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# ElderVoices

Newsletter of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.

Winter 2001

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## Important Conference News

### Plans Made for Conference 2002

The NICOA Board of Directors voted on January 12 to participate in the Healing Our Spirits Worldwide (HOSW) Conference, scheduled for Albuquerque, N.M. in September 2002. NICOA will hold its 2002 national Indian aging conference as a part of this larger conference. The HOSW conference is expected to draw more than 2,000 representatives from indigenous nations worldwide, in addition to the more than 1,500 who usually attend the NICOA conference.

Participating in the joint conference means that NICOA will partner with other Indian organizations, including the National In-

dian Health Board (NIHB), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), IHS, and United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY), as well as Native organizations from other countries. Joining this larger conference will require intense planning and organization. Dave Baldrige, NICOA executive director, and Brooke Mosay Ammann, NICOA assistant director, will represent Indian elder interests on the HOSW planning committee.

The HOSW conference will take place over the 2002 Labor Day weekend, September 2-6 (Monday through Friday). NICOA's conference will begin on September 4, ending with the HOSW closing ceremony on September 6. Starting NICOA conference registration on September 3, two days after the main conference registration, will ensure that NICOA elders can register as

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 Board of Directors**

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| <i>Pat Woods</i><br>(Past Chair)         | <i>(Muskogee Area)</i><br>580/622-2057     |

*IHS continues elder health program*

**The Indian Elder Health Care Initiative**

The IHS Indian Elder Health Care Initiative (EHCI)—a small but important program of the Indian Health Service—supports the development of high-quality services for elders. The EHCI acts as a resource for IHS, tribal and urban Indian health programs. The program, under the direction of Bruce Finke, a Family Practice doctor working at Zuni, N.M., provides information, referral, education and advocacy for providers who treat Indian elders. The EHCI survives and succeeds by creating numerous partnerships between tribal, state, federal and academic pro-

grams. The Indian Elder Health Care Initiative connects regularly with a list of more than 400 providers in the Indian health care system who have an interest in elder care. In order to support educational outreach and activities for these providers, the EHCI partners with university-based Geriatric Education Centers. One important part of the project is to promote and support the development of Elder Care Teams made up of the various people who provide care to Indian elders. These teams locate local resources for elder care, develop educational

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**Title VI Update**

Appropriations for the recently reauthorized Older Americans Act (OAA) included good news for Indian Country. Funding for Title VI programs increased by \$10 million, the largest increase ever for Title VI programs, which provides communal meals and other services to rural American Indian and Alaska Native elders. The new money will result in increased funding for current Title VI programs and approximately eight new tribal programs. The new Family Care-giver Support Program, in which \$5 million has been appropriated for Indian Country, will also flow to tribes through the Title VI program.

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they normally would, separately from the HOSW participants. NICOA will conduct its normal conference activities, such as the business meeting, elections, and sessions designed for elders, as well as coordinating activities within the HOSW conference schedule. Some conference events will be scheduled only for NICOA participants, while others, such as receptions and special events, will be designed for all HOSW conferees. Although a theme for the NICOA conference has yet to be decided, NICOA's board has expressed a desire to see the spiritual nature of the 2000 conference and the Message to America continued at this event.

The Healing Our Spirit Worldwide Conference will address the impact of alcohol/substance abuse and domestic violence on tribal individuals, families, and communities. The conference will bring indigenous people from around the world together to share ideas on how traditional values can promote healing in our communities. HOSW conference organizers have expressed interest in the Message to America as an important statement of traditional values and of healing.

According to NICOA board chairman Frank Chee Willetto, "This conference will be a chance for our elders to meet Native people from other countries and to share their knowledge with tribal youth."



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conferences and examine elder care policy within a program site to determine how a community can best serve its elders.

In addition to providing comprehensive elder care, the EHCI focuses on improved home- and community-based long-term care. The 2000 NICOA conference hosted a meeting focusing on best cases of home- and community-based elder care. Dr. Finke led the successful Mini-Conference, in partnership with the University of North Dakota Native American Resource Center and the Northwest Portland Indian Health Board.

Other EHCI long-term care efforts include developing training curriculum for home caregivers and developing a Public Health framework that will use Indian communities and tribes as the points of focus for elder care planning. Educational outreach efforts in 2000 included presentations at a variety of tribal meetings, and ongoing advocacy for elders within the Indian Health Service.

**REGIONAL EVENTS**

**Anadarko/Muskogee Area**

March 28-30, 2001

**16th Annual Oklahoma Minority Aging Conference**

A conference focusing on multicultural issues of older Americans.

For more information call Theresa Greer, 1-800-482-4594.

