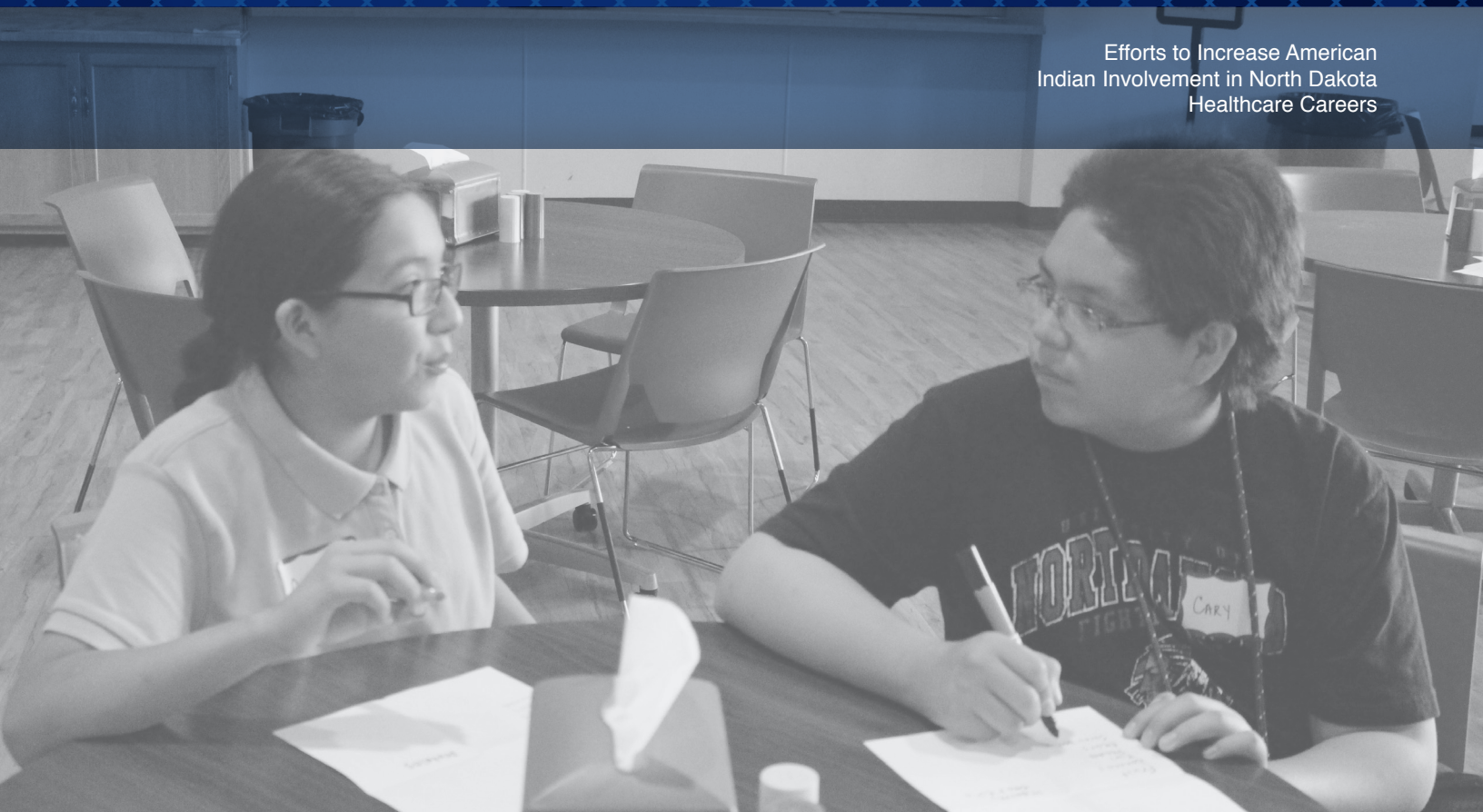


Building, Filling and Proving the Nursing Pipeline

Next Steps HPOG Project: Year 3

Efforts to Increase American
Indian Involvement in North Dakota
Healthcare Careers



NDSU SCHOOL
OF NURSING



CANKDESKA CIKANA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Spirit Lake Dakota Nation



Sustaining Career Pathways for American Indian Health Professionals in North Dakota Project

From October 2013 to September 2014, the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Department of Nursing and Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) underwent the third year of a four-year grant through the University Partnership Research Grants for Health Professional Opportunity Grants (HPOG). This effort was launched to identify the disparity of American Indians in healthcare careers throughout North Dakota and initiate the “Sustaining Career Pathways for American Indian Health Professionals in North Dakota: Building Apprenticeship and Workforce Options with the Next Steps HPOG Project.”

