



Community Story

Navajo County Builds NIZHONI Community Trail

By Sherry Haskins

National Trails Day, June 7, 2014, brought the groundbreaking and trail clearing ceremony for the Nizhoni Community Walking Path at the Navajo County Complex in Holbrook, Arizona. “NIZHONI is a sacred Navajo word meaning ‘the beauty way,’” said Navajo Supervisor Dawnafe Whitesinger, “Hopefully, the Nizhoni Community Walking Path can help community members who walk here discover their inner wisdom and bring it forth to teach, heal and lead in all aspects of life. In the spirit of Nizhoni, you invite into your life quality leadership, strong character and health.” Navajo County employees took part in naming the trail as a contest.

The idea to build the trail came after the Porter Mountain Road Multi-Use Path was built as a collaborative effort in Show Low/Pinetop. A Navajo County employee working in the Holbrook County Complex noticed other employees regularly walking on a rough trail during lunch breaks. The employee brought the improved-trail idea to the county manager. The county manager knew of the successful collaborative effort that had occurred the year before with the Porter Mountain Multi-Use Path and made the suggestion to the Board of Supervisors to embark on the trail project to improve Worksite Wellness and build a healthier community.

Lupita Banuelos, Community Outreach Specialist/Health in Arizona Policy Initiative (HAPI) manager from Navajo County, began working on the Holbrook Trail project with direction from the County Health Director. Ms. Banuelos coordinates and leverages resources across communities to maximize environmental approaches to achieve health outcomes. Ms. Banuelos explained, “The project was intended to increase physical activity among county employees and has now grown to promote wellness throughout the community. The trail will encourage community members to be active, will provide a safe area for exercise and offer the opportunity to experience the beautiful scenery of Holbrook’s red rocks.” *(Continued on page 6)*



The Smiles Movement

By Cindy Hisrich

Thirty-four years ago I, Cindy Hisrich, packed up and left my home in Colorado determined to have an adventure and a career change. I was a young adult nurse practitioner and the only things I knew for sure were that I wanted to help people in a non-traditional setting and I wanted to make a difference. I set out for Salem, Oregon, with the goal of securing a job with the Indian Health Service (IHS) providing care for the Siletz Tribe. I became a member of the Field Health Team.

Shortly thereafter I met a young dentist, Jim, a commissioned officer in the Public Health Service, who had just arrived from Tuba City, Arizona, where he had served as the Dental Director. We became good friends and realized we had many common career interests. This move to Oregon was life altering.

I left a year later to pursue further education at the University of Arizona, Jim resigned his commission, and we got married. We briefly owned a large practice in Phoenix but it didn't take us long to realize our hearts were with the Reservation and not the big city.

We sold our practice, moved to Flagstaff and founded "OnSite Dental." Jim had



Arizona Health Disparities Center

Mission:

To promote and protect the health and well being of the minority and vulnerable populations of Arizona by enhancing the capacity of the public health system to effectively serve minority populations and reduce health disparities.

Vision:

Health equity for all

We envision a state where each person has equal opportunity to prevent and overcome disease and live a longer, healthier life.

Contact:

Arizona Health Disparities Center
Bureau of Health System Development
Arizona Department of Health Services
150 North 18th Ave. Suite 300
Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-542-1219
602-542-2011 fax
<http://www.azminorityhealth.gov>

observed a tremendous need for dentistry for children in remote areas when he worked for the IHS. Early childhood caries continues to be rampant. The American Dental Association cites dental disease as the number one cause of school absenteeism. We find it amazing that 52 million hours of instructional time are lost each year to this preventable health care problem. Furthermore, we realized that the children who were extremely remote were at great risk. We began traveling to Head Starts and elementary schools. We initially worked with portable equipment, but over the years we fine-tuned our operation, switching to state of the art mobile dental units that are towed by four-wheel drive trucks (photo above), and we evolved to becoming "The Smiles Movement."

The need was even more pervasive than we imagined and we have provided care for thousands of children and have expanded to six mobile units. As a Medicaid practice we are fortunate to be a member of the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). The NHSC helps in recruitment and retention of qualified doctors and facilitates the continuation of our mission.

