

EQUITY

FAIR AND JUST ACCESS TO CANCER PREVENTION AND CARE

CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN CANCER HEALTH EQUITY

ISSUE 01 | JUNE/JULY 2023

Welcome to the C-NACHE Newsletter



Greetings!

Through this inaugural newsletter, the Center for Native American Cancer Health Equity (C-NACHE) invites you to learn about the proposed activities of the center and to join in the commitment to improve cancer prevention, care and recovery services for Native People in Arizona.

This issue introduces you to C-NACHE faculty, staff and students and describes our initial steps in establishing partnerships for education and change. Future issues of this newsletter will be interactive and will invite you to share your perspectives.

We are honored to have a 15-plus member Community Advisory Board representing Native Nations and Native serving organizations, to guide and shape C-NACHE ideas into action. We invite you to share this and future newsletters with your family, friends and co-workers.

Respectfully,

Nicolette Teufel-Shone, C-NACHE Director

IN THIS ISSUE

We are pleased to provide you with updates from the Center for Native American Cancer Health Equity project.

CONTENT:

- Introduction to C-NACHE and its team members.
- C-NACHE core activities.
- C-NACHE research projects.
- C-NACHE Community Advisory Board members.

NAU

Center for Health
Equity Research

What is C-NACHE?

C-NACHE is the newly funded Center for Native American Cancer Health Equity at Northern Arizona University, located in Flagstaff, Arizona.

The Center is grounded in intertribal partnerships, collaboration, and community-informed research to improve cancer prevention and control for Native communities.

C-NACHE strives to uplift community voices, strengths, and wisdoms to inform cancer care, action, and health policies.

C-NACHE is funded by the American Cancer Society, which is invested in the belief that everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, find, treat, and survive cancer.

C-NACHE is supported by CHERC-MSI-22-183-01 from the American Cancer Society.

Meet the C-NACHE team

Learn about what inspires members of our team and where they come from

Nicolette Teufel-Shone
Director



I am inspired by students and emerging public health professionals who are committed to changing policies and services to achieve health equity for the most vulnerable people.

Homestate
Maryland

Carmenlita Chief (Diné)
Sr. Project Coordinator



In reclaiming Indigenous health and wellbeing, I am inspired by the vision of thriving communities where everyone is afforded a long life full of happiness and harmony.

Homestate
Arizona

Carol Goldtooth (Navajo)
CAB Coordinator



My paternal grandfather, a traditional Navajo medicinal practitioner/ knowledge holder that helped heal his Navajo relatives, inspires me to work at limiting health disparities through public health by promoting healthcare equity, quality, access, and community participation.

Homestate
Arizona

Winona Reid (Navajo)
Grant and Project Support Coordinator



Seeing projects come to fruition inspires me. An idea, thought or question from a PI or a project team that leads to solutions and collaborative outcomes inspires me. Those ideas and thoughts are sacred to me.

Homestate
Arizona

Nicolas Beckett
Sr. Events Coordinator



I am continuously inspired by my family, friends, colleagues, and community. I am surrounded by compassionate, kind, and intelligent people, and they inspire me to be at my best every day.

Homestate
Arizona

Manley Begay, Jr. (Navajo)
CAB Facilitator



What excites me in my work is being a part of the effort of many Indigenous nations and their leaders to successfully re-build their nations after tremendous devastation from colonial influence.

Homestate
Arizona

Meet the C-NACHE team

Learn about what inspires members of our team and where they come from

Kelly Laurila

Evaluation Co-Lead

I feel drawn to serve programs that advance health equity by collaborating with them to tell their stories, and support data driven decision making.

Homestate
Pennsylvania



Marissa Tutt (San Carlos Apache)

Evaluation Co-Lead

The relationships I've created during my career have inspired me. I get to learn from diverse experiences and use it as encouragement to better my community and myself.

Homestate
Arizona



Jennifer Hudson (Diné)

Sr. Community Program Coordinator

I am constantly inspired by my community and my loved ones, whose lived experiences have motivated my journey in health research that harnesses the strengths of those experiences and perspectives.

Homestate
New Mexico



Taylor Lewis-Moore (Yavapai-Apache)

Media Specialist

I am inspired by my parents. Working alongside them in tribal communities, I have been motivated to give back to my people by majoring in health/science.

Homestate
Arizona



The Applied Research and Development (ARD) building is the home base for many of our C-NACHE staff, and is located on the NAU campus in Flagstaff.