During this period, the Next Steps HPOG project continued to gain traction, making noticeable progress since the program's inception in 2011, toward achieving the following two objectives:

Objective I: Engage state nursing educators and employers in an annual conference focusing on nursing education and employment for American Indian students.

Objective II: Encourage interest in healthcare careers through mentoring courses and programs for American Indian students.

The following information outlines the activities carried out during the third year, designed to further address the underrepresentation of American Indians in North Dakota healthcare careers.

Pathways to Nursing: Sharing Our Journeys Conference

As part of the program's first stated objective, the Third Annual Pathways to Nursing: Sharing Our Journeys Conference was held on May 20-21, 2014, at the Ramada® Bismarck Hotel in Bismarck, North Dakota. Similar to the previous two years, the purpose of this conference was to develop strategies for the recruitment and retention of American Indian students into the nursing profession in North Dakota.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- *Explore the historical context of tribal colleges in North Dakota.*
- *Discuss strategies for mentoring American Indian college students.*
- *Share individual and unique personal and professional pathways.*
- *Discuss recommendations for possible nursing contributions to policy, research, administration, education, advanced practice, public health, Public Health Service Commission Corps, and other practice settings.*
- *Facilitate networking opportunities for American Indian students, nurse educators and employers.*
- *Discuss the past, present and future needs of American Indian nurses related to employment and education.*

The keynote speaker for the conference was Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN, from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Her topic was the journey of a nurse in healthcare policy. Other speakers included Lillian Tom-Orme, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN; Research Assistant Professor, University of Utah Research Center; Sandy Littlejohn, MS, RN, Executive Director of Hospital Operations, Gunderson Lutheran Medical Center; and David M. Gipp, PhD, Chancellor of the United Tribes Technical College (UTTC).

In addition to the speaker presentations, the conference featured discussion panels, cultural learning experiences and opportunities to participate in a research project.

To recruit participants for the conference, postcards and e-mail invitations were sent to hundreds of potential candidates, including employers, nursing program administrators, faculty and students. A

series of follow-up reminders were sent as well. The conference was also advertised on the NDSU Department of Nursing website and the College of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Allied Science Facebook page. Additionally, a media consultant from the UTTC developed an announcement for area newspapers. As a result of these promotional efforts, 51 people attended the first day of the conference, and 46 people attended the second day.

At the end of each day, participants were asked to complete evaluations, in which each objective and itinerary event was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest level of satisfaction. Most ratings ranged between 3 to 5, with the highest percentage of ratings being 5. Interestingly, the majority of respondents expressed a willingness to pay a registration fee as high as \$200 to attend the conference because they felt it was important, needed and informative. Many participants also stated that the conference was valuable from a networking perspective.

Recruitment and Retention of American Indians Into Nursing Video

During the second year of the HPOG grant, development of a new video about the recruitment and retention of American Indians into nursing careers began. The video tells the story of many American Indian nurses and student nurses who overcame obstacles to complete nursing school and achieve healthcare careers. It also provides encouragement for others faced with similar challenges.

A draft of this video was initially shown during the “Past, Present and Future of American Indian Nursing in North Dakota” conference in June, 2013. After viewing the video, participants were asked to provide feedback, and their responses were used to help improve the video, which is currently being edited to its final version.

Additionally, feedback on the video has suggested the need for more in-depth interviews to fully tell the stories of American Indian nurses, their pathways into nursing and their experiences in the field. As a result, the team is planning to develop a documentary titled, “Voices of North Dakota American Indian Nurses.”

Recruitment and Retention of American Indians into Nursing Research Project

Preliminary data analysis and coding has been completed on a research project including the Next Steps mentors, Next Steps students, recruitment and retention program staff, and nurses. The coding is currently being reviewed for accuracy and manuscripts are being developed.



