RESEARCH UPDATE

The mission of the NCAI Policy Research Center is to provide tribal leaders with the best available knowledge to make strategic and proactive policy decisions that employ a framework of Native wisdom and positively impact the future of Native peoples. This update provides information on recent studies emerging from Indian Country, opportunities for training & research funding, and other tools and initiatives. An electronic copy of this Research Update is available on our website: www.ncai.org/PRC.

Featured Research

Human Trafficking: “Mapping the Market for Sex with Trafficked Minor Girls in Minneapolis: Structures, Functions and Patterns” (Martin & Pierce, 2014). In describing the sex trafficking market, this study notes that pimps and victims were disproportionately people of color, while White men made up the largest percentage of customers. Recruitment locations include schools, parks, libraries, street corners, juvenile detention centers, shelters and program, and homes of friends and family. Recruitment tactics include “lover-boy” pimping; peer-to-peer and family member recruitment; and the strategic use of rape and other types of violence to trap girls. According to the study, most reports of trafficking were by third parties, meaning someone saw something and took responsibility to report it. The approach to analyzing data and mapping the market in Minneapolis has strong insights for other communities invested in eliminating human trafficking. The study and several other resources are available at: http://uroc.umn.edu/sextrafficking/.

Current Research Topics

Native Children’s Research. In the first issue of the Advances in Applied Sociology journal in 2015, scholars Sonya Smith and Yanyi Djamba share their article, “Challenges Associated with Serving the Diverse Needs of American Indian Families through Current Provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act.” Partnering with a group of American Indians in the state of Alabama to conduct qualitative interviews, the article lends insights into the challenges ICWA poses to state recognized tribes, who are not covered by the Act, and calls for expanded services to cover all American Indians. To download the article, visit: www.scirp.org/journal/PaperInformation.aspx?paperID=53044#.VLmQ-ivF-OB.

Role of Language & Culture in Achievement and Wellness. The Suquamish Tribal program Healthy and Whole is highlighted in the recent article, “Linking Native American Tribal Policy to Practice in Mental Health Care,” featured in Nursing Science Quarterly. As a culturally-rooted modification of a behavioral therapy program, the authors share the ways in which Healthy and Whole met mental health needs in the community and grew the tribe’s capacity to support treatment for its members. To learn more about the program, and to determine whether it holds value to your tribe or the communities you serve, visit: 1.usa.gov/15y0pR8.

Collateral Consequences of Criminal Conviction. In the interest of understanding ways to support offender re-entry, a recent study from Naomi Sugie utilizes a novel approach of tracking the job searches, social contacts, and well-being of ex-offenders after their release from prison by utilizing
survey data collected through smartphones. According to most current research, successful reintegration into one’s community hinges on whether the ex-offender finds stable employment, has or develops positive social ties. The study provides information on ban-the-box efforts and workforce programs that connect ex-offenders to gainful employment and could inform efforts in Native communities to support the re-integration of community members. Article available from: www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/248487.pdf

Research with Urban Indian communities. Most health research with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people has focused on tribal communities on reservation lands, despite documented health disparities among AI/AN people living in urban settings, as compared with other urban populations. In the recent article, “Promoting ethical research with American Indian and Alaska Native people living in urban areas” by Nicole Yuan, Jamie Bartgis, and Deirdre Demers, the authors share unique considerations for engaging urban Indians in research—recommending greater involvement of tribal leaders, urban Indian health organizations, and research scientists in open dialogue concerning implementation strategies, capacity building, and ethical research policies aimed at health improvements. The article can be accessed online at: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4202957/.

The Science of Stories: Traditional Indigenous Epistemology in Modern Research. Community-based research relies heavily on qualitative methods that are rooted in content analysis, or the dissection of recurring themes and words present in text and conversations. In the recent article “Story Sciencing and Analyzing the Silent Narrative Between Words: Counseling Research from an Indigenous Perspective” by Eduardo Duran and Judith Firehammer, the authors propose that there may be a different approach to community-based research—one that relies on Indigenous methodologies and can best be described by the metaphor of story science, which has Indigenous oral traditions and epistemologies as its lineage. Not only is story science geared towards gaining in-depth and valid knowledge through the research process, but about bringing “a new transforming narrative to the community.” A “StoryScience” Toolkit has been developed to aid in the creation of logic models, in evaluation, in analysis, and in dissemination: www.seechangeevaluation.com/pdfs/toolkit.pdf.

Preserving the Past: Best Practices for Developing Tribal Archives. The latest volume of the Journal of Western Archives is dedicated to Native American archives, in honor of two Indigenous archive activists who recently walked on—Allison Krebs and George Wasson, Jr. Over the course of five separate articles, insights from Oregon, Washington, and Alaska Native archivists are shared in the interest of building the capacity of tribes to preserve their histories in texts and photographs for future generations. Full access to the volume is available online: digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/.

New Data Tools & Policy Resources

NCAI Regional Data Profiles. As part of NCAI’s effort to foster regional supports for tribal research, the NCAI Policy Research Center has developed a series of Regional Data Profiles for all 12 NCAI Areas. These profiles provide region-level population demographic data and some information on trends in education, household, and economic characteristics by states in each region and are available at: www.ncai.org/about-tribes/regional-profiles. We are open to input from stakeholders in each region to help shape this data work. Please contact Amber Ebarb at aebarb@ncai.org for further information.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Statistical Briefing Book. The latest data from 2013 on American Indian youth in the juvenile justice system is now available online: www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/. Users can build trend tables that display the age, sex, race, and ethnicity
characteristics of the juvenile population across the U.S. and within each State and County. One can also populate comparison tables across States and Counties to understand regional trends.

