

Who we are

RNASA is the Native American student association at Rice University. Our organization provides a support network for Native American/Alaskan Native students, promotes awareness of the cultures of America's indigenous people, and establishes a link between alumni and current students at Rice.

What we do

We have fun! Our group is small, but very active, and meets regularly in our office space in the Rice Memorial Center for lunch, conversation, brainstorming, and planning sessions. Our members plan all kinds of social and cultural events here at Rice, such as the Native American Arts and Crafts Display, the dance and drum competition, the Native American film festival, and our biggest event, the annual Rice Powwow. The powwow, which features both northern and southern drums, is a popular event on campus and each spring attracts participants from states as far away as Florida. We also hold Native food dinners and make and sell fry bread and Indian tacos to raise funds for our activities. We work to recruit new Native students and connect with SIRA, the Society of Indigenous Rice Alumni.



Back row, L-R: Jennifer Williams (Cherokee), Jason Buck (Cherokee), Rice University president David Leebron, Ivy Kuperberg, Powtawche Williams (Mississippi Choctaw), Alan Pham.

Front row, L-R: Ta-Shina Williams (Mississippi Choctaw), Elyse Walker (Cherokee), Shannon Hackett (Oklahoma Cherokee).

“Being president of RNASA has allowed me to not only proudly embrace my culture but also to share it with my friends at Rice. I’ve never been a part of such a strong Native community before, and my experience at Rice has benefited immensely because of it. Taking an active role in RNASA has allowed me to network with a community of Native American students and alumni, participate in showcasing the Native culture to the university as well as to the Houston area, and also learn to have a much more sincere appreciation for my ancestors.”

Elyse Walker, RNASA president



Visit us at <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~natamer/>

For more information about becoming a Rice student, visit <http://futureowls.rice.edu>.

We are eager to hear from you!





About Rice

Rice University is the smallest and most personal of the nation's best teaching and research universities, with 2,800 undergraduates and 1,900 graduate students. Rice combines the strengths of a liberal arts college—median class size of 11 and student-to-faculty ratio of 5 to 1—with the resources of a research university. Our residential college system creates even smaller communities of students and faculty within the university. Opened in 1912 and located a mere three miles from downtown Houston, Texas, our beautifully green and wooded campus is bordered by the 445-acre Hermann Park, the Houston Zoo, and the Texas Medical Center, and it is blocks from Houston's museum district.

About Houston

Houston, the fourth-largest city in the country, has a diverse population, including an active Native community. RNASA frequently collaborates with other Native American groups, and the area's many cultural offerings include powwows, programs and lectures, and exhibits about our culture. For example, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, located within walking distance of campus, has featured an exhibition of George Catlin and His Indian Gallery, which showcased artwork and Native American artifacts from one of the most important collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. And the Houston Museum of Natural Science holds an extensive collection of Native American objects. Texas has the fourth-largest Native population in the country—216,000 Indian people, according to the 2000 Census, behind only California, Oklahoma, and Arizona. Just 70 miles north of Houston is the reservation of the Alabama-Coushatta, one of three federally recognized tribes in the state.

What's in it for you?

When you get to Rice, RNASA provides you with a link to fellow Native American students, faculty, staff, and alumni—it's a support system that helps to ease your transition from home to university life. Our group offers a welcoming atmosphere for discussion and camaraderie, as well as a fun social scene.

RNASA can even provide you with something tangible right now—you could win a T-shirt or another Rice University souvenir. And all you have to do is visit our website—which will tell you even more about us—and answer a few quick questions. You also can contact us through our website with any questions you might have. Visit us at <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~natamer/>.