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TRIBAL NATIONS RESEARCH GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Mission

SAVE THE DATE

"To improve the quality of life for all tribal members through culturally competent, custom-fit research"

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Save
The
Date!

2019
Data Matters Conference
March 27 & 28, 2019

Hosted By
Tribal Nation Research Group

For more information, visit
www.tnrg.org

Skydancer Casino & Resort
Belcourt, ND

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Tribal Nations
TNRG
Research Group

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2018 Data Matters Conference Highlights



TNRG Board of Directors, President, and Staff would like to thank all who attended and made the conference a huge success. The 2019 conference has an amazing lineup. Be sure to watch for agenda updates, registration, and booth sign-ups coming soon!

The 2018 Data Matters Conference was a huge success. Our attendance topped the first year conference with 250 registered participants on day one. The conference theme was Data Sovereignty for tribal communities. One of the many highlights of the conference included the presentation of the Turtle Mountain Youth Council Strategic plan presented by the TM Youth Council. Keynote presentations by Jennifer Parisien from the Native American Finance Office Association (NFOA). Jennifer presented on Why Data Matters in Tribal Finance Management. The presentation was well received by the conference attendees, including the Tribal Government Representatives in attendance. Joan LaFrance, presented on the Indigenous Evaluation Framework-Data for Evaluation. Joan's presentation focused on using community engagement and data to develop an evaluation process that is community driven, then using this data to make program improvements. TNRG associate member April Walker, Civil Engineer, presented on a Data Centric Approach to Problem Solving. April's presentation included problem solving efforts for tribal infrastructure development. Equally important and informative were the presentations from local community programs which included the Tribal Court, Home Visitation Program, and Diabetes and Obesity research topics. A special evening event included a dance presentation from Ms. Bobbi Lyn Frederick, Fancy Shawl Champion Dancer, fashion show and Panel Presentation from the Turtle Mountain Native Nations Rebuilders led by Jacob Davis and Amber Mathern. Panelist included Chairman Jamie Azure, Les Lafountain, Jayme Davis, and Jona Peltier.

Tribal Maternal & Child Health Symposium: Resiliency & Healing



In September 2018, Tribal Nations Research Group received the pleasure of being part of the planning committee for Tribal Maternal & Child Health Symposium: Resiliency and Healing, that was held at the Sky Dancer Casino Event Center. TNRG's Senior Associate, Dr. Carol Davis volunteered her time to be the MC at the two-day conference.

The two-day conference was hosted by TNRG, American Indian Public Health Resource Center, Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, Turtle Mountain Tribe, and North Dakota Department of Health. It focused on the resiliency and healing factors that Native families carry with them in today's society. Attendees were able to participate in interactive and engaging presentations on the most pressing issues in the maternal and child health field in Indian Country. Topics that were covered include: Traditional Natural Family Planning; Native Fatherhood Panel; How to Promote Tribal, State, and National MCH Policies in your Community; Self-Healing through Home Visiting; and Adverse Childhood Experiences Resiliency Factors.

Sunday evening, the American Indian Public Health Resource Center, NDSU Department of Public Health, and the ND Department of Health Division of Maternal and Child Health hosted a Paper Tiger Community Screening and Discussion. The documentary, Paper Tigers, followed a year in the life of an alternative high school that has radically changed its approach to disciplining its students, based on understanding and treatment rather than judgment and suspension, becoming a promising model for how to break the cycles of poverty, violence and disease that affect families.

Monday & Tuesday's agendas were pervaded with inspirational presentations, from Indigenous people throughout the nation. After the first day of the conference, Dorothy Henry organized a wonderful event that evening, Honoring Our HERO's of Rolette County. The community was invited to attend a catered supper, donated by the Turtle Mountain Tribe and were able witness the honoring to all emergency responders in Rolette County. Dorothy and a few of her co-workers put together small gift baskets and presented them to each first responder, as they were being recognized. Nonetheless, the event was very successful and packed with community members supporting our local hero's.

TRIBAL
NATIONS

WORKING
TOGETHER

National Indian Health Board

*Annual Heroes in Health Awards Gala
Expanding the Horizon of Indian Health*

Wednesday, September 19, 2018, 6pm-9pm

Devon Energy Building
Vast, 50th Floor
333 West Sheridan Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK



Anita Frederick, from Tribal Nations Research Group (TNRG), with the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians along with the other four CRCAIH Tribal Partners (OST, SWO, FDL, & RST) were recipients of the 2018 Area/Regional Impact Award from the National Indian Health Board (NIHB). This award honors an individual or organization whose work has contributed to improving American Indian/Alaska Native health care or affected change on an area or regional basis. The CRCAIH Tribal Partners address social determinants of health through building tribal research infrastructure. They strengthen tribal governance through leading the regulation of research, data management policies, and collection of research that is tribally driven and ultimately benefits Native people.