**Native Food System Fact Sheets.** The First Nations Development Institute recently released 12 new fact sheets that provide broad overviews and specific insights into numerous topics and policies dealing with Native American agriculture and food systems, including those on community kitchens, farm-to-school programs, food and household income data, food safety, and seed sovereignty. The fact sheets are available at: [www.firstnations.org/knowledge-center/foods-health/resources/fact-sheets-2](http://www.firstnations.org/knowledge-center/foods-health/resources/fact-sheets-2).

**U.S. Census Bureau Profile America Facts for Features.** This past November, for American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, the U.S. Census Bureau released a profile featuring information on AI/AN housing, language, education, incomes, and so forth. It is available online at: [www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff26.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff26.html).

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**Upcoming Research Forums & Funding Opportunities**

**Research Forums**
- Native Philanthropy Institute: May 4-6 in Shakopee, Minnesota. Website: [www.nativephilanthropy.org/events/](http://www.nativephilanthropy.org/events/).
- Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health: June 2-4 in Minot, North Dakota. Website: [ruralhealth.und.edu/dakota-conference](http://ruralhealth.und.edu/dakota-conference).

**Funding & Publication Opportunities for Native Scholars**
- Doctoral Students: Graduate Research Fellowship Program in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Deadline is March 30th. Website: [go.usa.gov/tUFJ](http://go.usa.gov/tUFJ).
- Call for Papers for the inaugural issue of the peer-reviewed journal, *Citizen Science: Theory and Practice*. Deadline is March 31st. Website: [theoryandpractice.citizenscienceassociation.org/](http://theoryandpractice.citizenscienceassociation.org/).

Learn more about the NCAI Policy Research Center at [www.ncai.org/prc](http://www.ncai.org/prc) or follow us @NCAIPRC
Tools & Initiatives of the NCAI Policy Research Center

**Modernizing the Trust Relationship: Fiscal Year 2016 Indian Country Budget Request.** The Indian Country Budget Request offers recommendations for ways the federal government, partnering with tribes, should meet the educational needs of Indian youth; provide adequate health care via the Indian Health Service, for both direct and self-governance tribes; ensure responsible resource development for the future; provide safe and secure tribal communities; and supply the long-term investments in tribal public infrastructure and services required to ensure every American Indian and Alaska Native enjoys a decent quality of life and has an opportunity to succeed. Available from: [www.ncai.org/resources/ncai-publications/indian-country-budget-request/fy2016](http://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai-publications/indian-country-budget-request/fy2016).

**Back to Our Futures: 10th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum.** On June 30, 2015, in St. Paul, Minnesota, at NCAI’s Mid Year Conference, the NCAI Policy Research Center will host the Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum, which provides a space for tribal leaders and citizens, researchers, and policy organizations to discuss how to strengthen public policy and community-based initiatives based on meaningful data and research. This year’s theme is, “Back to Our Futures: Re-Searching for Justice,” and the Forum will feature a morning plenary session and afternoon breakout sessions with panel presentations, research planning sessions, and a poster session. For more information, please visit: [www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/tribal-leader-scholar-forum](http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/tribal-leader-scholar-forum).

**NOW LIVE! Tribal Public Health Law Database.** With the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and in partnership with the National Indian Health Board, we have launched a national database that features laws, policies, and codes that tribes have established to address public health issues (e.g. pollution, water quality, food safety, animal control, etc.). We have collected several hundred codes, produced regional and categorical memos, and secured tribal permissions to post them online at: [www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/projects/tribal-public-health-law](http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/projects/tribal-public-health-law).

**Latest Policy Brief: Tribal Transportation Insights: Preventing Unintentional Injury and Death.** In a continuing effort to draw attention to matters of public health in tribal communities, this Policy Insights Brief serves as an addendum our Summer 2013 brief, Reservation Road Safety: Reducing Unintentional Injury through Tribal Public Health Law, and focuses on the complex transportation safety challenges and opportunities facing tribal communities. The brief may be found online at: [www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications](http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications).

**A Bridge Across: Developing a Toolkit for Research Partnerships that Build Native Health and Culture.** As a Native American Research Center for Health (NARCH) grantee, we have partnered with the University of New Mexico to undertake the creation of Partnership Evaluation Toolkit focused on the core functions of governance, culture, and trust in research with AI/AN communities. For technical assistance opportunities and/or if your tribe has been, or is currently, engaged in a research partnership and is interested in piloting our toolkit in the near future, please contact Sarah Pytalski at spytalski@ncai.org or Karee Yabeny at kyabeny@salud.unm.edu.

**Inroads to Health: Supporting Innovative Diabetes Research in Native Contexts.** The PRC and Washington University are recruiting postdoctoral researchers to our Center for Diabetes Translation Research (CDTR), which focuses on translating Type II diabetes and obesity interventions. The PRC and the Black Hills Center for American Indian Health co-direct the “Research Partnerships with American Indian/Alaska Native Communities” Core. As a member of the CDTR, you will receive support from our network of investigators with manuscripts, publications, and applying for pilot and feasibility programs. To learn more, please visit our website: [http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/projects/diabetes-translation](http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/projects/diabetes-translation).

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