



Chickasaw
Retired Naval Aviator
and Astronaut
Houston, Texas



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Newsletter Committee

Shrawan (Sam) Kumar
Maurice Godfrey
Kim Soper
Liliana Bronner

GREAT NEWS: NIH YES GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED

Dr. Maurice Godfrey, Professor and SEPA Program Director

Happy New Year! It is with great pleasure to announce the NIH funding of a new program YES (Youth Enjoy Science) that will become an addition to our SEPA. Your advice and counsel over these many years has helped to make SEPA better. It is that engagement that has given us the trust, partnership, and knowledge to do more. This Board meeting marks the first joint meeting of SEPA with YES. This is our program to bring information about cancer prevention and research to your students and communities.

Dr. Joyce Solheim is the other Principal Investigator on the YES and Dr. Regina Robbins is a Co-Investigator. I know you will enjoy working with these two terrific University of Nebraska faculty. In addition, Ms. Misty Pocwierz-Gains will join Ms. Liliana Bronner as they both will work to coordinate the many activities over the years.

Knowing what works and how things work or don't work, is a critical part to ensure success of any program. Joining Dr. Jenenne Geske our SEPA evaluator is Dr. Bob Pawloski, who will evaluate our YES program.

Our educators and education specialists are the life blood of our work. Ms. Kim Soper and Dr. Sam Kumar will continue to do and expand our work with you, our wonderful partners.

We can never say this too often, but we always want to do as much as possible for all of your students or teachers. Feel free to call or email with questions, suggestions, or ideas. We look forward to continuing and expanding our partnership with all of you.

**2017: SEPA Science Fun
Activities at Santee, UmoⁿHoⁿ Nation, Marty, and Lake Andes Schools**

SEPA SCIENCE ACTIVITIES—October 25-28, 2017—Marty Indian School and Lake Andes

We have held annual workshops, science camps, family science nights, and visits to schools to stimulate interest in science, provide guidance and science education to Native American communities since 2005. **Pictures below:** On the left, science activity at Andes Central High School and on the right SEPA Science Family Night at Marty Indian School (more than 100 family members and students participated). All the students loved the variety of activities that are described on the next page:





SEPA VISIT of Marty Indian School and Andes Central School – October 25-28, 2017

Dr. S. Kumar demonstrated Reebops: A model organism for a fun way of teaching key concepts in Genetics. As seen in the pictures students, both middle and high schools, are creating imaginary creatures, called “Reebops” to explore the relationships between genes and inherited traits. Using Reebops as a model, students learn how hereditary information is passed from one generation to the next, and how the physical appearance of offspring is determined from the combinations of genes received from parents. Students really had a great time learning genetics. By the end of the activity, students were able to learn about the offspring and resemblance of characteristics from two parents as well as individual variation. Response from teachers and students were overwhelming and showed great interest in SEPA program. Both schools requested more visits. Thanks to Ms. Frances Bullshoe for her great support. Also, appreciate help from Ms. Savanna Bice from Andes Central High School.



PICTURE: First grade students of Lake Andes are very much engrossed in listening the story of Rain Forest and Animals by Dr. Kumar. The experience was very impressive—students appeared to be very excited in learning and surprisingly took part in discussion asking questions about rain forests and animals inhabiting them. Thanks to Ms. Brittany Schoenfelder of Andes Central Elementary School for all the support in organizing this event.





ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

1. **BOARD MEETING: Delta Hotel in South Sioux City, Nebraska**
Friday January 26, 2018 Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
2. **CANCER BIOLOGY & YOU - APRIL 4, 2018 –MARINA INN**
3. **SEPA TEACHER WORKSHOP – JUNE 27-29, UNMC, OMAHA**
4. **YES—TEACHER WORKSHOP –JULY 30-1ST AUG, UNMC**
5. **SEPA SUMMER CAMP –JULY 10-13, 2018, LINCOLN, NE**

Email us with your questions at sepa@unmc.edu

SEPA Publication - *The Power of Role Models*

Information about the Native American Role Model Poster sets is available on the web at:
<https://sites.google.com/a/education.ne.gov/power-of-role-models/>
Set 9 in almost complete. The set will feature 5 female behavioral health professionals. Set will be available at the next meeting/

SEPA PROGRAM NEWS: South Sioux City Ambassador Conference 2017 was organized by SEPA and BHECN . This can be viewed now on YouTube—here is the link :

<https://youtu.be/RDVW5W6WLwU>

Historic trauma, contemporary tribal issues and the opportunity to create positive change were the focus of the daylong conference.



National Cancer Institute-Sponsored Youth Enjoy Science Research (YES) Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

The University of Nebraska Medical Center has provided health-related educational programs for many Native American youth on reservations in the Midwest. Our programs have proven to be popular and have significantly impacted many students. To further stimulate appreciation of the health sciences and to interest students in medical research-related careers, we have expanded this outreach to include a National Cancer Institute-supported Youth Enjoy Science Research (YES) Program, which is open to students from throughout the U.S. In this program, undergraduate college students with Native American ancestry can participate in cancer research in laboratories at the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center. These experiences include summer research projects, or (for Omaha residents) working on research projects that can be accomplished part-time during the school year is also an option. High school students in the Omaha region can also participate in this research education program. All students receive payment for their participation, and, for some undergraduate students, financial support for housing, food, and travel to Omaha may be available in the summer.

For additional information, please contact:
Ms. Misty S. Pocwierz-Gaines
Eppley Institute for Research in Cancer & Allied Diseases
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198
Email: misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu

Role Model Posters

The Role Model Poster Project features Native Americans in many health and science professions. Each poster includes the name, photograph, and tribal affiliation of the person featured. Additional information for teachers include: education, benefits, motivation, special job skills, and words of wisdom. These posters proved to be a great source of inspiration and motivation to the students and teachers. There are currently seven sets of posters and each set features five tribal members. Set # 8 features: a dental assistant, pharmacy technician, biologist, nurse practitioner, and health scientist.

John B. Herrington



Chickasaw
Retired Naval Aviator and Astronaut
Houston, Texas

Education

- High School Diploma from Perry High School, Perry, Texas
- B.S. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
- M.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California

Benefits

- "I used to want to be a pilot, but the way aviation never felt right."
- "I got the warmth from a perspective that the people loved."
- "I get to share the experience with tens of thousands of people around the world."

Special Job Skills

- The ability to think analytically and problem solve.
- Skills from my background of applied mathematics and engineering.
- When combined with my skills as a Naval Aviator and test pilot, I had the right mix of academic and operational experience to be successful as an astronaut.

Words of Wisdom

"Believe in yourself and be confident you can achieve any goal that you wish to accomplish. Also, trust the people who believe in you when they recognize you have potential. I measure my success by the feeling of satisfaction I get from doing a good job. The harder the job, the greater the feeling of satisfaction!"