



Elder Visions

Spring/Summer 2006 Newsletter

The National Indian Council On Aging

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2004-2006

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Focusing on Where We've Been and Where We're Going: Celebrating NICOA's 30th Anniversary

Providing community service and employment training to over 6,938 American Indian Elders through the Senior Community Service Employment Program since 1989 and successfully advocating for the inclusion of Indian specific provisions in the Older Americans Act represent just two of the many accomplishments that NICOA will celebrate at its upcoming conference from September 16-19, 2006, at the Tulsa Convention Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. NICOA expects to welcome over 1,800 Elders, Title VI Directors, other service providers, advocates and federal officials for four days of reflection, celebration and planning for the future. The organization has worked diligently to address the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native Elders throughout its history and now must face how to transform itself in order to more effectively advocate for and serve the growing Elder population across Indian Country.

The conference will feature Assistant Secretary of Aging Josefina Carbonell at the opening session on Saturday, September 16, 2006. She will be accompanied by other federal officials, elected leaders and Barbara B. Kennelly, President of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. Elders should bring their stories to share at the storytelling event as well as their traditional dress to wear at the Inter-Tribal powwow on Saturday night in the Convention Center Arena and the Traditional Fashion Show on Monday at lunch. The four-day conference features many activities and events, but will also allow time for visiting local attractions and Tribal communities. For more information on the conference agenda, registration, the Board of Directors application process, advertising, exhibit space and sponsorships, please visit www.nicoa.org. We'll see you in Tulsa! ■

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From the Chairman's Canoe

Aklacha. As you read this newsletter, Members of Congress are addressing the top priority of reauthorizing the Older Americans Act (OAA) as voted on by the 1,200 delegates to the White House Conference on Aging. The National Indian Council on Aging has provided testimony to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, detailing the issues and needs of our Elders. As in the 2000 reauthorization, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) under Title V of the OAA is the area of most contention. SCSEP is a federal program that assists low-income Elders with employment training and community service opportunities.

The Department of Labor (DOL), which administers SCSEP, is attempting to alter the program to function similar to the Workforce Investment Act programs, placing more emphasis on participants transitioning to private, unsubsidized employment and relying on one-stop centers for job searching. The role of community service has been diminished in the current bill to only provide work based training that expects to end in unsubsidized employment. For

the majority of Elders we serve and the reservation and rural areas they live in, the opportunities for private, unsubsidized employment are minimal. Ultimately, it appears as if DOL wants to eliminate SCSEP or fold it into the state operated Workforce Investment Act programs. NICOA continues to work diligently with Tribal leaders, the National Congress of American Indians, and other advocates within the aging network to educate Members of Congress about why SCSEP must be saved as a vital program for our Indian Elders and the communities they serve.

Aside from the OAA reauthorization, Congress is also considering the Elder Justice Act, introduced in both the Senate and House, with only a few revisions from the versions introduced in the 108th Congress. The Act focuses on providing resources to States, Tribes and local entities to tackle Elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. It also sets appropriate authorization levels for programs and grants. Unlike the version introduced in the previous session of Congress, the current bills do not create a federal cause of action with civil and criminal penalties for those found to have committed Elder abuse. Penalties and

From the Chairman's Canoe

enforcement will still remain the responsibility of Tribal, State and local authorities. NICOA has reviewed the bill and provided feedback as requested to Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), who has served as a great advocate for Indian Elders through his work on both the Senate Finance Committee, which oversees Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and the Senate HELP Committee, which is working on the OAA reauthorization.

Beyond our advocacy efforts, NICOA is gearing up for its 30th anniversary celebration in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from September 16-19, 2006. We are pleased to announce that Assistant Secretary Josefina Carbonell from the Administration on Aging and Barbara B. Kennelly, President and CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, have both accepted our invitation to address the Elders at our opening session on Saturday afternoon. We will also feature Tribal leaders from the local area to welcome everyone to Tulsa, where the lands of the Muscogee (Creek), Osage and Cherokee Nations all meet. Overall, the conference will be informative, fun-filled, and celebratory – an experience you won't want to miss! Elsewhere

in the newsletter, you will find more information about the conference. I hope you will finalize your plans to join us in Tulsa to honor NICOA's role in advocating for and securing programs, services and funding to benefit American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.

