



# ARIZONA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN HEALTH CARE

## March 2024 Newsletter

***Mission statement:** The mission of the AACIHC is to advocate for increasing access to high quality health care programs for all American Indians in Arizona.*

### At-a-Glance

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- Tribal Health Summit - Navigating Pandemics Together - **March 12-14, 2024 at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix, Arizona**
- State-Tribal Epidemiology Summit - **May 8th, 2024 at Creighton University, 3100 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012**

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## Upcoming Conferences

### Tribal Health Literacy Summit:

# Navigating Pandemics Together

The Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care and its COVID-19 Health Disparities Grant Team is pleased to announce the "Tribal Health Literacy Summit: Navigating Pandemics Together."

**The three-day conference will be held from March 12-14, 2024, at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix, Arizona.**

This event will bring together tribal leaders, healthcare professionals, policymakers, educators, and community advocates to address the challenges posed by pandemics and promote health literacy in Indian Country.

It is designed to tackle critical issues related to health literacy, chronic disease management, social determinants of health, health screening, prevention, and the foundations of health literacy within tribal communities.

In addition, there will be discussions on topics such as long COVID, food access, post-COVID mental health, and more. The primary goal is to equip tribal community members with the knowledge, information, and advocacy skills needed to address health disparities, especially in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



[\*\*Register here!\*\*](#)

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## State-Tribal Epidemiology Summit

**Join us!**

**When:** May 8, 2024

**Where:** Creighton University, 3100 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012

The Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care (AACIHC) has embarked on a joint effort to organize a State-Tribal Epidemiology Summit. To achieve this, AACIHC is working in close collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), and First Things First (FTF).



[\*\*Register Here\*\*](#)

This collaborative endeavor underscores our commitment to advancing data-driven decision-making between our partners state agencies and Arizona Tribes to ensure better health outcomes for Tribal communities.

## AACIHC Agency Updates

### Meet Our New Team Members!

#### **Ariana Granger**

Program Specialist with the COVID-19  
Health Disparities Grant Team

Ariana Granger is an Arizona native, born and raised in Phoenix. A graduate of ASU with a degree in Global Health. Ariana transferred from Mesa Community College and values education. With a diverse background in global health, global citizenship, and education. Ariana is excited to be a part of the AACIHC and continuing efforts to bring resources and health equity to Arizona communities. Ariana loves to be outside and typically spends her weekend's at a local farmers market or hiking around the valley.



**Ariana Granger**  
Program Specialist

<http://www.aacihc.az.gov/>

#### **Corey Hemstreet**

Legislative Specialist

My name is Corey Hemstreet and I am a tribal citizen of the Navajo Nation. I was born and raised on the western side of the Navajo reservation in Tuba City, Arizona. I have a profound passion for advancing health equity in tribal communities through program and policy development and advocacy. I have worked in the realm of tribal public health for 6+ years as a community health representative, health program manager, tribal liaison, and a graduate research assistant. I received my undergraduate degrees in Justice Studies and American Indian Studies from Arizona State University. Currently, I am



**Corey Hemstreet**  
Legislative Specialist

<http://www.aacihc.az.gov/>

in my last semester of my Master of Public Health (MPH)- Health Promotion program and am expected to graduate in the Spring 2024. After I graduate, I plan to continue my education in public health and work in policymaking that will positively impact tribal and underserved communities.

### **Ernestine Nasingoetewa**

Grants Program Coordinator with the AIH-AHEC Grant Team

Ernestine Nasingoetewa (White Mountain Apache and Laguna Pueblo) joined the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care with more than 10 years of experience in healthcare. She has gained valuable experience at her previous positions at Native Connections, Native Health, Contexture and White Mountain Apache Behavioral Health Services. Ernestine is the new Professional Development/CEU Coordinator for the American Indian Health – AHEC and is also responsible for the coordination of student clinical rotation stipends.



**Ernestine Nasingoetewa**  
Grants Coordinator

<http://www.aacihc.az.gov/>



**AMERICAN INDIAN  
HEALTH-AHEC**

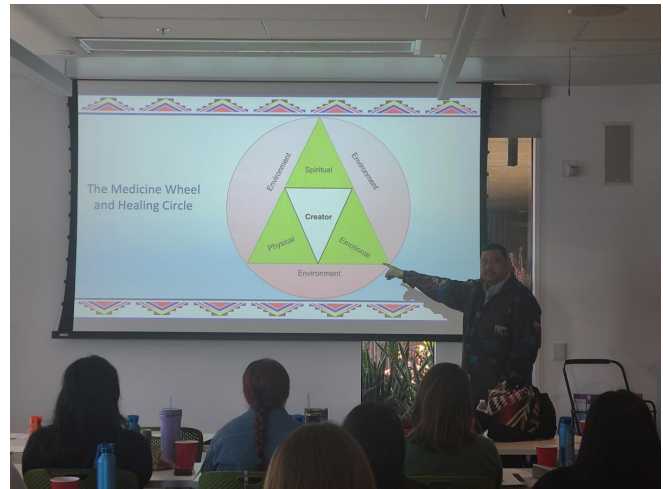
## **Unforgettable Experience in Southern Arizona for the 2023-2025 AIH-AHEC Scholars Program**

**Date: February 2-4, 2024**

**Location: Tucson, AZ and Tohono O’odham Nation Sells, AZ**

Our hearts are still buzzing with excitement from the incredible journey our AHEC Scholars had in Southern Arizona! Let's take you through the highlights of our 2023-2025 AHEC Scholars Cohort's 2nd enriching immersion program.

