



Partnerships  
for  
Native  
Health

## Stay in the circle...

### Greetings!

Partnerships for Native Health, housed at the University of Washington's Center for Clinical and Epidemiological Research, consists of American Indian and Alaska Native outreach, education, research, and training projects. This is our quarterly newsletter which highlights some of our projects and partners.

### Introducing: **Abigail Echo-Hawk**

My name is Abigail Echo-Hawk and I am very excited to be joining the Community Outreach and Research Translation (CORT) team as a Tribal Liaison. As an enrolled member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma I am dedicated to building capacity for translational research within rural and urban Native communities. I believe that successful campus-community partnerships with Native communities are contingent on interactions that are respectful of our beliefs and traditions.

My father is an enrolled member of the Pawnee Nation and my mother was traditionally adopted by Katie John, chief of the Athabascan village of Mentasta Lake, AK. I was raised in Alaska in very rural setting in which health problems among AI/AN people such diabetes, cancer and heart disease have become an everyday part of life that is impacting us disproportionately. Upon moving to Seattle to complete my BA and M.P.S. at UW, I realized that such disparities are not just impacting rural Native communities but also those in an urban setting. I devoted my academic work to support those working to undo such disparities and hope to continue doing so in this role.

I am the mother of two sons are 6 and 9, and my husband Chris and I love spending time with them at powwows where they both compete as Southern Traditional dancers. When I'm not at work I enjoy spending time in my community as a volunteer working toward equitable birth outcomes for urban Native women and increasing educational opportunities for AI/AN children in Seattle.



### Introducing: **Shelley Lawson**



Hi. My name is Shelley Lawson and I'm very excited to be working for the Partnership for Native Health. I'm Tsimshian Indian, Raven Clan. My family is from Metlakatla, Alaska, however I grew up in Portland, Oregon and have lived in Seattle for 20 years, so I'm pretty much an urban Indian. I've worked for many tribes and Native owned organizations including the Muckleshoot Tribe, the Puyallup Tribal Health Authority, and Seattle Indian Health Board's Urban Indian Health Institute. I've done consulting work for the Alaska Federation of Natives, Sealaska, South Puget Sound Intertribal Planning Agency, Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and the Wampanoag Tribe in Massachusetts. Visiting these Native communities has truly been a blessing and I'm excited for the opportunity to visit more communities through my work.

For the past five years I worked at Public Health – Seattle & King County steering a colorectal cancer screening program for low income and uninsured people. Colon cancer is easy to prevent but screening for the cancer can be challenging and expensive. Through collaborative work with many partners, we found effective strategies to help people complete the tests. I'm looking forward to helping more of our communities figure out how to screen our people for all cancers including colon cancer.

I have two young sons, Rhys and Ian. Our family loves to camp, play sports, and hang out together.

## Partner Highlight: South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency's Men's Wellness Workshop

On April 16-17<sup>th</sup> the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) hosted a Men's Wellness Workshop, "*The future depends on me now!*" at Squaxin Island's Little Creek Resort. Approximately 50 tribal members attending. NPCC staff assisted with planning and implementing in this workshop. The event began on Friday evening with a blessing ceremony. The Squaxin Island youth dance troupe performed traditional songs and dances of the tribe while the sun slowly settled behind them. The conference presented information booths which featured local health resources and a wellness check area that offered free blood pressure screenings, height and weight measures, blood sugar readings, and a colon cancer kit.

Throughout the day, a popular activity included a drum making workshop that most of the men participated in. At the same time, many of their wives engaged in a weaving and beading workshop in the adjacent room.

The presentations by Native men from local tribes consisted of informal discussions on topics covering diabetes, heart disease, prostate and colorectal cancer, hepatitis C and liver cancers, HIV/AIDS, tobacco, and lung cancer.

At the end of the conference, men who had completed the workshops were presented a shingle with their name emblazoned on it, as honored 2010 wellness graduates. We are honored to continue our partnership with SPIPA, and the tribes they serve.



*Photo courtesy of Maisie MacKinnon*

## Report back: Native Tobacco Policy Summit

On February 18th and 19th 2010, Native People for Cancer Control (NPCC) hosted its first Native Tobacco Policy Summit. Over one hundred participants gathered at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. Participants consisted of community members, tribal and state government agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges, and universities staff.

Engaged around community issues, the Summit sought to provide participants with an overview of current policy topics, while offering the tools and resources necessary to guide policy planning and coalition building. Some of the learning objectives focused upon the relationship between health and secondhand smoke; the policy process; the key economic, social and political influences guiding tobacco policy; and the methods to develop strategies for effective policy changes.

The Summit placed emphasis on the creation of shared, open space for participants to come together, hear stories, and learn best practices. This process established the opportunity for continued networking toward the development of best practices from within the Native community. Comments about the Summit include strengths such as "positivity, education, shared moments, support, tools and resources". Others enjoyed the "shared stories

and passion around tobacco policy", and for another participant: "the summit gave me an idea of a group/idea I will come in contact with as a public health worker". The contributions of community leaders reflected the passion and energy present within the current movement, as presenters detailed the work behind their challenges and success stories in working with community members and policy workers alike. The future of Native tobacco policy work, and social change for positive health outcomes, will hinge upon the diligence, time, and resources of communities and leaders.

