

UNM Prevention Research Center will Examine Childhood Obesity

Cathleen Rineer-Garber

The University of New Mexico's Prevention Research Center has launched a new study to evaluate the efficacy of early intervention in the prevention of obesity. The Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE), a five-year study funded by the National Institutes of Health, will focus on more than 600 preschool age children in New Mexico.



"Nutrition and physical activity during childhood are important, not only for growth and development, but because health behaviors established early in childhood track into adulthood and can affect long-term health and disease risk," says Sally Davis, PhD, professor and chief of the UNM Department of Pediatrics' division of health promotion and disease prevention and director of the UNM Prevention Research Center.

According to Davis, early childhood health behaviors related to diet and physical activity have particular implications for childhood obesity. "While the causes of obesity are complex, diet, physical activity and television viewing time directly influence a child's weight and ultimately his or her health," she says.

The purpose of the study is to design, implement and evaluate a culturally appropriate intervention program for children attending 16 Head Start programs around the state.

The study will promote increased physical activity;

increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; decreased consumption of sweetened beverages and high-fat foods; and decreased screen time. This will be accomplished through six different components including classroom curriculum and training for Head Start teachers, aides, food service staff and families. Davis says that interventions that address not only individual knowledge, attitudes, and behavior but also the social and physical environment have the potential for greater impact.

Children participating in the study will be followed for two years. Measures taken at the beginning, at mid-point and at the end of the project will include height, weight, body mass index, dietary assessment, and levels of physical activity to assess the success of the intervention.



With childhood obesity rates reaching epidemic proportions across the United States, finding effective prevention methods has become a vital public health issue. Since the 1970s, the prevalence of overweight among children has more than doubled for preschoolers ages

two to five and adolescents ages 12-19, while it has more than tripled for children 6-11 years.

According to Davis, overweight children have a much greater chance of becoming overweight adults—and overweight adults have a much greater risk of developing serious health problems including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer and arthritis.



National Indian Health Board Local Impact Award to UNM Prevention Research Center Staff

Marla Pardilla, MSW, MPH

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The National Indian Health Board (NIHB) was organized in 1972 to advocate on behalf of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Tribal governments in addressing health care needs, and to represent the sovereign rights of all federally recognized Tribal governments, to promote the highest levels of health for AIAN people, and to advise the Federal government in the development of responsible health care policy.

According to the NIHB mission statement, "The life expectancy of AIAN is 70.6 years compared to the U.S. population of 76.5 years and the vast majority of illnesses and deaths are from the diseases and conditions that are preventable. There is a clear gap in preventive care among the AIAN population as evidenced by the growing disparities in health for certain preventable health conditions (i.e. diabetes, heart disease, cancer, tuberculosis and injuries). The mortality rates for the AIAN population are disproportionate compared to all races in the U.S. for the following preventable diseases and conditions: 638% greater for alcoholism; 400% greater for tuberculosis; 291% greater for diabetes; 215% greater for accidents; 191% greater for suicide; 181% greater for homicide; 167% greater for pneumonia; 138% greater for gastrointestinal diseases; and 120% greater for heart disease."

Each year, the NIHB recognizes individuals and institutions that contribute greatly to narrowing the health disparities for the AIAN people. On October 16, 2005, NIHB gave such recognition to the UNM PRC at the NIHB Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Receiving the award for UNM PRC were Harrison Platero and Marla Pardilla.

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New Mexico's Prevention Research Center

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A New Partnership: Investing in Teens in Acoma - Canoncito - Laguna Through School-based Health Centers

Peou Lakhana, MSW

The Acoma-Canoncito (To'Hajiilee)-Laguna (ACL) Teen Centers, a part of the New Mexico PRC, were recently awarded two grants for a total of \$40,000 by the School-Based Health Centers Fund, an established fund of the New Mexico Community Foundation. The funding provides support for additional mental health services and piloting of a Medicaid enrollment project for adolescents attending the Laguna/Acoma Junior/Senior High School and the To'Hajiilee Community School.

