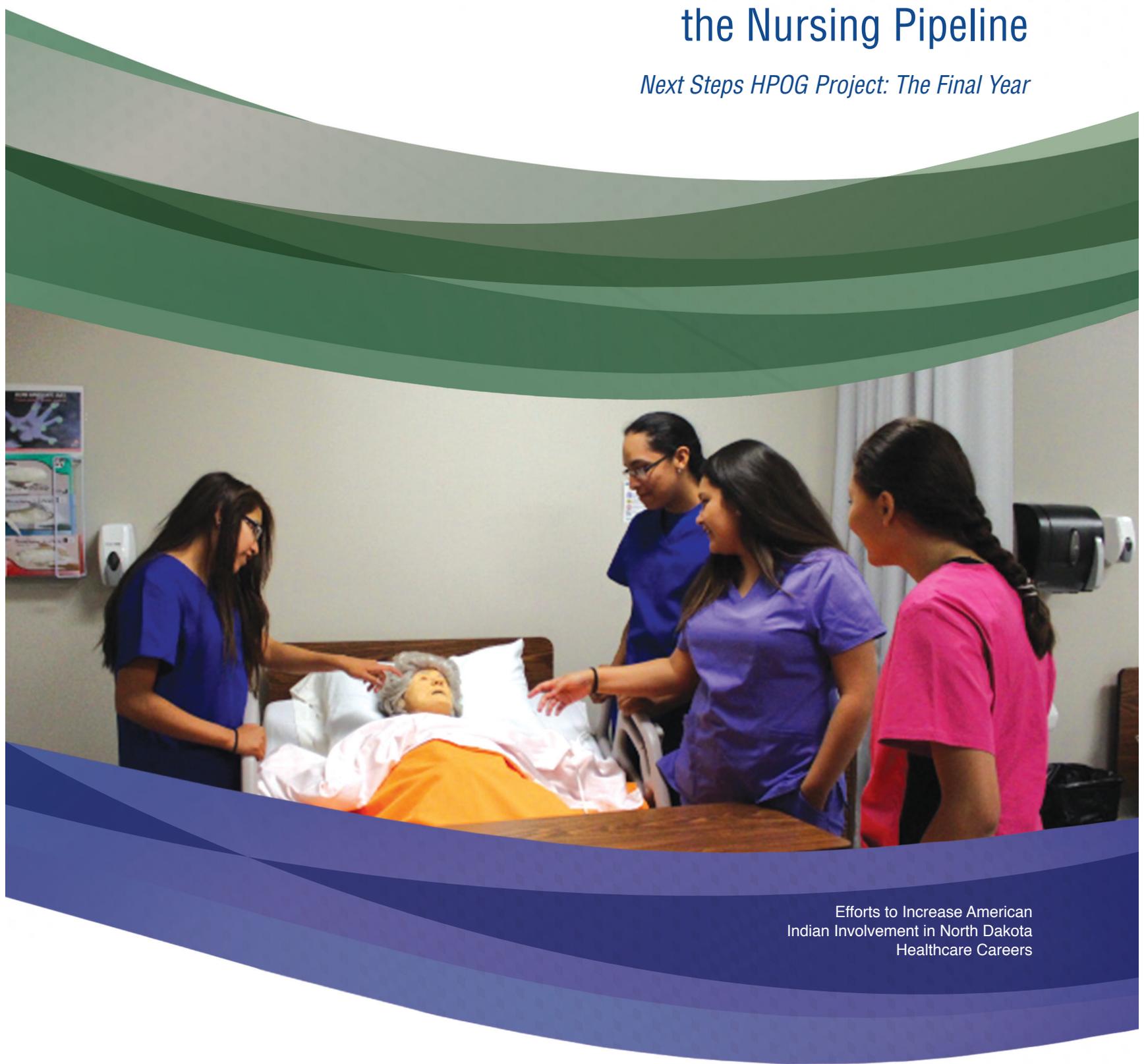


Building, Filling and Proving the Nursing Pipeline

Next Steps HPOG Project: The Final Year



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

During its final year, the North Dakota State University School of Nursing (NDSU SON) and Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) underwent the culmination of a four-year grant through the University Partnership Research Grants for Health Professional Opportunity Grants (UP HPOG). This collaborative grant 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 UP HPOG project continued to gain traction, making noticeable progress since the program’s inception in 2011 toward achieving the following 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 final year, designed to further address the underrepresentation of American Indians in North Dakota healthcare careers.

