

American Indian Cancer Foundation

Healing with Culture. Reclaiming Indigenous Health.



Biennial Report 2018 - 2019



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Greetings Friends and Relatives,

We are thankful for your unwavering support that has helped us move toward a healthier future for Native people. In 2018 and 2019, we made significant strides in reducing the cancer burdens for our relatives. And while we recognize there are still centuries of health adversities that need to be rectified, we are relentless in our work to reclaim wellness across Indian Country. We are grateful for your partnership on this journey and appreciate all that you have shared along the way!

This work cannot be done without the many funders and partners who have trusted our Native-driven cancer solutions. This investment has made a real and positive impact in Indian Country. We are incredibly proud of the work that has been accomplished to date. You are making a difference!

This year has uncovered and exposed incredible health inequities and the systemic racism affecting so many. Not only are these issues profoundly impacting Indigenous populations, they are also worsening cancer outcomes. Many organizations were forced to pause or stop their work amid the COVID-19 pandemic, but we responded to these issues with timely statements, informational webinars, and social media campaigns to effectively meet needs across Indigenous communities.

In closing, it has been my honor to lead this organization from the very beginning and after a decade of dedication to the mission, I am proud of where we are today. I am leaving the American Indian Cancer Foundation stronger than it's ever been and trusting the Creator, the incredible team of employees, the next CEO, the leadership of the Board of Directors, and you (our valued partners) to take this organization into the future.

Miigwech (Thank you) for your ongoing support!

Kris Rhodes

Kris Rhodes, MPH
Anishinaabe, Fond du Lac and Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Our mission is to eliminate the cancer burdens on Native people through improved access to prevention, early detection, treatment, and survivor support.

We value the wisdom found in every Tribal teaching. It is essential that our work is community-centered, respectful of tradition, advances knowledge, and is Native-directed. We know the answers to reclaiming our health reside within our Native communities. Together we are creating innovative, community-based interventions that engage Native populations in the discovery of their own cancer best practices.

We continue to do more and more every year, some of our highlights from 2018-2019:

We expanded our work on policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies. New national partnerships played a huge role in strengthening our PSE work focused on healthy Indigenous foods and traditional movement with tribes throughout the nation.

We supported clinic systems to advance cancer screening. With support from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we developed two national programs that foster clinic and state partnerships, more culturally-tailored cancer screening resources and increased screening rates

We conducted community-engaged research projects. Our research has included clinical systems improvement for HPV vaccines, smoking cessation, and lung cancer screening. We partner with academic, Tribal, and urban health system partners in all aspects of this work.

You raised \$133,152

in 2018 and 2019 from Powwow for Hope, allowing us to increase **Survivorship** support, campaign and outreach across Indian Country and benefiting the expansion of our monthly awareness campaigns: **Indigenous Pink** (breast health), **Turquoise Tuesday** (cervical health), and Blue Beads (colon health), and developing a new lung health campaign: **Sacred Breath**.

We developed Screen Our Circle and **Urban Cancer Solutions** to improve screening rates in urban clinics serving Native people nationally.

We presented at 304 conferences, workshops, and community events and conversations addressing Native health, reaching an estimated **19,500** people.

We created 80 new resources in 2018 and 2019 and shared them with individuals, organizations and health systems in **150+** tribal and urban communities.

We reached 1,538,514 people on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, helping raise awareness of cancer burdens with education, support and resources.

Raising Awareness of Indigenous Cancer Burdens & Solutions

Through our collaborative partnerships, AICAF leverages community interest, resources, and investments to engage tribes and mainstream health organizations with fundraisers and awareness events across Indian Country.

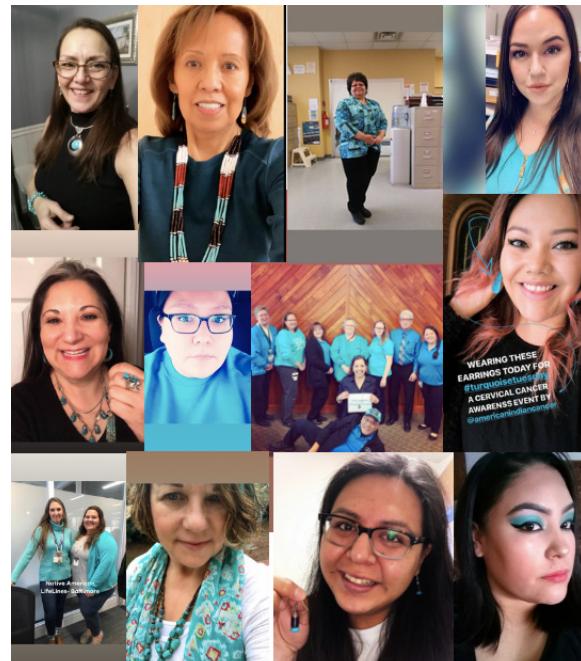
- ▶ National Outreach: We presented at 304 conferences, workshops, and community events and conversations addressing Native health, reaching an estimated 19,500 people.
- ▶ Social Media: We reached 1,538,514 people on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, helping raise awareness of cancer burdens with education, support and resources.