**Cultural Humility Training:** It was an early Saturday Morning for our scholars as we kicked off our adventure with our scholars immersing themselves in 4 hours of Cultural Humility Training led by Miguel Flores Jr. LISAC, Daniel Sestiaga MPH and Felina M. Cordova-Marks Dr.PH, MPH.



Training professionals used their expertise and experience over many years to address the need in understanding and acknowledging the historical traumas that have taken place within Native American Communities. This brought light to not only the disparities that are the direct cause of those traumas but also to the resilience to Native American communities to heal through policy change, tribal sovereignty and ceremony. This experience was a profound exploration of understanding, respect, and appreciation for diverse perspectives in healthcare for AHEC Scholars to take with them as they develop into healthcare professionals.

**85th Annual Tohono O'odham Rodeo and Fair:** After a quick lunch the AHEC Scholars adventure led to Sells, Arizona for the Fair Festivities. Our students were mesmerized by cultural dances from O'odham youth and the skill and determination in players participating in the adult women's Annual Toka Tournament which spoke volumes about the rich traditions of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Scholars networked with local community resources to learned about initiatives that are making a real impact in the community, reinforcing their commitment to being future healthcare leaders. Cheers echoed through the rodeo arena as our scholars joined the excitement of the women's rodeo division while indulging in the delicious local comfort foods of fry bread, Indian tacos and steamed corn.



**Reflections:** As we wrap up this immersive experience, our scholars are taking a moment to reflect on the lessons learned, the friendships formed, and the appreciation gained for the rich cultural tapestry of Southern Arizona and reassured that healing, resilience and culture all go hand and hand.

**Gratitude:** A huge shout out to the Miguel Flores Jr. LISAC, Daniel Sestiaga MPH and Felina M. Cordova-Marks Dr.PH, MPH., and Tohono O’odham Nation for their contributions to this unforgettable experience. It’s moments like these that shape the future of compassionate, culturally aware healthcare professionals. Stay tuned for more adventures as we continue our journey of learning and growth!



## **AHEAD Indigenous Healthcare Career Advancement Training Support**

The American Indian Health-AHEC in collaboration with the University of Arizona's Office for Rural Health is administering the Advancing Health Equity, Addressing Disparities (AHEAD AZ) program to enhance the American Indian healthcare workforce and the communities they serve. If you are interested in pursuing additional certification or training that will elevate your professional career as well as

impact the community you serve, please complete the application in the link.  
[AHEAD Healthcare Career Advancement Application](#)

**Indigenous Healthcare Career Advancement Training:** A certification or training opportunity to support your career advancement as well as have a positive impact on the community. (Examples include: SANE Training, wound care, nursing advancement, clinical training, CHR certification, modality training, textbook materials, examination fees, etc.) Training/certification that will further your healthcare expertise and improve your community's resources.

If you are interested in submitting an application or would like to learn more about the AIH-AHEC's AHEAD program, please contact Tashina Machain, Youth Program Coordinator, [tashina.machain@aacihc.az.gov](mailto:tashina.machain@aacihc.az.gov) or Jeff Axtell, Director, [Jeffrey.axtell@aacihc.az.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.axtell@aacihc.az.gov).



## CDC-CCR Updates

As the CDC-CCR *CHR'S WITH uS!* grant enters its last year of the grant cycle, the main goal is to strengthen the sustainability efforts of the Community Health Representative (CHR) workforce. The CDC-CCR team is working to continuously provide technical assistance in planning training events, grant partner meetings, and other events beneficial to the CHR Grant Partners. One of the sustainability efforts that the team has been working on is ensuring that every CHR applies for the Community Health Worker Voluntary Certification.

If you are interested in learning more about the CHR Workforce, here are some resources:

- [AACIHC CDC-CCR Grant](#)
- [IHS Community Health Representative](#)

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## Legislative Updates:



The AACIHC's new Legislative Specialist, Corey Hemstreet, started back with the agency in early February and since then she has dove right into the legislative session by connecting with respective stakeholders, tracking the agency's priority legislative bills, and providing updates.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please contact the AACIHC Legislative Specialist, Corey Hemstreet (she/her), at:  
[corey.hemstreet@aacihc.az.gov](mailto:corey.hemstreet@aacihc.az.gov)

The legislative updates are as follows:

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## **Bills that have crossed to opposite chamber or are still in the process:**

[SB 1037- AHCCCS; comprehensive dental care](#)

Prime Sponsor: Shope

Status: Transmitted to the House on 03/05/24 and is awaiting assignment to respective committees.