Encompassing American Indian Culture in Healthcare

As part of the program's first stated objective, the fourth annual American Indian Nursing Conference: Encompassing American Indian Culture in Healthcare was held May 28-29, 2015, at the Holiday Inn hotel in Fargo, North Dakota. Similar to previous 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.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

- *Discuss strategies for holistic health services for American Indians, including physical health and nutrition, mental health and spirituality.*
- *Understand the Tribal Health Professions Opportunity Grant (HPOG) objectives and statistics used to measure the accomplishments and challenges that align with the recruitment and retention of American Indian students into health careers.*
- *Discuss NDSU's commitment to health and education of American Indian students and the cultures and traditions of the American Indian people in North Dakota.*
- *Recognize the challenges that arise when differences in culture, values, beliefs and experiences exist between American Indian patients and healthcare providers.*
- *Discuss interactions with American Indian elders and how their behaviors and cultural background need special attention when it comes to healthcare interactions.*
- *Discuss how Community Health Workers improve the health of American Indians on Fort Yates Tribal Nation.*
- *Facilitate networking opportunities for students, educators, healthcare workers and employers.*

The keynote speaker for the conference was Margaret Moss, PhD, JD, RN, FAAN, Associate Professor and Coordinating-Nursing Management, Policy and Leadership Masters Specialty at Yale School of Nursing. Dr. Moss is an enrolled member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of North Dakota (Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation) and the first American Indian Nurse to hold nursing and law doctorates. She co-wrote the first book on American Indian Health and Nursing. Other speakers included Michael Meit, MA, MPH, NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis at the University of Chicago; Albert Allick, MD, Sanford Health enrolled member of Turtle Mountain; Michael Yellowbird, PhD, NDSU enrolled member of Fort Berthold and Philip Young Hong, PhD, School of Social Work at Loyola University Chicago. On the second day of the conference, President Bresciani welcomed the audience and discussed NDSU's collaboration and commitment with North Dakota's Tribal Nations.

President Bresciani and NDSU was presented a star quilt to honor this commitment and support.

In addition to the speaker presentations, the conference featured discussion panels, cultural learning experiences and opportunities. The final segments of the American Indian Nursing Recruitment and Retention videos that were developed in 2014 as part of the HPOG grant were also shown, and discussion was encouraged.

To recruit participants for the conference, Save-the-Date e-mail 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 SON website and the College of Health Professions Facebook page. Additionally, a media consultant from

the United Tribes Technical College UTTC developed an announcement for area newspapers. As a result of these promotional efforts, 55 people attended the first day of the conference, and 53 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 3-5, and the average rating for meeting the objectives was very high, with expertise rating slightly higher than teaching effectiveness. Overall, words like “wonderful”, “excellent” and “awesome” were used to describe the conference. Attendees commented that they were always learning something new, while meeting new people and gaining insights.

Many attendees believed this conference needs to grow to a wider audience. Specific suggestions included encouraging more people to attend including nursing students, Indian Health Service nurses,

Video and Documentary to Recruit and Retain American Indian Nurses

During the second year of the HPOG grant, development began on a video about the recruitment and retention of American Indians into nursing careers. The video tells the story of many American Indian nurses and student nurses who overcame obstacles to complete nursing school and achieve healthcare careers.

During a draft viewing, participants provided feedback and suggested more in-depth interviews to fully tell the story of American Indian nurses. This culminated in a new documentary called “The Essence of Healing: Journey of American Indian Nurses.” A premier hosted April 30, 2016 by UTTC at the North Dakota Heritage Center in Bismarck included a showing of the film to more than 200 attendants, along with honoring the participants in the film.

Evaluations after the premier showed that 98 percent of respondents rated the film, content presented and overall presentation, with four out of five, or higher. These results were overwhelmingly positive, with comments ranging from “Wonderfully done!” to “This was a very beautiful documentary and very encouraging for anyone thinking of going into nursing.” Twenty-eight percent of respondents specifically mentioned that it should be used as an educational tool in some way.

