

Katishtya Young Drums

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development is hosting a youth mentoring program from the Pueblo of San Felipe, New Mexico. This program has organized a young drum group who will share a little of their world with us on November 19, 2007. These youth, ages 8 – 17, have worked with their mentors to learn culturally significant chants and songs of nature which represent their Rio Grande Pueblo heritage as well as popular Plains Indian style of singing. They have also prepared a Corn Dance, honoring the annual harvest of corn.

The youth mentoring program has provided a curriculum that emphasizes language, and traditional protocol in the life of a Pueblo youth. The gourd rattles, drums and young voices will come together in both contemporary and traditional songs and fill the halls of our HUD building. This is their first trip out of New Mexico.

San Felipe Pueblo is located on the west bank of the Rio Grande River and lies 30 miles north of the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Under the provision of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the United States confirmed and ratified the rights of the inhabitants of San Felipe as Mexican citizens. Congress confirmed and patented Spain's original land grant of 30,000 acres to the tribe in 1864.

Katishtya, or the San Felipe Pueblo, was established at its current site in 1706. Tradition has it that enemies drove the people of San Felipe to the banks of the Rio Grande from their home on the Pajarito Plateau. The people of San Felipe speak an eastern dialect of Keres. Their identity as a people is very strong, and they consider their privacy integral to maintaining their traditional lifestyle. Ceremonial dances are held throughout the year, and the Native language is still spoken.

This event will be held in the HUD Event room in Washington DC as part of the HUD American Indian and Alaska Heritage Month observance. Federal Agencies across the U.S. will conduct similar events recognizing the contributions of Native Americans. The Katishtya Youth Group is performing at other federal agencies in the Washington, DC area.