YES! 2009 Regional Leadership Jams

Philippines Lambakan Jam, Summer 2009, Cordillera, Philippines – 40 young indigenous people coming together in efforts to protect their culture and environment in the face of mining, warlordism, and aggressive tourism.

Amazon Jam II, July 20-26, 2009, Rio Branco, Brazil – A second gathering of young activists, led by members of the Yawanawa tribe, working on sustainable economic development alternatives to oil exploration and cattle ranching in the Amazon rain forest.

“This Jam created deeper alliances among diverse people. All the representatives left with a fire burning in their hearts to follow-up with strategies and continue empowering the grassroots communities with information. We also saw how to create alternatives that make the indigenous communities so self-sufficient, they won't need to give up their land for exploration, which is one of the most precious things they have. It means their life and survival as indigenous peoples, and the survival of the last lung of the earth which is the Amazon Rainforest.”
- Tashka Yawanawa, 35, Chief of the Yawanawa Tribe, Rio Branco, Brazil

Nice ‘n’ Native, July 2009, Aotearoa/New Zealand – Uniting young indigenous leaders from around the globe for conversations and action-planning around indigenous community rights and environmental preservation.
“Nice ‘n’ Native was the first time I had the opportunity to sit and share in an indigenous space. I felt a mutual understanding without words being spoken...and felt humbled in the presence of such strong leaders from other countries around the world. I also came away with a clear vision and am done wasting time... Nice ‘n’ Native is an experience that empowered me and recharged to give more back to my people.”

Tia Taurere, 30, Greenpeace, Nga Puhi

Middle East Jam, October 2009, Wadi Rum, Jordan – 30 young leaders from all over the region will connect and build partnerships towards sustainability, peace, and social justice.

"During the days that brought us together, I was both humbled and honored to meet this group of young promising individuals who were mere strangers yet today are my dear brothers and sisters. Listening to each participant's religious script through their ears and viewing the kaleidoscope of cultural colors through their eyes has created in me a genuine personal sensitivity towards diverse traditional and religious values. I have as a result gratefully grown into an individual who is rooted in my beliefs yet open towards and respectful of other traditions. The Jam left me with treasured memories, wide smiles, warm tears, funny songs, deep understanding, grateful appreciation, and peaceful serenity. The Jam was an amazing inspiration to me and I'm so grateful to have been part of it. I also learned so much from our facilitators that I can apply in facilitating future events here in the United Arab Emirates."

— Abrar, 21, United Arab Emirates, 2008 Middle East Jam

Arctic Institute for Indigenous Leadership, Fall 2009, Alaska – Thirty young indigenous leaders will attend AIIL which supports personal and professional development for Native leaders focusing on preserving traditions, land, and community.