

Riverside County Health Coalition Meeting | October 19, 2022

Meeting Notes

10/19/2022

Present: Mary Obideyi and 112 other attendees.

Next meeting: January 18, 2022, 10:00 am – 12:00pm

Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

Mary Obideyi

- The welcome and introduction remarks were given by Mary Obideyi. She highlighted the use of a zoom platform for the panelist webinar and the inclusion of closed captioning for both English and Spanish, along with ASL interpreters. She asked for everyone to add in the chat box their name, job, and current location. Mary introduced the topic of the webinar and provided the QR code and link in the chat box for the follow-up survey.
- Mary stated that November is National Native American Heritage month and the importance of it. The meeting for today is to learn the history of Riverside County Native American history and ways in which we can build reciprocal collaboration with the native community, public health partners, and the community. This is just the start and want to continue the conversation.
- Mary provided a brief introduction of the guest speaker and the panelists for the meeting.
- A poll was conducted, which asked for sectors represented by the participants of the meeting. The result showed a majority representing healthcare and public health sector. Others included community member, government, healthcare, public health, housing planning, community-based organizations, social services, mental health, and other.
- Purpose of the Coalition was briefly mentioned, which include sharing knowledge, highlighting innovative practices, providing community empowerment and collaborating with each other.
- The Health Equity email (RivCoHealthEquity@ruhealth.org) was shared in the chat box.

Blessing

Tina Calderon

- Mayra acknowledged the natives and indigenous people living in this area. She thanked everyone for joining the meeting and encouraged participants to remember the Indigenous people's day (October 10th). She introduced Tina Calderon, who gave a blessing for the meeting. Tina is a dancer, storyteller and poet, who strives to honor her ancestors and inspire others to respect the lands, water, sacred elements, and the environment.
- Tina Calderon gave the blessing in her native tongue, Tongva, and in English.
- She expressed her love for her creator and asked to take care of children, all the people, ocean, four winds, and all life. She asked to bring healing to our mind, body, and spirit as well as providing shelter, healthy foods, and clean water.

Level Setting Presentation:

Native American History & Health Presentation

Dr. Clifford Trafzer

- Mary introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Clifford Trafzer.
- Dr. Clifford Trafzer is a professor of history at UCR and is the current Rupert Costo chair.

- He began by stating that he is not a California Indian native, nor an expert, but considers himself a student to California Native Indians. He has personally learned from Will Madrigal (a panelist) and his family through archival and oral interviews.
- He is of Wyandot descent, but currently resides in Southern California and is presenting from Yukaipa't-Serrano and Tongva village lands.
- Dr. Trafzer stated that being on California Indian lands, it helps to know the past of the people and the relationship with Spain, Mexico, and the United States.
- He gave a brief history of the California Native Indians, and that each tribe has a creation story that places them on these lands.
 - An integral connection in their history, not just folk tales.
- He provided some key events of colonization from Spain, Mexico and U.S. with a focus on the genocide of California that began during the Gold Rush period (1848) into the 1980s with the assimilation of boarding schools, such as Sherman Indian Boarding School.
- He discussed the 18 federal treaties that the U.S. created in 1850s, but were never ratified, which shows the attempt to displace native people and their rightful ownership of their land.
- He then began the story of the 1904 Tuberculosis (TB) epidemic on reservations.
 - Two field public health nurses worked with the reservation residents, and through this collaborative effort, they were able to decrease the spread of TB.

Q & A

Marcella Herrera-Carpenter

- There were no questions posted in the chat box. However, an anonymous person wrote, Whose land are you on? visit <https://native-land.ca>, this is an extensive resource with limitations on accuracy, use this as a place to start your learning. NAHC list of California Native Communities <https://nahc.ca.gov/cp/>

Birdsong performed by a member of Cahuilla Band of Indians member

William Madrigal

Daisy gave an introduction of Professor William Madrigal. William is the California Indian Professor of American Indian Studies and member of the Cahuilla Band of Indians. His work and study centers around the native people and currently he is a professor teaching Cahuilla language at UC, Riverside.