CRCAIH is a regional collaboration to build capacity for research among tribal nations and researchers in SD, ND, and MN to improve American Indian health. The CRCAIH tribal partners wear multiple hats, as advocates, protectors, and educators. They are the key to connecting interested researchers to their tribal collaborators. They support researchers in building trust and respect with community partners through building greater cultural/historical understanding of each tribal context.

Katie Blindman with OST represented for all five CRCAIH Tribal Partners at the NIHB Annual Heroes in Health Awards Gala held in September to receive the award. The effort and determination in building and sustaining tribal research infrastructure for their communities and paving a path for other tribal nations over the years has not gone unnoticed and staff at CRCAIH are very proud of their accomplishments.

Highlighted Associate Member



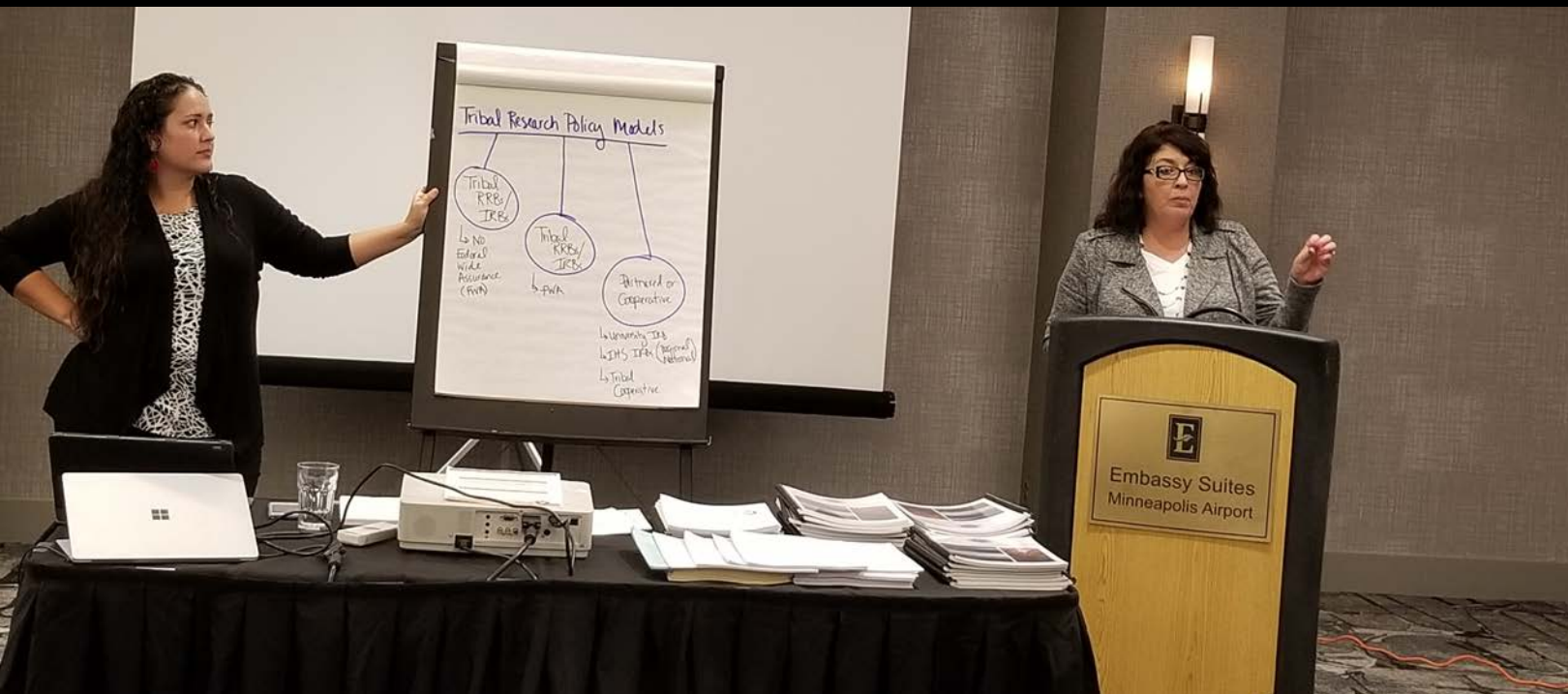
April Walker

April is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. She is a licensed professional engineer in ND and SD. April is a Certified Floodplain Manager and a member of the Association of State Floodplain Managers. In addition, April has experience in the fields of Water Resources, Transportation Engineering, and in local government administration and planning.

