



Urban Indian Health Institute Newsletter Spring 2011

In This Issue

[Letter from Ralph Leadership Award](#)

[Vital Statistics](#)

[Community](#)

[Gathering Awards](#)

[Health Equity](#)

[Spotlight Detroit](#)

[New staff!](#)

[Student Spotlight](#)

From the Desk of Ralph Forquera...



The Seattle Indian Health Board was pleased to host the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sponsored Urban Indian Health Summit. The event was met with great enthusiasm bringing together over 50 stakeholders in urban Indian health.

On day one, as a pre-Summit event, the National Council of Urban Indian Health hosted a day-long workshop on the Affordable Care Act and the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. Carole Barbero, JD, and Myra Munson JD, did an outstanding job covering the many confusing nuisances in both bills. The second day was the Summit, held at the Capitol Visitor Center. Four panel sessions were held to help illuminate various perspectives, challenges, and opportunities related to health care reform. The final day brought together the representatives from the UIHO to formulate a call for action.

With the summit completed, our focus is now to take the



Mission:

*The mission of the
Urban Indian Health*

Institute is to support the health and well-being of Urban Indian communities through information, scientific inquiry, and technology.

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New Report

Looking to the Past to Improve the Future:

Designing a Campaign to Address Infant Mortality among American Indians and Alaska Natives

[Find it here](#)

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[Grants](#)

[The WEAVING](#)

guidance from the summit and participant comments and create a call for action document so that urban Indians are best equipped to reap the benefits of health care reform. The final report is set for release in mid April and it will be posted at www.uihi.org/summit.

I want to thank the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, our panelists, and the participants at the event for attending. I am incredibly pleased at the breadth of information we were able to discuss over the 3 days and look forward to releasing the final report in April. It is my hope that this report will help to advance to officials our needs and concerns so that the promise of health reform can be realized for urban Indians as well. Thanks to all of you for your efforts on behalf of urban Indians. Keep up the good work.

Ralph

UIHO Staff Recognition Opportunity: Call for Leadership Award Nominations

The Leadership in Data Use Award is a new opportunity to honor an exceptional person or program at an urban Indian health organization. As part of the effort to promote leadership and capacity building among urban American Indian and Alaska Native communities, the Urban Indian Health Institute would like to recognize a person or program that has shown outstanding leadership and that has made an exceptional contribution to the organization's goals through the innovative use of data. Individuals may nominate themselves or a coworker to receive this award.

The winner of the 2011 Leadership in Data Use Award will receive a cash reward of \$500 and will be widely publicized through the UIHI web site, communication broadcast, and newsletter. In addition, the UIHI has developed a media tool kit to assist in informing the local community about the winner's accomplishments and contributions.

To access the nomination form, [click here](#). Nominations close Monday, April 25th. The winner will be announced Wednesday, May 25th.

New Vital Statistics Data Available

Project

C.A.R.E.S. Website

Communication Broadcasts!

Did you know?

UIHI sends regular emails to our Communication Broadcast listserv!



Emails may be about new materials, announcements, and important information - check out our previous Communication Broadcasts on our website.

Join Our Mailing List!

UIHI now has the 2007 vital statistics data available from the National Center for Health Statistics. This includes information on mortality rates, causes of death, and birth risk factors, such as receiving prenatal care during pregnancy. Please contact us at info@uihi.org if you have a data request on these or other topics, or want to speak with someone about your data needs.

Community Gathering Awards

Congratulations to two Urban Indian Health Organizations on their recent community gathering awards. The Indian Walk-In Center (IWIC) in Salt Lake City and the San Diego American Indian Health Center (SDAIHC) were each selected to receive the award, which provides up to \$4,000 per site and is being supported by a grant through the Office of Minority Health. The Community Gathering award is designed to assist urban Indian communities conduct pilot or preliminary work to enhance understanding of local health needs at the UIHO. Sites will discuss health priorities in a community setting and assess the health needs of their local American Indian/Alaska Native population.

In Salt Lake City, the Indian Walk-In Center (IWIC) is planning a gathering in conjunction with their annual Youth Powwow. IWIC will hold a community forum, inviting speakers with different perspectives on Urban Indian health to engage the community as a starting point for further conversation. Through this event, they hope to reach all stakeholder groups who are eligible for IWIC services, but who may not be currently accessing these services. They expect the gathering will increase awareness of the health needs of the community and will provide a forum for ranking and addressing priorities.