Also, we are excited that our NICOA website will be completely revamped this summer, providing you with more information in how to support our work and advocacy on behalf of Elders across the country. You will be able to enter your email address to receive updated conference information, advocacy alerts and important news for Elders. Please visit our website at www.nicoa.org later this month to sign up.

I want to thank each of you ("Maaseedt") for your continued support of the National Indian Council on Aging. We all look forward to seeing you in September in Tulsa! ■



James DeLaCruz, Sr.

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Planting Gardens at Elderly Centers to Address Diabetes

By Alvin Rafelito, NICOA
Director of Administration

The stand for the garden box had not made yet, so the Elders at Cochiti Pueblo elected to use the empty milk crates to put under the box so that it could be raised to a comfortable level. “As we grow older, we can get down to the ground; but, it is much more difficult to stand back up” said Hank Bruce of Hunger Grow Away, explaining to the Elders how one can modify traditional gardening to still enjoy growing plants at any age. Hank and his wife, Tomi Jill Folk, are partners with the National Indian Council on Aging’s (NICOA) Diabetes Prevention program, “Healthy Living for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.” NICOA and Hunger Grow Away are setting up demonstration community gardens at five Pueblos in New Mexico - Cochiti, Laguna, Isleta, Santa Ana and San Felipe - as a means of stopping diabetes. In Native communities, diabetes has reached epidemic proportion and it affects a majority of Indian families. Type II Diabetes was once considered an adult only disease, but no longer as Native children are being diagnosed with this disease as well.

There are major education efforts being done by some very dedicated diabetes health educators, nutritionist, and public health providers. We are adding to this effort by providing a means for Elders and their families access to fresh vegetables and fruits by planting gardens. In addition, multiple horticultural therapy benefits can be derived in using the gardens – self empowerment, spiritual reconnection to plants, stress reduction, nurturing, social and intergenerational interaction just to name a few.

Using the unique growing system developed for Hunger Grow Away, Elders can begin growing their own food again. The enclosed garden systems come in multiple sizes and are designed to require less watering and weeding. A 4' x 4' garden box can be set up indoors or outdoors. The material is made from recycled plastic and can last for a long time. Its secret is the dimpled drain board that provides efficient drainage of surplus water and allows for air space for aeration of soil and roots. “Healthy soil is 25% oxygen to create a healthy root system,” explains Hank as he shows the



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Planting Gardens at Elderly Centers to Address Diabetes

Elders how to set up the individual cells. Each individual cell allows for multiple types of plants to be grown together. Each plant grows in its own space and can be harvested without disturbing neighboring plants. The plants are grown close to each other to serve as surface mulch to prevent evaporation of soil moisture and control weed growth. The garden allows for continuous harvesting by picking the bigger plants first and leaving the smaller plants to grow for later harvesting. This is a new concept from “traditional” seasonal gardening where harvesting was only done at the end of a growing season. The container is a heavy durable liner that prevents contamination from diseased organisms or chemical pollutants that might be in the soil beneath the garden. It also prevents water loss, invasion from insects living in the ground, nutrients from leaching out into the soil and requires less fertilizers so that the plants are organically grown.

Hank and Tomi also provide information about eating not only the produce but the leaves, stems and flowers which are very nutritious. For example, sweet potato leaves are richer

in vitamin A than its tubers. A visit to Hank and Tomi’s home where they have their gardens is a palate’s delight in tasting the multiple plants that they grow. “Try this leaf, this bud, this flower” is Hank’s way of creating enthusiasm about growing your own food. “When Hank does the cooking, every now and then he will run out to the garden and pluck a few plants that he adds to his creation,” says Tomi, who was diagnosed with Type-1 Diabetes after a viral infection. Instead of letting her condition become a barrier to living a quality, she has opted to do something positive about it with her husband through their non-profit organization, Hunger Grow Away.

“The Native American diet was/ is the healthiest diet in the world but now some of their plants that they used as food we now think of them as weeds,” Hank shares with the Cochiti Elders as they get ready to plant the garden. He talks about a plant he calls the most nutritious plant in North America – the Aztec Red Spinach which is also called Lambsquarter or Amerrith.