BUILDING THE PIPELINE

Driving Interest in Healthcare Careers and Increasing Access to Nursing Education

The second stated objective of the program is to encourage interest in healthcare careers for American Indian students through mentoring courses and programs. The first logical step to achieving this objective is to provide better resources and support for American Indian youth. Prior to the HPOG grant, some programs existed in North Dakota to increase the overall awareness of healthcare careers among the American Indian population, but no ongoing efforts had been specifically geared toward the youth. As a result, the HPOG program initiated a series of ongoing educational opportunities to target American Indian youth.

Health Careers 4 U (HC4U) Summer Program

CCCC, in partnership with NDSU nursing professionals and medical students, residents and faculty from both the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, held its “Health Careers 4 U,” or HC4U, summer program for 11- to 14-year-olds in July 2014. This year’s program was focused on disabilities and health careers. Program goals included:

- Teach participants about becoming a doctor, nurse, dietitian, physical therapist, pharmacist or other health providers.
- Provide students an opportunity to interact with doctors, nurses, college students and faculty members.
- Involve students in a variety of hands-on activities to learn about healthy living.

Public service announcements, website and Facebook posts, brochures, and flyers were used to promote the four-day summer program. Forty students registered for HC4U, and 38 completed the program, resulting in significantly higher participation numbers than the 2013 program.

Evaluations were given at the end of each day, and results were consistent across all four days. Participants gave the staff high rankings for likeability. They also reported a high level of learning about public service announcements, eating healthy, emergency services and other health careers. Exercise and game playing were ranked as favorite activities, and very few students could think of suggestions for improving the program. Overall, the personal experience was highly rated for learning, comfort, interest and enjoyment.



Health Careers Edventures

A new program implemented in year three of the Next Steps HPOG project was Health Careers Edventures (HCE). Held on July 14-18, 2014, this program was offered to 15- to 20-year-old American Indian students on Spirit Lake Nation. The program was designed to provide youth with continuing opportunities to explore careers in healthcare. The program taught participants about traditional healing, the depth and



breadth of health careers, education paths for achieving health careers at North Dakota State University and the University of North Dakota, and other learning experiences.

A total of 10 students participated in HCE with a wide array of career interests, many of which were healthcare related. They participated in a variety of activities, including presentations, hands-on learning experiences and tours of universities and healthcare facilities.

Program evaluations showed HCE to be an overwhelming success. Participants became highly involved throughout the program, and some suggested extending the program's length for a more in-depth learning experience. They also expressed a high interest in getting more students to register for the program. Many planned to tell others about the program, and their evaluations reflected a need to market the program better to inform more students about the valuable opportunity.

Introduction to Community & Public Health Course

In July 2014, CCCC offered course HPER 172, Introduction to Community and Public Health. It featured a wide variety of presentation topics in regard to public health and health careers. Participation was up significantly from previous years with 21 students enrolled in the class in 2014.

The majority of the course content was developed and presented by two Mount Sinai (MS) medical students and two Columbia University (CU) Masters in Public Health students. They were assisted by two MS faculty and one NDSU Department of Nursing faculty member.

Additionally, HPER 172 featured a special topic presentation via live-stream webinar, as well as multiple guest speakers. Many of the speakers were American Indians who shared their stories about achieving health-related careers. These stories included experiences while in college and advice related to leaving their families and the tribal nation.

Pre and post evaluations were conducted to test participants' knowledge of health issues affecting American Indians and

to gauge their interest in pursuing healthcare careers. The students also rated the course overall with results showing that the course positively impacted their opinions on healthcare as a profession.

Photo Voice Project

CCCC and NDSU Department of Nursing initiated the photo voice project to creatively examine views of healthy environmental factors, while furthering the effort to increase healthcare career recruitment.

In year three of the Next Steps HPOG project, 22 students from CCCC, MS and

CU participated in the Photovoice project. They were shown a presentation on photovoice research, how to take pictures, and then given a digital camera to use. The students had one week to take three to five photos of environmental surroundings that either promoted or challenged good health practices.

After submitting photos, the students were randomly put into four focus groups, and a facilitator asked each participant five questions

about each picture. Once all participants discussed their individual photos, the facilitator asked three more questions of the whole group.

Overall, the students highly recommended this project. When the analysis is complete, the students will be invited back for a presentation and asked to provide input on the final project.

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FILLING THE PIPELINE

Recruiting/Retaining American Indian Students into Healthcare Programs

A simultaneous effort with driving better understanding and consideration of healthcare careers is to actively recruit those interested into appropriate programs. Furthermore, given the challenges of such programs, an additional, yet equally important effort is to provide support to help retain students in these programs until completion.

