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April 2013 Issue

# **National Indian Council on Aging**

## **NEWSLETTER**

### *Aging in Indian Country*

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Established in 1976, NICOA has become the nation's foremost advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders. Our mission is to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic well-being for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.



## **National Indian Council on Aging**

#### **NICOA's objectives are to:**

- Enhance communications and cooperation with community service providers and other aging organizations that represent and advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.
- Provide information and technical assistance for Native American communities to improve health care for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.
- Network with appropriate agencies to maximize resources, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivery systems for Elders.
- Provide information, reports and expert testimony requested by Tribal Nations and the US Congress.
- Provide a clearinghouse for information on issues affecting American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.

NICOA provides service to our American Indian and Alaska Native community through several grants from agencies within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. One of these very important federal programs is **SCSEP**. NICOA operates as a National Sponsor of the [Senior Community Service Employment Program \(SCSEP\)](#) in 14 states through a grant from the Department of Labor.



# National Indian Council on Aging

## Dual Goals of the Elder Employment Project (SCSEP) by Dorinda Fox, SCSEP Director

NICOA’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provides work-based training for eligible elders to improve their chances for new employment. These elders assist agencies with valuable community services within nonprofit and government agencies, including American Indian Tribes. These SCSEP dual goals, employment training and community service, are demonstrated in the following examples.

Participants Lawrence M., John Y., and Steven H. train at the Oyate Teca Community Garden project in Kyle, South Dakota. They are learning to plant and harvest crops and start a green house. The project’s goal is to increase the availability of fresh foods, improve community nutrition through traditional food harvests, and integrate Lakota Indian cultural beliefs with modern agriculture by passing on traditional teachings to youth. There is a lack of grocery stores and fresh produce in the area, so this project meets a vital need for healthy foods in surrounding communities.

SCSEP Participant Sandra H. is assigned as a case manager trainee at the Fitting Back In Prisoner Reintegration Program, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Sandra provides meaningful community service by assisting clients who have been released from prison to access various resources and positively re-enter the community. She is being trained by staff to assist with job search assistance to help clients find employment. Helping agency clients with job search is beneficial training for her, too!

Sandra, Lawrence, John, and Steven are only four of the more than 500 participants enrolled in NICOA projects serving across 14 states. The NICOA [SCSEP](#) is federally funded from Title V of the Older Americans Act through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

## BOARD MEMBERS

Eastern Region  
Northwest Region  
Southwest Region  
Midwest Region

**Eddie Tullis, Chairman**  
**James DeLaCruz, Sr., Vice Chair**  
**Lucia Trujillo, Secretary**  
**Donna Swallows, Treasurer**

Poarch Creek  
Quinault  
Pueblo of Sandia  
Grand Traverse Band

Alaska Region  
Eastern Oklahoma Region  
Great Plains Region  
Navajo Region  
Pacific Region  
Southern Plains Region  
Rocky Mountain Region  
Western Region  
Title VI Association.

Anna Frank  
Rhonda Weaver  
Robert LaFromboise  
Ralph Bennett, Jr.  
Harriet Rhoades  
Anita L. Johnson  
Vacant  
Phyllis Antone  
Vacant

Athabascan  
Quapaw  
Sisseton-Wahpeton  
Navajo  
Sherwood Pomo  
Kiowa  
  
Gila River

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Randella Bluehouse**

Navajo

**CALL TO Rocky Mountain Region:** Please contact Randella Bluehouse (505-292-2001 ext 25) if you know of an appropriate candidate to fill this vacant board position.

## Southwest Region Updates by Lucia Trujillo, NICOA Secretary

### September, 2012 - National Indian Council of Aging Conference, Albuquerque, NM

The State of New Mexico does not require a tribe to participate in the Medicaid program. However, Tribal governments are concerned about the changes that will affect Native Americans in Medicaid under the State of New Mexico's "Centennial Care Program." This concern led the Southwest Region to sponsor Resolution 01-2012, "Adherence to State/Tribal Consultation and Collaboration Statutes in the Design, Development and Implementation of the Medicaid Program."

The resolution was presented to and approved by the membership at the Conference. It was forwarded to the National Congress of American Indians where it was adopted and approved. New Mexico tribes are in the process of meeting with the Human Services Department.

### Friday, February 1, 2013, State of New Mexico Fifty-First Legislature Native American Day

New Mexico tribal dignitaries as well as other Native American Organizations were in attendance. Tribute was paid to all of the tribal governors, chairpersons, council members and their staff by recognizing and introducing them. The National Indian Council on Aging was also recognized. Representing NICOA was Lucia Trujillo, Southwest Region Board Member, and Randella Bluehouse, Executive Director. The State of New Mexico's Governor, Susanna Martinez, made a proclamation that Native American Day would be on the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of February each year.