"In the ACL service area, adolescent mental health services are extremely limited and yet so greatly needed. By providing additional services, we will be able to reach more teens through early intervention to increase protective factors and reduce their risk factors," said Peou Lakhana, Senior Program Manager for the ACL Teen Centers.

More than one-third of Native American children live in poverty; 40% of New Mexico's Native American children also have no health insurance compared to 20% of all the state's children. Though they have twice the nation's teen suicide rate, many Native American children live in rural areas, far from health care facilities, according to the New Mexico Community Foundation.

School-based health centers (SBHCs) can effectively provide both mental health and physical health care to large numbers of students, especially those living in underserved areas where it is difficult to access medical services geared to adolescent health, according to a 1992 evaluation of SBHCs by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

"School-based health centers are a critical and significant health care link to reaching adolescents. Students can come to a SBHC without missing a full day of school, because the service providers are located on the school campus," said Peou. "Ultimately, our goal is to promote a healthy lifestyle for adolescents as they journey into adulthood. Our Centers are a true partnership between youth, parents, community, UNM and funding entities, such as the New Mexico Community Foundation."

The ACL Teen Centers have served the ACL communities for over 20 years. In addition to mental health and primary care services, substance abuse prevention programs are provided to students attending the five area elementary and middle schools.



ACL Teen Center Staff (above): Christina Leon, Lynn Abeita, Peou Lakhana, Renee Dotson-Cox, Gloria Blea-Johnson. (not pictured) Lauren Fowler.

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"We are excited about the opportunity to work in rural Head Start programs where we can reach a large number of three-to-five-year-old children, their teachers and their families," says Davis. "If the intervention is successful it has the potential to influence the lives of New Mexicans and Head Start policy nationwide."

Special Thanks to the Church Family:

Casey, Lora, Deesbah, Nizhoni, Bahozhoni, Alilee Bah and Shandiin
(Photos by Barry Staver)



Cooking with Kids

Lynn Walters, MS

Ten years ago, the Santa Fe Student Nutrition Advisory Council's efforts to improve school meals led to the creation of *Cooking with Kids* hands-on food and nutrition education program. *Cooking with Kids* now engages over 4,000 elementary school students in Santa Fe in hands-on learning with fresh, affordable foods from diverse cultures. The program models healthy food choices in elementary school classrooms and cafeterias. *Cooking with Kids*' bilingual curriculum provides opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, including math, science, social studies, language arts, music and art. *Cooking with Kids*' curriculum is now being implemented in a number of New Mexico communities.

Cooking with Kids is among the growing number of successful programs in the United States that focus on experiential learning with fresh, affordable, and healthy foods.

Cooking with Kids was honored to receive a national USDA Food and Nutrition Services LINC Award recognizing Leadership, Innovation, and Nutrition Collaboration in the category of Partnerships and Collaborations at the second FNS National Nutrition Education Conference in Arlington, Virginia on September 14, 2005.

Program evaluation includes classroom and cafeteria observations, as well as feedback from students, teachers, families, foodservice staff and administrators. For the past several years, Leslie Cunningham-Sabo, Research Assistant Professor at the UNM Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, has been leading science-based program evaluation efforts, working with the *Cooking with Kids* staff in a participatory model.

With support provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Buckaroo Ball Committee, Inc. a new website offers free downloads of simple fruit and vegetable tasting lessons at

www.cookingwithkids.net. These classes provide opportunities for students to explore fresh foods using all of their senses, to have fun, and to exercise choice. Classroom teachers can easily teach these classes using lesson plans, letters from farmers, food history, and nutrition information provided by *Cooking with Kids*. Students read about, draw, taste, and write about different varieties of fruits or vegetables. They learn to articulate similarities and differences, employ descriptive language, expand vocabulary, and explore choice and personal preference.