Professor Madrigal gave a brief introduction about the birdsong, which he sang in Cahuilla language. The song is about the story of native people, from the very beginning of the earth; and how the earth was created for the people; and about the great migration that makes the Cahuilla universe today.

Panel Discussion

Daisy gave a brief introduction of Miguel, who facilitated the panel discussion. Miguel, in turn, introduced the panelists - Floyd Velasquez, Tina Calderon, and William Madrigal. He informed the participants that the members of the tribal nation in the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians were not able to attend and participate in the discussion.

1. **Please introduce yourself. (This is your time to talk about you, your tribal affiliation, your community, the land you are calling from. Please also feel free to share some of the achievements or milestones you would like to highlight about your community)**

- **Tina Calderon-** She indicated that the meaning of her Tongva name is woman singer. She is a singer, composer, digital dancer, poet, and storyteller. She enjoys working with different youth groups, environmental organizations, and schools. She serves on several boards and holds a few advisory positions, all in the educational and environmental fields. She believes it is important for us to give protection and voice to the lands, the waters, the minerals, and plants/animals. She is a chair of the L.A. River X Project, cultural advisor to the L.A. Public Art Project, and member of the Parent Advisory Council, to name a few.
- **Floyd Velasquez-** He is a member of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. He expressed his gratitude for participating as a member of the panel. He shared about the new diabetes center, which opened on the reservation. The reservation now has a fire department, a hospital, and a diabetes center. The reservation will also be getting an ambulance service soon.
- **William Madrigal-** In addition to teaching at UCR, he also works for a non-profit organization called the Climate Science Alliance. The Alliance has a health and well-being component, which addresses disparities created by climate change, and includes plant/wildlife habitats and diseases. He shared that part of the healing of the intergenerational trauma is to revitalize our traditional ways of tending and stewarding the land.

2. What are some cultural events in celebration of Native American Heritage Month you would like to share with the community?

- **Floyd:** He stated that they do not have any events in November. However, they follow a couple of different days like California Indigenous Peoples Day, Pow Wow, and a Rodeo in October. He shared that back in the day everyone's livelihood was cattle. The Rodeo is a major community event. He described back in the day they gathered wild cattle out in the mountain, they would bring the cattle into the reservation to vaccinate and utilize them for the rodeo. The Fiesta Day Pow Wow is celebrated on the last Sunday in May.
- **Tina:** She recently participated in Indigenous People Day, which consisted of gathering with elders to share knowledge and discuss the need for protection of land and water. In November, they encourage schools and youth groups to do land cleans ups and talk about water. She said it is important to push officials to listen to the native People.
- **Will:** He stated the significance of space which is conducive for their well-being. Healing properties within the land, gathering food as medicine, and prayer are always common when they get together. Every day is Indian day, and every day they try to go to certain places on the land to pray. He shared that he likes to talk about specific places and shed light. He mentioned that land stewardship practices are more important than western medicine.

3. What health topics do you want to use this space to bring attention to? What are some points you wish more people outside of your community were aware of?

- **Floyd-** Besides pandemic and other problems we face, all of the sovereign nations have problems with diabetes due to the change of diet among the native people. This is the biggest problem. He mentioned people ate off of the Indian land before the time of modernization and reservation. However, living in the reservation, the native people started eating foods that were not healthy and good for body. White settlers brought their foods and commodities, such as beef. However, their bodies were used to eating these types of food. But for the native people, it was new and for their body. It was hard for the native

people to get used to these types of food, which were not conducive to their health. In addition, there are alcohol and fentanyl, which people need help with.

