



## Strengthening Community Health through Stories of Resilience

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**W**e want to thank all the CAIR personnel, community members, and students who participated in our program titled, “**Strengthening Community Health through Stories of Resilience**” which took place on January 29, 2014 in the Native American Cultural Center at NAU. We had originally planned for a relatively small seminar of approximately 20 people who we thought might be interested in finding out more about our CAIR pilot research, but the response was so enthusiastic that we had to revise our expectations. Instead of a small seminar we had a large group of 72 people take part in the conference. Many of the people who are part of CAIR contributed to the program which included interactive workshops with community members and university students who gave us feedback about CAIR work. We heard many comments from people who were pleased to make contact with persons from CAIR and wanted to partner with the CAIR organization.

CAIR participation was integral to the success of the conference. The program began with a welcome by Dr. Priscilla Sanderson, Principal Investigator (PI) And Administrative Director, and Dr. Octaviana Trujillo, the Director of the CAIR Research Core at NAU. This was followed by a prayer and song by Dr. Chad Hamil who directs the Education and Training Core. Other people in CAIR who participated and helped throughout the day included Agnes Attakai, PI of a University of Arizona (UofA) CAIR pilot research project and Nicky Teufel-shone, Director of Research for UofA. Laura Kelly, evaluator for CAIR, provided an evaluation for the conference. Elizabeth Hulen and Darold Joseph are graduate students receiving CAIR support; both gave presentations at the conference. Elizabeth is working on coding data for our research. Darold has been working on literature research and model development on resiliency.

After initial introductions, **Health Resilience among American Indians in Arizona**, our research project, was presented to the conference participants. As part of the presentation, Jamie Esplain, one of the Community Researchers on the project, made a presentation on Wellness Mapping. Wellness Mapping was one of the research tools that she helped to develop and to use for research. Jamie explained it to the conference participants who were seated at round tables with paper and colored pens and crayons, and she asked them to participate in the activity by drawing a map of their wellness. The conference participants shared their drawings and stories with other people at their tables. After this activity, Elizabeth Hulen gave her presentation on some of the preliminary findings concerning Health Care Practitioners and patient-provider interaction.



*Conference participants creating wellness maps*



*Agnes Attakai conducting digital storytelling workshop*

Agnes Attakai gave an interactive workshop on her project which uses digital storytelling to define and document resilience. She provided information on visual/digital storytelling and provided materials and resources so that the members of the conference could practice working on a story and learn about the process. Most of the people who were seated at the tables worked with others at their tables to provide a story of resilience. Many used the drawings from the wellness mapping activity in the digital storytelling activity.

In the afternoon, a panel of health and wellness practitioners discussed narrative medicine and wellness in clinical practice. The panel included Dr. Mark Carroll, from Flagstaff Medical



Center, Dr. George Hershey from the Family Health Center at Native Americans for Community Action (NACA), Dr. David Spence from the Indian Health Center and the Poore Clinic, and Brenda Gene, Health promotion Director at NACA and member of the CAIR Community Advisory Committee. The conference audience was invited to make comments or respond to the questions as well, and the session provided another opportunity for useful community feedback.

The conference concluded with Darold Joseph presenting on American Indian literature about resilience. He presented and explained several models of Resilience developed by and within American Indian communities and answered questions from the audience about these models and the literature of resilience. There was also lively audience participation. Darold ended the day with another blessing, playing a Native American flute song for the conference.

Again, we want to thank everyone for their participation and the important, thoughtful, and interactive contributions to the conference. It was a successful conference and provided a valuable forum for American Indian interaction about stories for resilience and community health as well as a venue for our project, Health Resilience among American Indians in Arizona.

**T**hank you,

Lisa Jane Hardy, Ph.D., Principle Investigator

R. Cruz Begay, Dr. P.H., Co-Principle Investigator

Alejandra Figueroa, M.A., Project Coordinator