To get their garden started, the Elders provided the wheelbarrows, a shovel and a



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Lila Dean McManus belongs to the Chickasaw Nation and is one of 187 remaining full blood Chickasaws. She goes by Dean, as she was given this nickname as a child. Dean was born in Rocky Point, Oklahoma, but grew up in Ardmore and attended school in Kingston.

Dean began her professional career as a Community Health Representative (CHR) working for the Chickasaw Nation. She gradually worked her way to become Director of the Chickasaw Nation CHR Program. Dean resigned after 24 years of service to run as Legislator of the Chickasaw Nation. This position is equivalent to a Tribal Council Member in other Tribes. Through her work as a Tribal Legislator, Patricia Woods, former NICOA Board Member, and Bill Anoatubby, current Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, recommended Dean run for NICOA's Muscogee Area Board position. In fact, Dean states, "I was involved in NICOA right from the beginning, but never sat on the Board until now."

Planting Gardens at Elderly Centers to Address Diabetes

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couple of bags of compost to mix with the soil. Hank instructed them on the mix ratio of the soil to compost (4:1). The soil and compost were mixed using the shovel. One of the men started counting the ratio in their Pueblo language and this led to multiple languages being used to count the shovel full of soil and compost. Then, the group heard numbers counted in Spanish, German, Japanese, and Navajo by the various participants present. The dirt ran out before all the cells were filled in the garden box so some more soil was dug up. It took three full wheelbarrows to fill the 4' x 4' garden box.

Once the garden box was filled with soil, Hank demonstrated the planting method using his thumb as a gauge to press down the dirt for the seeds to be planted in. Each cell had about 16 depressions, and 3 to 4 seeds were placed in each depression. Instruction on planting was also available in the "Arid Desert Garden" handbook by Hunger Grow Away. Each planted cell was marked with a plastic marker to identify the seeds that were planted. Cabbages, beets, onions and radishes were planted as winter greens.

The planting preparation provided low impact exercise activity for the seniors by digging, mixing, shoveling and filling up the garden box cells with the soil.

Once the Elders knew how the garden box should be planted, Hank stepped back and let them plant the seeds. Both Hank and Tomi fielded questions and demonstrated where the answer might be found in the handbook that they brought to the center.

Social interaction was generated by the laughter and planting of the seeds. It was good to see the Elders play and joke with each other even though the weather was cold and cloudy.

Next step for the Elders is to build a cover over the garden box to protect the plants from frost and freezing at night. Hank provided a sheet of instruction on how to build the cover and they constructed it. The Elders enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to their efforts when their plants begin to grow.

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Planting Gardens at Elderly Centers to Address Diabetes

continued...

L. Dean McManus

The Abundant Harvest Garden's unique system was designed to be used easily and conveniently. It is flexible for a wide range of vegetables that can be grown from tomatoes to cucumbers, carrots to chiles to onions to spinach. Growing seasons can be extended and the harvest continuous, so that fresh produce is always available for the table. All year gardening is possible with the mini-green house and selection of cool season vegetables and replanting as the season changes. The gardeners have ownership over what plants will be grown, how they will be grown, and what will be done

with them. The garden is very forgiving of such problems as planting errors and over or under watering. The gardener can make mistakes and still enjoy the physical, emotional, spiritual and nutritional benefits of success. It requires a minimum of 10 to 15 minutes per day for maintenance and harvesting some of the delicious young tender plants.

For more information on the NICOA Healthy Living demonstration project in New Mexico, contact Alvin Rafaelito at alvin@nicoa.org or visit www.nicoa.org. ■

She is one of the newest Board members elected during NICOA's 2004 conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dean has committed herself to advocate and work hard for those who elected her. She loves working behind the scenes, providing and partaking of decision making to benefit Elders in her community as well as those across the state of Oklahoma. Dean is driven by having lived a life that is attuned to her own needs, those of her family and those around her in the community. She knows, "what kind of life Elders have to live because of poverty reasons," and how her work has been important to helping address their needs. Dean will continue to convey the importance of improving the conditions of the Tribes' Elders, so they can better provide for themselves. Her grandmother, whom she had great respect for, once told her, "Be true to yourself and always take care of yourself before you take care of other people."

