

AMERICAN INDIAN Health & Family Services

Connecting care with a culture of comprehensive wellness

MINO-BIMAADIZIWIN

"A GOOD LIFE"

July through September 2023 Newsletter



As we step into summer, I look at the six months behind us, and this quote comes to my heart....

"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave." - Dakota

As urban Natives, many of us are products of the "Indian Relocation Act." Generations of Natives flocked to urban areas in search of job opportunities designed by government strategies to continue assimilation. For many it broke tribal ties. As for my family who left North Carolina as young enthusiasts, it created new tracks. As a child growing up in Michigan but still having my attachment to my ancestral territory in Robeson County, NC---I learned how to make my own tracks, too.



As an adult, parent, partner and CEO, I hope to make changes in our wellness clinic as I continue to make tracks for our community. Some decisions and changes have been made with joy and some with discomfort. Physical reconstruction of both buildings and grounds have been a constant act of dedication and love over the past couple of years.

Our new ground was blessed, words were spoken and tracks are being made in the past, present & future as we work together to develop and improve the needs of the community for Natives all over Turtle Island. We have our new construction plans which still needs a lot of work before we break ground. Building dreams are a labor of love and can be an adventure. We continue to leave tracks of various kinds on Mother Earth every day and for qualities that no other clinic has. Our tracks are in remembrance of our ancestors and for our future stars.... "We will be known forever by the tracks we leave." - Dakota

Chasity Dial, MPA Chief Executive Officer

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Visit from Rashida Tlaib



by Kimberly Copeland



U. S. Representative, Rashida Tlaib, came to AIHFS on Friday, May 26th to deliver a "big check" and balloons, Publisher's Clearinghouse-style. She and her Chief-of-Staff Larissa Richardson took part in an agency tour, and a visit to the site of AIHFS' new facility. The funding from Rep. Tlaib will go toward making our dream of a new facility a reality!

Visit from Shri Thanedar



by Kimberly Copeland

U.S. Representative Shri Thanedar visited AIHFS on May 26th. Rep. Thanedar listened to an overview of what AIHFS offers for the community and took a tour of our current facility. He asked many great questions, and we appreciate him making the time to learn more about AIHFS.

Our Medical Team has extended hours on Wednesdays!



Call Today to Schedule Your Appointment 313-846-3718

From Dream Seeker to Doctor

by John Marcus, Tina James, Shelly Nimocks-Hinshaw

Fred Blaisdell, MD, Oneida Nation, Bear Clan.

Dr. Blaisdell has had a lifelong involvement with AIHFS and its community. His journey started as a member in our youth group program, the Dream Seekers. Fred went on to receive his Bachelor's in Biological Science and a minor in American Indian Studies and Nutritional Sciences from Cornell University. Fred was able to shadow doctors when he came back to AIHFS and then served the community as a Medical Case Manager in our clinic. He also served as a mentor to our youth program. Fred left AIHFS to pursue his dreams of becoming a family medicine doctor and went on to medical school at the University of Minnesota's Medical School where he recently graduated in May 2023. He will be practicing at Northern Memorial Health/Broadway Family Medicine in Minneapolis, MN.

Dr. Fred Blaisdell, on behalf of AIHFS, we want to say congratulations! We are all extremely proud and happy for you!



Global Ties Detroit





by John Marcus

We were honored to host a visit from Global Ties Detroit as they welcomed the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Meridian International Center delegation of health professionals from Costa Rica, Argentina, Venezuela, Dominican Republic and Peru.

Besides our location they also visited Children's Hospital of Michigan, Henry Ford Health, ACCESS, Wayne State University, Detroit Institute of Arts, the Ann Mandelbaum family, and the Claudia Nickel family!

Fight Against Hunger!

by Tina James

American Indian Health & Family Services (AIHFS) would like to thank Aquene (Friends Helping Friends). Brian Vander Ark (The Verve Pipe) and Mike Peters (Indigenous Coordinator) drove down from Grand Rapids and donated over 30 boxes of oatmeal, beans & rice. This will allow us to prepare meal kits to distribute to our clients, and also for our various programs such as Healthy Start, Men's and Women's Society and Youth Group. We are beyond grateful for our new partnership with Aquene and will continue to help with the fight against hunger and food insecurities together.





by Kimberly Copeland

On October 5th we will have a Gala celebration featuring keynote Tatanka Means. Tatanka Means is an award-winning actor and stand-up comedian from Chinle, Arizona. He represents the Navajo, Omaha, Ihanktonwan Nations and is an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Sioux Tribe in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. His most recent work includes FX's critically acclaimed series "Reservation Dogs" directed by Tazbah Chavez, Marvel's Disney+ show "Echo" directed by Sydney Freeland, and stars in the highly anticipated Martin Scorsese Western crime drama film Killers of the Flower Moon, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Jesse Plemons and Robert De Niro. Means is currently filming Kevin Costner's Western epic Horizon.

Aside from acting, Tatanka performs stand-up comedy throughout Indian Country spreading laughter and speaking to Native youth on reservations about healthy living and sobriety wellness. He currently resides in New Mexico with his wife and children. Means is the son of Gloria Grant and American Indian activist & actor, Russell Means. The topic of Means' keynote will be "Native Americans: Past, Present, and Future. From our creation as a people to fighting for our lives, we exist in a pop culture with the last of our elders. Means explores a reality of living in two worlds while preserving life and culture."

