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High School Online Guide Training

.....by Wade Beane, Borrego Village Association

Borrego Springs – Borrego Springs high school students are completing a never before offered online guide course through the National Association of Interpretation. Starting the fall 2019 semester, Borrego Springs Unified School District offered 11th and 12th grade students an elective Certified Interpretive Host course following curriculum from the National Association of Interpretation. The courses success led to a second NAI course offered the spring semester of 2020 to train and certify students as Interpretive Guides. Midway through the course, in-school classes and field trips were cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strong dedication to continue the course from Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Borrego Village Association, Anza Borrego Foundation, and Borrego Springs Unified School District students and staff, resulted in a plan to continue teaching the course through remote learning. Once a week the 15 students enrolled in the course participate in online instruction to complete the remaining National Association of Interpretation curriculum and finalize their course projects. Borrego Springs students are the first ever to be offered the course through online learning and are serving as a test case for the adaptive curriculum being offered remotely by instructors in the National Association of Interpretation Western Region.

Upon completion of the course curriculum, students will submit a 10 minute video presentation, complete a literature review and take a test. Students who pass will be awarded a nationally recognized certificate showing their readiness to successfully serve in positions at parks, museums, nature centers, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, historical and cultural sites, commercial tour companies, and theme parks. When tourism resumes in Borrego, students will have the opportunity to participate in practical internships in co-operation with Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Anza-Borrego Foundation, Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, Bike Borrego and California Overland Tours.

For additional information about the course please contact the Borrego Village Association, Jim Dion, BorregoVillage@gmail.com.

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