Whether growing and tasting crunchy sunflower sprouts, observing the surprise magenta inside a blood orange, or realizing that raisins come from grapes, students discover for themselves that many

"real" foods make delicious, healthy snacks. Whenever possible, *Cooking with Kids* uses regionally grown produce in season, supporting local farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

Collaborators include Santa Fe Public Schools, Santa Fe Farmers Market, Santa Fe County Extension, New Mexico State University, University of New Mexico, Museum of International Folk Art, and *Tendrils* Garden Project. Program funding is provided by USDA's Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program through the New Mexico Human Services Department through New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service, Santa Fe Public Schools, McCune Charitable Foundation, City of Santa Fe, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, Buckaroo Ball Committee, Inc., Con Alma Health Foundation, Azalea Foundation, Santa Fe Community Foundation, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In-kind contributions are provided by Albertsons, La Montanita Coop, Localflavor, Smiths, Trader Joe's, Vitamin Cottage, Whole Foods, & Wild Oats.



PRC Staff Updates



Christine Calvin

Christine Calvin recently started work at the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention as an Associate Scientist I. She will be contributing nutrition expertise to the CHILE and Cooking With Kids projects. Christine is a Registered Dietitian and received her Master's degree in Nutrition and helped complete the Healthy Body Awareness curriculum, trained NAAA Senior Center staff to implement the curriculum, traveled to Jos, Nigeria for two months to do research with the MIRT program through UNM's Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, helped her family in Indiana celebrate her father's 80th birthday (it was a surprise), taught nutrition at TVI and UNM, and served as Nominating Chair for the New Mexico Dietetic Association. She and her husband, Eugene Duran, love spending time in their garden in Tome, playing with their dog Moby, and their cat Bocaloca. She likes to hike and camp, would love to spend more time reading novels, but research papers are taking priority right now!



Renee Dotson-Cox

Renee Dotson Cox is originally from the Navajo community of Window Rock, AZ. Her maternal clan is Dibelizhini and she is born for the Welsh people. Her maternal grandfathers are the Kiyaa'aani people and her paternal grandfather is Welsh. She has a two year old son named Koey and is married to Daniel Cox. Renee received a B.A. in History and Psychology in 1995 from UNM. She completed her Master's in Counseling from UNM in 2000. She has worked as a guidance coordinator at Santa Fe Indian School, a counselor at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, and a guidance counselor for a local Charter School. Presently, she is employed as the clinical counselor at the To'Hajiilee Teen Center and a group facilitator for the Nihii'iina Project, also located in To'Hajiilee.



Antonia Montoya

Ms. Montoya plans and implements the Life Skills Training curriculum to elementary schools and the DARE To Be You curriculum to middle school students and their parents. Ms. Montoya has worked as a health educator for five years and has worked in the field of health and human services for nine years. In the field of health education, Antonia specializes in sensitive topics including: HIV/AIDS, STDs, reproductive/sexual health, hepatitis, substance use, death and dying, grief and stress. She is currently a UNM Masters of Health Education candidate; she plans to complete her degree December 2006.



Lynn Walters

Lynn Walters received her master's degree in health education from the University of New Mexico in 2003. She has been accepted into the Doctoral Program in Communication at the University of New Mexico for Fall 2006. A former restaurant owner in Santa Fe, Lynn brings eleven years of program experience to her research in nutrition education for children. Lynn has received multiple grants for hands-on food and nutrition education programming, including awards from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, and the McCune Charitable Foundation. She was recently named Co-Project Director of "Cooking With Kids: Integrating Classroom, Cafeteria, and Family Experiences," a project funded by USDA of the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center.



Evaluating Tobacco-Related Health Disparities

Linda J. Peñaloza, PhD and Eric Chrisp, MA

The Health Evaluation and Research Team (HEART), led by Principal Investigator Linda J. Peñaloza, is funded by the New Mexico Department of Health's Tobacco Use Prevention and Control (TUPAC) program. HEART, one of several research teams within the New Mexico Prevention Research Center, has been working with TUPAC for several years to design and conduct detailed evaluation of the state's 60+ TUPAC-funded tobacco programs. For the last two contract years a significant portion of HEART's work has focused on identifying tobacco-related health disparities around New Mexico.

Health disparities, as defined by the National Institutes of Health, are "differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups." Tobacco-related disparities are expressed in rates of tobacco use, exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS), rates of relapse and quit attempts, access to tobacco-specific prevention and intervention, access to health care in general, access to decision makers, community capacity and infrastructure, access to funding resources, the level to which a given population is targeted by tobacco advertising as well as disease outcomes.