April E. Walker P.E., C.F.M. is a North Dakota native who graduated from Turtle Mountain Community High School. She went on to North Dakota State University and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. She currently resides in West Fargo ND and works as a private consultant. She began her career as a highway designer for the state of California but moved to Fargo in 2002 where she worked for the City of Fargo as a Traffic Engineer. In 2006 she became a registered Professional Engineer and was hired to serve as the City's Storm Sewer Utility Engineer which put her at the forefront of a tumultuous time with regard to floodplain management, emergency flood fighting, flood risk reduction, and mitigation issues. The Red River experienced major flooding in all but one of her 6 years in this position, including the flood of record, which peaked at 22.8 feet above flood stage. In 2012 she became the City Engineer and her scope of responsibility grew. She managed a Capital improvement plan that expanded from a total investment of \$40.8 Million in 2012 to a record breaking \$263 Million in 2014. Following 2014 it consistently exceeded \$100 Million per year. This increased investment in infrastructure helped the City address the needs of existing neighborhoods and expand the City. During her tenure April helped to develop and began the implementation of a flood protection plan that has resulted in the construction of 20 miles of permanent Levees and Floodwalls within the City. In her new role as a consultant April is seeking to bring the skills she has acquired to benefit a broader population. April also serves as an Adjunct Professor for NDSU, she is a member of the City of West Fargo's Planning Commission and serves on the Board of Directors for the FM Area Foundation.

TNRG

ANITA FREDERICK CO-PRESENTED WITH DR. DEANA AROUND HIM AT THE AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (AIHEC) IRB PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING ON SEPTEMBER 27TH & 28TH, 2018, IN BLOOMINGTON (MINNEAPOLIS), MN. THE MATERIAL FOCUSED ON THE UNIQUE ROLES OF TRIBAL AND TCU IRB'S. THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION HELD IN BLOOMINGTON WAS THE FOURTH AND FINAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING AIHEC PROVIDED IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE US.




INDIGENOUSPINK®

DAY 10.18.18

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"Indigenous Pink Day is a national breast cancer awareness campaign for American Indians/Alaska Natives. The American Indian Cancer Foundation asks Indigenous People of all ages to wear pink and share photos on social media using the hashtag #IndigenousPink to spread breast cancer awareness. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death and the most common cancer found in American Indian/Alaska Native women.

The goal of Indigenous Pink Day is to educate all Indigenous people on the importance of early detection and remind men and women to keep up to date on their screenings. This is a national awareness campaign, so you can participate from wherever you are!"





SURVEY OF AVAILABLE GENOMICS COURSES AT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (TCUs)

Kylene Martell and Raeanne Henry are currently two students at the Turtle Mountain Community College, where they are Student Research Assistants in Dr. Lyle Best's Genetics and Pre-Eclampsia Lab, jointly led by Krystal Tsoie. They are working with the Tribal Colleges Consortium on Genomics Training to develop an online genetics class to be offered to TCU students. The coursework is intended to introduce genetics but in a culturally-competent manner that is sensitive to the concerns Native Americans have about genetic technologies. By increasing the interest in the genetics field in Native American communities, the hope is to train our future leaders to become well-informed advocates that can represent us when faced with clinical and policy decisions. On October 13, 2018, Kylene and Raeanne presented their research findings at the INBRE conference at the University of North Dakota. After researching current course offerings at all tribal colleges, they found that only 10 of the 35 TCUs offer biological or life science degrees, and only seven TCUs offer genetic courses—none of which are offered remotely. This is important because so many TCU students take online classes, and utilizing TCUs' existing distance learning capabilities could enable more Native American tribal college students to become interested in STEM careers. Raeanne and Kylene believe this project is important because genetics research had a tenuous reputation in many tribal communities due to historical and recent harms perpetrated by non-Native researchers, and they feel that this program could potentially encourage more Native students to re-Indigenize science.

GENETICS AND PRE-ECLAMPSIA STUDY

Dr. Lyle Best

Pre-eclampsia or toxemia as it has been commonly known, is a very serious complication of pregnancy that kills up to 50,000 women each year around the world. This occurs when pre-eclampsia (PE) becomes more severe and seizures, blood clotting problems and/or strokes develop. In developed countries, these risks to the mother are much less if PE is recognized early; but the only effective treatment (delivery of the mother), simply shifts the complications to the often pre-mature baby.

Pre-eclampsia affects about 6% of all pregnancies and the most common symptoms are high blood pressure, protein in urine, and swelling in legs and feet. Keep in mind however; some of the symptoms of pre-eclampsia are part of a normal pregnancy which can make it hard for doctors to be certain of the diagnosis. Although no cause has been found for PE, some risk factors have been identified, including certain genetic changes in the DNA. These genetic theories have been tested in European populations but never in American Indian communities. The Genetics and Pre-eclampsia Study (GPS) has been funded since 2004 at Turtle Mountain Community College (TMCC) by the National Institute of Health (NIH). This research is carried out according to strict ethical standards, and proper approval has been obtained from the TNRG and other tribes, university research protection boards (IRBs), the Indian Health Service and from each individual person who is invited to participate. Over 650 women have chosen to help with the study by donating DNA samples and information about their pregnancies. Only genes thought to be possibly involved in PE are tested and all records kept confidential. We work hard to ensure that any useful information is shared with participants via newsletters and radio programs; and with doctors at the local clinics.

