

# THE LOCAL IMPACT AWARD

THE LOCAL IMPACT AWARD  
ACKNOWLEDGES AN INDIVIDUAL  
OR ORGANIZATION WHOSE WORK  
HAS AFFECTED CHANGE OR  
IMPACTED HEALTH CARE ON THE  
LOCAL AND/OR TRIBAL LEVEL.

THIS YEAR'S WELL DESERVING  
LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS  
WILL BE CELEBRATED AT AN  
UPCOMING AREA INDIAN HEALTH  
BOARD MEETING IN THEIR AREA.

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## 2019 LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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- Alaska Area - Megan Mackiernan
- Albuquerque Area - Savannah Gene
- Albuquerque Area - Dr. Shannon Saltclah
- Billings Area - April Martin
- California Area - Ami Admire
- California Area - Norma McAdams
- Great Plains Area - Audrey Bercier, PA
- Great Plains Area - Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Youth  
Diabetes Prevention Program
- Nashville Area - Anna Van Stippen
- Navajo Area - Crownpoint CHR/Outreach Program
- Navajo Area - Sherry Begaye
- Oklahoma City Area - Nathan Billy M.Ed, LPC
- Oklahoma City Area - Randi Duncan
- Phoenix Area - Michael DuBois, DPT
- Phoenix Area - San Carlos Apache Opioid  
Stewardship Program
- Portland Area - Alison Goerl, RD, LD
- Portland Area - Kathy Wynecoop
- Tucson Area - Donald Williams

## 2019 LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS



### **MEGAN MACKIERNAN**

*Director of Quality Improvement  
Norton Sound Health Corporation*

Ms. Mackiernan has served the Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) and the people of the Bering Strait region for 6 years as a Physician Assistant and then moving into the roles of Quality Director, Risk Manager, Privacy Officer and HRSA Coordinator. Her service extends beyond NSHC serving on the Alaska Commission for Human Rights as Chairperson, the Alaska Primary Care Association, and the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association. Board members, leadership, staff, and patients have all recognized the diligent effort Ms. Mackiernan puts forward to improve the health and well being of our communities.



### **SAVANNAH GENE**

*Navajo  
Program Coordinator  
Albuquerque Area  
Indian Health Board*

Over the last decade, Ms. Gene has contributed to the health and well-being of youth in the Albuquerque area. She was part of a research team worked alongside youth to adapt a culturally-guided youth HIV prevention curriculum in three tribal communities. Her dedication and compassion of our Native youth people is undeniable. She currently coordinates a Health Equity project which aims to support the development, implementation and evaluation of culturally appropriate, evidence-based practices to address trauma, reduce health risk behaviors and strengthen resiliency among Native adolescents.

## 2019 LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS



### **DR. SHANNON SALTCLAH**

*Navajo  
Pharmacist  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention*

Shannon's passion and commitment to improving health in tribal communities is demonstrated by her development of the first 16-week Diabetes Prevention Program and an allied community-medical staff Screening Team at Tshhootsoi Medical Center, all while providing patient care as a pharmacist with the diabetes, tobacco, asthma, and inpatient pharmacy. Dr. Saltclah's leadership, dedication, and innovation helped create and sustain these impactful programs for tribal communities to improve their health status and quality of life.

### **APRIL MARTIN**

*Northern Cheyenne Tribe  
Executive Director, Wild Rose Center*

April Martin is the founder and executive director of The Wild Rose Center, which aims to address health disparities in the surrounding communities through traditional and alternative healing methods. It is a community hub for both Northern Cheyenne, Crow, and non-native friends to engage in open and honest communication about health, spirituality, and the change they wish to create in the surrounding communities. Each year, they host Healing Week, which includes behavioral health, to body and mind chiropractic work, to gathering and making traditional medicine. All of the services are provided on a "pay what you can" basis.



### **AMI ADMIRE**

*Payómkawichum,  
Rincon Reservation  
Native Connections  
Coordinator  
Indian Health Council*

Ami works to create collaborative partnerships with youth programs, schools, and community agencies to ensure that youth feel better connected to themselves and their communities; helping promote the future generation's well-being. A testament to this is her Rez Beats Open Mics project, and leadership of a Native and Indigenous Club, which creates a safe space for youth to self-express through art. Her work strives to connect youth to their culture, all-the-while giving them the tools and resources necessary for them to become empowered and take charge of their own mental health.