- **Tina-** It is important for health systems and care givers to understand that the native people are different. She stated that their spiritual health is related to their physical health. In addition to healthy foods and clean water, exercise is important. She admitted that she doesn't do enough of exercise. She also recognizes that many people with diabetes and high blood pressure, are deficient in Vitamin D. Many are working in the office and do not go outdoors to get sunshine. Also, when she goes to see a doctor, she gets a prescription for medication. But she doesn't take them because she believes that these pills are not to heal you, and only to mask a problem that a person has within the body. She believes it is important to go to traditional medicine, because it is natural, not processed, and devoid of chemicals. She believes that revival of her cultural medicine is critical in helping the native people. The native people's system of health is very different from the mainstream medicine. It is important for care givers to look at the traditional teachings before pushing the mainstream medicine to Indian people. She believes that one will never get well if you're just taking pills.
- **Will-** In addition to some of the great points that others made, Will believes that Institutions, such as clinics or county health care, are devoid of understanding their cultural remedies. He thinks that indigenous forms of treatment, which includes herbal remedies and other alternative forms of treatment are no longer used in the health care facilities. Will has worked with Indian Health council, with the aid of NIH grant to introduce traditional Indian medicine into clinical environments. He tried to create a space where two cultural forms of healing could be provided, and it afforded an opportunity to merge two forms of medicine. While working on the grant, he brought in elders, who shared traditional foods that were healthy to their nurses and doctors at the clinic. It was a great experience just connecting and building a network between doctors, patients, and cultural practitioners. He would like to see more programs from RUHS that would help foster that connection and the relationship with traditional medicine ways of California Indian people. He believes that there needs to be a multi-pronged approach to healing and treatment. He would like to promote what his ancestors have taught them for thousands of years regarding the land stewardship practices and try to supplement western medicine therapies with indigenous medicine therapy.

4. What can agencies in attendance do to build/ continue building paths for collaboration for community health action with the Native and Tribal community?

- **Will-** He answered in the previous question.
- **Tina-** She stated that it is important for us to create reciprocal relationships. They should be brought into the conversation early on not just for the job that needs to be done such as a land acknowledgment. We need to help each other.
- **Floyd-** He agreed with everything that was stated by other panelists. He described that they have a great working relationship with the county. The county has helped to provide vaccination clinics, supplies, and resources. His advice is to ask others and get yourself out there. People are very willing; it can just be hard to get through the door.

Panel Q/A

Q: How we can collaborate and learn climate change locally?

- **Miguel-** He stated that this is a moment to do a wrap up and final comments.
- **Will-** Climate change is directly affecting all of us, especially our health. He gave an example of plants. Plants are unable to thrive in poor soil, which influences the quality of crops harvested. He stated that they need support from RUHS, we need to all work together. He pointed out a few things that can be done.
 - Spread awareness
 - Collaborating and reciprocating new projects and events, share the knowledge
 - Follow up with long term commitments
 - Proposed: Indigenous health conference
- **Tina-** Climate change is all of our responsibility. As Will said, our soils are so unhealthy right now that we need to go back to traditional practices. She stated that we once had oak groves and our soils were naturally healthy.
- **Floyd-** We only have one Earth, and we need to take care of it. We need to operate on cleaner energy as we live in the modern world.

Q/A- From the Chatbox

- Marcella facilitated the questions in the chat box and had some time for panelist to provide answers.

Q: Whose land are we on? It also provided a website with useful info. It will be dropped in the chat box.

- <https://native-land.ca>,

Q: To tina's point of inviting people early on, what can we do to make sure people come together and be part of health survey?

- Tina stated people not responding may be the way you are requesting it. A relationship must be established first.
- A comment in the chat box stated that building relationships are important as they are the building blocks to working together.

Q: What is the main purpose of this group? Vision and mission?

- Marcella stated that this is a place for thought provoking and organic discussion. We can have conversations which can be led to answers. She also added that we want to shed light on this topic, but there is still so much to talk about. This is a great place to start.

Partner Updates

- Due to time limitations, it was skipped. However, participants were encouraged to email their updates.

HE Program Updates

- Mary provided information on the MPX Equity Taskforce and Equity Justice Taskforce. She encouraged participants to get on the distribution mailing list.

Evaluation Survey/Wrap-Up

Mayra expressed her gratitude for all who took part in the meeting and shared valuable knowledge with the group. Mayra acknowledged those individuals who couldn't be here- Dr. Shawn Milanovich and Dr. Wallace Cleaves.

She announced that today is International Pronouns day. To learn more about this day, resource info was dropped in the chat box. She shared the survey monkey link and encouraged all participants to fill out the survey, available both in English and Spanish. If anyone is interested in being added in the contact list, please contact the program.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 am.