Cancer Awareness Campaigns

Each year, AICAF hosts several awareness campaigns surrounding cancers impacting Native people at the highest rates. Our longest-standing campaign, Indigenous Pink, raises awareness about breast health and breast cancer among Indigenous people across the country. Thousands of followers have taken to using #IndigenousPink to share photos of themselves wearing pink and telling their personal cancer stories. In January, AICAF hosts a national cervical cancer awareness campaign for Native people. This awareness month culminates in #TurquoiseTuesday, a day when relatives across the country raise awareness by wearing turquoise clothing and jewelry.

2019 was a year of firsts. AICAF launched its first colorectal cancer campaign, #GetBehind-

CRCScreening. The campaign was wildly successful, reaching more than 53,000 people and helping to raise awareness about colon cancer screening in Indian Country. Two important components of this campaign included the launch of a new resource and a PSA video. In June, we hosted our first ever Survivorship Awareness Month. With the help of brave advocates for Indigenous health, we released new survivor stories reaching an astounding 79,981 people. 2019 concluded with our first lung cancer awareness campaign #SacredBreath month. This new campaign included a lung cancer resource, e-cig resource, Say No to Commercial Tobacco Meme Contest, and Breath is Sacred: E Cigarettes Are Not Our Tradition video.





“Our work aligns perfectly with the mission of the American Indian Cancer Foundation, as we are both dedicated to strong healthy Indigenous communities for generations to come. It is not easy to grow a new national Indigenous health organization. AICAF has always been there for us as we develop our path forward.”

Myra Parker, PhD, JD, MPH
(Mandan, Hidatsa, Cree)
 Director
 Seven Directions Center for
 Indigenous Health
 Partner organization



MHA Nation Ice Warrior Plunge

Since 2016, the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara (MHA) Nation has hosted the Ice Warrior Plunge on Lake Sakakawea to raise funds for AICAF and other local cancer organizations. Led by Chairman Mark Fox, AICAF Board Member, the Ice Warrior Plunge raises awareness of Indigenous cancer burdens and fundraises for important cancer solutions.

Over 40 participants in 2019 took the leap into icy Lake Sakakawea, including AICAF's Chief Executive Officer Kris Rhodes. In 2018 and 2019, **\$123,881** was raised to further our efforts in strengthening AICAF programs, building larger campaigns, and providing more resources to families across Indian Country.



#PowwowforHope

Since 2012, Powwow for Hope™: Dancing for Life, Love & Hope has brought together thousands of people nationwide to honor loved ones who have faced or are currently facing cancer by creating a space for healing. All funds raised by the event help AICAF develop and share culturally-tailored cancer prevention resources across Indian Country, connect cancer survivors and caregivers to healing and supportive services, and partner with Tribal nations to change the outcome of cancer in our communities.

Hard work and dedication from participants in 2018 and 2019 continued to help elevate this annual event, furthering our mission and greatly expanding reach. In 2018 and 2019, Powwow for Hope raised a total of **\$133,152!**

These fundraising efforts have supported:

- ▶ Development of AICAF's **Indigenous Pink** breast cancer awareness campaign, which reached **33% more** of our relatives in Indian Country.
- ▶ Development of AICAF's **Turquoise Tuesday** cervical cancer awareness campaign, which saw a **57% increase** in tribal and urban clinic involvement.
- ▶ National survivorship outreach: Last year our team was able to share **10 new Indigenous cancer survivor stories**, connect with survivors who had rare, lesser-known cancers, and expand our **Survivorship Program** to include more support and resources for caregivers
- ▶ Redevelopment of two AICAF websites: [**AICAF.org**](http://AICAF.org) and [**Powwowforhope.org**](http://Powwowforhope.org). Our new sites have reached **34% more** people since their launch.
- ▶ Providing survivors with care packages (including resources to navigate survivorship, questions to ask your provider, and self care essentials)



2019 Top Fundraising Awards

Individual

Chris Johnson \$375

Family

Team Beaulieu \$2,336

Community

Team Alaska \$895

School

American Indian Magnet School \$2,472

Thank you to our 2019 teams!