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## 2019 LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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### **NORMA MCADAMS**

*Hoopla*

*Executive Director,  
Native Women's Health  
and Wellness Alliance*

Norma founded the Native Women's Health and Wellness Alliance, Inc. (NWHWA) 22 years ago to help women/girls healing from trauma, grief and loss. They organize an annual women's gathering and quarterly Healing Days which brings massage, essential oils, Maori Romiromi, and acupuncture to the rural Hoopa reservation. Norma's enthusiasm is to bring healing through the creation of Quilting Classes, an Annual Coyote Run, improvement to school food and Elders Walking Trail, has made her a master of collaboration, bringing together community, organizations and Tribal departments.

### **AUDREY BERCIER, PA**

*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians*

*Physician Assistant*

*Quentin N. Burdick Memorial Hospital*

Audrey has dedicated her nearly 20-year career to improving the health of Tribal members at the Quentin N. Burdick Memorial Hospital on the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians reservation. From a young age playing doctor to attending Indians in Medicine as a teenager, the medical field has been her calling. Audrey and her team were recognized by the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board for a campaign for colorectal cancer month awareness. She genuinely cares for both the physical and mental well-being of each patient. One of the most notable aspects of Audrey is her quiet and understanding nature.



### **CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE YOUTH DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM**

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe (CRST) Youth Diabetes Prevention Program (YDPP) focuses on diabetes prevention by providing case management and follow-up for all identified high-risk youth. The program's target population are students in grades Kindergarten thru 12th grade. The program staff completes annual school screenings for overweight, obesity, pre-diabetes, and diabetes to identify the high risk youth. The goals are to provide consistent diabetes prevention education, nutrition education, nutrition consultation/counseling, physical fitness activities, mobile unit services, encouragement and lifestyle coaching to our program clients, youth and their families.

### **ANNA VAN STIPPEN**

*Oneida of Wisconsin*

*Diabetes and Wellness Program Coordinator*

*Miccosukee Tribe of Florida*

This young Oneida woman has worked with the Miccosukee Tribe ever since she completed her education, becoming an integral part of the Health and Prevention of Diseases activities of the Tribe. Apart from directing the Wellness Center she organizes monthly health related activities for the community. She meets with students on a regular basis, holds summer and holiday health camps for all ages, also imparting knowledge about cooking methods to the young women of the community. She is an active participant in the Diabetes Clinic where she employs her CDE skills.



### **CROWNPOINT CHR/ OUTREACH PROGRAM**

The Crownpoint Community Health Representative (CHR) Program demonstrates true teamwork. Its accomplishments include participating in local events such as health fairs, Rabies Clinics, Crownpoint Indian Health Services Field Nurses-Flu Clinics, assisting nurses with immunization, and Just Move It events. Most of the CHRs have their Public Health Certificate and all the CHRs are Certified Nursing Assistant, New Mexico State Certified Community Health Workers, helping homeless family with homes, clean water project, uranium projects, and much more.

### **SHERRY BEGAYE**

*Navajo Nation*

*Senior Community Health Worker*

*Community Health Representative*

*Outreach Program*

Ms. Sherry Begaye has served as a Navajo (Community Health Representative) CHR for many years. She is a strong advocate for her community and program. She educates physicians, medical students and volunteers about the importance of humility and the value of dignity and culture. She cares for her clients as if each person were her relative, whether it is health education to making sure that a bathroom is handicap accessible. She has built many partnerships in the community, because she is a trusted person who has been doing this work for many years.

### **NATHAN BILLY, M. ED, LPC**

*Choctaw Nation*

*Deputy Director, Behavioral Health*

Mr. Nathan Billy oversees the Choctaw Nation's Integrated Care team. The team provides behavioral health services to patients in primary care, pediatrics, women's health, diabetic wellness center, and other specialty clinics. Through Mr. Billy's leadership, the team works to ensure all patients are screened for depression, suicide, substance abuse and other behavioral health issues. As licensed clinical staff, the team is able to assess and treat a variety of psychological disorders and offer a plan of treatment to the patient. They are able to work collaboratively to address all patient care issues and advise a course of treatment.