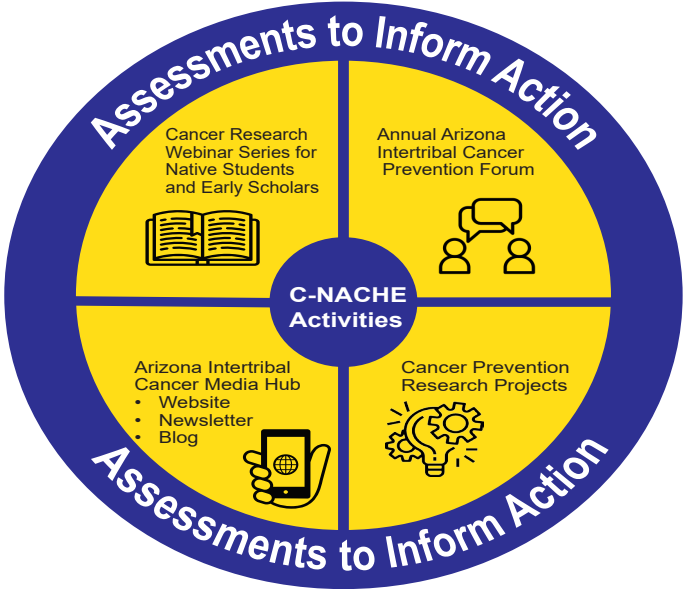
What does C-NACHE do?

The four core activities that C-NACHE sets out to achieve in its overall goal to center tribal voices in cancer prevention efforts

Quarterly
C-NACHE will produce a webinar highlighting Native American cancer research being done by academic-community partnerships. Webinars are live and will also be recorded.

Annually
C-NACHE will fund and collaborate with 6 communities a year, to adapt, administer and analyze a survey designed to identify community priorities relative to cancer prevention, care and survivorship.

Annually
C-NACHE will host an in-person intertribal forum. The forum will be a gathering ground for discussions on centering Native community voices in Arizona around cancer prevention efforts and policy.



Frequent and Ongoing
C-NACHE will create online opportunities for sharing information about tribal cancer prevention and control efforts in Arizona.

Ongoing
C-NACHE supports 2 collaborative cancer research projects. Findings from this research will inform and enhance future cancer prevention and policy efforts for Native people.

Please share news and updates with us! We'll publish it in our **bimonthly newsletter** and our **regularly updated C-NACHE website**.

We briefly introduce these two projects and their leads on page 5 of this newsletter. **Read on...**

Grounding our work in culture and community

Culture

Native elders, cultural knowledge holders, and health leaders encourage relationships, collaboration, and support for young people as valuable cultural practices for promoting health in Native communities.

Community

Informed by community-specific assessments, C-NACHE proposes four core activities to improve cancer prevention, care, and recovery support services for Native Americans throughout Arizona.



In our next issue, we will share more information on the purpose and objectives of each activity – as well as how you can participate in them or lend support.

Examining environmental exposures



Jani Ingram, Regents' Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Northern Arizona University.

Jani Ingram, professor of chemistry and biochemistry at NAU, is an expert on environmental chemical exposures and mining. She has authored many publications on the effects of environmental contaminants, especially on tribal lands. She is the research group leader (otherwise known as the Principal Investigator) of the Partnership for Native American Cancer Prevention (NACP) and director of the Bridging Native American Students to Bachelor's

Degree (BRIDGES) program.

Ingram is a member of the Navajo Nation. She is of the Naneesht'eezhi (Charcoal-Streaked Clan) and born for German people. Her maternal grandfather is Kintichii'nii (Red House Clan) and her paternal grandfather is European.

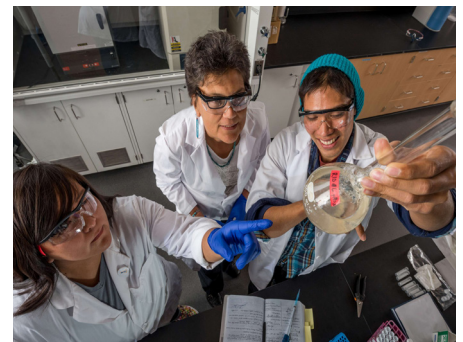
Ingram's funded C-NACHE research project is called, **Environmental Exposures from Legacy Mining as a Social Determinant of Health Linked to Kidney Cancer.** "This study will provide the Navajo Nation with information on rates of kidney disease and kidney cancer. Additionally, it will shed some light on the possible connection (or correlation) of kidney disease and kidney cancer to environmental exposures from contaminants of legacy mining (previously mined areas)," said Ingram, who has been at NAU since 2002.

Through the project, Ingram's team will convert the project findings (or results) into practical tools for health care providers

that can help with early detection and diagnosis of kidney cancer. The team will also share the findings with communities to assist in decreasing the risk of community members coming into contact with legacy mining contaminants in the environment.

"We will provide a roadmap for future work linking environmental exposures and cancer," said

Ingram, which will provide better understanding to help Navajo Nation and other Native communities develop community health interventions and policy to reduce cancer risk from exposures to legacy mining contaminants in the environment.