Agindaasodaa!

Team Caddo

Giizaagin Nokomis

Galvanized Feathers

Chris Johnson

Round and Brown Crew

Team Chosa-Drift

Team Anishinabe Academy

Cancer Equity Team

Bdote Learning Center

Native American Community Clinic

Team Brian Yazzie

2018 Top Fundraising Awards

Individual

Danielle DeLong (B's Babes) \$6,070

Family

Team Rivera Honoring Sylvia \$9,547

Community

Too Legit to Quit \$1,851

School

American Indian Magnet School \$2,021

Thank you to our 2018 Teams!

Urban Cancer Solutions

Round Brown Crew

Mni Sota Women's Lacrosse

AFC Team

Hope Stars

Dream Team FAN

Team Rivera Honoring Sylvia

Gi Zah Gin Nokomis

Team Benally Thompson

Makwawayaan

Team Goze

Team Carrie

Galvanized Feathers

B's Babes

Team Oklahoma Cancer Warriors!

Minis

Team Chosa

Melissa Buffalo

Team Beloit

Team Anishinabe

Tia's Team

Knowledge Table

Butterfly Warrior

Indigeneity





“By listening to and learning from the American Indian Cancer Foundation we can better support the Indian Country organizations who are developing policies for food codes and food sovereignty. The American Indian Cancer Foundation provides a bridge between Voices for Healthy Kids and its collaborators in Indian Country throughout the United States.”

NaDa R. Shoemaker
Advocacy Partnerships Manager
Voices for Healthy Kids
Partner organization



Advancing Capacity Through Training & Technical Assistance

There are many cancer-focused resources available but very few reflect Indigenous peoples. AICAF is filling those gaps by listening to our communities and developing culturally-tailored model frameworks, training, and resources with Native communities and health systems.

- ▶ Culturally-Tailored Resources: Our culturally-tailored education and outreach materials make a difference by sharing information that is relevant and specific to Indigenous communities. Some of our most popular educational infographics, toolkits, and resources include:

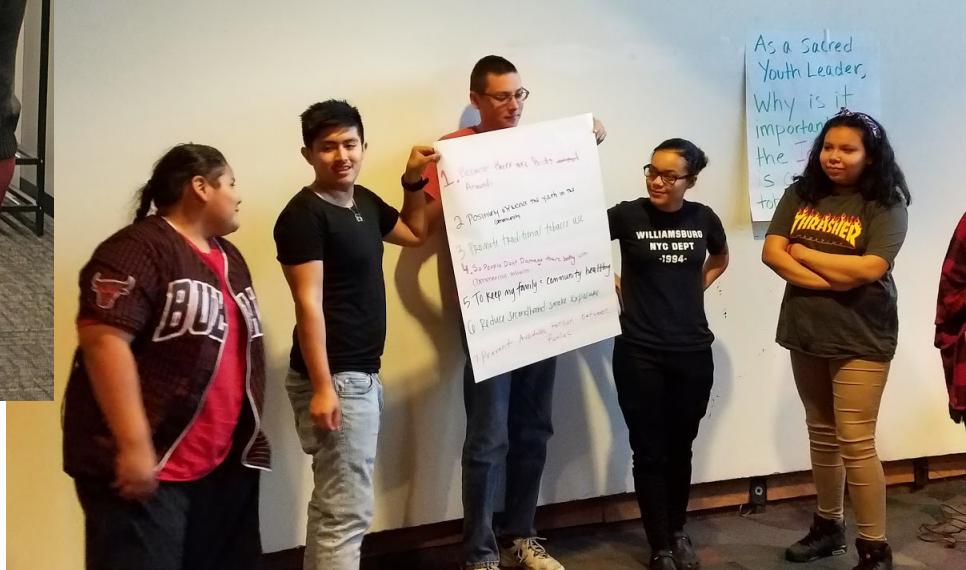
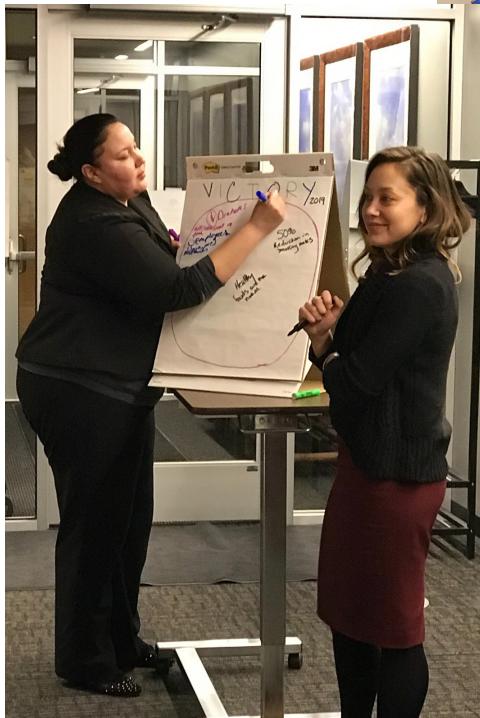
- [Policy, Systems, & Environmental \(PSE\)](#)
- [Indigenous Pink Social Media Toolkit](#)
- [Cancer Plan](#)
- [Indigenous Pink Cookbook](#)
- [End Cervical Cancer in Indian Country](#)
- [Which Colorectal Cancer Screening is Right for Me?](#)
- [My Pap smear was abnormal...now what?](#)
- [Indigenous Pink Breast Health](#)