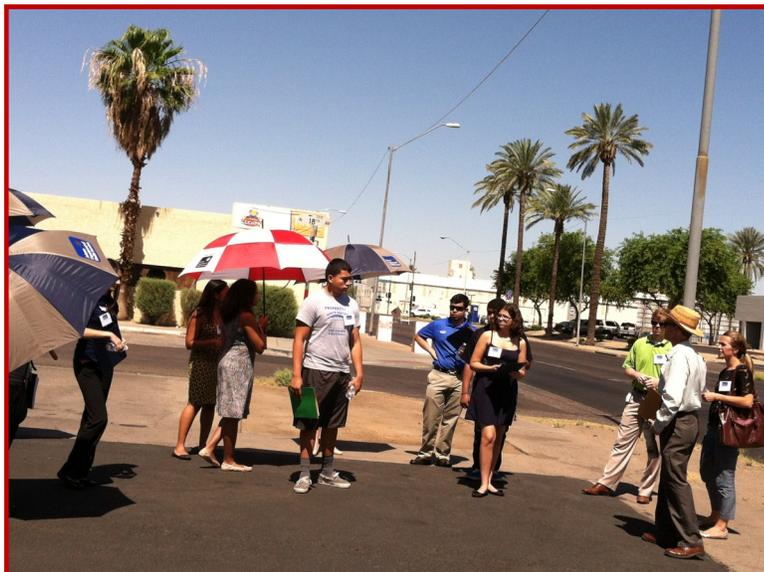
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Partnership between ADHS and NATIVE HEALTH Brings Students to Learn about Public Health the First Time

In partnership with the Native American Community Health Center, Inc. (NATIVE HEALTH) in Phoenix, the Arizona Health Disparities Center (AHDC), Arizona Department of Health Services hosted two pilot public health shadow workshops this summer. On the mornings of June 18 and July 30, respectively, a total of 20 students from high school and college came to ADHS to learn about public health the first time.

NATIVE HEALTH has a continuous level of volunteers ranging from high school to medical school students. The students work closely with its Volunteer Service Director to obtain a comprehensive clinical experience; however, the students lack an introduction to public health. Therefore, AHDC and NATIVE HEALTH decided to implement a 2-year pilot shadow program, starting this summer.

During the visits, the students learned about public health's history, role and key functions. They also were exposed to some community health examples in Arizona. In addition, they had a tour to the Arizona State Lab and a neighborhood walking tour to see how place matters to people's health.



Students were in a walking tour and listening to Brian Fellows (right), a expert from the Arizona Department of Transportation, about how location could make a differences in people's lives..

AHDC plans to host more sessions in upcoming winter and next summer. ♦

Refugee Community Profiles for Health Care Providers

The Refugee Health Program within the Arizona Department of Health Services developed ten refugee community profiles as a general cultural orientation for health care providers. These ten profiles include the Afghan, Bhutanese, Burundian, Congolese, Eritrean, Iraqi, Karen, Somali, Somali Bantu and Sudanese communities. Each profile includes health attitudes, beliefs and stigmas, common health concerns and potential barriers to care. It also provides dos and don'ts list to health care providers.

<http://azdhs.gov/phs/edc/odis/refugee/providers/index.php?pg=profiles> ♦

New Initiative to Reduce Cancer in Vulnerable Patients in Arizona

The American Cancer Society (ACS) just launched its primary care initiative in Arizona to reduce the cancer rate in low-income and medically underserved patients. The ACS plans to reach out to clinics serving low-income patients to help them increase cancer screening, education, outreach and prevention. These clinics are typically public health facilities and safety-net providers such as Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health providers and primary care clinics serving many uninsured or Medicaid patients.

Racial and ethnic minority populations and uninsured individuals are more likely to develop and die from cancer than the general United States population. This may be attributed to many factors including income, education and insurance status. Limited access to quality health care greatly impacts one's ability to access early detection. Because of that, individuals are more likely to be diagnosed at late stages of the disease when lifesaving treatments are limited. Research shows that the stage at which cancer is diagnosed has an enormous impact on 5-year survival rates. Even if overall annual screening rates are similar between races, minorities or the uninsured, individuals may not be getting screened at adequate intervals or early enough.