Next Steps Project

The Next Steps project uses a mentoring/career pathway model to help American Indians go to school to achieve careers in healthcare. It essentially acts as a career ladder into health professions in tribal communities. Those interested in such careers can receive a wide range of educational support services through Next Steps. This includes full tuition, mentoring services, childcare assistance and other forms of support.



(LPN), registered nurse (RN), licensed registered dietitian (LRD), licensed social worker (LSW) and other related health professions.

Recruitment/Retention of American Indians into Nursing (RAIN) Program

In collaboration with the Next Steps grant, RAIN is a program run by partner University of North Dakota (UND) that offers further assistance to those pursuing nursing specific degrees. Support offered by RAIN includes mentoring and academic advisement, tutoring, scholarship and financial aid advisement, and other student services.

Results from the RAIN program have been very encouraging. Since the 1990s, more than 178 RAIN program American Indian nurses have graduated with their Bachelor's in Nursing and 50 American Indian nurses with their Master of Science graduate degree. Further, five American Indian graduates from UND have continued their education and earned doctoral degrees in Nursing. Approximately 79 percent of Registered Nurses in North Dakota who identify themselves as American Indian are RAIN program graduates.

To be eligible for the Next Steps project, participants must meet the following criteria:

- Interested in learning to provide care for elders and people with disabilities.
- Potentially interested in having a career as a health professional in the future.
- Willing to work closely with a mentor to finish and maintain educational goals.
- Completed drug screening and background check.
- Financial need (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] recipient or low income).
- Enrolled in a Federally Recognized Tribe.

Healthcare career education opportunities available through Next Steps include quality service provider (QSP), certified nursing assistant (CNA), certified medical assistant (CMA), licensed practical nurse



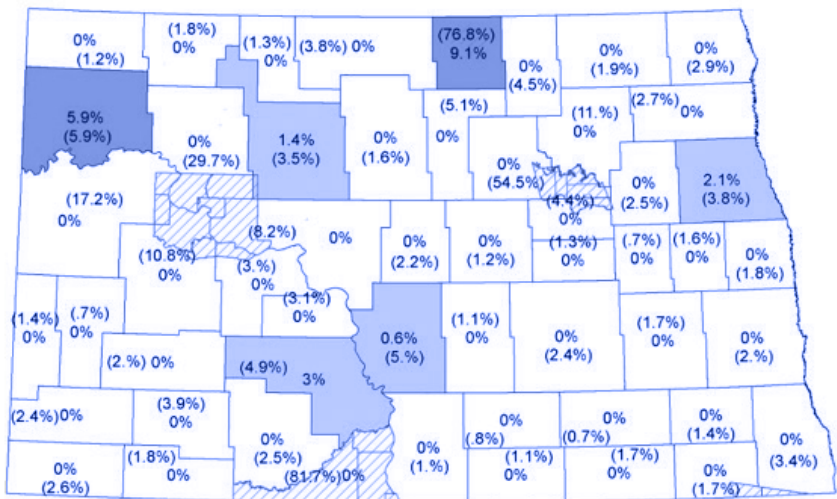
CONTINUED NORTH DAKOTA NURSING DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES

During the first year of the HPOG grant, NDSU Department of Nursing and North Dakota Center for Nursing conducted a study that identified an underrepresentation of American Indian nurses in North Dakota. The same study was conducted again in the second and third years, and will be repeated in the fourth year to identify trends over time, determine areas of the state with the most need for assistance, and measure the impact of the programs put into place to address the underrepresentation of American Indian Nurses in North Dakota.

The maps generated by this study highlight each of the 53 counties in North Dakota, and identify the total number of nurses compared with the total number of American Indian nurses per county. Further maps were generated to show the percentage of American Indian nurses compared with the overall county American Indian population, and then a step further to identify American Indian nurses by nursing specialty. A few of the maps are included on this and the following page.