- ▶ Technical Assistance for Clinics and Communities: We offer clinics and communities technical assistance in the forms of inter-tribal learning networks, training, presentations and webinars, toolkits, and targeted resources. Some of our most well-attended training topics include:

- Reclaiming Indigenous Food Relationships: Improving Health with Culture
- Advancing Health Systems: Colorectal Cancer Screening within American Indian and Alaskan Native Communities Toolkit in collaboration with the National Indian Health Board
- Clinic Systems Mapping Processes - AICAF staff can assist with onsite or virtual process mapping. Our staff collaboratively assists clinic sites with uniquely tailored solutions that work for health systems and their communities.
- Evidence Based Interventions in AIAN Health Systems - AICAF assists health systems with planning and realizing tailored EBI implementation plans
- Health System Landscape Assessment - AICAF creates comprehensive and tailored strategies to support sustainable health systems improvements. iQuits toolkit and presentations
- Survivor support group training- AICAF provides training to health systems that would like to build local survivor support groups

If you are interested in resources or technical assistance, please contact prevention@aicaf.org. We always welcome requests, feedback, and suggestions for new materials.





"My company, Tribal Diagnostics, partners with the American Indian Cancer Foundation to make sure the best cancer screening and treatments are available to all Native people. AICAF plays a vital role in Indian Country and I am a proud donor. My family was forced to face cancer when my beautiful wife was diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago, and we continue to fight this dreaded disease to this day."

Cory Littlepage, MBA (Chickasaw)
Chief Executive Officer
Tribal Diagnostics
Partner & Corporate Donor