Identifying and eliminating tobacco-related health disparities among specific populations is an emerging goal of public health initiatives in New Mexico and is one of the four Tobacco Program Goals set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Understanding health differences among populations is necessary in the design and implementation of effective interventions.

In general, cigarette use is highest among the population groups in New Mexico with the following characteristics: low socioeconomic status (e.g., low education, low income, unemployed, uninsured); high school youth and young adults (18-24 year olds); people who live in the southeastern quadrant of NM; American Indian youth; youth with poor academic performance; lesbian, gay, or bisexual individuals (LGBT); and people with a disability requiring assistance.

People more likely to make a quit attempt are

American Indians, rural residents, 18-24 year olds, low-income households, the unemployed, and people with less than a high school diploma. Groups who are less likely to make a quit attempt include: Whites, urban residents, adults over age 35, households earning more than \$50,000 annually, and college graduates. Overall, it appears that lower socioeconomic status New Mexicans are more likely to attempt quitting smoking than adults in higher socioeconomic strata.

In 2005, TUPAC and a variety of stakeholders, including members of HEART, engaged in a strategic planning process to obtain input from diverse communities in New Mexico on how to address tobacco-related health disparities. The main goals of the strategic plan include: 1) build understanding and trust among groups and service providers/stakeholders; 2) increase quantitative and qualitative data to eliminate data gaps among selected populations; 3) increase awareness of tobacco-related disparities; 4) maximize collaboration and partnering; and 5) develop and implement outreach and interventions for specific populations.

In the spring of 2006, HEART has been involved in data collection among three specific populations in the state: African Americans, LGBT, and members of a pueblo community. This work will continue through 2007, and will be expanded to include more pueblo communities and Spanish-speaking recent immigrants in northern and southern New Mexico. HEART recently published a data report presenting detailed information about tobacco-related health disparities. This report, entitled *Impact of Tobacco on Specific Populations in New Mexico*, reviews existing data and identifies data gaps among a wide range of specific populations. The report is found on the NM PRC website (<http://hsc.unm.edu/chpdp>) or can be obtained by contacting Linda Peñaloza. This tobacco disparities data report complements the disparities strategic plan.

HEART members include: Eric Chrisp, Willa Ortega, Mary Dillon, Jackie Morgan, Judith Rinehart, Elverna Bennett, and Eugene Tsinaginnie.

Healing from Historical Trauma: Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart in To'Hajiilee

Jessica Goodkind, PhD

In September 2005, Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart of the Lakota Nation visited the community of To'Hajiilee and the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention to discuss her work with historical trauma. Dr. Brave Heart is an expert in historical trauma, and the first person to apply the concept to Native Americans. She began her day in To'Hajiilee by visiting the community school and speaking with children about the ongoing suffering that has resulted from the loss of language, tradition, and land.

Many of the children expressed interest in learning about this aspect of Native American history and how it is connected to problems in the community today. Next, Dr. Brave Heart met with other members of the community at the Desidero Center, where she gave a presentation, listened to

To'Hajiilee residents speak, and enjoyed a traditional mutton feast. Dr. Brave Heart's visit was also intended to help the community, in partnership with UNM staff, to discuss and plan an intervention for healing from historical trauma. She met with the Nihii'iina (Life is Ours) Community Advisory Council and UNM staff for three days to plan a 6-month intervention that began in May 2006.

We were very fortunate to have someone with so much experience helping us to plan our project and raise awareness of historical trauma in the community of To'Hajiilee. Dr. Brave Heart helped us to plan a retreat for health service providers from To'Hajiilee and UNM staff to receive specialized training in historical trauma interventions. The training retreat took place at the end of April 2006.