The San Diego American Indian Health Center (SDAIHC) plans to use this community gathering opportunity to conduct preliminary work to better understand the needs for social and emotional behavioral disturbances (SEBD) support within their community. SDAIHC will meet with other agencies in the greater San Diego area that provide mental health services and other support services to the AI/AN community. They hope to establish a collaborative relationship, expose gaps in services, determine the needs of the community, and set specific, shared

objectives.

The UIHI looks forward to partnering with both organizations on these important projects to address the health needs of their local communities.

Promoting Health Equity for Urban American Indians and Alaska Natives

As you may know, AI/AN experience disproportionately high burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and depression. The high prevalence of the multiple CVD and depression risk factors, such as smoking, overweight/obesity, physical inactivity, diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, and substance abuse among AI/AN compared to other populations contribute to this burden.

In an effort to address the gross disparities in CVD, depression, and a third disease to be selected by the community, UIHI has partnered with the Office of Minority Health and launched the five year Health Equity Project. Over the coming months and years UIHI will document, publicize and build partnerships to strengthen evidence-based and culturally-targeted programs to reduce the impact of disease in urban AI/AN communities.

Many of you have already participated in the Health Equity Project by completing a survey of the services available at urban Indian health organizations (UIHO). We will also be interviewing UIHO staff to learn more about successful programming around CVD and depression. The information gathered from the survey and interviews will culminate in a Capacity Report, which we hope will provide inspiration, spark ideas, and highlight the amazing work you do.

The Capacity Report will be the first of many publications, tools and curriculum that we will be producing as a part of the Health Equity Project.

Community Spotlight: Detroit

According to the Urban Indian Health Institute's 2009 Community Health Profile for Detroit, more than twice as many American Indian and Alaska Native women in the area report late or no prenatal care than the general population. Fortunately, women living in Michigan's Wayne, Macomb, and

Oakland counties have a great new resource on their sides. In June 2009, American Indian Health and Family Services of Southeastern Michigan (AIHFS) became the 8th site of the Intertribal Council Healthy Start of Michigan. Since then, the AIHFS program, called *Maajtaag Mnobmaddzid* ("a start of a healthy life" in Ojibwe), has been providing pregnant women, new mothers, and their families with vital resources.

While the Healthy Start program does not replace regular pre and postnatal care, the program's two-person staff conducts monthly home visits to perform health screenings, provide education on topics like nutrition and vaccinations and offer services like transportation and help obtaining supplies and cash assistance when needed. Besides these general health services, the Healthy Start program at AIHFS also builds a strong support community offering pregnant women and their families the invaluable opportunity to interact with other families and reconnect with pregnancy and childbirth traditions that are often lost in urban environments.

New staff at UIHI

Over the years we have been able to provide experience and learning opportunities for students from both undergraduate and graduate programs. We are extremely fortunate to be able to have some of them rejoin us as colleagues.

Sarah Simpson and Amber Lenhart both started at UIHI as student interns and now are continuing on as Project Assistants. We have also happy to welcome back former Master of Public Health students Julie Loughran and Liz Knaster as Project Coordinators.

Julie completed her MPH in the University of Washington's Community-Oriented Public Health Practice Program. During her time at UW she interned at UIHI, collaborating with NAWDIM (Native American Women's Dialog on Infant Mortality) on a project to document and strengthen their work in reducing the disparity in infant mortality rates.

Liz also received her master's in public health from the University of Washington, where her research focused on intimate partner violence and social determinants of health. During her practicum at UIHI she worked on the Institute's colorectal cancer awareness initiative, and is now working as a project coordinator on a range of projects, including the Diabetes Audit Report and Viral Hepatitis Integration Project.

All of our new colleagues bring a wealth of experience that will truly enrich the work that we do at UIHI. If you would like to

inquire about student opportunities at UIHI please contact us at info@uihi.org, with "student opportunity" in the subject line.

Student Spotlight

Stefanie Davidson

Originally from British Columbia, Stefanie is Lytton First Nations Band. She moved with her family to Blaine, WA as a teenager.

In 2003 she graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in sociology and law, societies and justice. She is currently enrolled in Seattle University's advanced practice nursing immersion (APNI) program where she is studying to become a community and public health advanced practice nurse.

Her particular health care interests include improving the health of the homeless in Seattle as well as maternal/child health.

Amber Olsen Pouley

Amber Pouley is Alutiiq (Chugach Aleut) and Athabascan from Cordova, Alaska, though her family has been in Washington since her grandfather returned from the Navy after World War II. She is completing her graduate practicum with UIHI and studying in the Extended Master's of Public Health at University of Washington. This practicum work will support activities under a Health Equity grant from the Office of Minority Health. She obtained her undergraduate degree at Western Washington University, minoring in history.