The 2023 Charity Gala aims to raise funds necessary to expand our services to more of the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population and other underserved individuals in Southeastern Michigan. Currently, 7 out of every 10 American Indians reside in urban areas, yet remain an invisible and significantly underserved population who share similar disparities with other communities of color. Our agency serves over 2,000 Urban Indians, including enrolled tribal members from over 60 different tribes. and other underserved individuals annually. We aspire to extend our services to all 50,000 Urban Native Americans and other underserved individuals residing in Detroit and Southeast Michigan, irrespective of their ethnicity,



nationality, gender, race, religion, age, or sexual orientation.

The event will take place at The Garden Theater in Detroit, and a silent auction will be held. We are actively seeking event sponsors and silent auction item donations. Event tickets will be available for purchase starting in August. Further details regarding event tickets and sponsors will be accessible on our agency website at https:// aihfs.org/charity-gala/

The Official Media Sponsor for the event is Hour Detroit, a monthly city magazine that covers the Metro Detroit area. Additional sponsors include: Arrow Strategies and Arrow Healthcare Staffing, the Skillman Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, AAA – the Auto Club Group, Dakkota Integrated Systems, Michigan State University Federal Credit Union, the Kresge Foundation, and Health Alliance Plan.

If you or your organization/business are interested in sponsoring the Gala, or if you would like to donate items for the silent auction, please contact Kimberly at (313) 580-2614 or kkleinhans@aihfs.org

Detroit Pistons Game & Visit



American Indian Health and Family Services' Healthy Start program would like to thank the Detroit Pistons for providing game tickets to our youth program. In March our Native youth group had the opportunity to experience a real live Detroit Pistons game. They were able to stand and walk on an NBA court. They were able to shoot an NBA ball into an actual NBA hoop. This was an amazing experience for them. Many of our youth come from underserved communities and have never been to an NBA game or any professional sports game for that matter. Some of our youth are at cross roads that shape their young lives. We want to ensure we can provide positive experiences for our youth and help guide them along the way.

In addition, American Indian Health and Family Services Healthy Start program would like to give a **special** thanks to Native American NBA player Marjon Beauchamp, with the Milwaukee Bucks, for meeting with our youth, taking pictures, signing autographs and providing extra tickets to ensure all youth who wanted to come to the game could. This was an amazing experience for them and we are so grateful. by Salli Wabsis



Unity Midyear Conference





by Nechelle Laferriere

Back in February we had the pleasure of accompanying 4 of our Dream Seekers to the Unity Midyear conference in Phoenix Arizona. There they came together with other Native youth to discuss the issues that plague their communities as well as the importance of participating in ceremonies and other culturally relevant programs. The youth toured Arizona State University and met a lot of youth from other tribal communities. Overall the youth bonded, laughed, and made some wonderful memories at this conference.







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AIHFS's Wellness Community will be holding a Youth Summer Program June 26th – August 24th from 10am to 3pm. Ages 5-18. For more information, email to youth@aihfs.org or call 313-846-3718.





Employee of the Month



January: Taylor Maxwell Interim Zero Suicide Program Manager



April: Stefani Garcia Office Coordinator

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Employee of the Month

May: April Slaven Medical Accounting Clerk



Missed this newsletter in your mailbox or email?



To receive the newsletters, please email John Marcus at jmarcus@aihfs.org to be added to the AIHFS email list. If you need a hard copy mailed to you, please call the front desk and give them your information to be added to the mailing list. If you change your address, please let us know. We want to keep you updated on all the events at American Indian Health and Family Services.

How to Support AIHFS!

Only with your support can AIHFS continue to try to meet the physical, spiritual, emotional and mental wellbeing needs of Native American families and other underserved populations in Southeastern Michigan. Additionally, as a 501 (c) (3), your generous support is tax-deductible.

Won't you make a donation today to help us get closer to meeting these needs?

To donate by check or money order please send payable to:

American Indian Health & Family Services P.O. Box 810, Dearborn, MI 48121-0810 To donate online: www.aihfs.org/donate/

Or, use this QR Code >>>







AIHFS 4880 Lawndale Dearborn, MI 48210

Return Service Requested



Clinic Hours:

Monday	9:00 - 5:00pm
Tuesday	9:00 - 5:00pm
Wednesday	7:30 - 7:00pm
Thursday	9:00 - 5:00pm
Friday	9:00 - 5:00pm

Clinic: 313-846-6030

Services Provided at AIHFS

Here at AIHFS we offer great care & services for your health care needs.

If there is anything we can be more helpful with, please let us know! Medical Services Women's Care Maternal Health Diabetes Health & Education Substance Abuse Counseling Behavioral Health Counseling Dream Seekers Youth Program Tobacco Cessation Native Healthy Start Insurance Enrollments Health Education & Outreach Immunizations & Flu Shots HIV/AIDS Testing & Referrals Sweat Lodge Community Garden Cooking Classes Annual Events Fitness Classes

Visit us at: www.aihfs.org