

WAKANYÉJA

A Conference on American Indian Behavioral Health

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

Truhlsen Campus Events Center at UNMC, 619 S 42nd St, Omaha, NE 68198.

5:30 PM

Doors open: registration, food, and conversation

6 - 8:15

Stories of Survival

Discussion panel

Alcohol was introduced to indigenous communities during the first contact with Europeans. The resulting substance abuse and its impact has challenged these communities. This panel will share stories of the efforts to address this issue on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Panelists include:

- Frank LaMere, *Winnebago, activist*
- Nora Boesem, *Founder of Roots to Wings in South Dakota*
- Omar Abdul-Rahman, *Director of genetic medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Truhlsen Campus Events Center at UNMC, 619 S 42nd St, Omaha, NE 68198.

7:30 - 8 AM

Registration (breakfast opens)

8 - 8:30

Welcome: song, opening drum, and prayer

8:30 - 8:45

Introduction

8:45 - 9:30

Dr. Don Warne, Oglala Sioux, Director of Indians into Medicine

Impact of Unresolved Trauma on American Indian Health Disparities

Historical trauma, boarding school experiences, and adverse childhood experiences among American Indians create a complex web of risk factors for poor health outcomes. In this session we will describe the continuum of unresolved traumatic exposures to our populations, and we will build a path forward toward healing and health promotion in a culturally relevant manner.

9:30 - 9:45

Break

See all speaker bios
at <http://www.cvent.com/d/6bqtdz>

9:45 - 10:15

Joseph Marshall III, Rosebud Sioux, Writer / Actor
Resilience In and From Indigenous Cultures

A discussion of the values and social systems that enabled pre-European North American native cultures to thrive and why they should have a place in contemporary native communities.

10:15 - 10:45

Dr. Melissa Walls, Anishinaabe, Assoc. Professor, University of Minnesota Medical School at Duluth
Promoting Pathways to American Indian Health Equity

This presentation provides examples of lessons learned about promoting health equity through Community/Tribally-Based Participatory Research. Data and examples from several collaborative studies with tribal communities in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Canada will be shared to illustrate the potential and limits of research as one tool for enhancing American Indian and First Nations health and well-being.

10:45 - 11

Break

11- 11:30

Charles Sitting Bull, Oglala Sioux, Former Director of Behavioral Health, Indian Health Service, Pine Ridge Hospital
Native American Suicide: Cultural or Epidemic

Participants will gain a better understanding of Native/Lakota lifeways from a social and psychological perspective and the challenges involved in dealing with a reservation suicide emergency.

11:30 - NOON

Tim McGowan, President and Founder of Networks of Support
Creating Supportive and Protective Social Networks

Culture within schools and classrooms happens regardless. Deliberately creating school and classroom culture positively influences student engagement, connectedness, and learning outcomes. Furthermore, it increases the capacity for both students and teachers to lead, hold space for humanity, and ultimately make a positive difference in the students' lives, communities, and careers.

12 - 12:30 PM

Lunch

12:30 - 1:15

Drs. Kay McGowan & Fay Givens, Mississippi Choctaw/Cherokee, Anthropology & Native American Studies, Eastern Michigan Univ. & Mississippi Choctaw/Cherokee, Exec. Dir. of American Indian Services at Michigan
Cultural Genocide, the Story of the Indian Boarding Schools and Its Aftermath

The U.S. policy of attempted cultural extermination of Native Peoples through assimilation of Native children by the creation of Indian boarding schools has led to unresolved and very complicated long-term grief that continues to cause serious problems in Native communities to this day. The time has come for the U.S. to create a Truth and Reconciliation commission to investigate the various religious organizations and other entities that took part in the boarding school system to address these issues.

1:15 - 1:30

Break

1:30 - 2

Dr. Ruby Gibson, mixed blood, Executive Director of Freedom Lodge
Epigenetic Inheritance

Bridging western science and American Indian spirituality provides insights into seven- and 14-generation inheritance. Research reveals that physical symptoms, diseases, emotional patterns, and mental states are influenced by the past, primarily affecting life choices through survival stress. Environmental toxicity, cultural events, famine, and addiction shape future generations - for up to 14 generations. This discussion frames a narrative about actions, healing models, and preferences to create positive change, not only in our lives, but also in our great-great grandchildren's lives.

2 - 2:30

Larry Voegele, Standing Rock Sioux, Chief Executive Officer at Ponca Health Centers at Omaha
Prevention through Cultural (Re)construction vs. Preservation, Adaptation & Cultural Competence

This presentation will review value and some key cultural issues associated with engaging American Indian community members in the development of preventative public health programming. Various approaches will be discussed, with examples/materials drawn from local efforts.

2:30 - 2:45

Break

2:45 - 3:15

Dr. Lancer Stephens, Wichita/Muscogee (Creek), Director of Special Populations Outreach and Assistant Professor of Research, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Unintended Apathy

This session will explore some of the recognized and unrecognized barriers that continue to plague researchers from working in harmony with American Indian populations. Utilizing real-world scenarios through stories and personal accounts of more than 20 years of working with Native Americans, Dr. Stephens will challenge the audience to further understand and perhaps question their perceived understanding of the reality of being a tribal member in today's society.

3:15 - 3:45

Dr. Jennifer Giroux, Rosebud Sioux, United States Public Health Service
Wakanyéja: Healing Racism

Racism is based on phenotype or physical appearance. It's been five generations since Lakota nations were conquered by the U.S. government and "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" policy was implemented through government boarding schools and relocation efforts. Dr. Giroux, an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, is of mixed lineage (Lakota and European), is the first of five generations to not go to boarding school. She will weave together stories with the three definitions of racism: personally mediated, internalized, and institutionalized to demonstrate the human potential impact racism has within tribes and how appreciation of the meaning of Wakanyéja can stop personally mediated and internalized racism.

3:45 - 4

Break

4 - 5

Conversation with Conference Speakers: A Call to Action

Session moderated by Dr. Magda Peck, Adjunct Prof. of Public Health and Pediatrics at UNMC.

Given all that has been shared, what are today's most important take-away ideas and insights? How will conference participants translate what they have learned into informed, strategic actions? In this interactive closing session, speakers and conference participants will sum up key points and major discoveries. Together, we will explore what is more possible now – because of our time together – for advancing greater health, equity and well-being for American Indians and their communities. And we will invite clear commitments for carrying forward our work for health and justice.

CO-HOSTS



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