### **RANDI DUNCAN**

*Cherokee Nation*

*Occupational Health Nurse*

*US Public Health Service*

Lieutenant Randi Duncan, a Cherokee Nation citizen, serves as an Occupational Health Nurse for the United States Public Health Service at W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah. LT Duncan lead an effort to provide influenza vaccines to employees at Hastings Hospital achieving a 97% vaccination rate, which was recognized with an award from the Oklahoma Hospital Association. LT Duncan also promotes health maintenance among underserved populations, which resulted in vaccinating 2,269 patients reducing the risk of influenza related deaths by 40%.

### **MICHAEL DUBOIS, DPT**

*San Carlos Apache  
Fort Yuma Health Center*

Dr. DuBois works for the US Public Health Service for the Indian Health Service at the Fort Yuma Health Center in California. He is developing their new Physical Therapy program as well as developing a wellness program, working with the pain management program, and developing community programs on topics such as opioids, injury prevention, and fall reduction. He worked with the San Carlos Apache Tribe and served his people for almost 4 years as a full-time clinician the hospital; involved with several committees, developed injury and fall prevention initiatives for employees/patients as well as interdisciplinary rounds within the hospital.



### **SAN CARLOS APACHE HEALTHCARE**

*Opioid Stewardship Program*

To reduce prescription Opioid misuse, San Carlos Apache Healthcare Corporation created an Opioid Stewardship Program (OSP).

The OSP leadership team has gone above and beyond in only 4 months to prepare the foundation for a successful program. The leadership team has been able to rewrite an updated policy and procedures for pain management. The entire Pharmacy staff was enrolled and completed a course in pain management. Medical providers and pharmacists also received Pain Skills Intensive and Medication Assisted Treatment Training through the Phoenix Indian Health Service. There have been a great improvement in prescribing practices from providers.

### **ALISON GOERL, RD, LD**

*Diabetes/Women's Wellness Program Director  
Native American Rehabilitation  
Association of the NW*

Alison has amazing dedication to the patients of the NARA Indian Health Clinic. She has been instrumental in improving preventive care & management in the Greater Portland area. This includes expanding the Diabetes program to implement a Diabetes Prevention component. She revitalized NARA's Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. She has worked to expand prevention & chronic disease management services. Under Alison's leadership, NARA patients now have "whole person" preventive & chronic disease care addressing many persistent conditions.

## 2019 LOCAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

### KATHY WYNECOOP

*Spokane Tribe of Indians*

*Community Health Representative*

*Spokane Tribe Health & Human Services*

Kathy does specialty work with other reservations and urban Native Centers, recruiting Native people for the Native American Bone Marrow Registry and organizing Blood Drives. Her vision is to help Native peoples find that match and save lives. Kathy was dedicated to the youth in the community by providing health education and disease prevention classes throughout the years, providing kids with the resources available to fulfill those needs. Kathy's persistent personality helps drive her.



### DONALD WILLIAMS

*Injury Prevention,*

*Environmental Health*

*Tohono O'odham*

*Nation Health Care*

Donald Williams developed the first car seat program for the Tohono O'odham Nation in the year 1999. He arranged the first Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician training for a group of approximately 20 students. Don was instrumental in working to get a primary seat belt law passed and chaired the Securing Tohono O'odham Project (STOP), where members conducted seat belt/car seat observations, recorded public service announcements for the local radio station and encouraged tribal members to wear their seat belts and put their children in child passenger safety seats as well as not to drink and drive.



# THE AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD

THE AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD HONORS AN INDIVIDUAL, PROGRAM OR ORGANIZATION WHOSE WORK HAS CONTRIBUTED TO IMPROVING AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH CARE OR HAS AFFECTED CHANGE ON AN AREA OR REGIONAL BASIS.