Increasing Availability of Indigenous Cancer Data & Solutions

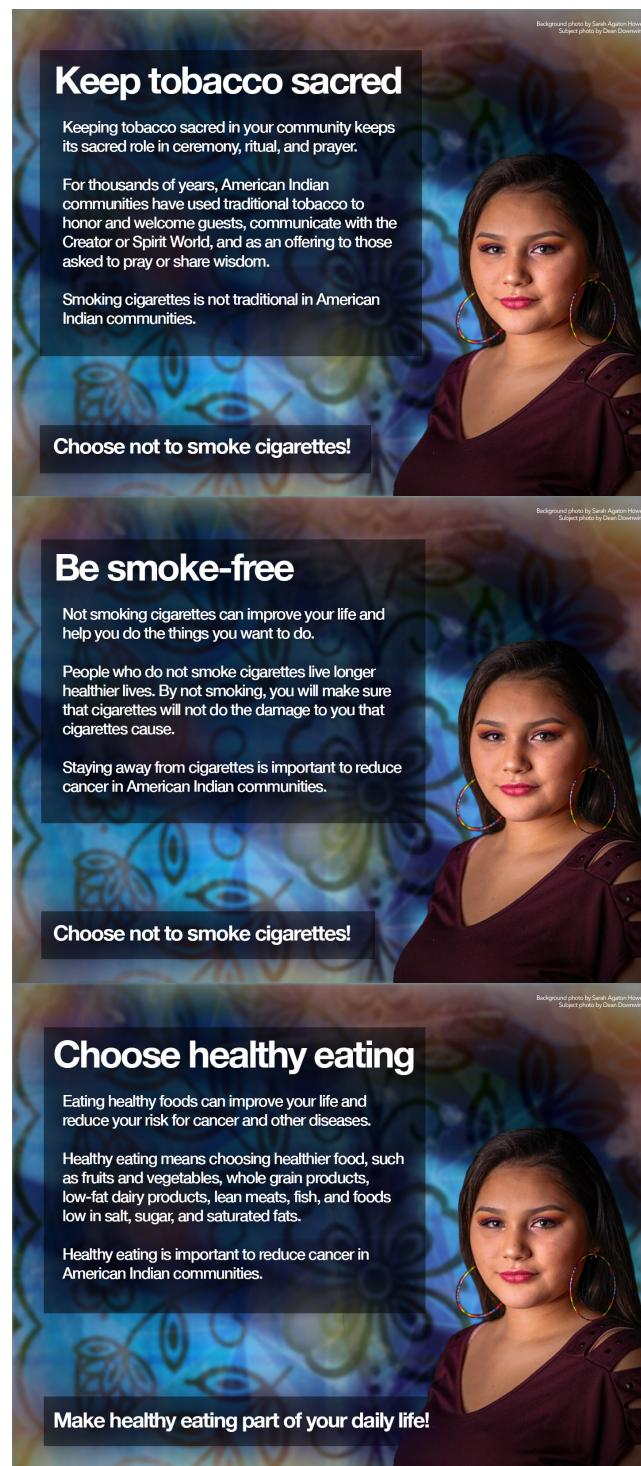
The lack of Indigenous health data is an ongoing problem. Too often, Native populations are referenced as an asterisk in data reports. Our research team is committed to identifying when new data is available, reviewing it for accuracy, and disseminating as appropriate. We are also committed to gathering Native-specific data by engaging our people in our own research. In 2018-19, we led research studies focused on cancer prevention.

Tribal Tobacco Use Project II: This is a repeat statewide study of adult tobacco use that engages tribal and urban populations to participate as full partners. The first study reported a 59% smoking rate among American Indian adults. Since then, tribes and funders have invested millions of dollars to reduce this rate. New study findings will be available in 2021.

TTUP II Survey Topics

- Traditional tobacco use
- Commercial tobacco use (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, chew, and pipes)
- Interest in quitting smoking
- Exposure to cigarette smoke and opinions about exposure to cigarette smoke
- E-cigarette or vaping device use
- General health and access to healthcare
- Demographics (e.g., age, gender, household, and tribal affiliation)

Tobacco Messaging: We conducted a study to learn if culturally-tailored messages matter when it comes to tobacco use. We learned that messages about traditional tobacco were most strongly associated with reduced intention for commercial tobacco use in the future.



Background photo by Sarah Agapito-Hawes
Subject photo by Dean Davenport

Keep tobacco sacred

Keeping tobacco sacred in your community keeps its sacred role in ceremony, ritual, and prayer.

For thousands of years, American Indian communities have used traditional tobacco to honor and welcome guests, communicate with the Creator or Spirit World, and as an offering to those asked to pray or share wisdom.

Smoking cigarettes is not traditional in American Indian communities.

Choose not to smoke cigarettes!

Background photo by Sarah Agapito-Hawes
Subject photo by Dean Davenport

Be smoke-free

Not smoking cigarettes can improve your life and help you do the things you want to do.

People who do not smoke cigarettes live longer healthier lives. By not smoking, you will make sure that cigarettes will not do the damage to you that cigarettes cause.

Staying away from cigarettes is important to reduce cancer in American Indian communities.

Choose not to smoke cigarettes!

Background photo by Sarah Agapito-Hawes
Subject photo by Dean Davenport

Choose healthy eating

Eating healthy foods can improve your life and reduce your risk for cancer and other diseases.

Healthy eating means choosing healthier food, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat dairy products, lean meats, fish, and foods low in salt, sugar, and saturated fats.

Healthy eating is important to reduce cancer in American Indian communities.

Make healthy eating part of your daily life!

Clinic Systems Improvements: The research team has engaged tribal and urban clinics in multiple studies to determine feasibility and impact on clinic systems improvements for HPV vaccination, smoking cessation, and lung cancer screening. Each study is planned with academic and clinic partners to identify research questions and analyze study findings for near immediate implementation into clinic systems improvements.

