



## STAR School

### Service To All Relations

The STAR School is the first completely off-grid, all solar and wind powered, school in the country and is internationally recognized as a model of place-based education. STAR is a charter elementary school located 30 miles East of Flagstaff, AZ, serving students in pre-school through grade 8 who live in the Southwest corner of the Navajo Nation. The school's vision is to create a joyful learning community in which members develop the character, skills and attitudes for understanding themselves, living in balance and serving all our relations.



#### **STAR School**

[www.starschool.org](http://www.starschool.org)

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## Rachel Tso

### Place-Based Media Arts Educator

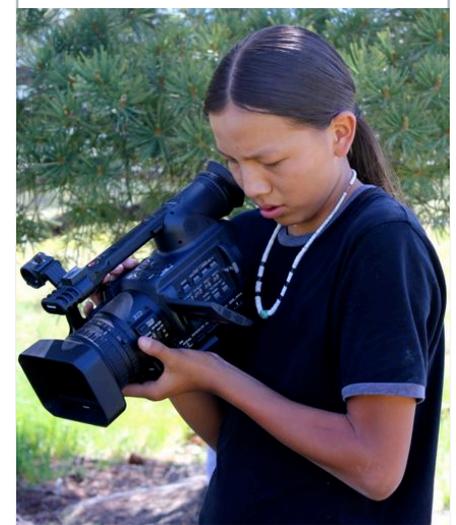
Rachel Tso is an award-winning educator, filmmaker, producer, and the developer of Place-Based Media Arts Education and Curriculum. She teaches media arts classes and workshops for youth and adults, consults on arts and media literacy integration, and produces film, media arts, and theatrical projects. She is proud to be a part of the STAR School community as a consultant and visiting artist facilitating students in creating media arts projects that are deeply meaningful for themselves and their communities.



#### **Tso Inspired Media Arts LLC**

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## Place-Based Media Arts at The STAR School



### Indigenous Youth Filmmaking



Students Voicing their  
Culture through Award-  
Winning Films



## Place-Based Media Arts

**Place-Based Media Arts** is the integration of Media Arts with **Place-Based Education**. It is assisting students in creating projects meaningful for themselves and their community while utilizing the relatively easily accessible technology tools of media making such as computers, video cameras, still cameras, and even cell phones. The curriculum is unique because it is intentionally working with students to reconnect them with their communities, elders, and culture to create media projects that creatively express their ideas and tell their own stories. These projects provide students with the opportunities to share their work with a wide audience; an essay may attract a dozen readers at best, but a

student film can attract viewers from within the local community to a global audience online.

Place-based Media Arts projects are inherently **multidisciplinary**; cultural and the traditional reading and writing literacies are reinforced while students also learn modern technological skills and **media literacy**, a critical literacy for the 21st Century.

Place-based Media Arts **regenerates and sustains communities** and creates a vehicle in which youth can **engage in global conversations** about the future they hope to have.



### What is Place-Based Education?

David Sobel (2004) describes Place-based Education as "The process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, help students develop stronger ties to the community, enhance students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens."

### What is Media Literacy?

Media Literacy is an essential collection of skills that give students the ability to effectively read and write media. Media Literacy is defined by UNESCO, as, "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication and information in a variety of forms and means."