will celebrate their accomplishments, as well as their connection to each other through the Internet, as part of the Four Directions Project.

The Four Directions Project was one of the first funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Technology Innovation Challenge Grants. The project was first funded in October 1995. Nineteen BIA-funded schools are included in the project. The schools and the grant administrators from the Department of Education at the Laguna Pueblo have been working with partners from the University of Texas, the University of New Mexico, the University of Kansas, and Haskell Indian Nations University, to integrate Native American culture and technology into classroom instruction.

On Net Day 1999, planned for September 25, Santa Clara will demonstrate how state of the art technology has transformed their school. During the day, visitors will see students and teachers use technology in their classrooms, collaborate with other students across the nation, and access resources around the world. The school principal, Frank Nordstrom, will show how he uses technology to improve communication with his teachers and parents through e-mail. The school librarian will demonstrate how to conduct online research using the Athena Library System. Kindergarten and second grade teachers will demonstrate how both teachers and students make powerful presentations of their work using Microsoft's PowerPoint software program. Another teacher, Arlene Romero, will show how students can use Quick Time Video Recording (QTVR) to communicate information about their local communities to others over the Internet.

Similar community sharing will simultaneously be conducted at each of the other eighteen Four Directions sites. At 11:00 a.m., Acting Director, Office of Indian Education Programs, Joe Christie, and Tribal Leaders from across the country will join an online chat to talk with students and answer questions from the other sites. Community feasts at each of the sites will follow the chats.

Net Day 1999 will be the Bureau of Indian Affairs' second celebration. The first celebration, in May 1998, celebrated the cabling and Internet connection of 28 schools in a 100-day period. The final Net Day Event will be conducted at the Havasupai School at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. That event, planned for the year 2000, will be a celebration of the completion of the Office of Indian Education Programs' Access Native America project to connect all 187 of its schools.