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## 2019 AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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**DANE LENAHER, DMD,  
MPH**

*Senior Clinical Director  
Southeast Alaska Regional  
Health Consortium*

Dr. Dane Lenaker has spent the last ten years working in extremely remote and heavily underserved areas to enhance dental access to Alaska Native patients. He has contributed to the growth and development of dental therapy programs in Alaska, Oregon, and Washington through mentorship, hands on instruction, data analysis and interpretation. He was an author in a key research article demonstrating the value in dental therapists within Alaska Native communities. He actively participates with the Alaska Medicaid Advisory Committee, a board which supports Medicaid in the state of Alaska and ultimately access to care for many Native Alaskans.

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## 2019 AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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### **ALAN BARLOW**

*Dinè/Navajo  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kewa Pueblo Health  
Corporation*

Alan has had the opportunity to work in seven different facilities Indian country. He has been able to positively affect each organization by obtaining accreditation status by either The Joint Commission, the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, or the National Committee for Quality Assurance. He positions each organization so that their employee and patient engagement and satisfaction scores grow, as well as increasing revenues to help facilitate new programs with safer, more effective, quality care. His ability to navigate the political atmosphere within Tribal communities is like none other wherein he can bring the community members together and resolve to common goals. He mentors the staff below him to ensure sustainability for the organization.



### **SAMUEL MOOSE**

*Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe  
Human Services Director,  
Fond du Lac Band of  
Lake Superior Chippewa  
Vice-Chair, Great Lakes  
Area Tribal Health Board  
Treasurer and Bemidji  
Area Representative, NIHB*

Mr. Moose has been dedicated to the health of AI/AN people in the Bemidji Area for over 18 years. He has served on the Great Lakes Tribal Health Board since its inception and advocates on a national level by serving as the Bemidji Area Representative to the National Indian Health Board. He has used his health administration experience to enhance Tribal policy and government to government relations at both the regional and national levels. Mr. Moose has helped strengthen area advocacy by sharing valuable information, insight, and position stances to Tribal leaders and Health Directors across the Bemidji Area.

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## 2019 AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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### **TRESSIE WHITE**

*Turtle Mountain Band  
of Chippewa Indians  
Program Director  
Montana Healthcare  
Foundation*

Ms. White has earned a stellar reputation through her work as a tireless advocate for the Native people of Montana. Tressie ensures that high-quality projects are funded in Indian country; that Native people are considered when funding to non-Native specific programs are awarded; and that Native voices and ideas are always respected. As a result, funds and support have been granted to every tribal nation in Montana - over and over again. Her support to programs has built sustainable health clinics, additional substance use disorder treatment services, and food sovereignty initiatives. Tressie does all of it with the calm enthusiasm and authentic relationship building that leaves a lasting impression on the people and communities with whom she serves.



### **JERILYN CHURCH**

*Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe  
Chief Executive Officer  
Great Plains Tribal  
Chairman's Health Board*

Jerilyn LeBeau Church has led not one, but two, at-risk tribal health organizations through a successful comprehensive restructuring. Jerilyn nearly doubled the staff and tripled the budget at American Indian Health and Family Services in Detroit. Ms. Church stewarded the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board to become a stable and financially sound organization with a clean audit history. Currently she is working under direction of local Tribes to assume the operations of the IHS facility in Rapid City. The expanded services which the health care center will provide under Tribal control, and under management of the Health Board, will improve health outcomes for Indian people in Rapid City and throughout the region. Her calm and competent leadership throughout the difficult assumption process has made the dream of achieving our Tribal goals a reality.

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## 2019 AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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### **DR. KARLETTA CHIEF**

*Navajo  
Associate Professor  
The University of Arizona*

For Navajo hydrologist Karletta Chief, water is sacred. When the Gold King Mine Spill contaminated a vital river in the Navajo Nation, Chief embarked on an investigation of the potential environmental and health impacts on Navajo Nation communities affected by the Spill. Utilizing an indigenous research framework, Dr. Chief obtained funding from NIH to lead a team that included Navajo Community Health Representatives, multiple universities and leaders of the affected communities. Research findings have been relayed at 12 community teach-ins and an executive session, where Chief makes presentations in Navajo and translates the scientific findings into information relevant to the affected communities.