In her spare time, Dean enjoys reading and traveling. She claims, "I love to travel and meet new people." Dean also takes great joy in centering her life around her family, who are the focal point of her life. She is married to Harold McManus and they live in Ada, Oklahoma. ■



Attitudes Weigh Heavy in Reducing Pounds

Recipe

Orange Almond Chicken

Number of Servings: 4

Serving Size: 4 oz.

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Nutrients per serving

Calories 188 - Calories from Fat 16%
Total Fat 3g - Saturated Fat <1g
Cholesterol 43 mg - Sodium 47 mg
Total Carbohydrate 21g - Sugars 2g
Dietary Fiber 1g - Protein 19g

Ingredients

Butter-flavored cooking spray
4 (4 ounces ea) skinless boneless
chicken breast halves
1 cup orange juice
1/3 cup SPLENDA® Granular
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 can (11 ounces) mandarin
oranges, rinsed and drained
2 tablespoons slivered almonds
1 teaspoon dried onion flakes
1 teaspoon lemon juice

Preparation Instructions

1. In large skillet sprayed with cooking spray, brown chicken pieces for 4 or 5 minutes on each side.
2. Meanwhile, in covered jar, combine orange juice, SPLENDA®, and cornstarch. Shake well to blend.
3. Pour sauce mixture into medium saucepan sprayed with cooking spray. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens, stirring constantly. Remove from heat.
4. Stir mandarin oranges, almonds, onion flakes, and parsley flakes into sauce. Spoon sauce evenly over browned chicken pieces.
5. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. When serving, evenly spoon sauce over chicken pieces. ■

By: Robert Comer, NICOA
DEOS Project Director

Recently, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) determined that approximately 65% of all Americans are overweight or obese. As bad as it is, this percentage is not significantly different with Native American men; but, for Native American women, it climbs to 70%. More than 40% of the Native American women are obese, putting them at a high risk for diabetes and heart disease. Between 1988 to 2002, obesity among adults 20-74 years of age rose significantly in the United States from approximately 15% to 31%.

These rising rates should cause concern because of the added risk factors it poses on the individual's health. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of:

- Diabetes Type 2
- Heart disease
- Hypertension
- High cholesterol
- Stroke
- Gallbladder disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Sleep apnea and respiratory problems

- Some cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon)

Although one of the national health goals of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is to decrease the prevalence of obesity to 15% by 2010 among adults, current data indicates the situation is getting worse and not better. Over thirty years ago diabetes was almost unheard of within the Native American population. Now 15% to 17% of the Elder population has diabetes. Cases are even being reported in children as young as eight years old.

Why is it getting worse? You could say that it is a difference in lifestyles. What factors have changed the most in the last 20 to 30 years? Eating habits have changed due to the ease and convenience in which fast food is produced and the prevalence of junk food sold at grocery stores and convenience stores. Perhaps some of you are saying, "Hey! Wait a minute I used to eat junk food and nothing happened to me when I was young." Yes, that may be true but since then many school districts have cut back or eliminated physical education

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Attitudes Weigh Heavy in Reducing Pounds

classes including recess; and, in general, kids are not as active as they used to be. Neither are some of the Elders. The electronic age has made it more comfortable to stay indoors in a controlled environment and watch TV, a movie or even take naps. But the truth is that everybody needs to be active in order to stay in good condition mentally, physically, and spiritually. Physical activity should be done in conjunction with a proper diet that minimizes fast food and pre-packaged foods from grocery or convenience stores. Remember to consult with your local doctor before beginning a fitness program.

The hard part of being overweight is the trap it can spin for those of us that are overweight. For one thing, food is a big part of any culture, especially the Native American culture. Food is associated with celebrations, prosperity, love and comfort. Why would anyone want to give up the wonderful events that precede or follow feasting? The good news is food can still have meaning in your life, you just need to eat less food with more meaning. Make every bite an experience, savor the food, and enjoy the company of

those that are eating with you. Keep the conversation pleasant when you are eating, share good feelings with those at the table with you, thus eating less but enjoying it more.

How much should you eat? Contact your local nutritionist for the proper calorie intake and nutritional requirements for your ideal body weight and health requirements. On the reservation, contact your CHR program or the IHS Area Service Unit. We don't have to give up the pleasure of the experiences we have while we eat. We want to focus on maximizing the experience without increasing the intake of food or unnecessary calories.

