

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

2025

BLUE BEADS

#BlueBeadsForCRC
#GetBehindCRCScreening



American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people face the highest colorectal cancer (CRC) rates in the U.S., with Alaska Native people experiencing the highest rates globally. As CRC continues to rise in Indigenous communities, culturally responsive education and screening are critical. The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) led its seventh annual Blue Beads campaign to raise awareness and promote early detection through community-driven, culturally grounded outreach.

A campaign highlight was the release of Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives, a video centered on Native stories and the importance of timely screening. This was launched alongside culturally tailored tools to support informed decisions. AICAF also hosted a webinar, From Tradition to Table, linking traditional foods, gut health, and cancer prevention. The Blue Beads Screening Pledge invited individuals to learn about screening and commit to action, with a national map showcasing 58 pledges. The campaign honored survivors, caregivers, and families, uplifting stories of resilience and shared commitment to health.

Despite progress, screening disparities persist: 69% of white adults are up to date with CRC screening, compared to 56% of AI/AN adults and just 23% of AI/AN individuals receiving care through the Indian Health Service. AICAF's campaign remains focused on closing this gap and advancing CRC equity.

This report highlights the reach, engagement, and outcomes of the 2025 Blue Beads campaign and AICAF's ongoing commitment to cancer prevention in Indigenous communities.

Call to action: Promote greater education and awareness about colorectal cancer, while encouraging and supporting Indigenous communities to engage in screening.

PLEDGES



58 people took the Blue Beads Screening Pledge exceeding our goal of 50.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Blue Beads had over 77,000 reaches & impressions!

WEBINAR



The webinar aimed to explore the connection between Indigenous foodways, practical cooking strategies, and the role of food as medicine, bringing in more than 70 attendees.

RESOURCES



Five new resources were developed including a survivorship video, CRC screening postcard, CRC video, social media toolkit, and implementation guide.

Wopila/Thank you to our relatives who participated in #BlueBeads to raise awareness of colorectal cancer in Indian Country. Learn more about Blue Beads at [AICAF.org](https://aicaf.org) or contact health@aicaf.org.

About the Campaign

Colorectal Cancer (CRC) Screening Saves Lives Video

In March, the American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) debuted a new digital video resource created in partnership with Kaiser Permanente and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD). This culturally tailored video highlights the importance of colorectal cancer screening in Indigenous communities and is part of AICAF's ongoing work to reduce cancer disparities and promote early detection.

The video follows a multigenerational family conversation, using warmth, humor, and everyday language to break down common barriers around colorectal cancer screening. A father and son explains his decision to start screening at age 45, describing the simple, at-home test he received from his doctor. As the family shares questions and concerns, the dialogue addresses fears, normalizes the topic, and encourages viewers to prioritize their health.

By showing a supportive and loving family dynamic, the video reinforces the importance of having open conversations with loved ones about cancer screening. It reminds viewers that there's no shame in taking care of our health and that early detection through regular screening is one of the most effective ways to prevent colorectal cancer.

This video serves as a powerful reminder to our relatives to take proactive steps toward wellness and make screening a regular part of their health journey. Through this collaborative effort, AICAF continues to advocate for accessible, culturally respectful cancer education and prevention across Indian Country.

[View the video here](#)



Eagle Woman's Survivorship Story



AICAF visited with Lori Powless, Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, to create an uplifting video about survivorship. In this inspiring short video, watch as Eagle Woman, a cancer survivor, shares her journey of healing through culture and tradition. From traditional medicine and spiritual practices Eagle Woman shares how these natural methods played a vital role in her recovery alongside Western medicine. Her story is one of resilience, hope, and healing in overcoming her battle against cancer. Additionally, during the month Lori's daughter Darcie's video was shown to showcase the different experiences people face when confronted with a cancer diagnosis and survivorship journeys. [View the video here](#)



From Tradition to Table: Indigenous Foods for a Healthier Future

As part of the American Indian Cancer Foundation's Blue Beads-Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month campaign, AICAF hosted a virtual panel, From Tradition to Table: Indigenous Foods for a Healthier Future, on March 27, 2025. The event spotlighted Indigenous foodways, food sovereignty, and culturally grounded practices that support health across the cancer continuum.

The session drew strong community interest, with over 140 registrants, 70+ live attendees, and more than 1,000 Facebook views. Attendees engaged actively, expressing appreciation for the warm, accessible tone. Many requested the recording to share with others, reflecting the content's relevance and staying power.