### **LAURA NEAL**

*Chickasaw Nation  
Director, Ardmore Clinic  
Chickasaw Health Services*

Laura Neal began working at the Health Clinic in Ardmore in 2013. She took on a very troubled department and in a very short time was able to bring that department together as a team. Productivity and morale increased tremendously. She then was promoted to Clinic Manager where she had a great influence on every employee every day. She stayed calm and even toned in all difficult situations. Because of her perseverance and caring personality, the employees work as one big team instead of separated departments. She makes a positive impact on every patient that she makes contact with and the staff are happy to work under her.

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## 2019 AREA/REGIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS

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### **FORT YUMA HEALTH CENTER**

*Indian Health Service*

The Fort Yuma Health Center (FYHC) is an ambulatory clinic of the Indian Health Services that serves two tribes, the Cocopah and Quechan, as well as other American Indian and Alaska Natives in the Yuma and Imperial County. They moved to a brand new building 2018, which allowed them to expand current services and add new services. The expansion of existing services include dental, pharmacy, public health nursing, community health tribal partnerships, lab, radiology, diabetic management, and primary care. The new services being added are: physical therapy/wellness, optometry, community health outreach, health promotion and prevention, expanded visiting specialty provider/clinics, and patient nutrition. They also increased home care, such as mobile mammograms. There are plans to expand service hours, integrate prevention work into the school systems for all ages, and into the community.



### **CHERYLE KENNEDY**

*Confederated Tribes of  
the Grand Ronde*

*Tribal Council Chairwoman*

Chairwoman Kennedy's commitment as co-chair of the Oregon Behavioral Health Justice Reinvestment Steering Committee resulted in approval of SB973, which includes recommendations designed to include support for Tribal nations to develop stronger community-based continuum of care to improve health and criminal justice outcomes for Tribal people cycling in and out of Oregon's jails and hospitals. Chairwoman Kennedy has incessantly advocated for equitable health care in Indian Country. Her career as a Health Administrator working with Tribes spans several decades. She has served several terms on her Tribal Council, on many local, state and national committees and boards, and provided expert testimony focused on improving the health and wellness of Indian people.

# THE NATIONAL IMPACT AWARD

THE NATIONAL IMPACT AWARD HONORS AN INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION WHOSE WORK HAS MADE AN IMPACT ON AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH CARE ON A NATIONAL LEVEL.

## 2019 NATIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS



### PAUL HANSEN

*Hospital Administrator &  
Alaska Native Health Board  
Tribal Health Director  
Maniilaq Association*

Paul came to Kotzebue as a Commission Corp Officer in 1980 and served in various capacities throughout his nearly 40-year career at Maniilaq.

Paul's responsibilities ranged from vaccinating dogs in his initial role as Sanitarian, to helping negotiate Maniilaq's first compact with the Indian Health Service as a Self-Governance Coordinator. Paul has witnessed or has been an integral part of many significant changes and organization enhancements over the years including the construction of facilities. Paul is very passionate about Tribal health. Those who have had the privilege of traveling throughout the whole Maniilaq region, the state or nation with Paul, have seen his significant contributions to Tribal health. He is modest, innovative, smart and sees angles on problems that others don't see when looking for solutions. He has also had a huge national impact, most notably in the furtherance of sanitation, 105(l) leases, climate change health impacts, Advance Appropriations and Self-governance.