If you would like more information about goal setting for weight loss or physical activity, contact Robert Comer robert@nicoa.org or Lucille Kelley lucille@nicoa.org with NICOA's Diabetes Education and Outreach Strategies (DEOS) Project funded through CDC's REACH 2010 Initiative. ■

Elders Compete at Laguna Senior Olympics

On Wednesday, March 29, 2006, NICOA's Albuquerque staff headed to the Pueblo of Laguna to volunteer at the 4th annual New Mexico Indian Senior Olympics. The day of fun and games featured staff working at various event areas, such as the 100 meter dash, 400 meter power walk, basketball free throw, softball distance throw, frisbee accuracy, soccer kick, bowling pins, washers, and golf putting.

NICOA staff members, Alvin Rafelito and Gerlinde Voorhis, were kept busy the entire day as they were the Event Managers for the Frisbee competition. When asked about the experience, Gerlinde said, "It was fun. The Elders really got into the spirit of competition and were so happy to get their ribbons. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and especially the awards ceremony." Last year, NICOA staff also volunteered for the event, held at the Pueblo of Sandia. ■

*By: Sharon Hodge,
NICOA Conference
Coordinator*



"Honoring Our Elders: Best Practices in Long Term Care"

Maudean Harden has worked for NICOA's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) since 1992. Maudean's dedication to the Elders earned her the position of Oklahoma Project Director for NICOA SCSEP. What she likes most about her position is working with Elders and helping them. Maudean states, "I enjoy learning Oklahoma Tribal traditions and receiving the thank yous from Elders placed on the program."

Prior to working for NICOA, Maudean's professional background consisted of being a teacher, bank loan teller, and working for the Chickasaw Nation's Employment and Training Program. In fact, two Chickasaw Tribal members recruited her to NICOA - Pat Woods (Chickasaw), former NICOA Board Chairwoman, and Frieda Clark (Chickasaw), current NICOA SCSEP Director.

Maudean is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Although born in Oakland, California, she returned to Oklahoma. She enjoys reading and going to the University of Oklahoma (OU) football games.

Maudean gets inspiration from her mother, the late Josephine Gibson Pierce, a full blood Choctaw Elder. Maudean draws strength from "her wisdom, courage, intelligence, and most of all, the love she gave not only her family, but everyone." The most important message her mother left her was, "No one succeeds without effort, those who do owe their success to perseverance." ■

Conference Planning Underway for Second Annual Event

By: Alvin Rafelito, NICOA Director of Administration and LTC Conference Coordinator

The second annual American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Long Term Care (LTC) Conference is almost here. The National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA) will be hosting and coordinating the conference in conjunction with its own biennial conference. The LTC conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from September 18 – 19, 2006. The Planning Committee for the conference expects over 400 participants to attend this year.

Since long term care is a growing issue in Indian Country with the rising population of Elders, this conference will focus on sharing and promoting the best practices in long term care for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders. Our Tribes and urban Indian health programs are designing innovative ways of caring for Elders in their homes and communities. No one wants to send off the Elders to far off nursing homes where their

families cannot visit them regularly and where depression and loneliness can set in. Also, it is difficult to find culturally appropriate care for many Elders who do not speak much English or may revert to their native language after experiencing a stroke or developing dementia or Alzheimer's. For others, the experience can revive their younger years when they were taken from their community and sent to boarding schools, thus re-traumatizing them all over again.

As a result, this conference is designed to provide a forum where Tribes and AI/AN organizations engage in the development of culturally appropriate long term care services. Attendees will also share with each other the best practices in sustainable programs of long term care, hear about resource information in the development of long term care services, and learn from experts in the field about specific technical issues. Finally, the conference provides an opportunity for networking with long term care program providers and vendors in the long term care industry.

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"Honoring Our Elders: Best Practices in Long Term Care"

The conference will cover topics such as: Tribal Leaders Forum on LTC Issues; the Cherokee Nation's Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE); Assisted Living; Home and Community-based Services; Adult Day Care; Respite Resources; Caregivers Support; Consumer Directed Programs; and, many other services that are available through state and federal programs.

