

TRIBAL COLLEGE

JOURNAL OF AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Contact:

Bradley Shreve, Managing Editor

editor@tribalcollegejournal.org

(970) 533-9170

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michael R.L. Begay of IAIA Wins TCJ Student Best Film Award

Tribal College Journal is pleased to announce that Michael R.L. Begay of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) is the recipient of the 2019 TCJ Student Best Film Award for his original work, *Lightning Boy*. As part of the award, Begay will present *Lightning Boy* at the Pocahontas Reframed “Storytellers” Film Festival in Richmond, Virginia.

Michael R.L. Begay is from Santo Domingo Pueblo and the Navajo Nation. He is currently attending IAIA where he is working on a BFA in cinematic arts and technology, with an emphasis on directing, editing, and photography direction. He is a graduate of both Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute and Haskell Indian Nations University, where he earned a degree in media communications. A multidisciplinary artist, Begay has received numerous awards for his work in both film and art. In 2016, his original mixed media artwork, *reINcarNATIVE*, was selected for the cover of the summer issue of *Tribal College Journal*.

TCJ received over a dozen submissions this year from a wide range of tribal college filmmakers. Begay’s original narrative film *Lightning Boy* stood out, combining a culturally based storyline, special effects, and a notable acting performance from award-winning poet and writer Vivian Mary Carroll, also of IAIA. This year’s contest has generated special enthusiasm, as TCJ Student is partnering with the Pocahontas Reframed “Storytellers,” a national film festival that features a wide array of Native filmmakers and films.

“The Pocahontas Reframed ‘Storytellers’ Film Festival is proud to award to Michael Begay, the winner of the 2019 TCJ Student Film Contest, an all-expense paid trip to our third annual festival on November 21-24 2019, plus a \$1,000 cash prize,” states Bradby Brown, director of film festival. “Michael will be joining accomplished Native filmmakers from Canada, Mexico, and the United States as they screen their films to large audiences at the Historic Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia. This is the inaugural year of the partnership between TCJ and Pocahontas Reframed Film Festival.”

Bradley Shreve, managing editor of *Tribal College Journal*, says, “We’re thrilled to be partnering with Pocahontas Reframed and excited for Michael—he is truly a talented artist. As a graduate of both SIPI and Haskell, a former student at College of Menominee Nation, and a current student at IAIA, all tribal colleges can celebrate his award. Michael’s artwork is testament to the great creative energy at tribal colleges and universities.”

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About *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ):

Tribal College Journal is a national, nonprofit media organization operated by AIHEC. TCJ has covered the news, newsmakers, and issues of the tribal college movement for 30 years, earning multiple awards from organizations such as the Native American Journalists Association, Association Media and Publishing, and Western Publishing Association.

About Pocahontas Reframed

The Pocahontas Reframed “Storytellers” Film Festival honors the contributions of Native Americans and aims to raise awareness about Native American language, cultures, and societies through films that share Native American perspectives. The festival, which is the only one of its kind on the East Coast, brings together producers, directors, authors, cineasters, and actors who share a passion for film, and features experiential learning opportunities for the entire public. The festival is a Legacy Project of the American Evolution 2019 Commemoration.

About Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs):

Currently, there are 37 AIHEC-affiliated TCUs in the United States, operating more than 80 campuses and serving more than 100,000 students and community members annually. TCUs were created in response to the higher education needs of American Indians and generally serve geographically isolated populations that have no other means of accessing education beyond the high school level. TCUs have become increasingly important educational opportunities for American Indian students and are unique institutions that combine personal attention with cultural relevance to encourage American Indians—especially those living on reservations—to overcome the barriers they face to higher education.