[\\*SB 1361- sober living homes](#)

Prime Sponsor: Carroll

Status: Do pass amended in the Senate Committee of the Whole on 02/28/24

[\\*HB 2205- fraud unit; investigations; annual report](#)

Prime Sponsor: Livingston

Status: Transmitted to the Senate on 02/20/24 and assigned to the Senate Committee on Finance & Commerce on 03/04/24 and Senate Rules Committee

[\\*HB 2249- residential care facilities; inspections](#)

Prime Sponsor: Carter

Bill Overview:

Status: Transmitted to the Senate on 02/05/24. Assigned to the Senate HHS Committee on 03/04/24 and awaiting assignment to the Senate Rules Committee.

[\\*HB 2587- adult protective Services; reporting records](#)

Prime Sponsor: Dunn

Bill Overview:

Status: Transmitted to the Senate on 02/29/2024

[\\*HB 2764- long-term care; enforcement; memory care](#)

Prime sponsor: Dunn

Bill Overview:

Status: Transmitted to the Senate on 02/29/24

[\\*HB 2827- sober living; enforcement; recovery residences](#)

Prime Sponsor: Peshlakai

Bill Overview:

Status: Waiting assignment to the House Committee of the Whole (COW)

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# Bills that are waiting to be assigned or are most likely to die:

## \*SB 1655- health care institutions; regulation

Prime Sponsor: Hatathlie

Bill Overview:

Status: Awaiting assignment to the Senate Committee of the Whole (COW)

## \*HB 2230- AHCCCS; Outpatient services

Prime Sponsor: Longdon

Status: Awaiting assignment to the House Committee of the Whole (COW)

## HB 2228- AHCCCS; complex rehabilitation technology

Prime sponsor: Longdon

Status: Awaiting assignment to the House Committee of the Whole (COW)

## \*HB 2560- sober living; behavioral health; licensure

Prime sponsor: Schwiebert

Status: Awaiting assignment to the House Committee of the Whole (COW)

*\*The AACIHC is tracking bills, also deemed as Murdered & Missing Indigenous Peoples (MMIP), that will add protective and regulatory measures to ensure the health, wellness, and safety of vulnerable adults.*

## Resources

### Extreme Heat Preparedness Plan Released!

Last year's heat waves resulted in over 400 deaths in Maricopa County alone, per the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. This matched the all-time high of heat-related deaths for the county. Consequently, Governor Hobbs has released an Extreme Heat Preparedness Plan, which includes setting up more cooling centers with solar-powered mobile cooling units, funding for more extreme weather shelters statewide, and increasing staff to work these cooling centers.

The Emergency Heat Preparedness Plan can be found here:

[View The Plan](#)

### What can YOU do to take precautions against the heat?

- When the heat index is high, stay indoors when possible.
- If you must be outside, make sure to take regular breaks, drink plenty of water, eat food, and seek out shade whenever possible. It can be up to 10 degrees cooler in a shaded area. Also, wear light weight, light colored cotton clothing.

Cotton can actually absorb water and retain it for longer time periods in high temperatures. So, if you are starting to get hot, you can wet the cotton clothing you are wearing and it will help to keep you cool for longer.

- If outside, use wide-brimmed hats or umbrellas for heat relief. These will keep the sun from being directly on you.
- If outside, and you are able to decide when you are outside, limit your outdoor activities to the cooler parts of the day. The day is always the most hot between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so make sure if you are outside that if you are doing physical work, to do it prior to 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. Remember to take frequent, indoor breaks.
- Wear sunscreen!
- Check on loved ones, friends, and neighbors who are at a higher risk of heat illness. Those more susceptible to heat include infants, young children, and older adults over 60 years of age.
- Do not rely on fans as a primary cooling source, even when indoors. Indoor temperatures can soar, particularly when temperatures are over 95 degrees Fahrenheit outside.

Please also see the attached infographics for more information on how to stay safe in the heat, and what signs and symptoms to be on the lookout for, when it comes to spotting someone suffering from a heat-related illness. There are things you can do to help someone suffering from a heat related illness until definitive medical help arrives.

[More Information](#)

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## Bureau of Indian Education Launches Behavioral Health Call Line for Students and Staff

The Bureau of Indian Education is increasing behavioral health and wellness support by launching a 24/7 support line for students and staff at schools and programs funded by the bureau. Students and staff who call **1-844-ASK-BHWP (1-844-275-2497)**, will be connected with trained professionals who can provide immediate individual attention.

The call line offers 24/7 crisis support and scheduled counseling sessions.

[Learn More](#)

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## Sign Up for AACIHC News Updates & Newsletters!

[Sign Up Here!](#)

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Stay up to date and access more information about our agency!  
Click or scan the QR Code below to learn more!



## AACIHC's Office Location



**Arizona Advisory Council on  
Indian Health Care  
AHCCCS | 801 E. Jefferson  
Street, MD 4600  
Phoenix, AZ 85034**

**Office #: (602) 542-5725**

*The AACIHC, utilizing its knowledge of Indian healthcare issues and tribal sovereignty, serves as a resource for Tribal governments and the State of Arizona, and supports prevention, training, education, and policy development as the keys to meeting the unique health care needs of the Arizona Indian population.*

**AZ Advisory Council on Indian Health Care  
602-542-5725**

**Visit the AACIHC  
website**