In addition to better understanding this serious condition, one of the primary goals of the research program was to engage tribal college students in an active biomedical research program that might encourage them to consider a medically related careers. To date, GPS has employed 3 full time assistants (one of whom later worked for TNRG) and over 40 part-time student assistants. The students assist with all aspects of the study, from learning the ethics of research with human participants, to extracting and testing the DNA at our lab at TMCC, to statistically analyzing the data and writing publications. Two American Indian physicians, Dr. Gilbert Falcon and Dr. Candelaria Martin have also assisted the project. Many of these students and staff have used their experience to advance their training. Dr. Melanie Nadeau was our first laboratory technician, two of our early students are nurse practitioners, two are enrolled in medical school and many others are teaching in local schools or providing care in local medical facilities.

GENETICS AND PRE-ECLAMPSIA STUDY

Dr. Lyle Best

Although our study is small, it has made some recognizable contributions to the medical understanding of pre-eclampsia. GPS was the first to identify 3 small changes in an immunity related gene called "CRP" which double the risk of PE to about 12%. This contribution was noted and appreciated in the editorial section of a well-respected medical journal recently. In addition to examining the DNA that our participants have inherited from their parents, we have extended our laboratory capabilities recently to be able to measure how those genes are actually expressed in various tissues of the body. We are especially interested in the placental tissue and have obtained permission to examine this in a number of pregnancies, both affected with PE and normal. The GPS has grown over the years to include two other tribes in our region and two tribes in Oklahoma. This has allowed additional students and clinicians to become involved, as well as improving the accuracy of our results. All of the additional communities and individual participants have been informed and approved participation. We are very grateful for the cooperation and support of our participants, the tribal governments and their departments, TMCC, the University of North Dakota and NIH.

Respectfully,

Dr. Lyle Best

701-842-6770 or lbest@restel.com

This research has been led by Dr. Lyle Best, who previously worked with the Indian Health Service for over 20 years at Belcourt starting in 1977 and taught genetics at TMCC for over 10 years.

August 11, 2017

recently approved research

The Role of Individual and Community Level Social/Cultural Strength Factors in Anxiety and Depression Outcomes for Native American College Students – Lauren White

Genetics and Pre-Eclampsia Study – Lyle Best

Tribal College & Universities Epidemiology Behavioral Wellness Study (Epi BeWell) – Bonnie Duran

ND MIECHV Innovation Project: Surveys of Participants in Community Outreach and Education Events in Rolette County – Dorothy Henry

Birch Bark Biting workshop video – Denise Lajimodiere

Natives in Cybersecurity Education-NICE – Ace Charette

Exploratory Research on the Impact of the Growing Oil Industry in North Dakota and Montana on Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking – Dheeshana Jayasundara

Healthy American Indian Pregnancy Survey Project (HAIP-SP) – Clayton Hilmert

Native Women, Intimate Partner Violence, and Substance Abuse: The Protective Effect of Culture and Identity – Katie Schultz

ASPIRE North Dakota – Amy Armstrong

Impact of a Pricing Strategy at a North Dakota Tribal College – Wanda Laducer

Elder Personal Balance Self-Assessment Wheel – Sloan Henry

Genetics and Pre-Eclampsia Ethnographic Study – Krystal Tsosie

Telling Our Story: TCU Return on Investment Studies – Ace Charette

The Power the Youth has Always had Video – Alexis Davis

School Connectedness, Biculturalism and Academic Achievement of Community College Students – Nidia Ruedas-Gracia

An Analysis of Disability Support Services in Tribal and Nontribal Community Colleges in North Dakota – Kellie Hall

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SAVE THE DATE

7th Annual CRCAIH SUMMIT

APRIL 29-30, 2019

Sanford Center | Sioux Falls, SD



**COLLABORATIVE
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Project is supported by the National Institutes of Health under Award Number U54MD008164

The intent of CRCAIH was to bring together Tribal communities and health researchers, from multiple disciplines, to work in the development of cutting-edge transdisciplinary research to address the significant health disparities experienced by American Indians in South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota. The Annual Summit provides a forum for American Indian health researchers, tribal communities, practitioners, healthcare entities, and other various stakeholders to gather to learn about innovative research being conducted in AIAN health, share challenges and lessons learned, and discover new resources and techniques. It also serves to strengthen our partnerships and identify new areas for collaboration.



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