### Thank you to our planning committee!

- American Cancer Society
- Black Hills Center for American Indian Health
- Chehalis Tribe
- American Nonsmokers Rights Foundation
- Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
- Oregon Department of Human Services
- Seattle Indian Health Board
- South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency
- TOGETHER! Youth Violence, Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug Prevention program
- Washington State Department of Health
- Yakama Nation

## Save the Date: 2010 Cancer Leadership Initiative

### Changing Patterns of Cancer in Native Communities: Strength Through Tradition and Science

## Spirit of EAGLES

American Indian/Alaska Native  
Leadership Initiative on Cancer



*Artwork Designed by: Chholing Taha, for Spirit for Eagles*

## Eighth National Conference September 11-14, 2010

(Student conference dates are September 11-13,  
2010)

Westin Hotel  
Seattle, WA

For the most up-to-date information please  
reference our website

@ <http://www.nativeamericanprograms.org>

**NOTE: Scholarships for local students  
will soon be available.**

**For more information on student schol-  
arships, please contact Johnny Mao at  
[jmao@uw.edu](mailto:jmao@uw.edu)**

## Upcoming: Young Native Women's Leadership Academy

The Native Action Network (NAN) will be hosting its first annual Young Native Women's Leadership Academy, September 26-27th at the Tulalip Resort. This one and a half day Leadership Academy will provide attendees with the resources they need through interactive workshops, keynote speakers, and a wide NAN community network to become strong Native leaders in their community. Through sessions, Native women attendees will be able to define how their actions can support their goals for the Native community through discussion, professional development, and community support.

As noted, attendees will leave with improved leadership skills, introduction to a network of Native women leaders, developed relationships with Native women peers, and insight from community leaders.

All expenses, less travel to and from Tulalip, are covered with acceptance to the Academy

The NAN encourages young Native women who are juniors in high school through sophomores/2nd years in college/university during the 2010-2011 school year to apply. Applications will be judged on the applicant's potential for leadership and commitment to Native service, as reflected in the application.

Applications are available at [enduringspirit.org](http://enduringspirit.org) under the "Young Women" tab in pdf form. *Applications are due Aug. 15th.*

## Update: Native People for Cancer Control's Next Five Years

Greetings! For the past five years, Native People for Cancer Control (NPCC) has been one of 25 Community Networks Programs in the country to receive funding from the National Cancer Institute (NCI), to reduce cancer health disparities through community-based participatory education, training, and research. Thank you to all of our partners throughout Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, North and South Dakota, who have collaborated with us over the past five years!!

NPCC is currently in a time of transition as last fall we reapplied for another five years of funding through NCI's Community Network Program. We will find out this summer if we are funded for another five years, with an anticipated start date of September. To prepare for these upcoming years, our team will be holding a retreat in August to reassess the past 5 years in order to reflect on what this means to the community now, and to plan accordingly for the future. We will also be contacting many of you, to hear what your education, outreach, research and training needs are, to help plan our activities for the upcoming year. We are committed to hearing what your needs are, and filling those needs the best we can! We hope that you may join us in this ongoing discussion. For any comments, suggestions, or questions in regards to how the next years are shaped, please contact Carrie Nass (cnass@u.washington.edu). We cannot do this without you!

## Collaborative to Improve Native Cancer Outcomes

This spring, the National Institutes of Health announced the awarding of 10 new Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities. The Collaborative to Improve Native Cancer Outcomes (CINCO) at University of Washington Partnerships for Native Health is one of the 10 awarded centers.

The 10 centers are supported by the NIH's National Cancer Institute; the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research. The centers will support transdisciplinary collaborations among biological, medical, behavioral, social, and public health scientists. In addition, each center will each play a major role in the training of a new generation of transdisciplinary researchers in collaborative team science.

Traditionally, studies of vulnerable populations have focused on specific disease disparities targeted at the individual level. This center seeks to implement a different approach to cancer outcomes, in that it considers diverse cancer disparities as "systemic disorders" of society. The key factors targeted in this method range from the micro level to the macro level, from genetic vulnerabilities to health policies.

The goals for this center consist of:

- 1) generating findings that can be translated into practical policy,
- 2) changing organizational structures, and their resulting treatments,
- 3) optimizing patient-centered health outcomes, and
- 4) reducing or eliminating cancer among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people.

