



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN PHYSICIANS

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May 4 2022

Dear AAIP Members:

This past weekend, over 100 participants, including more than 50 students, attended AAIP's 28th Cross Cultural Medicine Workshop (CCMW) on the traditional lands of the Pueblo people. Dr. Allison Kelliher led a team of AAIP members and staff in organizing this fantastic event that focused on two themes: incorporating traditional medicine into practice and navigating academia as an Indigenous learner.

For me personally, the most fulfilling component of the workshop was realizing how we, as Native physicians, have started to normalize traditional medicine and our cultures in our work. Workshop attendee, Dr. Kathy Morse, recalled that the CCMW she attended 27 years ago featured more talks by traditional healers. Those early workshops have paid off. This year Dr. Morse heard from Drs. Kelliher, Molina, and Warne, how traditional medicine is now more accepted and integrated into medical practice. Drs. Maresca and McCabe beautifully explained how commonly held traditional values and knowledge such as the prioritization of care for community, elders and children have helped us survive another pandemic.

We also heard from Dr. Warne about increasing national recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledge and efforts to incorporate more traditional healing into academia. He and others were led by Dr. Missy Begay in a panel discussion about their journeys in medicine. A second panel led by Dr. Day addressed microaggressions in clinics and medical school. Panelist Dr. Shaquita Bell related a powerful story about continuing to deal with the same issues even when you're no longer a student and in a position of power. Students appreciated these messages. They were engaged, asking great questions, and avidly seeking mentorship from the array of physicians at the conference who represented a variety of specialties and interests.

When we weren't learning about the importance of culture, we were sampling it. We visited the Pueblo Cultural Center where we viewed Pueblo historical exhibits and art and dined on amazing foods that included tamales, enchiladas, Pueblo stew and Pueblo style bread pudding. Our CCMW organizers included these same dishes and other delicious foods throughout the workshop. I'm still full. Dr. Maresca organized the first, but certainly not last, AAIP trade and barter event. I never expected to return from the Southwest with new Tlingit jewelry, but Dr. Christine White brought copper shields and beaded herring eggs earrings that necessitated a trade for one of my bracelets. And for those who didn't find something to trade or barter for, there was the Gathering of Nations Powwow (GON) with two buildings full of Native artists and their wares. Some of my students proudly told me that they went early to get seats at GON and witnessed grand entry and the crowning of the new Miss Indian USA.

Hopefully I've conveyed a taste of the workshop and its importance to and for us all. As my mentor, Dr. Hill once told me, AAIP is unique because we maintain and support our traditional values, we hold on to who we are as American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Gunalcheesh' to the CCMW planning committee and the AAIP staff and volunteers for what was an incredible weekend full of exceptional people supporting one another and practicing the values that have kept us alive for centuries.

Mary
Mary Owen MD
President AAIP