Developing a cancer control plan



Hendrik (Dirk) de Heer, Professor, Department of Health Sciences, Northern Arizona University.

Hendrik (Dirk) de Heer is the lead for the C-NACHE funded research project called **"The Navajo Cancer Workgroup: Enhancing Impact of Cancer Data for Cancer Prevention and Control among the Navajo People."**

De Heer has worked

collaboratively with Navajo health leaders for many years to advance priority public health and health promotion initiatives identified by Navajo Nation wellness advocates. Cancer prevention is one such priority. With C-NACHE support, de Heer and the Navajo Cancer Workgroup study team will focus on utilizing data relevant to the Navajo people and to inform the development of a cancer control plan.

"Our project aims to impact the lives of Navajo individuals and families by developing tools, such as a user-friendly cancer data and resource dashboard, and informational resources that are aimed at providing a regularly updated, easily accessible source of cancer data and information," said de Heer.

One of the informational resources the team plans to

develop is a Navajo Cancer Control and Prevention seminar series, which de Heer says would provide a unique opportunity for furthering important community-grounded discussion around cancer care and prevention on the Navajo Nation – all from a culturally aligned perspective of compassion, relational care, prevention, and restoration of balance.

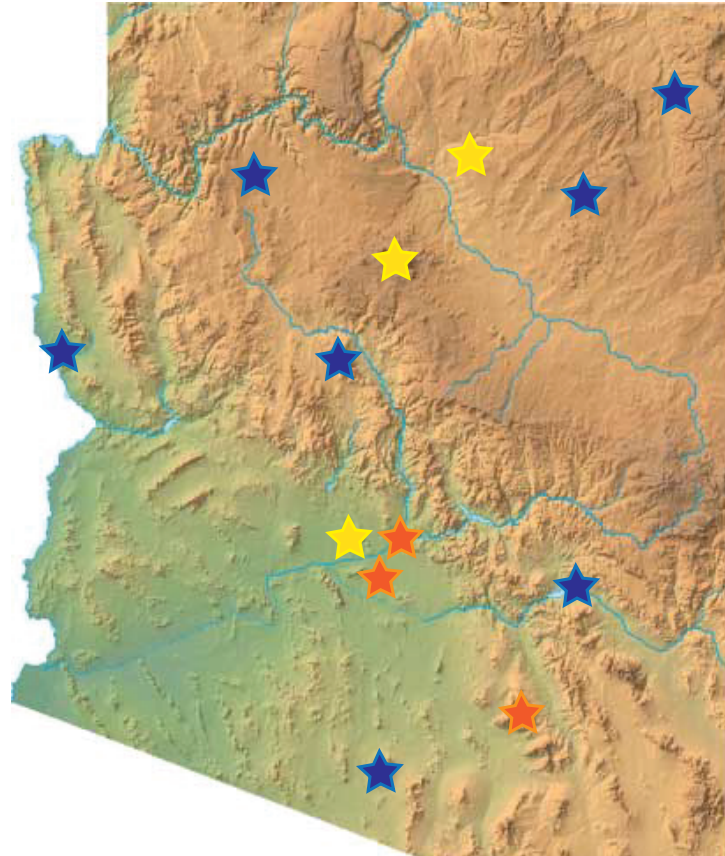


Meet our tribal partners

Inclusion of community voices is essential towards cancer prevention

Tribes

- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
- Hopi Tribe
- Hualapai Tribe
- Navajo Nation
- San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Tohono O'odham Nation
- Yavapai-Apache Nation



Tribal Organizations

- Intertribal Council of Arizona Inc.
- Native Americans for Community Action Inc.
- Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation

Nontribal Organizations

- American Cancer Society Inc.-South Region
- AZ Department of Health Services
- U of A, Cancer Center-Community Engagement & Outreach

Land Acknowledgement

Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized Native Nations, whose homelands are sacred to Native Americans throughout the region. We honor their past, present, and future generations, who have lived here for millennia and will forever call this place home.

C-NACHE is honored to work collaboratively with the Native Nations listed above, as well as several Native serving organizations across Arizona.

Overall, C-NACHE was established to strengthen collaboration with and among Arizona tribal communities and institutions serving Native Americans in the southwest region to address cancer prevalence trends. As part of our mission,

C-NACHE aims to expand the discussion regarding cancer prevention, care, and recovery in Native communities.

However, we understand that not all of Arizona's 22 federally recognized tribes are currently represented, but we hope to change that. **We encourage you to reach out to partner with us.**

If you do not see your tribe or organization listed above, please reach out to us. Diverse tribal perspectives are pivotal to this conversation and toward building cancer health equity in Native communities altogether.

For more information,
contact us at:
CNACHE@nau.edu



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C-NACHE is funded by the American Cancer Society, award number CHERC-MSI-22-183-01.