For more information about the initiative, contact sussan.olivera@cancer.org or 602-586-7415. ♦

The CLAS Standards Online Training Is Going Live

The [National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards](#) (CLAS) in Health and Health Care are intended to advance health equity, improve quality and help eliminate health care disparities. The CLAS Standards were launched initially in 2000 and enhanced in April 2013 with expansion of conceptualization of culture, audience, health and recipients. In partnership with the [Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity](#), the [Arizona Health Disparities Center](#) within the Arizona Department of Health Services has just launched CLAS Standards online training to bring the awareness of the CLAS Standards to people in the health and health care setting. This one-hour interactive training includes five modules, along with pre- and post-tests. After completing and passing the post-test, participants are able to receive a certificate of completion. Additionally, in partnership with the Northern AHEC, continuing education credits are available. Please contact Nancy Dorobiala at Nancy.Dorobiala@azdhs.gov for registration and continuing education credits. ♦

The Smiles Movement

Continued from page 2

This work is not for everyone, but the doctors and staff we hire share our philosophy of care for underserved populations, fall in love with the children, and grow to feel at home on the reservation and appreciate its beauty. Best of all, I can say with great pride and emotion this is the most fulfilling career imaginable and the ultimate "feel good" job for health care providers who enjoy working with children and want to make a difference. We love our job just as much today and share the same commitment that we did thirty-four years ago. The children are wonderful and we are blessed. ♦



Cindy (left) with Dr. and Mrs. George Blue Spruce at an event. Dr. Blue Spruce is recognized as the first Native American dentist and is a former assistant surgeon general of the United States.

Community and Health System Preparedness Resources

Do you have a family plan for what to do if you and your family are affected by a blackout? A flood? A tornado? A house fire or wildfire?

I just looked at this [website](#) and discovered that even though many of us may live in a residential community, we may still be in an area that has a medium-high risk of being affected by a wildfire! (click on the map and zoom into your neighborhood)

It takes a whole community working together to effectively prepare for emergencies and disasters. Many of us at our places of work understand being prepared is a shared responsibility. Being a part of a public health system or business, practicing some basic preparedness activities makes a real difference in being able to recover more quickly. The goal of preparedness is to increase the number of people who understand which disasters could happen in their community (in our case [wildfires](#), [floods](#), and [power outages](#) top the list), know what to do to be safe, [wise and ready](#), and join nearly one million organizations taking action to increase preparedness (www.ready.gov/prepare). We know preparedness is a year round activity and we encourage everyone to at least “[do 1 thing](#)” a month to build our preparedness capability together.

In fact, Arizona has experienced earthquakes, hurricanes, wildfires, floods, power outages, and disease outbreaks. Although you don't need your share of real world emergencies to be better prepared, participating in drills and exercises helps establish brain patterns that support quick and effective action during an emergency.

For our Health Care providers in the community here is a link to a preparedness contingency planning simulation game ([training module](#)) for public health and healthcare system partners (U.S. HHS News Release [April 2014](#))

This security training module uses a game format that requires users to respond to privacy and security challenges often faced in a typical small medical practice. Cybersecure contingency planning exercised through a series of selecting the appropriate response to earn points and see the virtual practice flourish (in appropriate decisions leads to floods, server outages, fire damage and other poor outcomes related to lack of contingency planning).

Use of gamification by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology is an innovative approach aimed at educating healthcare providers to make informed decisions regarding privacy and security of health information. ♦



In these days of difficulty, we Americans everywhere must and shall choose the path of social justice..., the path of faith, the path of hope, and the path of love toward our fellow man. ♦

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

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Continued from page 1

Tracy Cruickshank, who oversees the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program (HAWP), a collaboration between



the Arizona Department of Health Services, Maricopa County Health Department and the Arizona Small Business Association, stated, "Lupita and several others from Navajo County attended the HAWP train-the-trainer event a few weeks ago. I am very excited that they are launching this project." The HAWP helps Arizona employers successfully implement evidence-based healthy worksite initiatives to improve the health of their

employees and businesses. The program works to reduce the risk of chronic disease among employees and their families through evidence-based workplace health interventions and best practices.

