

## 2017 National UNITY Conference Report

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August 24, 2017

My experience at Unity was a step in a new direction, a learning experience and an eye opener. Unity had opened my mind up to so many things and really inspired me to push myself and make a change within myself and eventually in my community. The whole entire time I was being motivated to find who out I really was and I made sure that when I came home I would continue to try and find myself. Well, I later realized that character is kind of what define you as a person, so it gave me the motivation to build good character.

One of the first things I noticed when we got to the Denver Convention Center was that the place was packed with Native American people and that was something I have never experienced before. That had made me feel really blessed and proud to be there. I really felt connected at that moment and it got so real because I felt so connected with the people in the building and disconnected with anything outside of the building. Once everyone was pretty much there the speakers went on and sort of broke the ice which made me a little less nervous. Seeing so many kids with different lives and hobbies was awesome too, I connected with so many people there. The first couple of days I was a little shy but i think the day of culture night I really began to come out of my shell and approach people and open to everyone. Everyone there was just approachable and humble it made it easy to be real with one another. My buddies from Arizona made it easy to make friends because some of them already had their friends from previous Unity Conferences so it was not hard at all to make friends I was grateful I had every single one of them there because they were like my family I saw them as my brothers and sisters so having them around was helpful.

A few of my highlights from the conference was the Unity Fire, the cultural night, and the dance on the last night. The fire was amazing it something you must experience for yourself that was probably my favorite part. I learned allot from the fire and the speakers at the fire. If i was taught something at Unity it was to be a good listener. The ironic thing was that nobody told me how to be a great listener with their words, they showed me by their actions. That is also why I was

motivated to come home for a change because I knew the only way I could make change, was through action. If I wanted a difference I would have to initiate the first step myself. Being away from your problems also gave you the opportunity to realize what problems you carry and made me want to think of ways to fix them. It really was a blessing, and a new step of direction to a healthier change. I learned so many valuable things at Unity, especially coming from kids my age or younger. Words that I can take home to heal myself and to remind me of those individuals Unity really did teach me a lot and i have nothing but great feedback, the only thing I would have asked for was to have more free time to actually hang out with the people you meet there because you end up connecting with each other after you leave home and I gained many great potentially long lasting relationships with other kids from all over the country. Unity was one of a few life changing experiences I have had in my life I'll be at Unity 2018 in San Diego. Thank you, Greg, Diedra, and The Phoenix Indian Center for everything you have done I couldn't have went without your guys help.