



## Awards at U. New Mexico celebrate native music

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(Daily Lobo) (U-WIRE) ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- It only took seven words to make the crowd go wild. "It's a great night to be indigenous," presenter Rodney Grant said to the audience at the second annual Native American Music Awards at the University of New Mexico Saturday.

Popejoy Hall housed over 100 Native American artists Saturday. Branscombe Richmond of the TV show "Renegade" hosted the sold-out show in front of an audience of more than 2,000. The show began with a segment titled "Did you know?" -- a category that recognized famous Native Americans such as Hank Williams, Tina Turner, James Garner, Chuck Norris, Billy Ray Cyrus, KD Lang and Brett Farve.

Native American performers honored their fellow artists with performances of rock, blues, rap and native sound. Some of the performers included Natay, Jack Gladstone, Robert Tree Cody, Primeaxu and Mike, Arigon Starr, Jim Boyd and Native Roots.

Although it was a modern awards show, Native culture hung in the atmosphere.

The Native American Music Awards lent its support to saving the Petroglyph National Monument by incorporating them as part of the backdrop. Sky Hunter, the event's director, said using the petroglyphs as a part of the show was a perfect way to honor native culture.

"Those writings were once stories and songs used by the people," he said. "It's an honor to help support them."

Among the winners were P.M. Begay for best children's recording, Robbie Robertson for record of the year, Joanne Shenandoah for best female artist and Indigenous for best blues group, group of the year and best pop group.

Sweeping several categories, one native artist walked away with something more.

"I won blessings, not awards, blessings for my people," said Bill Miller, a Mohican from the Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation in Wisconsin. Miller took five "Nammys" home for song of the year, best male artist, artist of the year, best folk artist and songwriter of the year.

"We are celebrating the joy, the future, the now and we are celebrating success for our people," he said.

Wayquay, an Ojibway who lives in New York City, livened up the audience with her combination of hip-hop, funk and rock mixed into one.

"Sometimes you have to break stereotypes so people can have something familiar to understand, and then once they understand then you dispelled those stereotypes," said Wayquay, winner of the best music video award. "It is a great day, night, and life to be indigenous."

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