If you operate a long term care service program and would like to share your best practices, the

conference is currently accepting abstracts for presentations. Abstract submissions are due by June 30, 2006. Please submit your abstract by mail to the National Indian Council on Aging, 10501 Montgomery Blvd., NE, Suite 210, Albuquerque, NM 87111, by fax at (505) 292-1922 or via email to alvin@nicoa.org.

For conference registration, host hotel information, presenter abstracts and exhibitor forms, please visit www.aianlongtermcare.org. ■



NICOA Employee Feature Carolyn Mendoza

Carolyn Mendoza is full blood Chickasaw Tribal member, born and raised in Ada, Oklahoma. Since July 2000, she has been working for NICOA's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) as the Administrative Assistant for the Oklahoma Project Director in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

When asked what brought her to NICOA, Carolyn stated, "I was working at a training site where the Oklahoma Project Director Maudean Harden had a trainee. Maudean told me about her Administrative Assistant position which was vacant at the time and encouraged me to apply." Carolyn accepted the position and derives great satisfaction when an Elder is placed at a training site. What she likes most about her job is helping an Elder who has no income enroll in the program and witnessing that Elder receive his/her first paycheck from the community service and employment based training program.

Carolyn's favorite message from her parents is "Be honest and treat everyone the same way you want to be treated." Outside of her work helping Elders, her hobbies include sewing, cooking, and making craft items for family and friends. She is married to Jesus Mendoza; and, they both enjoy his flower gardens. ■

NICOA Successfully starts 1st Annual Golf Tournament

On Friday, April 28, 2006, the National Indian Council on Aging held its First Annual Charity Golf Tournament at the Sandia Resort Golf Club. The event helped raise much needed funds for the organization to further its mission to improve health and social services for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders. The tournament was made possible with the generous support and sponsorship of Sandia Pueblo. In addition, Isleta Casino and Resort provided 'Platinum Level' sponsorship and Manuel Lujan Agency provided 'Gold Level' sponsorship. Various area businesses sponsored individual holes and a longest drive contest, as well as team sponsorships. The sponsorship from these Tribes, businesses and agencies helped ensure that all participants enjoyed themselves; and, the organization had a successful launch of its new annual event.

The golf tournament was held as a four-person scramble with a shotgun start format. Participating golfers enjoyed the fabulous greens at Sandia Resort Golf Club while competing for generous prizes. Each member of the first prize golf team went home with a \$100 gift certificate to the Sandia Resort, \$100 gift certificate to the Sandia Golf Club and one free round of golf at the Sandia Golf Club. Each member of the second place golf team received a \$100 gift certificate to the Sandia Resort. Third place golfers each went home with a \$50 gift certificate from the Sandia Resort. Three

Roadmap to Successful Eldercare

By:
Emma R. Medicine White Crow,
Program Manager

The National Indian Council on Aging's Washington State Demonstration

Project has come to a conclusion; and, yet it is still making a difference in the lives of many Elders in our Tribal Communities. Elders, who previously may not have applied for any, let alone all of the social service benefits to which they are entitled, have benefited greatly from this project. Many more Elders now have an informed and well-trained advocate in their community to help them through the Benefits Counselors hired through this project. Though at times the Benefits Counselors met with challenges, the real rewards are in the way that the services impact people's lives.

Many Elders do not apply for benefits because they assume they will not qualify. They also are afraid they will lose another benefit or they think it is something that they will have to pay back. Many Benefits Counselors have become trusted advocates and are now sought out by Elders who help them understand the importance of accessing the benefits they are entitled to receive.

One Elder from the Cowlitz Tribe was having surgery. She called her Benefits Counselor and asked her if she would come to her house when the nurse came to tell her about her procedure.

The Washington State Demonstration Project has confirmed the need to hire trusted Native community members to work with our Tribal Elders. When you hire someone with the passion to be an advocate, one who genuinely cares, our Elders and their families are more willing to trust them, knowing that they will get the help they need. Our Benefits Counselors work to become not only a trusted advocate, but an expert in their field.

The project has also shown that when you use Native trainers, our trainees are more successful as they are empowered to do more. They will continually research changing laws and resources; and, they will take the initiative to find Elders in their community with unmet needs. Appropriate site supervision with mentorship and support is also crucial to a successful effort in any given community. The supervisor should know Elder issues, other Tribal programs

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Roadmap to Successful Eldercare

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“...A big part of my job is explaining to them, ‘No, this isn’t something that you need to pay back to the state, it is just to help you get on your feet if you are eligible for it.’ Many do not have family to take them to do the paperwork for them, but that’s what we’re there for.”