Driving Interest in Healthcare Careers and Increasing Access to Nursing Education

The second main objective of the program is to encourage healthcare careers for American Indian students. The first logical step to this end is to provide better resources and support for American Indian youth. Prior to the HPOG grant, CCCC collaborated with Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health to address American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN)



BUILDING THE PIPELINE

health disparities through educational interventions designed to increase AIAN health professional capacity. As a UP HPOG partner, NDSU SON provided multiple educational resources and opportunities for the American Indian students while evaluating the educational outcomes.



To foster interest and offer education for prospective nursing students, NDSU SON and Kat Communications designed a campus e-course based on the documentary “Essence of Healing: Journey of American Indian Nurses.” The goal of the course is to compel middle- and high-school students to become excited about nursing and to learn about nursing careers.

Targeted for students in 6th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade, the online course is broken into eight modules comprised of educational videos, teacher-led and web-based games, journal entries, and forum questions that allow students to reflect on the given module. Module topics range from nursing and native culture, to career pathways and advice for future students.

Health Careers 4 U (HC4U) Summer Program

CCCC faculty and staff, in partnership with NDSU SON faculty 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 from June 29 to July 2, 2015. This year’s program offered exposure to

various health careers and topics emphasizing nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Program goals included:

- Teach participants how to become a doctor, nurse, dietitian, physical therapist, pharmacist or other health provider.
- 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.

Radio announcements, website and Facebook posts, brochures and flyers were used to promote the program. Those efforts were wildly successful, to the point where event organizers had to turn students away. Forty-eight students registered for HC4U, and 46 completed the program – a record turnout.

Evaluations were given at the end of each day. Results were consistent across all four days and were overwhelmingly positive. 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, nine out of 10 students highly enjoyed the activities and would recommend them to friends. And a wide majority said they’d like to come back the next year.

Health Careers Edventures

Following its implementation in 2014, the Health Careers Edventures (HCE) Program was held July 6-17, 2015 and offered to 15- to 20-year-old American Indian students on Spirit Lake Nation. Its focus was to teach participants about traditional healing, the depth and breadth of health careers, education paths for health careers at CCCC, University



of Mary, United Tribes Technical College, Lake Region State College, and University of North Dakota, and NDSU, and other learning experiences such as campus life as college students.



A total of eight students participated the first week and seven the second week. The students showed a wide array of career interests, many of which were healthcare related. They participated in a variety of activities, including hands-on learning experiences and tours of universities and healthcare facilities.

Program evaluations showed HCE to once again be overwhelmingly successful. Participants became involved throughout the program, showing high interest in touring the colleges, and excitement during hands-on experience with medical mannequins. Interacting with their culture in an educational setting was well received, such as working with Dr. Yellowbird, NDSU and visiting the multicultural center. Their evaluations reflected a need to possibly scale back the number of activities while adding more structure and organization to heighten the level of educational opportunities.

Introduction to Community & Public Health Course

In June 2015, CCCC once again offered course HPER 172, Introduction into Community and Public Health. It

