

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Indigenous exchange program takes flight

Five Aboriginal students will depart for America tomorrow morning as part of the University of Tasmania's inaugural Indigenous Cultural and Educational Exchange Program.

The students will spend two weeks at Northern Arizona University where they will attend classes and lectures as well as taking part in cultural exchange activities on country.

University of Tasmania Pro Vice-Chancellor for Aboriginal Research and Leadership Professor Maggie Walter said the trip followed the reciprocal visit in July last year when 11 Native American staff and students from Arizona visited Tasmania.

"We can sometimes feel as if we are a long way from other communities here in Tasmania," Professor Walter said.

"It's important to be reminded that the work that we do is a piece of the Indigenous scholarship underway, not just in Australia, but in America and countries around the world.

"This is an opportunity for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be exposed to the wider global field of indigenous studies and to feel connected to that international community.

"We hope this program will challenge and inspire our students to push their studies further."

The five students, from around Tasmania, will be accompanied by two members of staff from the Riawunna Centre, a centre committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students, staff and communities achieve their educational aspirations.

The exchange participants will take part in classes from the Northern Arizona University's Applied Indigenous Studies Program and be escorted on cultural activities in surrounding areas.

Information released by:

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office

Phone: 61 3 6324 3218

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au