To make the best use of available resources, the rationale and approach of this program targets cancers and risk factors that are the most common among AI/AN people; result in the

### 9 American Indian/Alaska Native Investigators and Core Leaders (25 in total)

- Jeffrey Henderson, Black Hills Center for American Indian Health (BHCAIH), Cheyenne River Sioux
- David Perdue, U. of Minnesota School of Medicine, Chickasaw Nation
- Emily Haozous, U. of New Mexico, Chiricahua Fort Sill Apache
- Angela Gonzales, Cornell University, Hopi
- Dorothy Rhoades, U. of Colorado Denver, Kiowa
- Lori Alvord, Dartmouth Medical School, Navajo Nation
- Patricia Nez Henderson, BHCAIH, Navajo Nation
- Eva Garrouette, Boston College, Oklahoma Cherokee
- Duane Jeanotte, former IHS CFO/Deputy Director, Turtle Mountain Chippewa

greatest morbidity and mortality; and are amenable to interventions that involve education, screening, behavior change, or system level change. Specifically, this program consists of five interwoven research projects that concentrate on cancers that have the highest incidence rates among AI/AN people. Among AI/AN women, these are breast, lung, colorectal, and cervical cancer, whereas among AI/AN men these are prostate, lung and colorectal cancer

These research projects operate in six community based sites and eleven academic institutions. One project will study nicotine metabolism, while another investigates a preventive intervention for cervical cancer among Hopi women and girls. Other studies include an evaluation of an intervention using computerized multi-media storytelling that emulates the Native tradition of storytelling to increase colorectal cancer screening; as well as an intervention to reduce environmental tobacco smoke, and a study of surgical treatment and outcomes among AI/AN with lung, prostate, breast, or colorectal cancers.

For more information, please contact Ursula Tsosie (utsosie@u.washington.edu).

## To the Community: A Message from Michelle Montgomery

As a research coordinator with the responsibilities that encompass working directly with tribal colleges and universities, and American Indian and Alaskan Native communities to improve inequitable health disparities, this work has molded both my professional and personal experiences. Through routine travels in the capacity as both a tribal liaison and research coordinator, for the months of February through May, I have worked directly within a large geographic area that includes site visits to Blackfeet Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Oglala Lakota College, Sinte Gleska University, Turtle Mountain Community College, and United Tribes Technical College.

My experience of continuing to practice skills as an educator, advocate for the equity of American Indian/Alaskan Native communities in becoming self-determined, and qualitative researcher are the catalyst for the many reasons of being passionately dedicated to continue to build positive, long-lasting collaborative relationships to make an impact on numerous health and social disparities. Although my site visits have been due to work responsibilities, more than often, words cannot express my heartfelt gratitude for the welcoming hospitality of each community creating a "home away from home" during my travels. I am sincerely grateful.

For more information on this message, please contact Michelle Montgomery (montgm2@u.washington.edu).

### Partnerships for Native Health Contact List

#### Contact us at

Partnerships for Native Health  
1730 Minor Ave, Suite 1760  
Seattle, WA 98101  
(206) 543-5342

Abigail Echo-Hawk (Pawnee)

Tribal Liaison

Community Outreach and Research  
Translation

hawkd3@u.washington.edu

Andrea Jones Krinke

Research Coordinator

Strong Heart Stroke Study

ajj@u.washington.edu

Ardie Doorenbos

Project Lead

American Indian and Alaska Native

Cancer Survivor Support Groups

doorenbos@u.washington.edu

Cara Towle

Director

Telehealth Services

ctowle@u.washington.edu

Carrie Nass

Co-Director

NPCC, Community Outreach & Admin.

cnass@u.washington.edu

Corinna Tordillos (Tlingit/Assiniboine  
Sioux/Northern Cheyenne)

Research Assistant

ctordi@u.washington.edu

Dedra Buchwald

Principal Investigator

Director, Center for Clinical

and Epidemiological Research

dedra@u.washington.edu

Diane Korngiebel

Program Coordinator

Institute of Translational Health

Sciences, Community Outreach

dianemk@u.washington.edu

Janice Sabin

Project Lead

Alaska Workplace Solutions

Increasing Organ Donation

sabinja@u.washington.edu

Johnny Mao

Research Study Assistant /Community  
Outreach

jmao@u.washington.edu

Laura Revels (Tlingit)

NPCC Outreach Trainer

American Indian and Alaska Native

Cancer Survivor Support Groups

ljrevels@u.washington.edu

Michelle Montgomery (Haliwa Saponi)

Research Coordinator

Increasing Organ Donation

montgm2@u.washington.edu

Odile Lallemand

Research Assistant

Multiple Projects

ozl@u.washington.edu

Ron Whitener (Squaxin Island)

Director

Native American Law Center

ronw@u.washington.edu

Shelley Lawson (Tsimshian)

Director

EXPORT Projects & NPCC

salawson@u.washington.edu

Steve Charles (Haida/Tlingit)

NPCC Outreach Coordinator

stevec3@u.washington.edu

Steven Patrick Verney (Tsimshian)

Project Lead

Strong Heart Stroke Study

sverney@unm.edu

Sweetwater Nannauck (Tsimshian/Haida/  
Tlingit)

Research Assistant

Staying Connected

sweeth20@u.washington.edu

Ursula Tsosie (Navajo)

Project Lead

Staying Connected, Collaborative to Im-  
prove Native Cancer Outcomes

utsosie@u.washington.edu