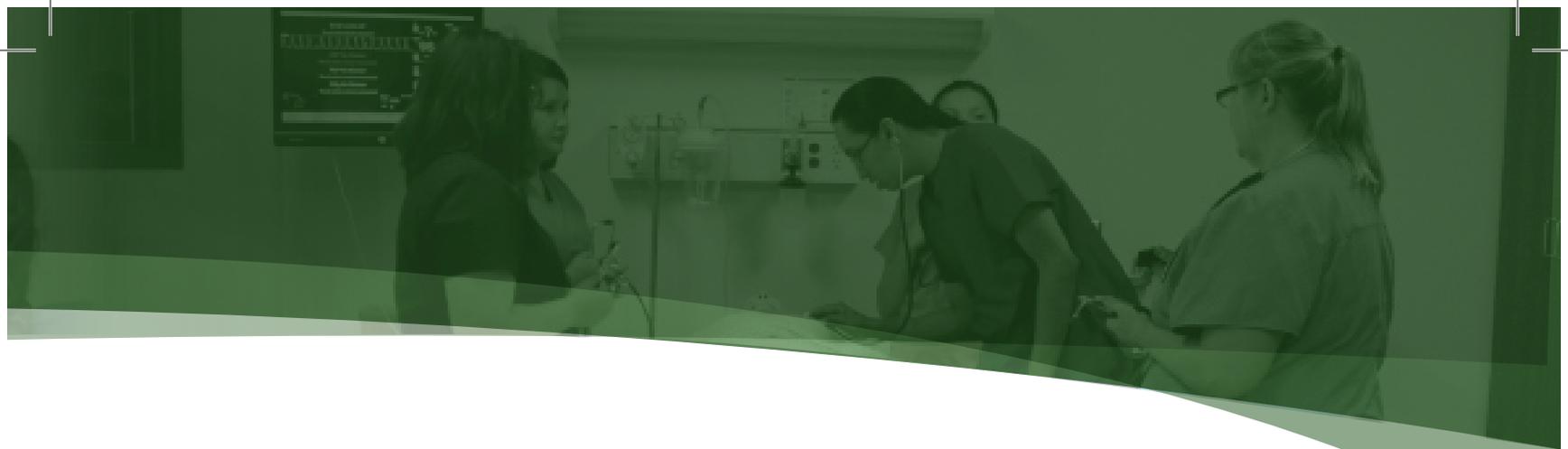
featured a wide variety of presentation topics in regards to public health and health careers. The majority of the course content was developed and presented by Mount Sinai (MS) medical students and Columbia University (CU) Masters in Public Health students. They were assisted by MS and NDSU SON faculty members. The MS and CU students also graded the CCCC students' homework and final test, and reinforced learning by having an interactive review session of the final test to correct answers.

Additionally, HPER 172 featured multiple guest speakers. Many of the speakers were American Indian professionals, who shared their stories about achieving health-related careers.

Pre- and post-evaluations were conducted to test participants' knowledge of health issues affecting American Indians and gauge their interest in pursuing healthcare careers. The students rated the course overall, the results of which showed that it positively impacted their opinions on healthcare as a profession.



Many environmental issues persist on Tribal lands despite many efforts to combat them (Charleston & Sullivan, 2016). Therefore, CCCC and NDSU SON initiated the photovoice project to creatively



examine the HPER 172 students' views of healthy environmental factors, while furthering the effort to apply public health concepts.

In the third year of the Next Steps HPOG project, 19 students from CCCC participated in the project. They were shown a presentation describing the project, given a demonstration on how to take pictures with digital cameras and then provided 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 three to five questions about each picture. Once all participants discussed their individual photos, the facilitator asked three more questions for the whole group.

Through photovoice, they boosted awareness of environmental factors, and applied concepts learned in the community and public health course.

Overall, the students highly recommended this project. Nineteen selected pictures along with unidentified student quotes were displayed in the 2015 CCCC Fall People's Choice Art Show on October 20-22nd. The Art Show is open to the public.

In the fourth year of the UP HPOG project, eight students from CCCC participated in a similar project. A similar protocol was used in which the students were taught the purpose of the project and participated in focus groups to describe their pictures. Selected pictures and student quotes will be displayed at the 2016 CCCC Fall People's Choice Art Show.



Education and Employment Hope (Self-Reliance) Assessment of High School Juniors and Seniors on ND American Indian Reservations

In late 2015, high schools located within or near North Dakota American Indian nations were invited to participate in a survey to assess students' hope for future education and employment. This study was conducted after permission was granted from 12 school principals and approval from NDSU, Tribal Institutional Review Boards including Spirit Lake Tribal Resolution A05-12-087.

The purpose of this study was to assess American Indian 11th and 12th grade high school students' hope for obtaining their goals in higher education and employment.

A total of 511 students reported usable data for the survey. Data has been analyzed and individual reports are in preparation for each participating high school.

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.

Cankdeska Cikana Community College Next Steps Project

The Next Steps project uses a career pathway model to help American Indians go to school for careers in healthcare. The career pathway model 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.

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.
- Interested in becoming a QSP or Certified Nursing Assistant in nursing homes or in community settings.
- Potentially interested in having a career as a healthcare professional in the future.
- Willing to work closely with a mentor to finish and maintain training goals.
- Completed drug screening and background check.
- Financial need (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] recipient of low income).
- Available for three full weeks of training.