The trail is a little over 2 miles long and winds around the grounds and hills surrounding the County Complex facilities. It is scheduled to be completed in late August of this year, right before the Holbrook school session starts. The White Mountain Youth Corps, a youth environmental conservation program in the White Mountains of northeast Arizona, led volunteers to get the trail building started with the ground-breaking ceremony and will take the lead to complete all the work on the trail.

Navajo County Chairman Jesse Thompson and County Supervisors Jonathan M. Nez, Sylvia Allen and Dawnafe Whitesinger participated in the ceremony and joined in to clear and build the trail. Holbrook Mayor Jeff Hill spoke of community building, and young Asher Irwin of Holbrook threw the first rock off the trail, marking the official kickoff of the trail-building event.



During the ground-breaking ceremony, County Supervisor Jonathan Nez from Kayenta mentioned he is working on building interest in his own tribal community to construct a similar community trail. ♦

Photo top from left to right: Sherry Haskins from Arizona Department Health Services, Supervisor Whitesinger, Lupita Banuelos, and Travelle Mason from the USPHS Commissioned Corps IHS.

Photo bottom: Supervisor Whitesinger shoveling alongside teens.

Publications of Interest:

New Data Brief: Using Data to Advance Health Equity for Men of Color

A new data brief by the Office of Minority Health, examining the characteristics of uninsured males by race and ethnicity, is a useful tool to inform federal, state and community efforts aimed at improving insurance coverage of targeted populations.

<http://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/npa/blog/BlogPost.aspx?BlogID=3185>

What is the Health Literate Care Model?

This interactive Health Literate Care Model graphic is a quick way to understand how to integrate health literacy strategies throughout health care organizations.

<http://www.health.gov/communication/interactiveHLCM/> ♦

Events of Interest:

Arizona Health Equity Conference: Building Bridges in Research and Practice

Dates: August 13 – 15, 2014

Location: Charlotte, NC

<http://www.aacorn.org/InReRegi-2693.html>

Arizona Health Equity Conference: Building Bridges in Research and Practice

Date: October 30, 2014

Time: 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Arizona Time

Location: Glendale Civic Center, 5750 W. Glenn Drive, Glendale, AZ 85301

Contact: Chara Chamie at Chamie.chara@mayo.edu

6th Annual Health Literacy Research Conference

Dates: November 3 – 4, 2014

Location: Hyatt Regency Bethesda, Bethesda, Maryland

<http://www.bumc.bu.edu/healthliteracyconference/>

Online training: Introduction to CLAS Standards

Delivered by: Arizona Department of Health Services

Contact: Nancy Dorobiala at Nancy.Dorobiala@azdhs.gov ♦

Funding Opportunities:

Delta Dental of Arizona Foundation: Community Grants Program – Deadline: September 4, 2014

Purpose: to support efforts focused on oral health promotion and dental disease prevention that serve pregnant women and children and youth through age 18.

Eligible Applicants: Local Government, Academic Institutions, Native American Tribe, Non Profits, Schools/School Districts, and State Government

Award range: \$1,000 to \$25,000

<http://www.deltadentalaz.com/foundation/community-grants/>

Simply Organic: SOI% Fund – Deadline: Rolling

Purpose: to support and promote organic and sustainable agriculture

Eligible Applicants: Local Government, Academic Institutions, Native American Tribe, Non Profits, Private Sector, Schools/School Districts, State Government

Contact: sogrants@frontiercoop.com

<http://www.simplyorganic.com/simplyorganic/ourvalues/applying.php> ♦

For more information about funding opportunities, publications of interest and events of interest, please visit www.azminorityhealth.gov. ♦

Editor's Note:

The *AHDConnection* is published quarterly on January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31. We are looking for community stories and other leads that are related to efforts to reduce health disparities in Arizona. Because of space limitation, each submitted community story should not be more than 500 words. Ideas for community stories are also welcome. Our deadline is the 15th of month prior to the publication date. Please email articles or ideas to the editor at

hong.chartrand@azdhs.gov. ♦