~Dulcie George,
Benefits Counselor, Yakama Nation

that are utilized by Elders, and have support from their own superiors. Tribal leadership must support this kind of effort from the very beginning. NICOA will help you better serve the needs of your Elders and develop a program tailored to your community. The journey of aiding Tribal Elder’s to access benefits can be a difficult one. They should not walk this journey alone.

Thank you from my heart to yours to all who participated in this project. I was honored to have a small part to play in this effort. My heroes are the Benefits Counselors who have been hired by their communities to continue to be advocates on behalf of Elders.

• *with Tribal leaders, health directors and Title VI staff across Indian Country to share the lessons learned from the project and a roadmap to assist in establishing your own Tribal Benefits Counselor program. ■*

“I went and I sat with her while the nurse explained to her that she had to go through colon surgery. And she says, “Will you take me to the hospital?” and I said, “Yes, I’ll be more than happy to take you to the hospital.” So she wanted me there to hold her hand and that made me feel good. I think the success of this project is getting the Elders to trust you and to call you when they need you.”

~Geraldine Brickey, Benefits Counselor, Cowlitz Tribe

To view the project report and guide for establishing your own Benefits Counselor program, please visit www.nicoa.org under the "Publications" link to download.

NICOA is currently in the process of meeting with Tribal leaders, health directors and Title VI staff across Indian Country to share the lessons learned from the project and a roadmap to assist in establishing your own Tribal Benefits Counselor program. ■

continued...

Golf Tournament

individual ‘Closest to the Pin’ winners went home with gift certificates for \$100 each for merchandise at Wal-Mart. The winner of the ‘Longest Drive’ contest took home a \$175 gift certificate from Wal-Mart. The winners of the ‘Sandiest Shoes’ (those with the highest score), received \$50 each in gift certificates from Wal-Mart. Immediately, following the announcement of the golf tournament winners, NICOA Executive Director, Traci L. McClellan, drew winners of donated raffle prizes. Raffle winners took home various prizes, such as free rounds of golf, jewelry, a mobile phone, a signed hat from Notah Begay, Jr., and beautiful Pueblo pottery. NICOA also would like to express appreciation to Mrs. Florence Chavez, NICOA’s Vice Chair and member of Sandia Pueblo, for her hard work, support and donated pottery for the golf tournament and raffle. Without the dedication and support of Mrs. Chavez, this event would not have been such a huge success.

The combination of a wonderful golf course, great participants, and generous sponsors have laid a strong foundation to make this a much-anticipated annual event. So mark your calendars now for NICOA’s Annual Charity Golf Tournament coming to a golf course near you in the spring of 2007! We’ll see you there! For photographs and additional information on this year’s golf tournament, visit www.nicoa.org. ■

By: Candice Terry,
NICOA Finance Director

Tentative NICOA 30th Anniversary Biennial Conference Agenda

Friday, September 15, 2006

- 8:00AM Registration set up - Tulsa Convention Center
All Day Attendees free to visit local attractions in northeastern Oklahoma (Ancient Village at Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah, Will Rogers Home & Museum in Oologah/Claremore, Creek Nation in Okmulgee, Tulsa Zoo, Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa)
1:00PM Registration opens - Tulsa Convention Center
6:00PM Registration closes - Tulsa Convention Center
6:30PM Welcome Receptions at Tribal Casinos

Saturday, September 16, 2006

- 8:00AM Exhibits set up - Tulsa Convention Center
Registration opens - Tulsa Convention Center
Attendees free to visit local attractions in northeastern Oklahoma
10:00AM Exhibits open - Tulsa Convention Center
2:00PM Opening Plenary Session - Tulsa Convention Center
- Josefina Carbonell, U.S. Assistant Secretary on Aging
- Barbara Kennelly, President and CEO, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
- Addresses by Tribal dignitaries, National and State Elected Officials and others.
5:00PM Opening Plenary Session concludes
Registration closes - Tulsa Convention Center
Dinner on your own
7:00PM Powwow starts - Tulsa Convention Center Arena
10:00PM Powwow ends and Exhibits close