Panelists—Nico Albert Williams (Cherokee Nation), Erin Martin, and Amy Warne (Mvskoke, Seminole)—shared insights from their work in nutrition, advocacy, and community healing, offering a holistic, culturally rooted vision of Indigenous health.

All 34 post-event survey respondents rated the session highly, averaging 4.4–4.6 on usefulness, expectations met, and influence on perspectives around Indigenous cancer survivorship. Open-ended responses showed strong interest in learning more about food prescription programs, gut health, and traditional diets. Several participants requested a compiled list of resources shared by the speakers—signaling enthusiasm and opportunities for deeper engagement in future offerings.

From Tradition to Table stood out as one of the most successful components of the Blue Beads campaign. It reflected AICAF's ability to create welcoming, culturally resonant spaces for learning and demonstrated the power of Indigenous knowledge in shaping conversations around survivorship and health equity.

THE AMERICAN INDIAN CANCER FOUNDATION PRESENTS

**FROM TRADITION TO TABLE:
INDIGENOUS FOODS FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE**

Join AICAF this March for Blue Beads-Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and engage with our esteemed panel as they explore the connection between Indigenous foodways, gut health, practical cooking strategies, and the role of food as medicine in improving food access and health outcomes for Indigenous communities.

Panelists:

- Erin Martin**
Founder and CEO
FreshRX
- Amy Warne**
Manager of Nutrition and Health Programs
Partnership for a Healthier America
- Nico Albert Williams**
Founder and Executive Director
Burning Cedar Sovereign Wellness

WEBINAR DETAILS:

**THURSDAY,
MARCH 27, 2025**

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CST

Questions?
Email health@aicaf.org
To learn more about Blue Beads, visit AmericanIndianCancer.org

American Indian Cancer Foundation


American Indian Cancer Foundation
26 March at 10:01

Our Food is Medicine

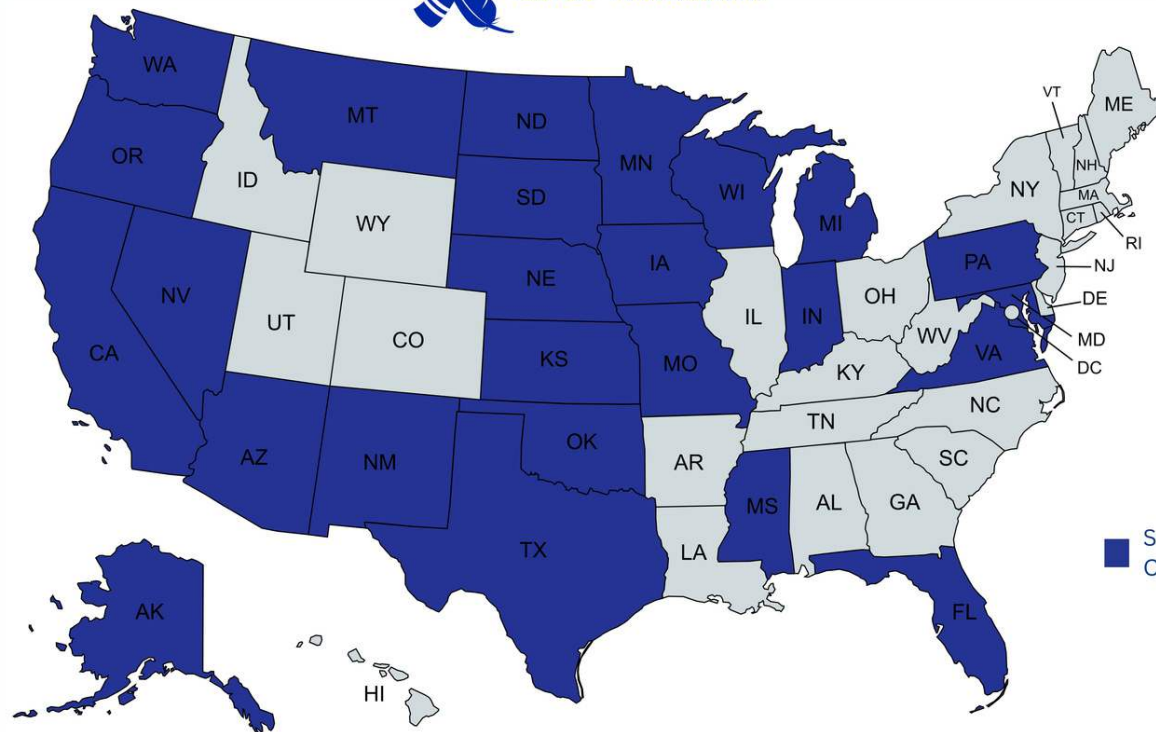
Food connects us. It nourishes us. It strengthens us. Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet—rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains—can help reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

Take a step toward wellness today! Explore AICAF's resources for more inspiration on cancer prevention methods.

