

For Immediate Release
July 22, 2011

**STUDENTS FROM JEMEZ AND TAOS PUEBLOS SELECTED
TO ATTEND NATIONAL INTERTRIBAL YOUTH SUMMIT**

***Week-Long Leadership Conference in Santa Fe, N.M., Provides Opportunity for
Obama Administration Officials to Hear Directly from Youth***

ALBUQUERQUE – Five students from the Pueblo of Jemez and the Pueblo of Taos have been selected to join 150 young men and women from across the country for the week-long **2011 National Intertribal Youth Summit in Santa Fe, N.M., from July 24-28, 2011**, featuring administration officials from the White House and the Departments of Justice, Interior, Health and Human Services and Education.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced today that Khaila Gachupin, DeNita Toya and Jose Toya, from the Pueblo of Jemez, and Summer Romero and Islin Wright, from the Pueblo of Taos, were selected to attend the National Intertribal Youth Summit. The summit also provides an opportunity for Obama administration officials to hear directly from youth in Indian Country. The administration and federal agencies have made a commitment to building healthier and safer communities through strengthened coordination and collaboration with tribal governments and partners.

“We applaud all the students joining this summit for their commitment to improving their communities,” said Attorney General Holder. “Tribal governments face unique challenges, and the importance of getting our youth involved in securing a bright future for themselves, their friends, families, and neighbors can’t be overstated.”

In his work with tribal leaders, U.S. Attorney Gonzales understands that the Pueblo of Jemez and Pueblo of Taos greatly value their youth and the opportunities this summit will bring to their government and community. “Young Native Americans today face a lot of challenges,

not least among them domestic violence and dating violence, alcohol, suicide, and street gangs. The young people who will be participating in this conference will serve as advisors because they hold the keys to the future of our Native communities. We need this advice, because the decisions we make today as government leaders can help clear the path that they themselves will need to walk. I look forward to hearing their thoughts on how we can more effectively fight crime, create educational and job opportunities, keep young people safe and healthy, and ensure that all children growing up in our Native American communities have the chance to fulfill their potential and dreams. I also am very proud that five of those who will be providing us with advice are from our Pueblo communities,” said U.S. Attorney Gonzales.

Chaske Spencer, star of the Twilight movie series, and pro-golfer Notah Begay also plan to make appearances at the summit, which is focused on youth voices. During the week-long session, participants will have the opportunity to create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to run in their communities. In a special session called Voices of Youth, participants will share thoughts, concerns and recommendations on ways to address public safety and positively impact the lives of youth across Indian Country—providing a platform for honest dialogue with federal officials. Additional workshops will provide tribal youth with knowledge and skills in leadership development and strategies for achieving academic and career success.

Youth were nominated for the 2011 Summit by their tribal youth program coordinators and submitted an application to attend. The Department of Justice’s Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs (OJJDP) and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) made the final participant selections.

For a full schedule of events, visit:

<http://www.tribaljusticeandsafety.gov/2011youthsummit.html>.

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