

HALLIBURTON

Navajo Reservation

March, 2019

LITTLE SHOP of PHYSICS



Little Shop of Physics (LSOP) first visited the Navajo Reservation back in 1995. Since then we have gone back to the reservation every two years. This pattern of regular visits has let us establish relationships. People have heard of our program, and understand that we have a commitment to the communities, the schools, the teachers and parents, and the students of the reservation. When we visit a school in this area, with its very distinct culture and history, we arrange to have a cultural presentation for the students that take part in the trip. We want to be sure that the students taking part in the programs understand and appreciate the unique opportunity that a visit to this area represents.

This visit was in partnership with Colorado State University's Native American Cultural Center (NACC). Ty Smith, the NACC Director, is from this area, came to Colorado State, and began his career working on the reservation as a field engineer with the oil and gas industry. He is the perfect person to talk to students about college and careers, the perfect person to let students know that studying science and math does not mean leaving home—it can mean preparing for a rewarding career in the area that students come from, one that pays tangible benefits to the community. This is a powerful message.

We began each presentation with introductions of the people taking part in the visit: staff and interns from LSOP, staff and students from NACC, including current Colorado State students from this area. We then encouraged students to experiment and explore the 100+ hands-on science experiment stations we brought with us, asking them to share their ideas and insights. As always when we visit this area, students shared observations and insights that we hadn't seen before, and we were able to share this fact. This group of students sees the world differently, and having diverse backgrounds and perspectives is necessary for the truly creative problem solving that we will need in future years. This message resonated well with the students and teachers.

Over the course of three days, the **Little Shop of Physics presented programs at Bluff Elementary School, White Horse Schools and Red Mesa Schools, and worked with over 1,500 K-12 students** from these schools. Each student received a Halliburton Science-at-Home Kit, which contains Halliburton-branded rainbow glasses, a color-change bracelet, and an LED circuit kit.

The most exciting outcome of this visit was the beginning of a plan to work with Red Mesa Schools next year, to assist their high school students to create their own experiment stations to enliven their classrooms and to share with middle school and elementary school students. The schools are grouped together, and the students at the schools are siblings and neighbors, and the teachers and administrators at the schools are keen to use the LSOP model to build excitement, engagement and community. We have begun planning for a series of work days similar to the ones we do with Oglala Lakota College. This effort has the chance to spread around the region; Red Mesa High School is eager to take this program on the road to other schools in the area.

The school visit, the materials provided to students, and the ongoing partnerships are all made possible by a generous grant from the Halliburton Foundation.



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