



NORTHERN NAVAJO MEDICAL CENTER
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Yaa'teeh and Aloha, greetings from the Council on Indigenous Health! The American School Health Association's Council on Indigenous Health is soliciting for dynamic and motivational speakers to present at the "Cultural Exchange" Symposium. The symposium will be held on October 27, 2009 during the 83rd Annual ASHA Conference in Denver, Colorado. The conference theme is "*Healthy Kids, Healthy Lives, Healthy Futures.*" The COIH Planning Committee would appreciate any recommendations. We would like interested individuals to donate their valuable time and services for the event.

The COIH was founded in 2007 and sponsored their first symposium in July 2007 at ASHA Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii. The NAIHS Health Promotion / School Health Program serves in an administrative and leadership role to support the council. The 2007 COIH Symposium highlighted the Navajo Coordinated School Health and the Hawaiian Health and Education Programs – both programs emphasized the important of using culture and language to teach health and wellness to children and youth. The 2008 COIH Symposium was held in November 2008 in Tampa, Florida. The keynote presentation featured the Seminole Tribe of Florida – they provided an overview of their education and health systems and how they serve the youth. Both events were successful and participants felt the symposium was beneficial.

The symposium goal is to share the culture, language, and traditional beliefs and values of Indigenous People and how they integrate these concepts and models to promote health and wellness for youth, families, and communities. Another goal is to recruit members for the council from different disciplines. We are proud of the interest and partnership with the Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, Seminole Tribe, and the international interest from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan.

We know that Indigenous People share similar beliefs and values; and we have common interest. Our strength comes from our culture, language, traditional beliefs and values that have been taught to us by our elders and ancestors. We value our native language and know the power of storytelling to teach our children. Indigenous people have always known that body, mind, and spirit are equally important and inter-connected. We know the importance of sharing these teachings with our children and their children and the generations to come. Practicing our traditional teachings gives us strength and has allowed us to sustain as individuals, families, and communities. The relationships between people and families; and among communities are rooted in these teachings.

Please share this invitation with colleagues. If you are interested or would like to recommend someone, please contact us as soon as you can. Please visit the ASHA website (www.ashaweb.org) for information about the conference, council, and association. If you have any questions, suggestions or comments, contact Darlene Begay at darlene.begay3@ihs.gov or Ku`ulei Serna at kserna@hawaii.edu.

Respectfully – COIH Planning Committee