



Stay in

the circle of life...

Greetings

from your friends and partners at Native People for Cancer Control. As a new feature of our monthly newsletter, we will highlight other American Indian and Alaska Native research projects within UW's Center for Clinical and Epidemiological Research as well as continue to share information about ongoing NPCC outreach, education, training and research projects.



Pictured: Front Row L-R: Francine Swift, Dedra Buchwald, and Brenda Manuelito. Back Row L-R: Jon Tomhave, Ardith Doorenbos, Debra Sprague, Sweetwater Nannauck, and Johnny Mao. Not pictured: Steve Charles and Ryan Morigeau.

If you would like to receive our monthly e-news or if you would like to contribute any news for further issues, please contact:

Steve Charles at
stevec3@u.washington.edu or call
 (206) 543-5342

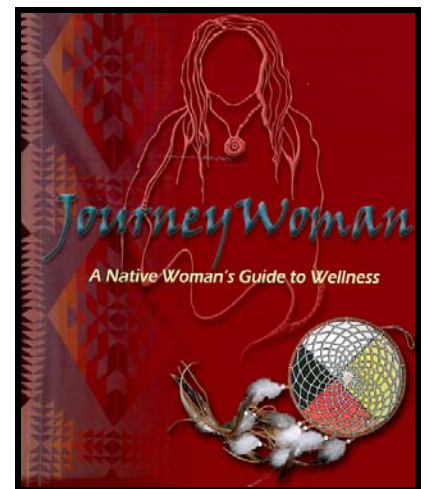
**We wish you the best of
 holidays and many blessings
 in 2009!**

Journey Woman: A Native Women's Guide to Wellness

This beautiful health resource was produced by the Women's Wellness Program at NARA (Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest). Founded in 1970, NARA is an Indian-owned, Indian-operated non-profit agency, originally focused on outpatient substance abuse. They now operate a residential family treatment center, an outpatient treatment center, a family resource program, and a primary health care clinic with a Women's Wellness Program (WWP) that provides women's health services to the urban Indian women of Portland, Oregon and surrounding towns. All NARA's services are centered on the family.

The *JourneyWoman* guide began when the Women's Wellness Program conducted over 30 in-depth interviews with women served by the program, to gain a better understanding of barriers to wellness for Native women. This project was called "Voices," and revealed barriers such as historical trauma leading to mistrust in the health care system, misunderstandings about and fear of health procedures and disease, and lack of a "Native look" to health awareness materials. A major recommendation from "Voices" was to create women's health materials designed for Native women with a Native look. The women said they wanted one resource that brought together information on many women's health issues, not separate pamphlets for various health concerns.

When samples of different manuals were evaluated by the focus groups, *Where Women Have No Doctor* was chosen by all of them as the best model in terms of reading level and layout for the Native women's manual. And while initially the manual was to focus on breast and cervical cancer, each focus group



recommended a comprehensive view of women's health with personalized stories of Native women's experiences with a range of wellness issues. The result is "*JourneyWoman: A Native Woman's Guide to Wellness*."

Currently, there has been a printing of 2100 copies. However, the majority of those books have been designated to those on the waiting list, including tribes in Washington and Oregon state who have not yet received a copy.

Please contact your local tribal health program to let more women know about the book, as there are no available funds for individual shipping. Copies will go quickly, so please assist us in ensuring that community members receive the manual.

For more information, contact Sharon Fleming, Special Projects Coordinator, at sfleming@choctawnation.com or (580) 380-7786.

Comic Book Project Launched with First Participants



The first ever Native Comic Book Project Training Workshops were held on November 20th and 21st in Seattle and Bellingham, respectively. The first workshop hosted 12 participants, including community members from the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency, the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration of Washington, and the University of Washington.

The second workshop, held at Northwest Indian College's Cultural Learning Center, brought together 21 participants, including youth representatives, Northwest Indian College students, Lummi CEDAR Project representatives, and a public health director. Representatives from Lummi Tribal Court, Youth Academy, and Nation School also took part.

Columbia University's Dr. Michael Bitz, founder of the New York-based Comic Book Project, and Stanford University's John Frazier of the Decision Education Foundation conducted the initial training at both sites.

This workshop was the launching pad for the Native Comic Book Project, which provides educators the necessary materials to work with community youth in helping them conceive, develop, and produce comic books from a Native perspective. These perspectives address issues on how to live a long, healthy life.

