WELCOME and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

On behalf of the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP), I would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year. AAIP is looking forward to another busy year with great activities. We hope you mark your calendars now for these important events and learning opportunities that include the Pre-Admission Workshop scheduled for February 19-22, 2009, with the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. This is an outstanding program that helps AI/AN students prepare for the admissions process to medical school.

Looking ahead, we are planning now for the 16th Annual Cross Cultural Medicine Workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 23-26, 2009; the Patty Iron Cloud National Native American Youth Initiative, June 20-28, 2009; and AAIP’s 38th Annual Meeting and National Health Conference, July 22-26, 2009, at the Westin Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia. AAIP President Dr. Gerald Hill and Executive Board are working very hard organizing another great annual meeting and would like to invite everyone to attend this wonderful conference. The theme for the conference is “Critical Issues in Indian Health: Science and Solutions for the Health of Our People”. Presentations will address childhood obesity, diabetes, mental health, and many other important health topics.

The Annual Meeting and National Health Conference will also provide you the opportunity to explore Alexandria – one of America’s oldest and most picturesque destinations. Alexandria takes pride in being the hometown of George Washington as well as other important figures in American history. The nation’s capital also offers fine art, antique galleries and wonderful restaurants. We hope you will join us for the conference this summer.

I would also like to thank our many partners and affiliates that assist us in various AAIP projects such as the Diabetes Program, Family Wellness and Youth in Distress, Careers in Health for Native Students and the Patty Iron Cloud National Native American Youth Initiative. We are also grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with the national Native organizations such as National Indian Health Board, National Council on Urban Indian Health, National Indian Council On Aging, National Congress of American Indians, Northwest Portland Indian Health Board, United South and Eastern Tribes, One Sky Center, and several other tribes regarding two very important programs: Indian Country Methamphetamine and Healthier Indian Country Initiatives. The AAIP staff and I are dedicated to providing the best service to our AAIP members and community members.

Finally and most importantly, I would like to congratulate Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, AAIP member, who was appointed to President Barack Obama’s Transition Team. She is part of the HHS Agency Review team for the transition. This is a great opportunity for us to convey health priorities to the transition team in hopes of improving the health of Native people and all Americans.

Warm regards,
Margaret Knight
AAIP Executive Director
The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) announced it has recognized Brent Oliver Hale, MD, FACEP, an attending physician at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City, as a “Hero of Emergency Medicine.” The campaign, which is part of ACEP’s 40th anniversary, recognizes emergency physicians who have made significant contributions to emergency medicine, their communities and their patients.

“Emergency physicians are on the front lines of America’s health care system, providing the essential community service of emergency care,” said ACEP President Linda L. Lawrence, MD. “The dedication, passion and commitment Dr. Hale has shown embodies the vision of ACEP’s founders and the ideals of our specialty.”

Dr. Hale served as Battalion Surgeon with the 19th Special Forces 1st Battalion in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004. He was tasked with operating an unconventional warfare “clinic” in a remote corner of Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. The clinic was often mobile, with the team taking medicines and whatever it could to even more remote areas in an effort to build trust with the local people. Sometimes with only a backpack of supplies, Dr. Hale was better equipped than anything the locals could provide.

Dr. Hale’s team was credited with saving many lives and building trust with the local leadership. He stayed beyond his required 90 days – serving for one year. He received the Combat Medical Badge and Bronze Star for his service, while helping to build two functioning clinics and leaving a mark on the countryside that is still felt today.

“The American College of Emergency Physicians is celebrating 40 years of advancing emergency care, and the nation’s emergency physicians are dedicated to saving even more lives and to improving emergency care for the next 40 years,” said Dr. Lawrence.

“Tens of thousands of lives are saved each year by emergency physicians and 115 million patients are treated in the nation’s emergency departments. Emergency physicians are medical specialists who are experts in their field.”

Dr. Hale is also a clinical instructor in the Physician Associate Program at OU Medical Center. He is a graduate of Harvard Medical School – and performed his residency at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine.

ACEP is a national medical specialty society representing emergency medicine with more than 26,000 members. ACEP is committed to advancing emergency care through continuing education, research and public education. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, ACEP has 53 chapters representing each state, as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. A Government Services Chapter represents emergency physicians employed by military branches and other government agencies.
In October 2008, the Diabetes Advisory Committee selected eight mini-grants to be awarded $1,000 each to conduct diabetes education and prevention in Native American communities. This year marked a record year for applications with more than 24 tribes and organizations seeking funding.

“With so many good applications, it was difficult to select just eight to fund, but I did my best,” said Dr. Kevin Teehee of Ventura, CA. Dr. Teehee serves on the Diabetes Advisory Committee.