Healthcare career education opportunities available through Next Steps include quality service provider (QSP), certified nursing assistant (CNA), certified medical assistant (CMA), licensed practical nurse (LPN), registered nurse (RN), licensed registered dietician (LRD), licensed social worker (LSW) and other related health professions.

The overall five-year Next Steps Program outcomes include a total of 269 students enrolled in health occupations with 216 (80%) completing one healthcare training. Among students who completed and exited the Next Steps Program, 191 (71%) were employed by their completion of the program. Note the occupational statistics listed below:

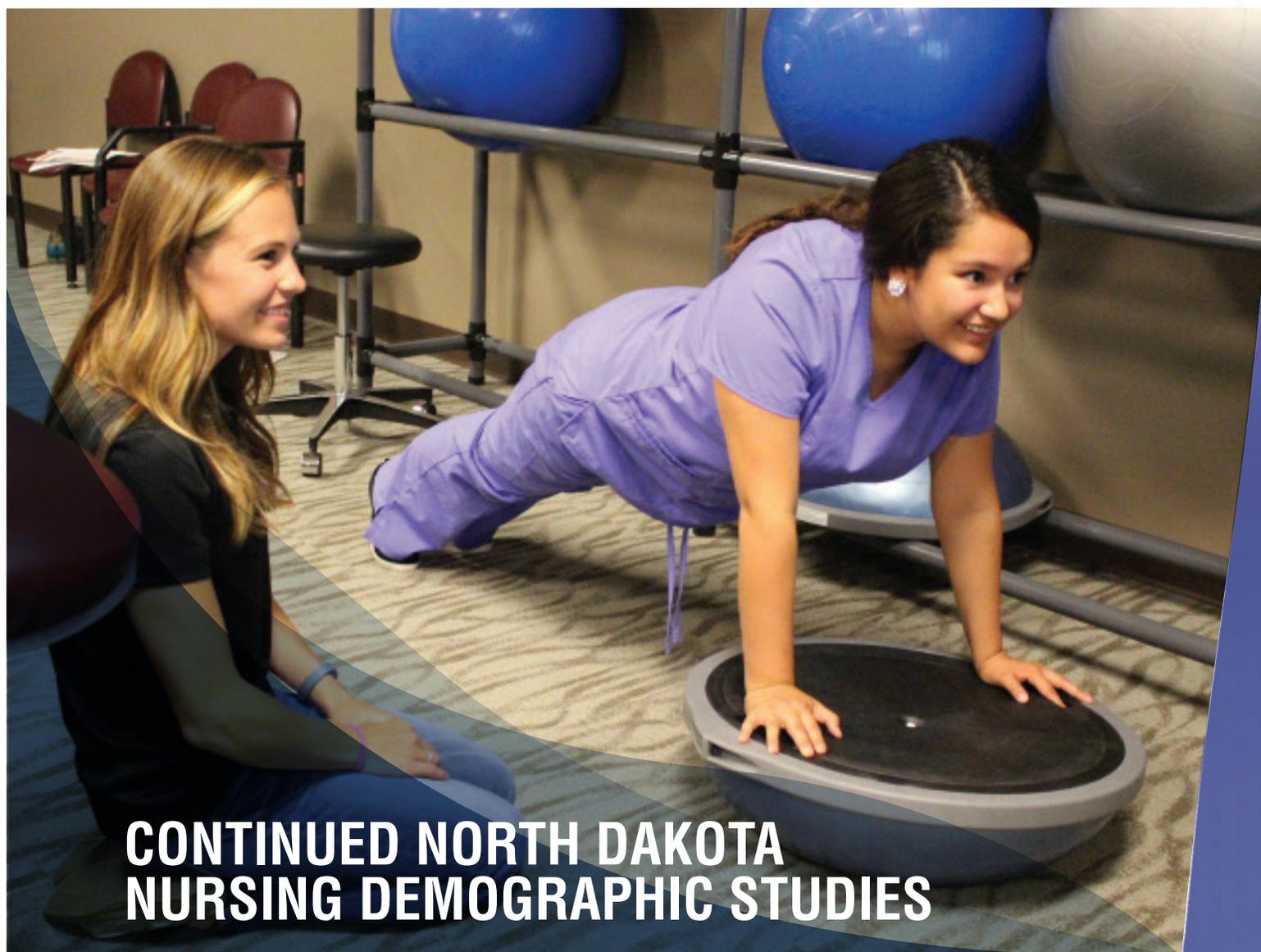
- **Registered Nurse:** 39 enrolled, 28 completed, 22 employed.
- **Licensed Practical Nurse:** 69 enrolled, 65 completed, 64 employed.
- **Social Work:** 15 enrolled, 11 completed, 9 were employed.
- **Dietician:** 15 enrolled, 12 completed, 2 were employed.
- **CNA:** 121 enrolled, 93 completed, 87 employed.
- **HIT:** 4 enrolled, 2 completed, 2 employed.
- **CMA:** 5 enrolled, 4 completed, 2 employed.
- **EMT:** 1 enrolled, 1 completed, 1 employed.
- **Other Healthcare Occupations:** 2 employed.

