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ACCELERATING ACCESS

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ROLE MODEL — SEE BACK PAGE

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2018 SEPA PROGRAMS

Dr. Maurice Godfrey, Professor and SEPA Program Director

Happy New Year! We are about to start the fourth year of our third SEPA and it is with great pleasure that I welcome Liliana Bronner as a Principal Investigator to this program. Liliana has been a part of SEPA from the very beginning. Everyone knows her invaluable contributions to all of our work to increase Native participation in health and science education from Kindergarten to graduate and professional school. Her dedication to this work is unmatched. We are about a year away from submitting our fourth SEPA proposal. It is not too early to get your thoughts about what new things we should try to continue and expand our partnerships and successes.

We recently learned that our partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium has been funded by NIH for an additional five years. Therefore, we will be working closely with tribal colleges across the country. Our YES program for cancer related education and prevention programs is going strong. We continue to look for ways to engage with your students and teachers to bring new approaches to health and science education in all of our partner schools and communities.

Your thoughts and ideas are always welcome.

Learn more about our programs:

Visit our website -

www.unmc.edu/sepa

Newsletter Committee

Shrawan (Sam) Kumar
Maurice Godfrey
Kim Soper
Liliana Bronner

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKSHOP 2018

SEPA Behavioral Health Day for college students and high school juniors and seniors : 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. Mental illness affects millions of youth across America, with 1 out of 5 children and adolescents suffering from some form of mental illness. Examples include stress, anxiety, bullying, family problems, depression, a learning disability, and alcohol and substance abuse. **Therefore, we planned behavioral health workshop which was held on Tuesday, Oct 30, 2018 at Delta Hotel, South Sioux City, NE. Pictures: More than 50 students participated from 7 different schools**—the details are described in the next page:





SEPA Behavioral Health Workshop-Oct.30, 2018



Behavioral health is a huge concern amongst youth. We know that without some form of intervention, youth with untreated mental health issues are more likely to experience academic failure, become involved with the criminal justice system, abuse substances, or fall victim to suicide. In fact, **suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for youth ages 15-24**, according to the [National Institute of Mental Health](#). Early identification and treatment for mental illness can prevent these negative outcomes. Unfortunately, many children and youth do not receive the help they need. Among the 2.2 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 who reported a major depressive episode in the past year, **nearly 60% did not receive any treatment**. Most go untreated because they either cannot afford care, lack access, do not know anyone they can turn to for help, or are too embarrassed and ashamed to even ask for help. Clearly, education and awareness in preventive mental health services could give these young people a chance for a better and healthy future. **Considering the above facts, SEPA organized behavioral health workshop to Native American students from Nebraska and South Dakota.** In total 7 schools from Nebraska and South Dakota participated in this program—held at Delta Hotel, South Sioux city, Nebraska on October 30, 2018. As seen in the pictures, more than 50 students took part in this exciting program. Participating schools and colleges: Andes Central High School, Creighton Preparatory, Marty Indian School, Omaha South Magnet, UmoⁿHoⁿ Nation Public School, Winnebago Public School, and University of South Dakota. This unique workshop is organized for high school and college students which included table top discussions on mental health topics such as: 1. Advocating for Change 2. Anxiety, 3. Bullying/Cyber-bullying , 4. Concussion 5. Cutting/Self Harm, 6. Depression, 7. Healthy Relationships, 8. Hope for the Future: 9. Severe & Persistent Mental Illness, 10. Substance Use , 11. Suicide, 12. Talking to Someone in Crisis and 13. Trauma Informed Care.





SEPA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKSHOP held on **Oct 30, 2018** at **Delta Hotel, South Sioux City, NE**



This was a unique program designed to give first hand information about various problems related to behavioral health issues and career opportunities for high school and college students. More than 50 facilitators were directly involved in round table discussions with the students. Program started with an opening prayer and comments about importance of education in Native American communities by Mr. LaMere, Facilitator, Advocating for Change. Drs. Joe Evans and Maurice Godfrey welcomed participants on behalf of SEPA. The keynote speaker Ms. Grace Johnson (picture on the right) has talked about “Intergenerational Trauma and the Impact on Native American Communities.” A day-long workshop provided an overview of behavioral health issues and offered helpful tools to cope with such problems. Participating students met face to face with different experts and offered in-person round the table discussion and review of case studies described by Dr. Anitra Warrior, Psychologist, Morningstar Counselling. Students were extremely excited to get the opportunity to discuss the possible diagnosis and treatment options directly with experts. All the students discussed cases with serious and more moderate mental health needs, as well as substance abuse issues. The case studies discussed in the workshop included: schizophrenia; schizoaffective, bipolar, panic, obsessive compulsive, and psychotic disorders; major depression; anxiety; PTSD; eating disorders; autism; and serious emotional disturbance.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

The table top discussions were also included about different professions and career opportunity. Students picked 4 professions of their choice from the followings: 1. Administration & Management, 2. Counselors, 3. Direct Service Workforce: A place to start, 4. Licensed Alcohol & Drug Counselors, 5. Medical School & Residency, 6. Occupational Therapy, 7. Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners, 8. Psychiatrist, 9. Severe & Persistent Mental Illness, 10. Social Workers and 11. Working with Patients in Prisons and Hospitals. As seen in the various pictures, students were involved in table top discussions for 15 minutes each. This was a unique platform which provided students from 21 different schools—a wonderful opportunity to learn problems associated with behavioral health and mental illness and early exposure to think about future career opportunities.



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 day-long conference.



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/>

Role Model Poster

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.

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Words of Wisdom
We are all humans; we all experience suffering, failure, pain, fear, and sadness. In those moments remember it is ok to be vulnerable and fragile. The spirit learns through feeling and experiencing those low points in our lives because they happen to be the greatest lessons for us to experience in order to nurture the spirit within us to evolve, grow, and learn.

SEPA SCIENCE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AWARD
Supported by the National Institutes of Health

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ANNOUNCEMENTS/ UPCOMING EVENTS/NEWS

1. BOARD MEETING:

Marina Inn (Delta Hotel)
in South Sioux City, NE
January 25, 2019

Time: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

2. WAKANY É JA: A Symposium on
American Indian Behavioral Health
April 23 and 24, 2019.

Email us with your questions at
sepa@unmc.edu