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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Urban Realities for Native American Youth Captured in Photographic Exhibit**

SEATTLE-The photographs are as diverse as those who snapped them. In one, a carefree group of teenagers huddle together at Pike Place Market. In another, a graffiti-covered sign warns students against bringing guns into school. For one dozen Native American youth whose work will be featured in the new exhibition *Native Realities: One Week in Our Lives* at Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center starting at 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 26, 2008, their photographs portray anything but stereotypical images of beads and feathers. The exhibit will run through November.

United Indians of All Tribes Foundation invited 12 Seattle-area Native American youth, ages 13 to 20 years old, representing thirteen indigenous tribes from Alaska to Central America, to capture on film one week in their life. "Through these photographs," explains United Indians' Executive Director Marty Bluewater, "we see that the world that our future Native leaders live in is more diverse-and inherently more complicated-than what most of the rest of us in Indian Country can imagine."

After completing courses that touched on topics ranging from composition and technique to the historic use of photography in anti-Native American propaganda, the youth set out with their new digital cameras. One week and hundreds of photographs later, they reconvened. With guidance from instructor and world-renowned photographers Jack and Michelle Storms, each participant selected one photograph that they felt best embodied their life as a Native youth growing up in an urban environment. The result is reflected in *Native Realities*.

Bluewater states, "As cultural ambassadors to the larger community, their pictures show us that it truly is impossible to characterize our people according to anyone's old, preconceived notions." Indeed, a bass guitar and basketball feature prominently in two photographs, as do friends and families in others.

For 13-year old Armetris Joe, who is Paiute and Swinomish, he selected a photograph of his little sister, not simply because it "...captures her personality well." Rather, he says, "It captures more than other people's perspectives and stereotypes of a Native person. These pictures show that we are regular people, just like everyone else. I think we need more of our stories to be told."

The mission United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, a Seattle-based non-profit organization founded in 1970, is to foster and sustain a strong sense of identity, tradition, and well-being among the Indian people in the Puget Sound area by promoting their cultural, economic, and social welfare. To learn more about United Indians, visit [www.unitedindians.org](http://www.unitedindians.org).

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Three photographs from the exhibition are available [here](#).

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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

United Indians of All Tribes Foundation proudly invites the community and media alike to attend the opening reception of the photographic exhibit Native Realities: One Week in Our Lives at 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 26, 2008 at the Sacred Circle Art Gallery at Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center in Seattle. Photographs by twelve Native American youth, ages 13 to 20 years old and representing thirteen indigenous tribes, will be featured.

Native Realities: One Week in Our Lives is the culmination of a six-week project with Seattle-area Native youth intended to help replace lingering stereotypes of Native Americans with the day-to-day realities of what it means to be young and Native in today's urban environment.

**Who:** Everyone is encouraged to attend the reception that will feature the work of and presentations by one dozen, Native American youth ages 13 to 20 years old, representing thirteen indigenous tribes

**What:** Opening reception for their photographic exhibit Native Realities: One Week in Our Lives. Refreshments will be served. The exhibit will run through November.

**Where:** Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center, Discovery Park

**When:** Sunday, October 26, 2008 at 3 p.m.

**Why:** To allow a diverse group of young Native American leaders the opportunity to tell their stories by photographing one week in their lives.

**How:** Through the ongoing efforts of United Indians of All Tribes Foundation to encourage Native youth to be successful and proud of their heritage through dynamic programming

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