Next Steps Program is an innovative model that is making a significant impact on the rural health delivery system in North Dakota, Native American populations and healthcare agencies across the state and on or near North Dakota Tribal Nations by increasing the number of healthcare professions.

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

In collaboration with the Next Steps grant, Recruitment/Retention of American Indians into Nursing (RAIN) is a program run by the University of North Dakota (UND) which 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 230 RAIN program participants have earned nursing degrees. Also, of the American Indian registered nurses in North Dakota, roughly 80 percent are RAIN program graduates.



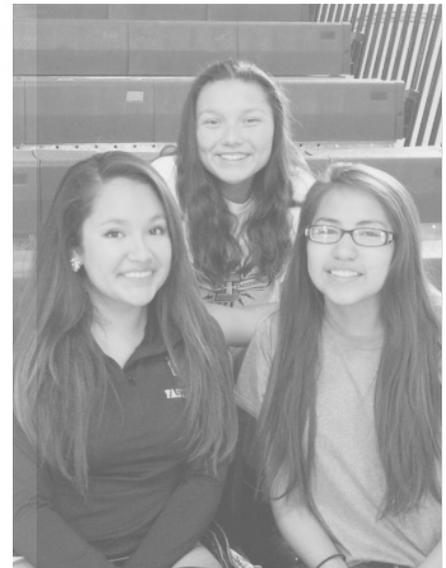
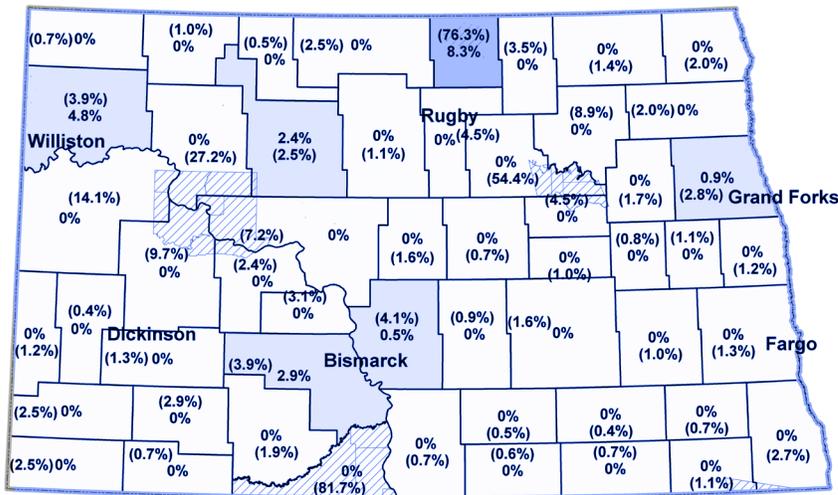
CONTINUED NORTH DAKOTA NURSING DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES

During the first year of the HPOG grant, NDSU SON 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, third and fourth years to identify trends, determine areas of the state with the most need for assistance, and measure the impact of the programs put into place to address the issue.

The maps generated by this study highlight each of the 53 counties in the state and identify the total number of nurses per county, compared with the total number of American Indian nurses for the same area. 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. Here are few map examples.

