Yáʼátʼééh (Traditional Navajo Greeting for Hello)!

We hope this newsletter finds you well as you conclude one chapter in your life and begin to look forward to starting a new chapter next year at Calvin. As you begin this transition, we want to touch base on a number of important points related to your academic adventure in New Mexico.

NUMBERS IN THE PROGRAM: Currently we have nine students who have applied for the program, with nine students the program is a GO! So we do need you to officially commit to the program by reading, signing, and returning the terms and condition sheet for the fall program by May 24. Once we have a commitment from nine students Calvin will declare the program a definite go this fall, If we do not have a commitment from nine students by May 24 we may need to cancel the program. Although we understand some of the challenges of a small group, there are also some amazing benefits including: input into the program, personal attention, academic support, opportunities to connect with people at Rehoboth, just to name a few. If any of you are concerned about the group size I would encourage you to call Becky or myself and talk about it.

MAKE-UP OF THE GROUP: Currently the group is all women, this does seem to follow a national trend in off-campus study as over 70% of students who study off-campus in America are women (Calvin does follow this trend as well). We are continuing to recruit, and are open to more men or women. However, if no additional men join the group, we will work to maximize the benefits of an all female group. These benefits include:

• More time discussing women’ s health issues among Native Americans
• Less relationship drama during the semester! 😊
• Get to spend dining dollars on quality food, not quantity! 😊
• More freedom in the dorms to not have to worry about appearance
• Research shows that in co-ed situations, women often defer to men in terms of decisions. Having a group of all women allows you to develop your leadership potential to the greatest degree.

FUTURE ISSUES OF THE BRIDGE: In future issues of The Bridge we will explore such topic as:

• Faculty profiles
• Interesting facts about Rehoboth
• Staff profiles from Rehoboth
• What to pack?
• Orientation resources
• Resources for NM
• Answering your questions
Housing upon Returning to Calvin in January

In talking with many of you, we understand this is a concern. As a result, we will be keeping you updated on many of our efforts to help in this transition process as well. All the various departments at Calvin (student life, residence halls, faculty and staff) are on board to make this transition a great experience. In each newsletter we send out we will describe some of these efforts. For those of you who are interested in specific floors or dorms, we do our best to honor these requests. Each year in the Spring, some students from the first year class who complete the Fall semester do not return for the Spring semester. Other students leave for the Spring to participate in off-campus semester programs. There will be opportunities to join floors and dorms in many ways.

Cool Stuff

As you begin to think about the possibilities of living and learning in New Mexico this fall, we will be sending out some cool resources for you to check out. In this issue of The Bridge, we want you to see some of the places we will explore on our trip out to Rehoboth in September:

Dickson Mounds – our first stop
Experience the world of the American Indian through an awe inspiring journey of over 12,000 years of human experience in the Illinois River Valley

Cahokia Mounds & St. Louis Arch (“Gateway to the West”) Visit one of the greatest cities of the world – Cahokia – it was larger than London was in AD 1250, but then it disappeared. What happened? There may be lessons for us today.

Trail of Tears Museum and Ancient Village, Cherokee Nation Learn to make Cherokee Double-Wall baskets on the trip

Bedrè Chocolate Factory, economic enterprise of the Chickasaw Nation Sample tasty gourmet chocolates on the tour

Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Albuquerque, NM Introduce yourself to the foods, crafts and cultures of 19 pueblos in one place

Summer Reading & Movies

We know enough not to assign deep reading over the summer, but if you like mysteries you might want to read a few Tony Hillerman novels. Tony writes mysteries set in and around Gallup and includes a lot of background on Native American culture. Here are a the first two: The Blessing Way and The Listening Woman. Two of the novels are on DVD at most libraries: Coyote Waits and A Thief of Time.

While in New Mexico, my husband Lawrence will continue this immersion course “in Native American ways through Movie & Pizza Night every week. Here are some of the movies we will be enjoying: Smoke Signals, Fancy Dancer, Powwow Highway & Four Sheets to the Wind.

The Bridge Newsletter

The Bridge Newsletter will be posted every around the 1st and the 15th of the month in the summer. Once the group arrives in Rehoboth the newsletter will be available each Tuesday. If you have questions or items for the newsletter please email them to Don DeGraaf (ddegraaf@calvin.edu) or Becky Haney (bhaney@calvin.edu). Back issues of the newsletter will be available on the New Mexico Semester webpage.