Community Advisory Council (CAC) met on March 10, 2006

Marla Pardilla, MPH, MSW

The CAC members held their quarterly meeting at the Prevention Research Center to network and to discuss the Center research activities and New Mexico community program activities. Present at this meeting were: Hank Haskie, Frank Morgan, Theresa Clay, Chenoa S. Jensen, Lynn Walters, Vinton Zuni. The new CAC member, Yvonne Davis was introduced and Hank Haskie was welcomed back (he has been away for one year for education). Linda Beltran informed the CAC about the Center program updates and Sally Davis discussed the newest research project, Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (C.H.I.L.E.). The CAC members Theresa Clay, Chenoa S. Jensen, and Frank Morgan made presentations about their community projects. Theresa Clay provided the mission, goals and objectives about her program, the I.H.S. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention programs for the Albuquerque Area tribes. Chenoa S. Jensen presented her project, Envision New Mexico, a state-wide Pediatric Overweight Pilot community outreach program, which aims to inform, educate and empower community clinics and health

centers to better assess the obesity problem and to address the needs. Frank Morgan discussed the health care crises in Native American communities and how alternative medicine, as in Native American healing practices, can help to make treatment more holistic. Jessica Goodkind, Principal Investigator for the Center core research project, Teen Health Resiliency Intervention for Violence Exposure (T.H.R.I.V.E.) provided a progress report for the CAC during this meeting.



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Camila Romero

Camila Romero, “I was born in Santiago, Chile and moved to the United States when I was one year old. I received my medical degree from Ponce School of Medicine in Ponce, Puerto Rico and completed my Pediatric internship at UNM Children’s hospital in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As a medical student I chose to do research for my elective months through two different experiences—Dengue virus surveillance and HIV/AIDS morbidity. My work in the PAHL project at the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention has been invaluable for my career in Preventive Medicine, a specialty within the field of medicine. In July 2006, I will start a two year residency program at University of Colorado, Denver in Preventive Medicine. I will be working on a community garden and an environmental health project. I’m indebted to the Center for having launched me into my chosen career with experience and confidence. Thank you!”



Ann Githinji

Ann Githinji, M.S., was born in Kenya, East Africa and came to the United States to pursue graduate studies. She has a Masters degree in biology from New Mexico State University and is currently completing her Doctoral studies in Biomedical Sciences at University of New Mexico. During her studies at UNM, Ann became very interested in the health disparities in the African-American populations, especially in HIV/AIDS and drew parallels with the AIDS epidemic affecting continental Africans. Subsequently, Ann, together with other sub-Saharan African women, founded Women Can International, a grassroots organization that seeks to identify and disable the underlying causes of the AIDS pandemic among Africans and minority populations in the United States. At CHPDP, Ann is working on the African Refugee Well-Being Project (ARWP), which is assessing the challenges and stressors faced by African refugees as they begin new lives in New Mexico. Last December, Ann mobilized the collection of donations at CHPDP that were distributed at a holiday get-together for the African refugee families. The holiday get-together was organized and hosted by WCI members. It is Ann’s hope that through more collaborative efforts between ARWP and the communities in NM, the African refugee families will finally feel at home in Albuquerque.



Allistair McCray

Allistair S. McCray, Navajo, a Crownpoint native, was hired as a temporary student employee through an employment program offered to high school and college students from the Department of Youth in Crownpoint, NM. This program is funded through the Navajo tribe, helping students prepare for the employment process and opportunities. Students are given a number of hours to find a worksite. He has assisted with creating logos and other graphic arts projects. Allistair is majoring in Graphic Design and has attended Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Northern Arizona University and is currently attending Technical Vocational Institute. His previous experience in the Health Promotion field started at Crownpoint I.H.S., assisting and advertising outreach programs (S.P.A.R.K., Project Adventure, Fitness Gram, Just Move It). He has been an experienced runner for nine years, studied nutrition and sports medicine on the side. Allistair is a freelance artist in Graphic Design and Video Editing. Future plans include continuing his education at UNM, directing and writing for film, and assisting with the native communities in the area of arts and health issues.