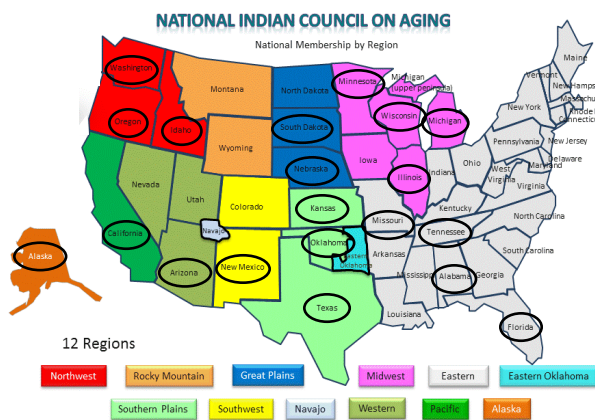


**New Mexico Indian Council on Aging (NMICoA)** members are elderly and disabled from the 19 Pueblos and 2 Apache tribes in New Mexico. The NMICoA meets quarterly to discuss and provide education on policy matters and issues concerning the well being of its membership. As the NICOA representative for the SW Region, I make every effort to attend these meetings and to stay informed on the issues that are of concern to each community.

As with any organization, a good leader plays a vital role in coordinating communication among its members and other organizations to come together and work toward accomplishing our goals. Organizations such as the NMICoA is one way of reaching the elders in our regions. It is worth the time, effort, coordination and patience to develop a good working relationship with groups like this. Perhaps a session on how to develop these groups can be provided at our next NICOA conference.

## NICOA Regions

See page 4 to learn what the circles around the state names indicate.



NICOA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1976 by members of the National Tribal Chairmen's Association. Members included the late Wendell Chino (Mescalero Apache), the late Joe DeLaCruz (Quinault) and other tribal leaders.

These leaders saw the need for a national organization whose sole purpose is to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native Elders.

NICOA is governed by a 13-member board of directors elected from 12 Regions across the Continental United States and Alaska plus one representative of the National Title VI Association.

**THANK YOU Poarch Creek Tribe for your \$60,000 challenge grant.  
Your donation can assist us in meeting that challenge.**

# Survey Results from the NICOA 19th Biennial Conference by Toby Rose Brown

Aging in Indian Country: Embracing the Past and Facing the Future

Held at the Albuquerque Convention Center September 15-18, 2012

## The NICOA Conference IS YOUR Conference

Members from **20 States** representing **77 Tribal Nations** enjoyed three and a half days of presentations, exhibits, caucuses and fun at our 19<sup>th</sup> Biennial National Indian Council on Aging Conference.

**The circles on the page 3 map indicate the 20 states from which NICOA members came.** Over 40% of those members returned a completed survey that provided some very interesting information.

### Health Care Information

<http://www.healthcare.gov/law/>

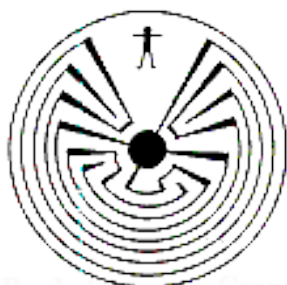
This web site has information on the Affordable Care Act (ACA). You can read the 955 pages at this link. Page 244 of the Act contains Subtitle K – Protections for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Sec. 2901

Special Rules Relating to Indians

Sec. 2902

Makes permanent the reauthorization of Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA)



Information	National Statistics	AI/AN Survey Results
Registered to vote	67.6%	90.0%
Have cell phones	82.0%	86.0%
Households own a computer	65.0%	59.0%
Alcoholism	8.0%	15.0%
Arthritis	21.0%	54.0%
Blindness	<1%	22.0%
Breathing Problems	NA	29.0%
Cancer	41.0%	15.0%
Dementia/Alzheimer's	12.5%	7.0%
Diabetes	7.8%	59.0%
Drug Addiction	8.3%	9.0%
Emotional abuse	NA	7.0%
Heart Disease	11.8%	30.0%
High blood pressure	31.3%	75.0%
High cholesterol	13.0%	47.0%
Physical abuse	NA	3.0%
Physical Disability	20.0%	15.0%

NA—Not Available

Find information for your specific state at this web site.

[www.ccwdata.org/web/guest/interactive-data/chronic-conditions-dashboard](http://www.ccwdata.org/web/guest/interactive-data/chronic-conditions-dashboard)

### COLA Increase Approved for Veterans

Veteran's United web site states, "President Obama signed into law a bill that gives veterans and survivors a 1.7 percentage hike for the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). The increase will ... affect about 4 million veterans, military retirees and survivors.

"The COLA will increase pay for Social Security recipients and military retirees who receive disability compensation and pension, as well as veterans' survivors who receive dependency and indemnity compensation."

**For information on the RFP for the 2014 & 2016 Conferences check**  
[www.nicoa.org/conferences/](http://www.nicoa.org/conferences/)