Sunday, September 17, 2006

- 7:00AM Prayer Breakfast - Crowne Plaza Hotel
9:00AM Breakfast ends / Depart to Tulsa Convention Center
Registration and Exhibits open at Tulsa Convention Center
9:45AM Area Caucuses at Tulsa Convention Center (resolutions, bylaws, campaign speeches)
11:45AM Area Caucuses end
12:00PM Honoring Luncheon - Tulsa Convention Center
Registration Closes
2:00PM Luncheon ends - Depart to Crowne Plaza Hotel
2:30PM Workshop Track A - Crowne Plaza Hotel
3:45PM Workshop Track A ends / Coffee Break
4:15PM Workshop Track B - Crowne Plaza Hotel
5:30PM Workshop Track B ends - Crowne Plaza Hotel
6:00PM Traditional Feast – Outdoor Patio next to Crowne Plaza Hotel
Resolutions Due – Crowne Plaza Hotel Registration Area

Monday, September 18, 2006

- 7:00AM Fun Walk
9:00AM Exhibits Open
9:30AM General Session (guest speakers and consideration of resolutions and bylaws) - Tulsa Convention Center
12:00PM Fashion Show and Boxed Luncheon - Tulsa Convention Center
1:30PM Luncheon ends
2:00PM Storytelling Event - Tulsa Convention Center
3:30PM Break – Concessions Open
3:45PM Area Caucuses for Board Elections resume - Tulsa Convention Center
5:00PM Exhibits Close / Dinner on your own

Tuesday, September 19, 2006

- 9:00AM Closing General Session - Tulsa Convention Center
12:00PM Adjourn – Travel home safely
Exhibits close

NICOA 30th Anniversary Biennial Conference Registration / Membership Form

This form must be completed and accompanied with full payment to qualify for Advance Registration.

The registration must be postmarked on or before **July 31, 2006**.

Send form with payment to: NICOA, Attn: Finance, PO Box 21070, Albuquerque, NM 87154.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____
 Tribe / Organization: _____
 C.D.I.B./ Census #: _____ DOB: _____

MEMBERSHIPS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE AND NON-TRANSFERRABLE

Voting Member (\$50 for Membership only): See below for conference registration fees.

A qualified voting member is "any Indian 55 years of age or older who is an enrolled member of an Indian Tribe, band or combination of Tribes and bands, recognized by the United States Department of the Interior."

*Please attach a copy of proof of Tribal enrollment or C.D.I.B. card.
 Fill out the following if a copy is not available and have notarized.*

I hereby attest that (print name) _____ is a member
 of the (Tribe) _____ of (state) _____.
 Enrollment No.: _____ Date of Birth: ____-____-____
 Certified by: _____ Title: _____

Associate Member (\$100 for Membership only): See below for conference registration fees.

Any Indian/non-Indian individual who does not qualify to be a voting member.

Organizational Member (\$200 for Membership only): See below for conference registration fees.

Any organization (including Tribes) may become a non-voting organizational member.

Registration	before 7/31/06	after 7/31/06	Payment Method
Voting Members <i>2 Year Membership Fee of \$50.00 Included</i>	\$ 125.00	\$175.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Check/Money Order No. _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase Order No. _____
Non-Voting Members <i>Membership NOT Included</i>	\$200.00	\$250.00	Amount Due Membership \$ _____ Conference Registration \$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED* \$ _____
Students <i>Membership NOT Included</i> <small>*proof of current student enrollment required*</small>	\$ 100.00	\$150.00	*Payment must accompany this form. Do not send cash. Convention fees are used to defray NICOA operating costs. Therefore, it is NICOA'S policy NOT to refund registration fees.

****Please do NOT mail or fax registrations after July 31, 2006****

Register now to attend the National Indian Council on Aging's 30th Anniversary Biennial Conference

Board of Directors
Elections

Traditional Dress
Fashion Show

Storytelling
Event

Fun Walk

Powwow



Honor Luncheon

Prayer Breakfast

Visit local Tribal casinos
and area attractions

National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
10501 Montgomery Blvd. NE
Suite 210
Albuquerque, NM 87111-3851

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