2015 American Indian APRNs as Compared with Total American Indian Population

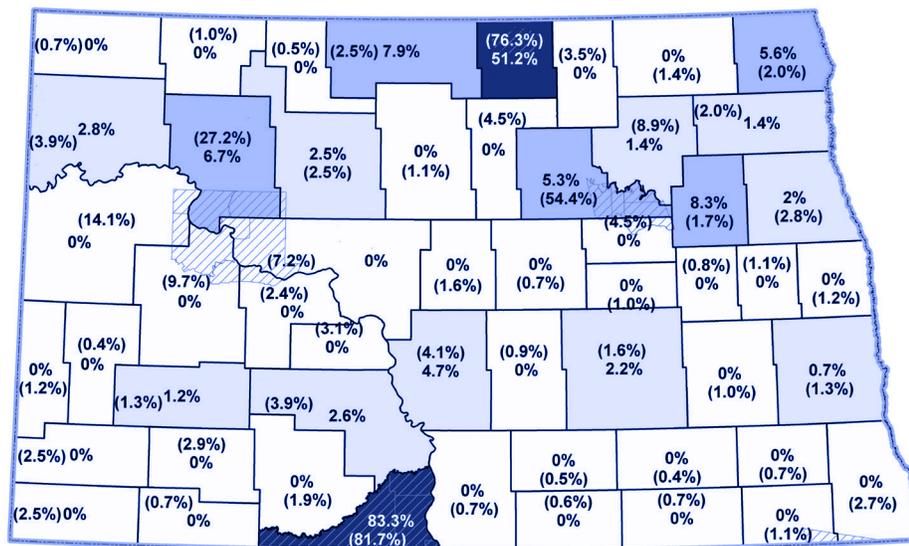
Total APRNs = 938 American Indian APRNs = 7



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

2015 American Indian LPNs as Compared with Total American Indian Population

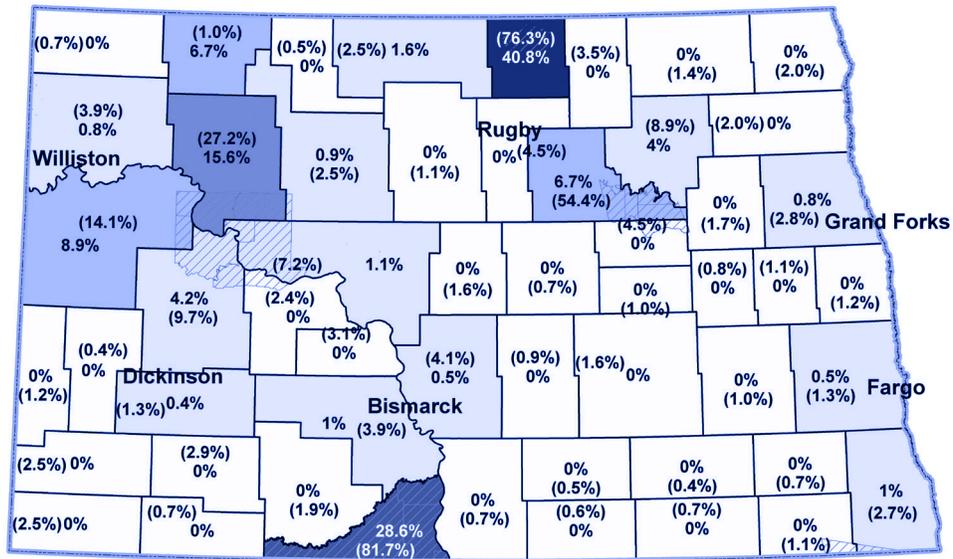
Total LPNs = 3,031 American Indian LPNs = 75



*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 = 9,964 American Indian RNs = 113



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

CONCLUSION

The final year of the Sustaining Career Pathways for American Indian Health Professionals in North Dakota Project ended positively, as the programs that were put into place grew and were continually refined for the best possible experience on prospective students in various healthcare fields.

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 SON*



*Funded by The University Partnership Research Grant for Health Professional Opportunity Grant,
90PH0019, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families.
For information contact Loretta Heuer, PhD, RN, FAAN at loretta.heuer@ndsu.edu or 701-231-8205.*