Recent Publications: Our research projects result in new findings that are first shared with tribal and community partners. Additionally we publish our results in peer-reviewed publications. Here are two of our recent publications:

- ▶ [Feasibility of a systems approach to treat commercial tobacco dependence within American Indian health clinics.](#) Buckless B, Rhodes K, McCann M, Christiansen B, Forster J, Joseph A. *American Indian Alaska Native Mental Health Research*. September 2018.
- ▶ [Effects of cultural cues on perceptions of HPV vaccination messages among parents and guardians of American Indian youth.](#) Yzer M, Rhodes K, McCann M, Harjo J, Nagler RN, LoRusso S, & Gollust S. *Preventive Medicine*. DOI: 10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.08.021



"It takes Indigenous leadership and strategies based on Indigenous ways to truly get to solutions that improve the health and lives of our people. Native-led organizations, like the American Indian Cancer Foundation and the Center for Indigenous Cancer Research at Roswell are leading the work to change cancer outcomes for Indigenous people."

Rodney Haring, PhD, MSW
(Haudonsaunee)
Director, Center for Indigenous Cancer Research
Roswell Park Cancer Center
Partner organization



Thank You for Your Contribution!

We are thankful for the funding partners who have trusted us and invested in Native-driven cancer solutions, programs, and research. Your investment has made a positive, lasting impact throughout Indian Country!



2018 Funders & Sponsors

Thank you to the following funders who supported 2018 programming:

- Allina Health's Virginia Piper Cancer Institute
- American Heart Association
- Bald Eagle Erectors
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN
- CCStpa
- Centers for Disease Control
- Clearway Minnesota
- Fond du Lac Reservation
- Hennepin Healthcare Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan
- Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Lower Sioux Indian Community
- Masonic Cancer Center
- Mayo Clinic, Office of Health Disparities Research
- Minnesota Department of Health
- MN Department of Human Services
- National Indian Health Board
- Newman's Own Foundation
- Otto Bremer Foundation
- San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians
- Senior LinkAge Line
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Susan G. Komen of Minnesota
- Three Affiliated Tribes of Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians
- University of Minnesota
- Visions Printing

2019 Funders & Sponsors

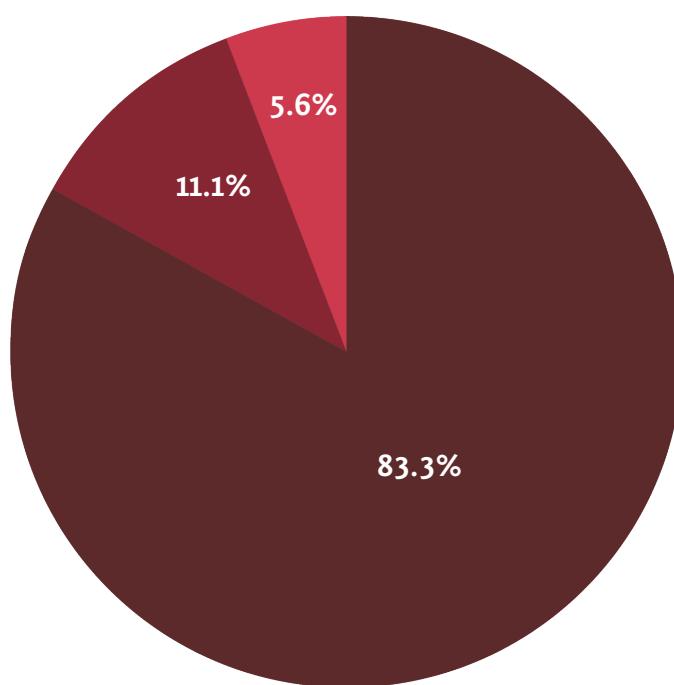
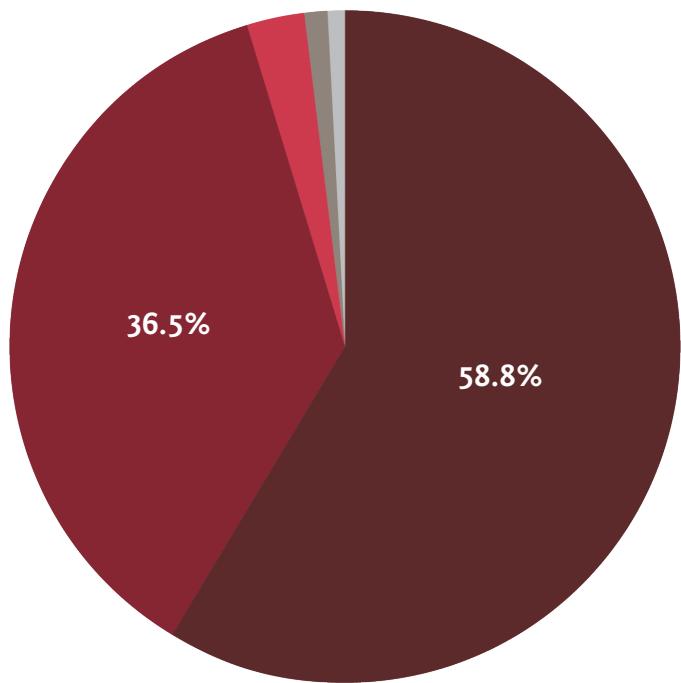
Thank you to the following funders who supported 2019 programming:

- American Heart Association
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN
- BlueLink TPA
- Centers for Disease Control
- Clearway Minnesota
- Fond du Lac Reservation
- Health Partners
- Hennepin Healthcare Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Masonic Cancer Center
- Mayo Clinic Office of Health Disparities
- MIGIZI Communications
- Minnesota Department of Health
- MN Department of Human Services
- Mystic Lake Casino
- Newman's Own Foundation
- Otto Bremer Foundation
- Quit Plan
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Senior LinkAge Line
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Susan G. Komen of Minnesota
- Three Affiliated Tribes of Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations
- Tribal Diagnostics
- University of Minnesota
- Visions Printing
- Woodlands National Bank

2018 Financials

Support and Revenue

Grants	\$690,092
Contracts	\$1,112,500
Individual Donations	\$22,327
Events and Merchandise	\$52,729
In-Kind donations	\$3,083
Other Income	\$10,412
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,891,143



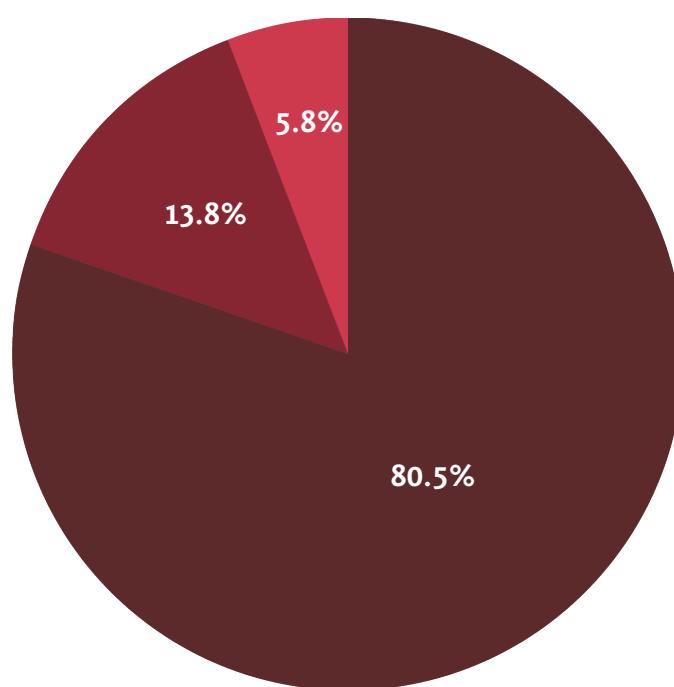
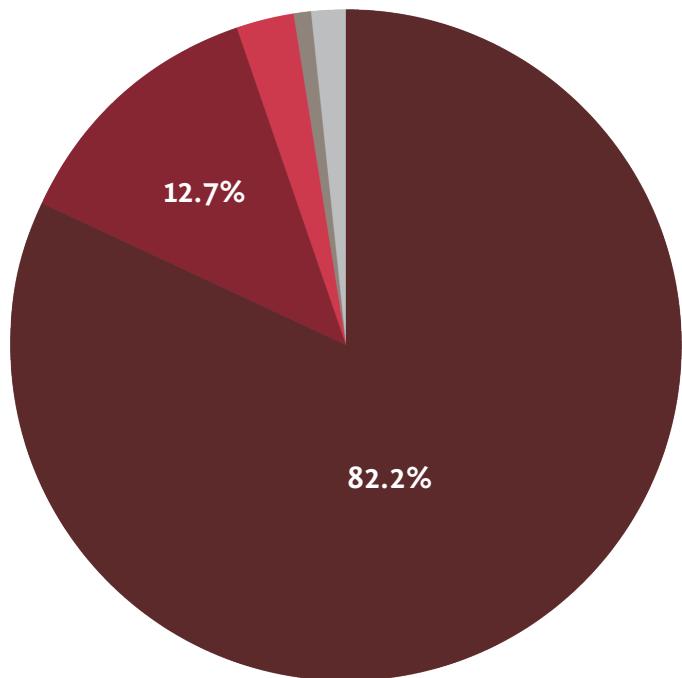
Expenses