Join us on 3/27/25 for our webinar! Learn more about the power of food in cancer prevention. Plus, attendees will have a chance to win exciting door prizes! Don't miss this opportunity to learn, connect, and celebrate the strength of Indigenous food traditions. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/4hs65rm6>



Screening Pledge



The pledge map shows our reach, with 58 respondents—13 from Minnesota, our largest group. We're grateful to all participants for their commitment to Colorectal Cancer awareness and prevention!

■ Screening Pledges Completed

American Indian Cancer Foundation
3 April at 13:37 · 🌐

Each year, more than 153,000 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer (CRC). Thank you to those who joined the fight to end this preventable disease. We are excited to have blotted 50% of the state's blue! We will be holding a drawing later today for the prize packages and will announce the winners in the comment section. #BlueBeadsScreeningPledge #FightColorectalCancer #AICAF #CRCawareness #CancerScreeningSaveLives

BLOT IT BLUE



CRC pledgers are "blotting in blue" across the nation! Join us by pledging to get screened here: <http://ow.ly/CIX65ON7FBO>



AICAF encourages relatives to take an active role in their health by participating in its Screening Pledge, sparking meaningful conversations around colorectal cancer prevention. This pledge guides individuals through the latest screening recommendations, helping them determine the best time to get screened based on their age and risk factors. The map above reflects the 58 pledges made so far, illustrating the growing movement across Indian Country. By making these commitments visible, AICAF hopes to inspire more participation, strengthen community accountability, and emphasize the shared responsibility of addressing colorectal cancer disparities in Native communities. Next year, let's build on this momentum—help us reach even more relatives, gather pledges from every state, and expand our circle of prevention.

Social Media Campaign

Each year, AICAF leads a vibrant social media campaign to raise awareness about colorectal cancer and promote the importance of screening in Indigenous communities.

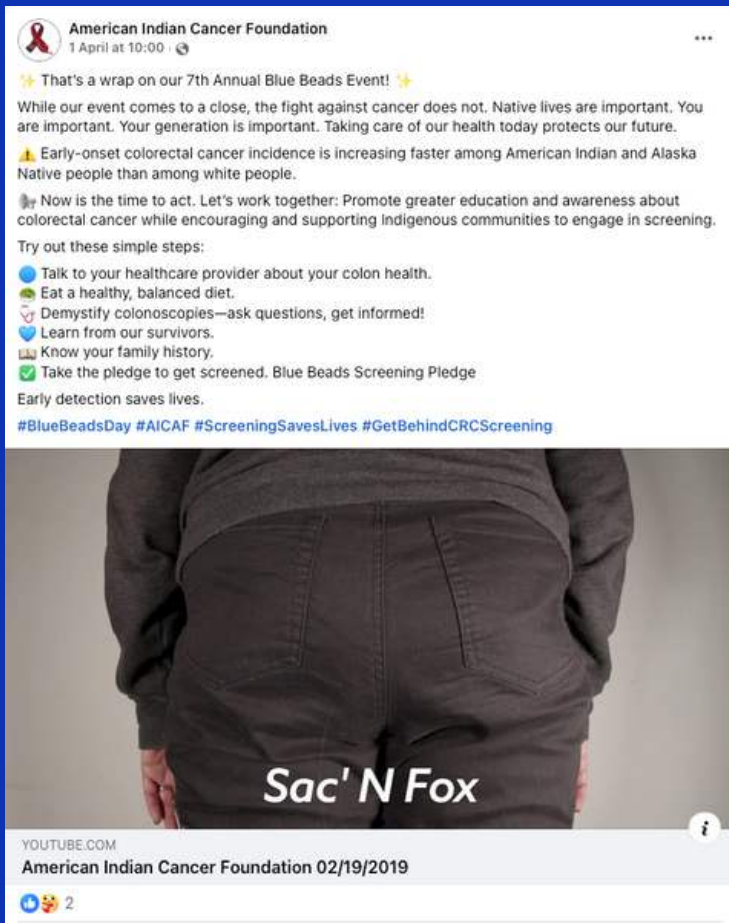
Raising awareness about colorectal cancer is crucial, and a strong social media campaign allows us to reach and engage a wide audience in an impactful way. By harnessing the power of digital platforms, we can educate people on prevention, early detection, and treatment options—ultimately encouraging action that saves lives. Social media enables us to foster community support, share survivor stories, and amplify key messages, making vital information accessible to those who most need it. With this campaign, we aim to break stigmas, spark conversations, and ensure that no one faces colorectal cancer alone.