## Tips for Seniors

Sometimes it's hard to tell if a sales pitch is legitimate or fraudulent. You can't judge by the tone of someone's voice, or how friendly the person seems. Good salespeople are convincing, and so are crooks. It's probably a scam if:

J You get a call or postcard from someone telling you you've won a prize and they ask you for payment to buy something, for processing or administrative fees, for customs, for taxes, or for any other reason. *Legitimate sweepstakes or prize offers don't ask for payment because it's illegal.*

J The person says you have to take the offer immediately or you'll miss the opportunity. *Legitimate companies don't pressure people to act without time to look into the deal.*

J The caller refuses to send you written information before you commit to anything. *Legitimate companies will send information about what they're offering.*

J The caller claims that you can make huge profits in an investment with no risk. *All investments are risky and legitimate companies must tell consumers about the possible risks involved.*

J The caller claims that you can make huge profits through a franchise or other business opportunity with little or no effort. *All business ventures require effort on the part of buyers. No legitimate companies would guarantee profits.*

J The caller is asking for a donation but won't tell you exactly how the money will be used or how you can verify the charity and what it does. *Legitimate charities are willing to say what percentage of contributions is used for services and how much goes to overhead and fundraising. They are also willing to tell consumers who they can check with to confirm that they are legitimate.*

J The caller insists that you send your payment by private courier or wire money. *Legitimate*

*companies don't try to evade the postal authorities by demanding immediate payment by courier or wire.*

J The company asks for cash. *Legitimate companies don't ask for cash, but con artists do because they often have trouble getting merchant approval from the credit card companies, and want to be hard to trace.*

J The caller asks for your social security number. *Legitimate companies don't ask for that unless you are applying for credit and they need to check your credit report.*

J The caller asks for your credit card number, bank account number, or other financial information when you aren't buying anything or paying with those accounts. *Legitimate companies only ask for financial information to bill you or debit your account for purchases you've agreed to make.*

J The company calls you relentlessly or after you've asked not to be called anymore. *Legitimate companies will take "no" for an answer and will take you off their calling lists if you ask. Con artists will keep on calling to wear you down or get more money from you.*

J The company offers to get you a loan, or credit, or a credit card, or to "repair" your bad credit if you pay an up-front fee. *Legitimate lenders and credit card issuers do not demand payment in advance, and no one can get bad information removed from a credit file if it is correct.*

J The company offers to get back money that you have lost to another fraudulent scheme if you pay an up-front fee. *Law enforcement agencies don't ask for payment to help consumers get their money back. It is illegal for a company to ask for advance payment for such services.*

Giving money to a fraudulent telemarketer usually means losing it forever. Don't let a criminal break into your home through your telephone line!

## Jose Duran

Every other week, NICOA's Albuquerque staff looks forward to a visit from Jose Duran. They know he is dropping off their bi-weekly reward, their paycheck. For 15 months Jose has worked in NICOA's finance department as the Payroll Clerk. He says the hardest part of his job is collecting timesheets.

Jose was born in Taos, NM and raised in Albuquerque. A retired military man, he spent 21 years in the Air Force. Jose says the most important elder in his life is his 80-year-old father. Jose's dad taught him responsibility, which he has passed on to three successful sons. Jose is the father of a second year medical school student, a registered nurse and the youngest violinist in California's Solono Symphony.

When he is not chasing down NICOA employees for their timesheets, Jose enjoys crafts, creating sculptures and working on puzzles of any kind.

## Update

The Message to America continues to grow. On January 25, NICOA Vice-Chairman Gary Kodaseet, Minneapolis Area representative Helen Cummings, NICOA Assistant Director Brooke Mosay Ammann and her mother, St. Croix Chippewa elder Dora Ammann, were featured guests on the national radio show, Native America Calling. The topic was the Message to America.



The hour-long show included a reading and discussion of the Message, followed by questions and comments from callers throughout Native America. Producer Harlan McKasato commented on the success of the show, and said that an hour was not long enough to hear words from the elders. Another show may be in the works.

The team (NICOA staff, volunteers, and contractors) that worked to compile the Message to America in Duluth continues to work on disseminating it. Look for more information in the coming months.



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### In Memory

NICOA was sorry to hear of the recent passing of two former board members.

Madeline Colliflower, Gros Ventre, of Dodson, MT was NICOA's Billings Area Representative for many years.

Sam Stool, Jr., Cherokee, of Tahlequah, OK was a Title VI director from the program's inception, and a former NICOA Title VI association representative.

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## Lillian Taylor

Seneca elder Lillian Taylor, NICOA's Central Area Representative, lives on the Allegheny Reservation in upstate New York, where she was born. Lillian moved to Buffalo after high school to attend college, where she earned her degree in nursing.

Geriatric nursing, her specialty for more than 20 years, continues to keep her active in her community. Every other week she spends a few days at the local nursing home caring for the residents. In addition to her nursing degree, Lillian has a bachelor's degree in health administration and is currently taking classes in substance abuse counseling.

Lillian sets a good example of active elderhood. Her hobbies include oil painting, travel, reading, knitting, and caring for her pets. It's a wonder she finds time for any of these

activities in between classes, weekly water aerobics, and her role as a volunteer EMT at the local fire department. Lillian says, "I hope to continue to help my people in many ways," and notes that the most important lesson she learned from her elders is patience. She says that critical factors affecting the elders in her region are lack of access to benefits and isolation.

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Anadarko Area representative and NICOA Vice-Chairman Gary Kodaseet was appointed to the Oklahoma State Council on Aging in December, 2000. Congratulations, Gary, we know you will do a great job.



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