

Nike's Indian Point Man Talks To Tribal Youth

■ Fort Peck Tribal member Sam McCracken presents some principles for success.

By Ron Karten and Jack Ham

Sam McCracken (Fort Peck/Sioux and Assiniboine) Nike's Native American Business Manager, wrote his own ticket at Nike. He arrived at the company to work in the warehouse but the job could not hold him. He wrote his own busi-

ness plan for serving the Native American community. They liked the idea. After three years packing boxes, he said, he is now the only Native American Business Manager among the entire corps of Fortune 500 companies. And at the end of July, he shared his secrets with about 25 Grand Ronde Tribal youth.

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"All of you have a gift," he said. "All you need is a dream."

He passed out rubber DREAM wrist bands to the group. Each letter has a different message: dedication, responsibility, education, attitude and motivation.

"I'm going to create the path for you," said McCracken, "but if you don't have the vision and the dream, it won't happen."

"I thought it was cool that this guy came out of his busy schedule to talk to us," said Tribal youth Josh Wilson.

McCracken talked about objec-

tives in the same way. He used the acronym SMART as a starting place. Objectives have to be specific, measurable, achievable, results oriented and time bound.

He told about growing up on a ranch on a Reservation, about the

influence his Uncle Joe had on him, about his mother who died of diabetes and finally about life in corporate America. "I left the Reservation to work in the white man's world when I was 19," he said.

And today, he bridges the two worlds, putting Native America on Nike's radar, and keeping Nike's name, products and goodwill in Native communities. To date, he has made the connection with Tribal communities throughout America.

Tribal youth Cristina Lara said,

"I left the Reservation to work in the white man's world when I was 19."

~ Sam McCracken

"It was very touching, inspirational."

"I was inspired," said Tribal youth Hope Lafferty. "We definitely need more (like him)."

"He inspired me to play football," said Tribal youth Travis Trambell.

Through McCracken, Native sports teams get outfitted with Nike gear at special prices; and using



Dreamers — Sam McCracken, (right) Native American Business Manager for Nike, shakes hands with Tribal Council member Jack Giffen, Jr. while Tribal Mentorship Program coordinator Denise Ripley watches. McCracken was in Grand Ronde to speak with Tribal members about the importance of following one's dreams.

incentives like the wrist bands, Nike leverages its prestige and influence to make diabetes programs stronger on reservations. Currently, McCracken has helped initiate and/



or strengthen 79 Tribal diabetes programs, including the one in Grand Ronde.

"I was very interested because I play sports," said Tribal youth Maria Ramirez, who also had an-

other touchstone for the talk. "He talked about helping other people with diabetes," she said. "My other

foster parent was diabetic and it was very hard to watch her take her medicine. She almost died."

"I was very well impressed with his presentation," said Tribal Council member Jack Giffen, Jr. who stopped in for the presentation at the Tribal

Education Division. "I liked his focus on the kids — to walk in the paths of their dreams."

Nike Among Corporate Sponsors To Raise Money To Fight Cancer

■ Yellow, 'Live Strong' wristbands to raise \$5 million for the Lance Armstrong Foundation.

By Ron Karten

Four years ago, Nike was encouraging the country to wear yellow in support of bicyclist Lance Armstrong's bid for a second *Tour de France* victory. Today, Armstrong is still riding and still at the top of his game as he won an unprecedented sixth victory at the French classic at the end of July, but Nike has something different in mind this year.

The company is among a host of corporate sponsors encouraging Armstrong fans and cancer fighters across the country to purchase and wear a special yellow wristband engraved with the Armstrong mantra, 'Live Strong,' as a way to help raise \$5 million for the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), dedicated to fighting cancer.

The leader on each leg of the *Tour de France* traditionally wears a yellow jersey. Armstrong has been among that elite group in each of the most recent six races, including of

course the 2004 race just completed.

Armstrong also is one of the world's most famous cancer survivors, and that is the reason for the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), recipient of a \$1 million grant from Nike this year, and hopefully, recipient of \$5 million more raised through the sale of 'Live Strong' wristbands, which cost contributors \$1 each.

"On a personal level," said Sam McCracken (Fort Peck/Sioux and Assiniboine) Nike's Native American Business Manager, "I wear the yellow band in memory of my uncle, Joe Day (Fort Peck Sioux), who died

of stomach cancer. I wear it in honor of him."

Presidential nominee, John Kerry, as well as President Bush



Lance Armstrong

have also been spotted wearing the wristbands. According to the Associated Press, celebrities such as Bono, Alec Baldwin, Bruce Willis,

Robin Williams, Matt Damon and Ben Stiller are also showing their support for the LAF.

Information on the Nike website reports: "The Lance Armstrong Foundation believes that in your battle with cancer, knowledge is power and attitude is everything. From the moment of diagnosis we provide the practical information and tools you need to live strong. The LAF focuses its activities on community survivorship programs, national advocacy initiatives, scientific and clinical research grants, and survivorship education and resources, including Live Strong, the LAF's comprehensive resource for cancer survivors. The LAF was founded in 1997 by cancer survivor and champion cyclist Lance Armstrong and is located in Austin, Texas.

For more information, visit www.laf.org, www.livestrong.org and www.wearyellow.com."

Wristbands can be purchased at those websites.