As part of this effort, we invited our online community to wear blue beadwork or clothing throughout March to spark conversation, show solidarity, and honor those who have faced or are currently living with a colorectal cancer diagnosis.


Our social media campaign is designed to maximize engagement and spread awareness about colorectal cancer through a multi-faceted approach. With 13 carefully crafted social media posts, we highlight essential components such as an informative From Tradition to Table webinar, compelling personal stories about Survivorship and Caregiving, updates on the national Blot It Blue map, and merchandise that supports the cause. To further amplify our reach, we've strategically invested in five social media boosts, ensuring that key messages and life-saving information reach a broader audience. This campaign is not just about sharing information—it's about fostering a movement that encourages prevention, early detection, and community support.

BLUE BEADS SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS		
Platform	Reach/Impressions	Engagment
Facebook	56,864	3,414
Instagram	7,755	4,864
LinkedIn	4,117	146
Total	68,736	8,424

Social Media Campaign



Social Media Campaign cont.


**American Indian Cancer Foundation**
13 March · 🌐

🌱 The wisdom of Indigenous cancer survivors teaches us resilience, strength, and healing. Read the inspiring journeys of colorectal cancer survivors through AICAF Survivorship here: <https://americanindiancancer.org/survivorship/>

💙 We are honored to offer AICAF Sacred Circle, a free online community for caregivers, survivors, families, and friends. Connect, find support, and empower each other—rooted in cultural values and shared experiences.

👉 Register today and share with those who need it most: <https://aicafsacredcircle.com/>

#BlueBeadsDay #AICAF #ScreeningSavesLives #GetBehindCRCScreening



AMERICANINDIANCANCER.ORG
Survivorship | American Indian Cancer Foundation
Survivor Support with the American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF)
Welcome to the Survivor Support Program with the American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF). We understand that the journey doesn't end with cancer...

ARE YOU AN
INDIGENOUS
CANCER
SURVIVOR,
CAREGIVER,
FAMILY MEMBER,
OR FRIEND?



The American Indian Cancer Foundation has launched AICAF Sacred Circle—a community space where you can build your own personalized support network. This free platform allows you to communicate and organize with those who understand your unique needs.

Visit <https://aicafsacredcircle.com> or scan the QR code below to join today!



To learn more contact health@aicaf.org



We acknowledge the Cancer Research and Prevention, for the support of the American Indian Cancer Foundation staff, and the printing and distribution of the campaign materials. We appreciate the support of the American Indian Cancer Foundation. The content is 100% the responsibility of the individuals and does not necessarily represent the official views of CDC.

**American Indian Cancer Foundation**
1 March · 🌐

🔵 Join Us for our 7th Annual Blue Beads Event! 🔵

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and we're excited to share new resources and opportunities for you to engage with AICAF, your community, and healthcare providers.

👉 Did you know? Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer among Indigenous people and the second leading cause of cancer death—but it's also preventable with regular screening!

✅ Screening starts at 45! This week, we're focusing on getting screened. Check out our new postcard—bring it to your next healthcare visit to start the conversation about screening.

Look out for our AICAF team in action this month as they raise awareness on colorectal cancer and gut health through social media. We invite you to engage with us and help spread the word!

#BlueBeadsDay #AICAF #ScreeningSavesLives #GetBehindCRCScreening

YOUR LIFE IS
IMPORTANT
YOUR

LET'S GET
SCREENED!



Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cause of cancer death for Native people. Screening saves lives by detecting precancerous growths, or polyps, in the early stages when they are easiest to treat and remove. Most men and women should start screening at age 45, but it can be done earlier if symptoms are present. Talk to your doctor about your screening options, and encourage relatives to schedule their next appointment to help us end colon cancer in Indian Country!

PLACE
STAMP
HERE



**American Indian
Cancer Foundation®**

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