Announcements:

Dr. Lynn Abeita has been selected as a 2006 Promoting Psychological Research and Training on Health Disparities Issues at Ethnic Minority Serving Institutions (ProDIGS) awardees, funded by the American Psychological Association (APA)/Science Directorate's "Academic Enhancement Initiative" and administered by the APA Public Interest Directorate's Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) in collaboration with the APA Minority Fellowship Program. Her research will focus on American Indian adolescent intimate relationships.

Sally Davis, Ph.D., Linda Peñaloza, Ph.D., and Lynn Abeita, Ph.D. took time from their busy schedules to attend the annual UNM Commencement exercises to support the Spring 2006 graduating students. Those with doctorates at the Prevention Research Center serve as mentors and teachers for students who are interested in public health and research. Over the years, the Center has supported and provided research training for students from Africa, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Chile, and other countries. Also, students from Native American tribal communities and Hispanic communities have received their initial research experience at the Center.



Linda Peñaloza, PhD, Sally Davis, PhD, and Lynn Abeita, PhD

Recent & Upcoming Grads 2006



Audrey D. Solimon, B.S., Pueblo of Laguna; received her Bachelor's in Psychology from the University of New Mexico and obtained her Master's in Public Health in May 2006 from the University of New Mexico. She currently works as a Graduate Student Research Assistant on the Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) grant with Dr. Nina Wallerstein and various Tribal groups in New Mexico. While pursuing her MPH at the University of New Mexico, Ms. Solimon was able to complete her MPH Practicum at the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention under the direction and guidance of Dr. Jessica Goodkind on the eTHRIVE project. Future plans include continuing her education in public health with an emphasis on Tribal Community Health issues.



Dustin M. Cole, a former CHPDP employee, graduated on May 12th from the UNM School of Medicine. Honors and awards he received were Alpha Omega Alpha, a national honor medical society founded in 1902 for the Class of 2006 Research Award; Honors in Research, Faculty Award of Excellence; and a Phase II Clerkship Award in Family & Community Medicine. He worked with the UNM Prevention Research Center as a Research Scientist on the Pathways Project and then with the National Diabetes Prevention Center as an Electronic Resource Specialist.

Dustin will be moving to Anchorage, Alaska to complete a residency in Family Medicine at Providence Medical Center. His interests include rural and wilderness medicine and he hopes to complete his MPH through the University of Alaska Anchorage. His wife, Anna Cole, is pursuing a PhD at UNM in the Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies Program in the Department of Education. They have a nine-month old son named Henry. We are all proud of Dustin and we all wish him and his family well.



New CAC Members 2006:



Theresa Clay, MS, Navajo (Diné) Nation, is a Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HP/DP) Coordinator with the Albuquerque Area Indian Health Service, which services 27 tribes. Theresa worked as a Health Education Manager with the Prevention Research Center for 11 years, managing trainings in the community and served as a liaison between UNM and communities. She worked on the Participatory Action for Healthy Lifestyles project to prospectively study the dissemination, diffusion, and utilization of a school-based intervention (Pathways) using a participatory approach. She coordinated the partnership between UNM and the NM Public Education Department to implement the Circle of Life program, a health curriculum focusing on prevention strategies for HIV/AIDS and STIs. For the Southwest Diabetes Prevention Center, she developed and coordinated training institutes and workshops, and worked on building partnerships.



Yvonne Davis joined the Community Advisory Council in December 2005. Yvonne is a former staff of CHPDP. While she was with the PRC she directed and implemented the Circle of Life project, a Native American HIV-AIDS prevention curriculum. She is one author of Circle of Life, and is currently a national consultant dealing with HIV prevention issues in Native American communities.



Henry (Hank) Haskie has been a member of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) since 2000, and has contributed actively to the mission of the PRC for community collaboration. He has recently rejoined the CAC after taking leave to continue his education for a couple of years, and after successfully graduating from the Arizona State University with a BA degree. In 2004, Hank was a recipient of an award from the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), for community advocacy on behalf of the Navajo Nation. He has also served as a community representative for the New Mexico PRC at the National Community Committee meetings. The PRC is honored to have Hank rejoin the CAC.