AAIP is proud to be able to award the monies to organizations nation-wide implementing innovative diabetes education strategies with the goal to reduce and, hopefully one day, eliminate diabetes in Indian Country.

Congratulations to our 2008 Diabetes Mini-Grant Awardees:

Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe (Fallon, NV)

Their outreach activity included starting a walking program for Headstart children (1/8 mile daily) and after-school care children (1/4 mile daily). They are providing nutrition education that involves a 15 minute (Headstart) and 60 minute (after-school) weekly class on better eating habits and will utilize posters and visual aids for the younger students and introduce a food diary to the older students. Additionally, a certified nutritionist provides a one-hour session on healthy food choices. Incentives will be provided upon completion of activities. A Fun Walk will be conducted at the end of the program where prizes and raffles including gift cards, money, tennis shoes, and tee shirts will be awarded.

Muldrow Cherokee Community Organization (Muldrow, OK)

The Tribal Healthy Nation public health educator will provide extensive classes every week for four weeks during the month of November regarding diabetes education by utilizing the NDEP materials. The health educator will advertise the program information in the local newspaper and go to the senior citizen center to announce the classes and handout flyers. Incentives will be given to participants.

MINI-GRANTS GIVEN TO HELP WITH DIABETES EDUCATION

The Diabetes Advisory Committee rated the applications on the following:

- Impact of Activity (in regards to diabetes education and prevention)
- Opportunity to Learn (does activity provide an opportunity to increase knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or behaviors)
- Use of National Diabetes Education Program materials
- Opportunity to Partner
- Evaluation of Activity
**Choctaw Apache Tribe (Zwolle, LA)**

Their activity will include a covered dish social event where NDEP materials are available at the door, as well as door prizes. Once the dinner is over a nutritionist will go over the nutritional values in the foods prepared by the community members and discuss portion control. Then two registered nurses will demonstrate how to perform correct foot care. Between demonstrations, free bingo games will be played. The bingo prizes will consist of articles needed to help measure correct portion size, i.e. food scales, measuring cups, smaller plates, etc. For the foot care, there will be different creams to prevent ulcers/breakdowns and mirrors for those who are unable to observe their own feet.

**Hannahville Indian School (Wilson, MI)**

Students during Health Enrichment Classes will view videos from NDEP website and have class activities using the booklet Tips for Teens and Move It!. A Native American artist who has Type 2 diabetes will present on Type 2 diabetes and will help the students to create a visual of how to reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes. These visuals will be displayed throughout the community. The school has a radio program that airs weekly. Students will create 60 second PSAs on the importance of reducing the risk of diabetes. The PSAs will be aired throughout the school year. Students will also be instructed during health classes on Behavior Modification. Students will be expected to make a plan of how they plan to change eating habits and increase exercise habits. They will need to discuss the changes with their parents and their parents will sign an agreement on helping them to improve their lifestyle and reduce their risk for Type 2 diabetes.

**Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (Littleton, ME)**

The HBMI Program entitled “We have the Power to Prevent Diabetes” will be modeled after the NDEP program “Power to Prevent” originally designed for African Americans. The program uses a family lifestyle approach to Diabetes Prevention. The emphasis will be to focus on adapting the program to the specific needs of the community to ensure cultural relevancy. There are 12 lesson plan components that will be covered lasting from 60-90 minutes each. Sessions included are: Small Steps Lead to Big Rewards, Strategies for Healthy Eating, Physical Activity-Get Moving Today, Healthy Food Choices One Day at a Time, Physical Activities for Families, Navigating Around Eating Out, and Portion Size. An activity tracker and fat and calorie counter included in the kit will be used to track progress.

**Igiugig Tribal Village Council (Igiugig, AK)**

In recognition of National Diabetes Awareness Month, the organization will host five weekend sessions throughout the month of November that will combine cultural activities and physical exercise/nutrition. Each session will focus on an aspect of Type 2 diabetes prevention. Sessions will include: an introduction to the disease, Night of Nutrition, Dance Away Diabetes, Native Youth Olympics and Traditional Foods, and a conclusion. A variety of work-out DVDs will be ordered for morning work-out sessions with the adults. A Wii Fitness Nintendo will be ordered for the community center so that the youth will not only be motivated to exercise but will have the age-appropriate equipment to do so. The community organization will provide a supervisor throughout the winter so that the center can be used regularly by youth.
Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma (Pawnee, OK)

The tribal organization’s proposed innovative, culturally sensitive community intervention is a handgame. The tribe holds handgames for a variety of reasons: to honor someone, as a fundraiser, or to celebrate an event. The handgames are considered to be a wonderful tradition that the elders left for their people. The theme for the handgame will be “Living and Loving a Healthy Life.” A handgame consists of fours to five games with either fours songs or two songs and a fun activity. The songs provide the audience an opportunity to engage in dancing. A representative from the tribal health program will be in the audience to disseminate the NDEP information and answer any questions. To promote physical activity, a pedometer will be given to participants as they arrive. The audience will be asked to wear the pedometers and take steps to “Living and Loving a Healthy Life.” The individual with the most steps from each side of the gym will be given fitness center memberships to the tribal Fitness Center.

Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma (Shawnee, OK)

A work site wellness initiative stresses the importance of physical activity in the work place. The tribe has agreed to incorporate opportunities for daily physical activity into the workday and to award incentives to employees that utilize these opportunities. Also, the grant aims to demonstrate the importance of policy change at the tribe for the financial/productivity of the tribe. Activities include flexible work hours for on site PA, lunch time walking clubs, sports team opportunities, healthy vending machine options, mileage trails club, fitness challenge, and develop and post culturally relevant motivational signs.

At the conclusion of the diabetes outreach activities, each organization awarded a mini-grant will submit a report to AAIP. The Diabetes Advisory Committee will then review the reports and select two Model Diabetes Programs. The two selected programs will have the opportunity to attend the Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in July 2009 to present on their successes and share the lessons they’ve learned. If you would like more information on the availability of mini-grants, NDEP materials, or other diabetes related information, please contact the diabetes program at diabetes@aaip.org or 1-877-943-4299.
The Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) along with The National Indian Health Board sponsored a one-mile walk in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, November 12, 2008. The event, “Honoring Native Health Warriors,” recognized those who have worked to reduce health disparities that include diabetes.

“We wanted to commemorate all who have dedicated their life’s work to ending diabetes. The walk was also a way to lift up those struggling with the disease,” explained Noelle Edwards Kleszynski, AAIP Diabetes Program Director. “November is Native American Heritage Month and Diabetes Awareness Month and so this was a great way to recognize both and raise awareness.”
Organizers said the walk promoted physical activity as a way to prevent diabetes. About 100 people participated in the one-mile walk that started at the National Museum of the American Indian and ended at the Natural History Museum.

Native American Indians have the highest rate of diabetes. Health professionals are concerned with statistics showing an increased number of Native youth affected by the disease with early onset of diabetes.

“Diabetes is a chronic condition that gravely affects quality of life. It can lead to blindness, kidney failure, stroke, amputations, and even death if it is not managed properly,” said Kleszynski. “The good news is diabetes is preventable.”

Research shows that approximately 80 percent of Type 2 diabetes cases are preventable. Education and lifestyle changes are essential to both the management and prevention of the illness.

Nike participated in the event by providing the commemorative T-shirts. The event also held an interactive dance session called “Dance Away Diabetes” led by champion pow wow dancer, Rocco Clark of the Yakama Nation.
JOIN US!

The 38th Annual AAIP Meeting and National Health Conference will be held in Alexandria, Virginia on July 22-26, 2009.

Preparations are underway for an exciting and engaging event. More details are COMING SOON!
The National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), Office of Minority Health Research Coordination will award 15 undergraduate students interested in research scholarships to attend the AAIP conference. Selected scholars will be required to attend a NIDDK session to be held during the conference. The remainder of the conference will be yours to attend all the other scheduled sessions and social activities. This scholarship provides for the student’s airfare, hotel lodging, and meals.

Application Process

- NIDDK Application/AAIP Primary Data Sheet form
- One-page letter regarding your interest in research
- Copy of Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood or Tribal Identification
- Current College/University Transcript
- Letter of Recommendation – Must be completed by a College/University faculty member, preferably a science professor
- Recent photograph

Applications must be postmarked by Friday, June 1, 2009. The NIDDK scholarship is awarded on a one-time only basis. If you have any questions, please contact AAIP Student Programs at (405) 946-7072, or send an email to lmyers@aaip.org or pjohnson@aaip.org for more information.
Careers in Health for Native Students

PHYSICIAN SHADOWING PROGRAM

College student eligibility and application process

College students will live with an AAIP member. A background check will be conducted on selected students. AAIP will cover airfare for out of state students who are matched with a physician. Students will be reimbursed for mileage if matched with a physician within their respective state (not to exceed 100 miles roundtrip). Students will also receive a stipend to cover meals and all incidentals.

