



FROM THE AIR PROGRAM

Toni Richards Receives the Virgil Masayesva Tribal Air Programs Excellence Award

Toni Richard, Air Quality Specialist in the Environmental Management Office, was the 2010 Virgil Masayesva Tribal Air Programs Excellence Award in the category of technical excellence. The award was developed to commemorate a founding official of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals at Northern Arizona University who passed away in 2005. The purpose of the award is to recognize outstanding accomplishments and dedication within tribal air programs. It is awarded in three categories: technical excellence; tribal program development; and policy development.



Toni has worked for the Tribe since 1998 and founded the Tribe's air quality management program in 2001. Since that time she has continued to build the capacity of the program to effectively monitor air pollutants. Her monitors accurately detect and record and report levels of atmospheric dust, smoke, ozone and radon, smoke and even mold for indoor air. Toni has been a leader in her use of technology. Data from her program are reported to the US EPA. The local air district included her data as part of their response to EPA's proposed ozone designations for the Owens Valley. She completed a pilot epidemiological study focusing on health impacts of pm 10 and pm 2.5. Toni supports other tribal programs in the Owens Valley, assisting them on a variety of technical matters including audits, troubleshooting and equipment installation. She has collaborated with the Bishop Indian Education Center and other Owens Valley Tribes developing innovative approach to science education.