Recent & Upcoming Grads 2006: Cont. from Page 11

Lance Freeland, a graduate of the University of New Mexico Psychology Department with a minor in Chemistry, joined the Prevention Research Center in the Spring of 2004. He first worked on the Participatory Action for Healthy Lifestyles (PAHL) project as a research assistant. Lance has ventured onto other projects as needed and has assisted at trainings. Mr. Freeland currently works on THRIVE and eTHRIVE, which are school and community-based studies to address violence exposure and promote positive mental health among Native American youth and their families. Mr. Freeland is Co-P.I. on the THRIVE project and serves as a group facilitator for the eTHRIVE intervention. Lance's experience and leadership skills have been an asset to CHPDP, and he credits the mentorship of faculty and staff for their help and support. Lance's future educational goals are to pursue his PhD in Psychology or to complete medical school.

Teresa Tenorio, "As part of a class assignment during my undergrad, I interviewed four CHPDP staff members to better understand their involvement with community health issues. I was impressed by the number and quality of projects underway here and I was inspired by the dedication of the staff to their work's purpose. I decided to work for CHPDP, I brought my resume to Sally, with the resolve to work in whatever capacity was most helpful to the Center and to the best of my abilities. I joined CHPDP as a volunteer, transcribing for the PAHL project; a couple of months later, I was hired on as a student employee. In December 2005, I graduated from UNM with a bachelor's degree in University Studies with a multi-disciplinary focus on Health and Society. My plans are to pursue a master's degree in public health, work for the ACL Teen Centers as a life skills trainer for the Botvin Life Skills Program at participating elementary schools and as a facilitator for the "Keeping Family Traditions" Program in the communities of To'hajiilee, Acoma, and Laguna. I also worked on the PAHL project, assisting with literature review, data management, and analysis. My work experiences at CHPDP have been very enriching and liberating. I am so honored to have the opportunity to work in New Mexico's communities and truly connect to the people I serve. They have welcomed me into their classrooms and neighborhoods as one of their own which I cherish since I am a native New Mexican. I am personally committed to a lifestyle of health promotion and disease prevention, and take pride in contributing to prevention research. I find great pleasure in the opportunities presented to me at CHPDP thus far, in allowing me to wear more than one hat, so to speak. It is important to work in an environment, such as CHPDP, that utilizes and is enhanced by the varied disciplines and diverse experiences among the researchers, educators, and community partners involved in improving community health."



2006 PRC Director's Meeting in Atlanta



Howell Wechsler, Ed.D, Sally M. Davis, Ph.D., and Frank Morgan

The 2006 annual PRC Directors' meeting was attended by Sally Davis, Linda Beltran, Marla Pardilla and Frank Morgan. The meeting was held in Atlanta, Georgia on March 20-22, 2006. Frank Morgan represented the NM Community Advisory Council and provided input for the National Community Committee on the strategic planning process. Sally made a presentation and update on the UNM PRC, and Marla Pardilla led a roundtable to discuss the contents of the Healthy Body Awareness curriculum and dissemination to Native senior centers. Linda Beltran participated in the discussion for the overall planning for PRC mission, goals, and accomplishments and planning for evaluation and training activities.



The Connection is a production of the newsletter workgroup:

Sally M. Davis, PhD
Linda J. Peñaloza, PhD
Marla Pardilla, MPH, MSW
Elverna M. Bennett, BA

The Connection is a quarterly newsletter that features programs, provides updates, reports on program activities and announces upcoming events for the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center and the Community Advisory Council. Direct inquiries and correspondence to Marla Pardilla by mail or by phone.

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The University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC) is one of 33 Prevention Research Centers funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop and carry out scientifically-based, innovative chronic disease prevention research to improve the health of Americans. The mission of the UNM PRC is to address the health promotion and disease prevention needs of New Mexicans through participatory science-based research and through collaboration, training, dissemination, and evaluation activities. The UNM PRC has a long history of partnering with communities in New Mexico and the Southwest. The UNM PRC has a Community Advisory Council (CAC), whose members serve in an advisory and advocacy capacity, and represent the public health interests and concerns of New Mexico communities. Through collaboration and communication, these two entities work together to carry out the goals of the Center.



The University of New Mexico

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