High school student eligibility and application process

High school students must have participated in an AAIP activity in the past to be considered for this program (i.e. the Patty Iron Cloud Youth Initiative). Students will be matched with an AAIP member physician who resides within 100 miles (roundtrip) driving distance of the student. Students will be reimbursed for mileage and will receive a stipend to cover meals and all incidentals.

AAIP is currently accepting applications until all shadowing positions have been filled. Please visit www.aaip.org for the application or call (405) 946-7072.

ENDOCRINOLOGY FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Oklahoma City Area Indian Health Service in conjunction with the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC), Section of Endocrinology & Diabetes and the Harold Hamm Oklahoma Diabetes Center is actively requesting candidates to apply for a two-year Endocrinology fellowship program. Interested applicants must hold U.S. Citizenship. American Indians are strongly encouraged to apply. Upon completion of the fellowship training, a two-year payback will take place at the Oklahoma City Area Indian Health Service in the role of Area Consultant for Endocrinology.

Go to http://w3.ouhsc.edu/Endocrinology/Fellowship%20Program.asp for more information on the fellowship opportunity. You may also contact the Fellowship Coordinator, Carla Deal at Carla-deal@ouhsc.edu or (405) 271-3613.
The Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) in partnership with the University of Utah – School of Medicine will be conducting a Pre-Admission Workshop in Salt Lake City, Utah, from Thursday, February 19 through Sunday, February 22, 2009. The workshop focuses upon skills necessary for successful application and admittance to health professional school. AAIP member physicians, medical students, university faculty and financial aid/scholarship representatives will present workshop lectures.

Scholarships are available for the workshop. The scholarship application and accompanying materials must be in the AAIP office no later than FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009. If you are selected, the AAIP scholarship will pay travel, lodging and most meals.

January 30, 2009 is the application deadline

Please contact the AAIP Student Programs at (405) 946-7072 or by email at pjohnson@aaip.org or lmyers@aaip.org for application materials and additional information.
After graduating from Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Dr. Moira Redcorn spent several years as a massage therapist. She then changed the course of her career and went back to school to learn more about health and healing.

“There was a point when I felt I couldn’t advance my knowledge base of the body without continuing my education,” explained Dr. Moira. “It was late in my life, but I thought, in 10 years I can continue to be a massage therapist or I can be a doctor.”

She chose to be a physician, attending medical school at Oklahoma State University. Dr. Moira is now in a psychiatric residency program in Norman, Oklahoma while working in internal medicine at St. Anthony’s Hospital in Oklahoma City.

“There are several reasons I’m pursuing psychiatry. I enjoyed my psychiatry rotation more than any other rotation. I began this path with the idea that I would work with patients who suffer from substance abuse,” said Dr. Moira.

Another reason for her interest is the location. She and her husband consider Norman, Oklahoma their hometown. Both of their families live in Norman – and both of their tribes are in Oklahoma. Dr. Moira’s father is Osage and her mother is Caddo.

She is proud of her heritage. That is why she believes strongly in the Association of American Indian Physicians mission – and hopes to give back by inspiring others.

“I am grateful to have benefited from the programs offered by AAIP. It is imperative to encourage Native people to become educated,” said Dr. Moira. “I believe having Native doctors treating Native populations is important in the healing of our people in every way.”

Dr. Moira Redcorn [right] along with her brother, father, and nephews are shown here after the I-lon-shka (Osage Ceremonial Dances).

“It is imperative to ENCOURAGE Native people to become educated.” —— Dr. Moira Redcorn
Dr. Yvette Roubideaux was named to serve on the Health and Human Services (HHS) Agency Review Team for the Obama-Biden Presidential Transition Team. The committee is one of several completing a thorough review of key departments, agencies, and commissions of the United States government. Their work helps provide the new President, Vice-President, and key advisors with information needed to make strategic policy, budgetary, and personnel decisions.

Dr. Gerald Hill was honored by the Center of American Indian and Minority Health and Native American Alumni of the University of Minnesota Medical School at a special event in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Dr. Hill was recognized for the impact he has made for Native students in medical school and those in the profession. Dr. Hill was one of the first directors of the Center of American Indian and Minority Health (CAIMH) on the Duluth campus in 1990. Under his leadership, CAIMH established programs to help decrease disparities in American Indian communities by recruiting American Indian students into health professions. Dr. Hill is the current President of the Association of American Indian Physicians.
UPCOMING EVENTS
Save the date for 2009

Pre-Admission Workshop
Feb. 19-22 – Salt Lake City, UT

Cross Cultural Medicine Workshop
April 23-26 – Santa Fe, NM

Patty Iron Cloud NNAYI
June 20-28 – Washington, D.C.

AAIP Annual Meeting
July 22-26 – Alexandria, VA

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