



Winter 2018 Newsletter



Greetings,

It's been a wonderful year at the American Indian Cancer Foundation! We've been busy developing new resources, and growing the team to enhance our connections with Tribal communities across the nation and increase awareness about preventable diseases. October was breast cancer awareness month, and our most successful Indigenous Pink campaign to date. AICAF partnered with more than 20 tribal clinics across the country to offer breast cancer support, education and screening. We had the opportunity to present at the

American Indian Health Research Conference, and engage tribal leaders in Tribes for Hope during NCAI's annual conference in Denver. We also welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors: Nicole Hallingstad (Tlingit), Laura Revels (Tlingit), and Frances Tiger (Muscogee Creek Nation).

Our passion to revive Indigenous communities hasn't gone unnoticed. Our work has recently been recognized by *The Atlantic*, *Indian Country Today*, and *Native Report*. The extra attention gave us the boost we needed to ramp up our donation efforts and finish the year strong. In 2018 an incredible 585 donors supported the AICAF mission, strengthening our programs to improve health outcomes across Indian Country.

We are grateful for the many champions who helped elevate our work this year, but there's still much to be done to eliminate cancer burdens in our communities. With your support we will continue to make a difference in 2019 and beyond!

With gratitude,

Kris Rhodes, MPH
Bad River and Fond du Lac Bands of Lake Superior Chippewa
Chief Executive Officer

7th Annual Powwow for Hope success!

The Powwow for Hope community

event and fundraiser brought together thousands of individuals representing many tribal nations and urban communities to show their support of loved ones dealing with cancer by creating a space for healing. Fundraisers throughout the country actively sought donations for months leading up to the event and are the primary source of healthy foods, crafts and activities at the event each year. Thanks to our dedicated sponsors, donors, volunteers, fundraisers and teams, we raised \$85,000!



Watch the 2018 Grand Entry

Proceeds benefit the Foundation's efforts that are not currently funded, such as survivorship support including newly developed cancer care packages, delivery of resources to communities aimed to improve early detection and prevention outcomes, and allow us to work with communities across Indian Country to reverse the increasing cancer trends of our people together.

Through our specials, we honor survivors, caregivers and hold a powerful jingle dress healing song followed by a healthy feast. The Survivors Table provided 37 survivors with newly developed care packages filled with Native-specific resources to help them deal with a cancer diagnosis or treatment plan. AICAF continues to distribute cancer care packages to those who need support across the nation. Due to this tremendous need, a survivorship program is currently underway at the organization.

Join the fun! Get Involved! Virtual online fundraisers will begin soon. Powwow for Hope happens May 4, 2019. Learn more at www.PowwowforHope.org

#IndigenousPink campaign engages thousands across the nation to spread breast cancer awareness



In October our annual *Indigenous Pink* campaign made waves across the country. Returning for its fourth year, the nation-wide movement drew in thousands to spread awareness about breast cancer disparities among American Indians and Alaska Natives. Indigenous Pink expanded greatly in 2018, helping us achieve our goals to:

- Raise awareness of breast cancer incidence and mortality disparities in American Indian and Alaska Native people.
- Increase education in both tribal and urban communities about the importance of

- breast cancer screening and follow-up tests.
- Increase the number of American Indian and Alaska Native women getting screened for breast cancer.

Part of our campaign growth came from several partnerships with tribal and urban AI/AN clinics who hosted their own breast cancer education and screening events. Throughout the month we collaborated with 22 clinics across 11 states, each one holding events that featured Indigenous Pink resources and educational kits; some locations provided breast cancer screening as well.

Social media interactions boomed with users trending the #IndigenousPink hashtag to participate in Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter conversations. Across these platforms, community engagement was at an all time high with followers joining in on digital events like: Facebook's Indigenous Pink Day event, Instagram's "Think Pink" Trivia, a live #IndigenousPink Twitter chat, two breast health webinars and four prize giveaways.

Thank you to each individual, clinic, community and organization that supported our efforts to raise breast health awareness across Indian Country; you made Indigenous Pink more successful than ever!

Cancer warrior shares his story across Minnesota



Watch Robert's Story

Over the summer, we partnered with colon cancer survivor Robert Desjarlait, Red Lake Nation, for the Powwow Colon Cancer Initiative. Desjarlait traveled across Minnesota sharing his cancer story, attending six powwows alongside Joy Rivera, AICAF's Community Education Coordinator. At each Powwow Desjarlait spoke of his health journey, emphasizing the importance that regular cancer screening has on early detection and survival rates. Rivera shared AICAF resources at each event. To keep the story alive, AICAF filmed the work done on this project. This video will continue to be used to share Desjarlait's journey, and to help educate people about the need to be screened.

Putting policy into practice


**RECLAIMING INDIGENOUS
 FOOD RELATIONSHIPS:**
 IMPROVING HEALTH WITH CULTURE



Purpose of the Framework
 Recognize and honor Indigenous foods as being central to life and a valuable resource to connect cultural practices with health.

Reclaiming Indigenous Food Relationships was created and organized for Native American organizations, tribal communities and individuals. By engaging the traditional teachings that connect all parts of life to food and health, it is designed to support Indigenous practices addressing food insecurity. The framework is based on the traditional medicine wheel with food at the center, surrounded by the stages of life, the changing seasons and the various aspects of individual and community health.

New framework!

Our new framework is already being utilized by Tribal partners and in classrooms. *Reclaiming Indigenous Food Relationships:*



Improving Health with Culture was designed to support integration of cultural traditions into healthy eating initiatives for prevention of chronic diseases. It presents concepts, strategies and discussion questions to promote implementing positive sustainable changes in communities related to healthy relationships with food.

[See the resource here.](#)

In October, Melanie Plucinski and Colin Welker presented at the Notah Begay III Foundation Healthy Beverage Summit. They led interactive sessions about how to implement policy, systems and environmental changes to promote consumption of healthy beverages across Indian Country. Participants engaged with tribal community success stories and learned about the five steps to policy change.

Tobacco research underway



Our research team: Kendra, Michael, Tarlynn and Madison are hard at work on the second portion of the “*Impacts of Traditional Tobacco Messages on Prevention &*

Cessation” study. They wrapped up the adult arm of the study that focuses on cessation, and will start surveying youth ages 13-17 on messaging and prevention in the new year. The aim is to test whether or not cultural references to traditional tobacco use are *more* effective in discouraging smoking among AI/AN youth than prevention messages that do not have the traditional component. AICAF partnered with the University of Minnesota’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication for this project. It was funded by ClearWay Minnesota.

TTUP Background:

The Tribal Tobacco Use Project (TTUP) was the first study to reveal the staggering 59% smoking rate among AI adults in Minnesota in 2013. TTUP results propelled our efforts to address high rates of commercial tobacco use, while focusing on strategies that are culturally grounded and community led. We are launching a follow up study with Minnesota tribes to reassess commercial tobacco use, attitudes and beliefs, and traditional tobacco teachings.

[Learn more about tobacco cessation](#)

Meet our new employees



Kendra Roland, MPH
Research Manager
Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara
Nation



Tina Munnell, BA
Communications Coordinator
Leech Lake Ojibwe



Tarlynn Tone-Pah-Hote, BA
Research Coordinator
Kiowa, Oneida



Michael Mudgett, MPH
Research Coordinator
Spirit Lake Nation



Sheryl Lawery, MPA
Public Health Advisor



Michael Yang, BA
Graphic Designer

Online store redevelopment

We will be closing **Shop AICAF** for remodeling. All of our swag items will be available until February 1, 2019, after which we will be working on a new store design to better serve you! Stay tuned for more information.

[Shop AICAF](#)