In emphasizing a face-to-face relationship with students, the workshop trained participants on decision-making elements, comic book fundamentals, and lesson plans. Because students will be encouraged to be the driving force behind their own comic creation, instructors were given the preparation necessary to offer guidance and direction for this force.

In the spring of 2009, a public display involving all participants in the Native Comic Book Project will celebrate Native youth's creations.

A participant fills in the blanks for the start of his own comic book under the direction of Dr. Michael Bitz.



The first part of the workshop introduced "The Fundamentals of Making Good Decisions" developed by the non-profit Decision Education Foundation located in Palo Alto, California. Through research, The Decision Education Foundation studied the decision-making process and broke it down into six components that can be taught to youth. Kids make many decisions every day, and good decisions are important for living a long healthy life.

The second part of the workshop demonstrated the logic behind the comic book format through the presentation of examples from Native illustrators, cartoonists, and past student creations. The curriculum examines all aspects of comic book creation and provides a 16-week lesson plan and activity and manuscript starter templates.

Dr. Michael Bitz led this section of the workshop and provided the participants with the necessary skills to lead their own afterschool programs. Participants will be using comic books as an avenue for promoting health and wellness in Native communities.

In the spring of 2009, a public display involving all participants in the Native Comic Book Project will celebrate Native youth's creations.

For more information on the Native Comic Book Project, please contact Project Lead Jon Tomhave at jst1066@u.washington.edu or (206) 543-3268.

Alaska Workplace Solutions Project

The Alaska Workplace Solutions Project, funded by the National Cancer Institute, is currently recruiting Alaska Native businesses to join the project. The research focuses on adaptation and evaluation of an evidence-based intervention aimed at disease prevention and health promotion strategies in Alaska Native workplaces. The project plans to partner with 40 Alaska Native businesses to implement culturally appropriate interventions focusing on areas such as influenza immunization, cancer screenings (colonoscopy, mammography, pap smears), healthy eating habits, physical activity, and tobacco cessation. University of Washington researchers are partnering with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, workplaces, and workplace committees to adapt and implement this Workplace Solutions intervention package. For more information, please contact Ursula Tsosie (Navajo), Research Coordinator, utsosie@u.washington.edu or (206) 543-7931.

Janice Sabin, PhD
Project Director



Ursula Tsosie, MPH
Research Coordinator

Project Staff

Increasing American Indian Tissue and Organ Donation Project

The Increasing American Indian Tissue and Organ Donation Project is funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and partners with Northwest Indian College, United Tribes Technical College, Turtle Mountain Community College, and other tribal colleges and universities. The purpose of our project is to increase awareness of the need for organ donation and transplantation among American Indians and to increase the number of American Indians who register to donate organs. Students and faculty at our partner tribal colleges and universities in Washington, Montana, North Dakota, and Alaska are helping us create culturally appropriate organ donation educational materials such as posters, brochures, bookmarks and digital stories. We will use these materials to conduct organ donation awareness programs on each campus and in the surrounding communities over the course of the five-year study. For more information, please contact Ursula Tsosie, Research Coordinator, utsosie@u.washington.edu or (206) 543-7931.

Native People for Cancer Control Telehealth Network Provider Education Series



December 11, 2008

11:00 am – 12:00 pm, Alaska Standard Time

12:00 – 1 pm, Pacific Standard Time



Traditional Healer, Dr. Rita Blumenstein, will offer words on the key principles of traditional healing and how traditional healing is used.

Rita Pitka Blumenstein is a Yup'ik Elder who has become the first certified traditional doctor in Alaska. Rita is also an artist, a teacher, speaker and storyteller. In her presentations around the world, Rita has focused on the health and social development of people.

She is a learned voice for passing on knowledge of the environment and ways of the land. (Dr.) Rita has made outstanding contributions in health, social development, education, environment, human rights, and international goodwill. She teaches by just "being" and is an outstanding role model for other women and for all those who encounter her. (Source: www.arctichealth.org)

To ensure network connection

please RSVP by Monday, December 8th, 5 pm:

Cara Towle, RN, MSN, Co-Director

Native People for Cancer Control Telehealth Network

Email: ctowle@u.washington.edu

In Alaska to ensure network connection please contact:

Tom Elmore

AFHCAN Visual Communications Administrator

Phone: (907) 729-3910