Program Services	\$1,734,949
Management and General	\$231,820
Fundraising	\$116,136
Total Expenses	\$2,082,905

2019 Financials

Support and Revenue

Grants	\$221,821
Contracts	\$1,431,802
Individual Donations	\$17,363
Events and Merchandise	\$46,867
In-Kind donations	\$8,455
Other Income	\$16,429
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,742,452



Expenses

Program Services	\$1,592,625
Management and General	\$272,551
Fundraising	\$114,400
Total Expenses	\$1,979,576

Board of Directors

The AICAF Board of Directors is made up of Native leaders from across the nation. These individuals bring an impressive set of skills, energy, passion, and connections that help AICAF further its mission and strengthen our communities.

Chairperson

Gary Ferguson, ND
Aleut, Unangan

Vice Chairperson

Margo Gray
Osage Nation

Secretary

Deana Jackson
Navajo

Treasurer

Samuel A. Moose, MTAG
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Board Director

Bret R. Benally Thompson, MD
White Earth Ojibwe

Board Director

Nicole Hallingstad, MA
Tlingit

Board Director

Mary Fairbanks, DNP
White Earth Ojibwe

Board Director

Donna Palakiko, PhD, RN, APRN
Native Hawaiian

Board Director

Mark Fox, JD
Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nations

Board Director

Lillian Sparks Robinson, JD
Rosebud Sioux

Board Director

Johnny Nelson
Navajo

Board Director

Frances Tiger
Muscogee Creek Nation

Board Director

Kalina Newmark, MBA
Dene First Nations



Staff

The AICAF team is a group of talented and passionate individuals who strive everyday to find solutions to cancer burdens in our Indigenous communities. Each of our staff have personal reasons behind their dedication to the AICAF mission and each contribute to our success.

Chief Executive Officer

Kris Rhodes, MPH

Anishinaabe, Fond du Lac and Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Deputy Director

Melissa Buffalo, MS

Meskwaki

Operations Director

Alyssa Terleski, MBA

White Earth, Turtle Mountain Chippewa

Finance Manager

Kim Galvan, BS

White Earth Ojibwe

Prevention & Policy Coordinator

Sana Siddiqui, MPH

Prevention & Policy Manager

Chris Johnson, MA

Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota

Cancer Equity Coordinator

Justin Jones, MS

Tlingit & Haida

Cancer Programs Manager

Lindsey Petras, MSN

Cancer Equity Coordinator

Misha Loeffler, BA

Bay Mills Ojibwe

Research Manager

Wyatt Pickner, MPH

Hunkpati Dakota

Communications Specialist

Tina MacDonald, BA

Leech Lake Ojibwe

Research Coordinator

Arundhathi Sasikumar, MPH

Senior Program Specialist

Ashley Pohlenz, MPH

Research Assistant

Madison Anderson, MPH

Fond du Lac Chippewa

Graphic Designer

Mike Yang, BA

Office Administrator

Samantha Blackhall, AS

Prevention & Policy Coordinator

Daanis Chosa, BS

Bois Forte Chippewa

Prevention & Policy Coordinator

Alyssa Diaz, BA



Thank You

We are focused on continually developing support for those with a cancer diagnosis and engaging Indigenous people across the U.S. to raise awareness, build capacity, and identify solutions. We will continue to work across the cancers that most impact Native people (i.e., lung, colorectal, breast, prostate, and cervical). We will continue to promote screening for early detection and better survival with these too common cancers. We are also focused on working with communities to continue to engage tribal communities and tribal leadership in utilizing sovereignty and promoting upstream prevention strategies. Finally, we will always stay focused on how our tribal teachings provide solutions, how communities have the answers, and how scientific innovations can lead to better outcomes for Native people.



**You can be a part of this work!
Donate. Volunteer. Fundraise.**



American Indian
Cancer Foundation®

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