2014 American Indian APRNs as Compared with Total American Indian Population

Total APRNs = 675 American Indian APRNs = 7

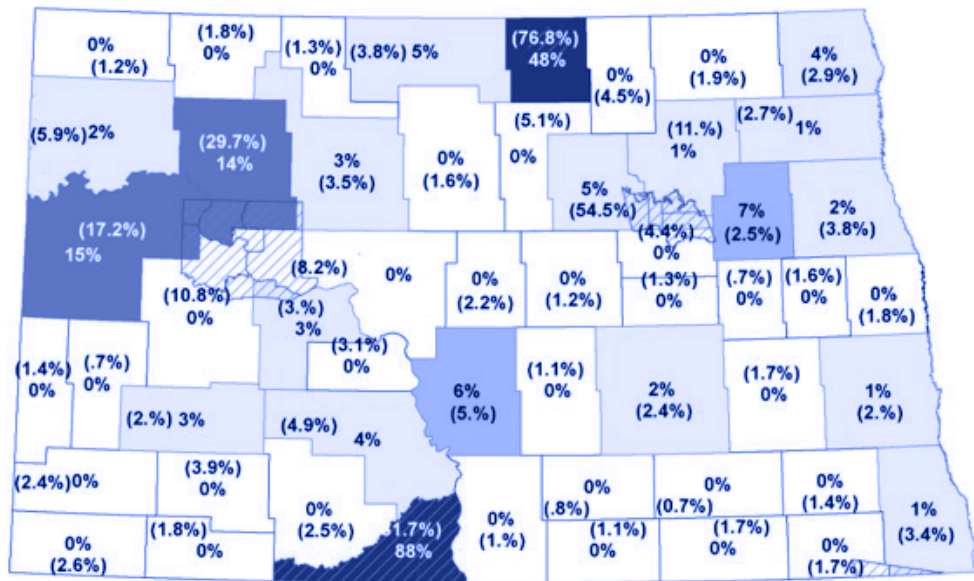


*Number in parentheses indicates the percentage of the county population that is American Indian



2014 American Indian LPNs as Compared with Total American Indian Population

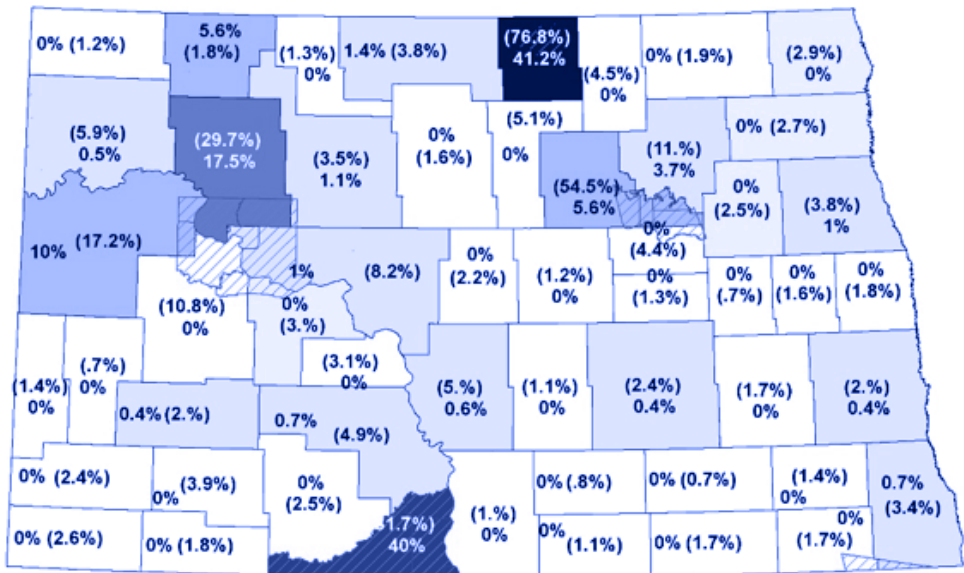
Total LPNs = 3,505 American Indian LPNs = 100



*Number in parentheses indicates the percentage of the county population that is American Indian

2014 American Indian RNs as Compared with Total American Indian Population

Total RNs = 9,281 American Indian RNs = 116



*Number in parentheses indicates the percentage of the county population that is American Indian

CONCLUSION

Year three of the Sustaining Career Pathways for American Indian Health Professionals in North Dakota Project ended on a high note, as new programs were put into place and some of the current programs experienced an increased rate of success. The project looks forward to an even more successful year four, the final grant year.

Thank You Project Partners!

Cankdeska Cikana Community College • Next Steps • RAIN
Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University • Mount Sinai School of Medicine
NDSU Environmental and Conservation Sciences
North Dakota Center for Nursing • NDSU Department of Nursing