### **VICTOR JOSEPH**

*Tanana Tribe*

*Chairman, Tanana  
Chiefs Conference*

Chief Victor Joseph is a tribal member of the Native Village of Tanana, Alaska, and has worked for Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) for over 20 years. Prior to being elected Chief/Chairman in 2014, Chief Joseph worked as the TCC Health Director for seven years and in the substance abuse field prior to that, and was instrumental in the success of Old Minto Family Recovery Camp, for which he received the Robert Wood Foundation Community Health Leadership Award in 2001. Chief Joseph provides for his extended family through hunting and fishing and is a strong advocate for sharing his culture and traditions. Chief Joseph's leadership was instrumental in building the new Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center in Fairbanks and the acquisition of funding for construction of 8 new village clinics in the Interior of Alaska since 2011 with construction of a new Subregional clinic underway. Mr. Joseph worked closely with Tribes, administration, and staff to rebuild TCC health services. Under Mr. Joseph's leadership, TCC increased health services revenue from \$48 million in 2009 to \$156 million in 2018 by expanding third-party revenue and advocating for increased Indian Health Service and other state and federal funding. Chief Joseph has built strong relationships among the Tribal Health System in Alaska, as well as at the National level, ensuring continued and expanded quality health care systems in Alaska. As a Tribal leader, Chief Joseph represents Alaska at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Tribal Advisory Committee, as the Indian Health Service Budget Formulation Workgroup Co-chair, and at the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee.



### **KITTY MARX**

*Director, Division of  
Tribal Affairs  
Centers for Medicare  
& Medicaid Services*

Kitty Marx is the Director, Division of Tribal Affairs, in the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Prior to CMS, Kitty served as the Legislative Director at the National Indian Health Board. She has also worked for Indian Health Services and for Montana Legal Services in Browning, Montana. Kitty received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maryland and a Juris Doctor degree from Vermont Law School. Ms. Marx has devoted her entire professional life to improving the health status for all American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN). As the Director of Tribal Affairs, Kitty has elevated tribal concerns in CMS for ten years. She works tirelessly to bring CMS Senior Leaders into dialogue with the CMS Tribal Technical Advisory Group to obtain advice on important CMS policies impacting Indian health and advocates fiercely for the rights and improved health status of AI/ANs. Kitty has worked diligently to increase funding resources for Tribal health and maintains an open door policy for AI/ANs, Tribal health directors, and Tribal leaders. Kitty is a trusted resource and ally in Indian country and a respected expert among her colleagues in the Federal government.

## 2019 NATIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS



### **CAITRIN SHUY, MS**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Financial  
Resources, Department of  
Health and Human Services*

Caitrin served more than 6 years with the National Indian Health Board as the Director of Congressional Relations. She secured congressional victories for Tribes in many areas of policy, budget and appropriations. Her efforts and successes have been numerous, including increasing IHS appropriations, budget formulation and consultation; successfully advocating for tribal-dedicated funding to fight the opioid epidemic in Indian Country; and she has lead national advocacy for two successful reauthorizations of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. Caitrin boldly lead efforts to request doubling the Good Health and Wellness Program in Indian Country, despite budget requests that would have ended the program. Caitrin spent three years as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Tom Cole (R-OK) where she served as a political advisor and his lead staffer for Native American Issues for the Congressman's work on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies. Caitrin holds a Master's of Science in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics and a Bachelor's of Arts in Political Science St. Mary's College of Maryland.



## 2019 NATIONAL IMPACT AWARD WINNERS



### **DR. JORGE MERA**

*Director, Infectious Diseases  
Cherokee Nation  
Health Services*

Dr. Jorge Mera is the director of infectious diseases for Cherokee Nation Health Services. He leads the Cherokee Nation HCV elimination program and the HIV/HCV Extended Care Health Outcomes project in the tribe. He is the Director of the HIV clinic and the Director of the only Native American AETC local performance site in Oklahoma. More than 50,000 Cherokee Nation Health Services patients have been screened via their health checkups, dental appointments or walk-ins to urgent care or emergency room and approximately 900 have received treatment for HCV. The program, which has a 90 percent cure rate, is changing and saving lives in northeast Oklahoma. Cherokee Nation's initiative is the first Hepatitis C elimination program in the United States and utilizes aggressive screening and treatment to cure the disease. The program screens patients ages 20 to 65 who use our health system. The goal is to cure the Native population in northeast Oklahoma of Hepatitis C by 2030. Dr. Mera completed his fellowship in Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine and is Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) in Infectious Diseases. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University Health Science Center.



### **UNITED INDIAN TRIBAL YOUTH, INC.**

United Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) has a mission to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian and Alaska Native youth and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement. They accomplish this mission through many initiatives including the New Year's Revolution Webinar, promoting National Indian Health Board Community Changemaker Grants for Native Youth-led Health Projects and supporting the Food Sovereignty: Free Wellness Warriors Webinar. They held their first two virtual conference this year - the UNITY Wellness Warriors Virtual Conferences, titled "Indigenous Approaches to Wellness" and dozens of youth councils participated.



# THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD  
COMMENDS A YOUNG AMERICAN  
INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE FOR THEIR  
LEADERSHIP AND OUTSTANDING  
EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE QUALITY  
OF HEALTHCARE OR AWARENESS  
OF HEALTH ISSUES WITHIN THEIR  
PEER GROUP OR COMMUNITY ON  
A LOCAL OR NATIONAL LEVEL.

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## THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER

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### **KAITLYN PINKERTON**

*Cherokee Nation, Junior  
Miss Cherokee 2018 - 2019*

Kaitlyn Pinkerton, a Cherokee Nation citizen, is served as Junior Miss Cherokee from 2018 - 2019 and is an honors student at Claremore High School in Oklahoma. Kaitlyn has travelled the country speaking to fellow youth about eliminating the stigma of mental illness. She has been a featured speaker at National Indian Health Board, United National Indian Tribal Youth, National Council for Urban Indian Health, Native Connections, and has been a panelist at the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Conference. Kaitlyn used her platform as Jr. Miss Cherokee to combat one of the most pervasive issues not just within the her Tribe but across the United States: the stigma surrounding mental illness. Kaitlyn is courageously challenging the status quo to let others suffering from mental health issues know that they should not feel ashamed to seek treatment. Kaitlyn has personally battled anxiety, depression and thoughts of suicide. She benefitted from treatment and is hoping to ease the suffering of thousands of other tribal citizens with these same challenges. Kaitlyn has traveled the United States speaking about innovative treatments for mental illness including the Friend2Friend app. In addition to these efforts, Kaitlyn is an exemplary student at Claremore High School excelling in both academic and extracurricular activities.

# THE JAKE WHITECROW AWARD

THE JAKE WHITECROW AWARD, IN MEMORIAM OF THE FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL INDIAN HEALTH BOARD, RECOGNIZES AN INDIVIDUAL WITH OUTSTANDING LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS IN ELEVATING HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY, RAISING AWARENESS OR AFFECTING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH CARE.



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## 2019 JAKE WHITECROW AWARD WINNER

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### **ANDREW C. JOSEPH, JR.** *Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation*

Andrew C. Joseph, Jr. (Euuhootkn) is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in Washington and comes from a long line of Tribal Chiefs. He is also a US Army Veteran. Mr. Joseph served more than 15 years on the Colville Business Council as a Nespelem District Representative, Vice Chair, and Chairman of the Health & Human Services Committee. He also served on the Veterans Committee, Tribal Government Committee, and Culture Committee. Andy served as the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Delegate to the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) from 2004 - 2019. He became the Chair of NPAIHB, and in turn Chairman Joseph represented the Portland Area on the Board of NIHB. Andy served as the Member-At-Large for NIHB for several terms. Mr. Joseph was a voting delegate of Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and the National Congress of American Indians. Andy Joseph was actively engaged on a national level in various IHS Tribal Workgroups and served as the representative for the Portland Area Tribes. Mr. Joseph was a Co-Chair of the Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup 6 years, Co-Chair for the Indian Health Service (IHS) Contract Support Costs Workgroup, and Portland Area Representative for the IHS Purchased Referred Care Workgroup and the Community Health Aide Program workgroup. He also served as the Vice Chair of the Direct Service Tribes' Advisory Committee and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Tribal Technical Advisory Committee.

Andy Joseph has been at the forefront of fighting to transform and improve the Indian health system through outstanding local, state, and national leadership and advocacy for over 15 years. He has been a strong voice on Tribal sovereignty and the treaty and trust responsibility. He has testified numerous times before Congress and participated in countless federal and state Tribal consultations. As chair and co-chair of the National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup, he always advocated for full funding and demanded the federal government meet its obligations. Mr. Joseph is known for saying yes to any opportunity to advocate for his Tribe and Indian country. Andy Joseph has sacrificed time from his family and community for his work, always stating that he has to ask for everything our people need.