



NAHO Bulletin

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Health – Get With It! a success!

By Gail Boyd

More than 900 people from across Canada attended NAHO's First Annual Conference and Health Information Fair held Jan. 21 to 23 in Ottawa.

Entitled Health – Get With It!, the conference highlighted the accomplishments of Aboriginal health initiatives. It also provided an opportunity for participants to learn from their varied experiences.

"Our call for abstracts resulted in more than 100 being received from individuals, groups, and organizations," NAHO Executive Director Richard Jock said. "From these, we chose speakers for panels, workshops, and posters to address the three tracks – traditional knowledge, best practices, and the use of health information."

"It was a very successful event," NAHO Board of Directors Chairperson Dr. Judith Bartlett said. "Topics featured ideas and models that could be altered and tied in various places in Canada, regardless of where Aboriginal People live."

Keynote speakers included two internationally-recognized individuals in the area of Aboriginal governance and health. Dr. Stephen Cornell, Director of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona, spoke on Sovereignty and Nation Building. Michael Bird, past president of the American Public Health Association, was the special guest speaker at the final luncheon.

On Jan. 22, the Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Public Health Association, and Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health (IAPH) co-hosted the Friends of Aboriginal Health Reception. Quebec Medical Association President Dr. Stanley Vollant and IAPH Scientific Director Dr. Jeff Reading provided welcoming remarks. Federal Health Minister Anne McLellan also spoke at the reception.

Special guest Billy Mills provided an uplifting and inspirational message. The



During breaks between presentations and workshops, delegates had plenty to see and do at the more than 60 booths set up as part of the Health Information Fair.

Olympic gold medallist was a favourite among conference delegates. Mills hosted an afternoon session with youth delegates and was the keynote speaker at the conference banquet. The Lakota Indian is well known throughout North America for his message of inspiration based on dignity, character, pride, and opportunity for youth.

Other youth activities included a social night featuring a fashion show hosted by Turtle Concepts. That company offers empowerment workshops about self-esteem, self-concept, and self-identity. The energetic and thought-provoking workshops are targeted to any age group. Inuit youth from Nunavut Sivuniksavut proudly shared their culture through songs, dances, and drumming. Youth activities also included panels on health careers and healthy lifestyles, a workshop on HIV/AIDS and sexually-transmitted diseases, and a health information workshop hosted by the Aboriginal Youth Network. (For more on the youth contingent at the conference, see page 3.)

Health – Get With It! also included a Health Information Fair. It was designed to stimulate health discussion among confer-

ence delegates and provided relevant health information. Among the more than 60 booths were not only Aboriginal health organizations presenting information, but also arts and crafts. This provided an excellent opportunity to purchase gifts for loved ones. There were herbal teas and traditional foods as well as presentations by natural health and alternative medicine practitioners.

More than 80 people from urban, rural, and remote communities in nearly every province and territory took part in NAHO's photography contest. They submitted nearly 400 images of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis of all ages taking part in a variety of healthy activities. Entries were displayed at the conference where delegates voted for their favourites. (For more on the photography contest, including the winning entries, see page 4.)

This issue of the *NAHO Bulletin* focuses on the National Aboriginal Health Organization's First Annual Conference and Health Information Fair. Its regular format, focusing on the activities of NAHO and its First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Centre, will return with the March issue.

Elders share their knowledge

The National Aboriginal Health Organization benefited from ceremonial and spiritual guidance from some of the 25 Elders who attended the First Annual Conference.

Algonquin Elder Evelyn Dewache of Kitigan Zibi, Que., provided helpful behind-the-scenes support. She guided organizers through various protocols to ensure everything was done appropriately.

Other Elders were more in the spotlight. They shared their knowledge on the second day of the conference, which focused on traditional knowledge and medicines.

As part of the plenary session, Inuk Elder Mariano Aupilarjuk of Rankin Inlet,

Nunavut, spoke about his views of Inuit traditional knowledge. Through his translator, he discussed how knowledge can be protected, be passed on to younger people, and be a source of pride for his people. Participants got a close-up look at some of the traditional tools he continues to use. Elder Aupilarjuk closed his session with a drum song.

During workshop sessions, Métis Senators Nora Ritchie from Saskatoon, Sask., and John Boucher of St. Louis, Sask., discussed their views of Métis traditions and culture. They spoke about the Métis holistic approach to health and wellness. They stressed the importance of culturally-based frameworks for providing services and developing more

inclusive and responsive health programs and services.

Oglala Elder Birgil Kills Straight spoke about his community of Pine Ridge, S.D., and its response to the effects of historical trauma. He discussed the immediate and long-term effects of the Wounded Knee Massacre. He shared the seven sacred laws of the Lakota and the Wiping the Tears Ceremony. Both help the descendants of the survivors of Wounded Knee to continue their healing journey.

Elder Jan Longboat of Six Nations, Ont., talked about her views on protecting and promoting the use of traditional medicines and knowledge. She also discussed the work she does in her community.

With files from James Lamouche.



NAHO Bulletin

The National Aboriginal Health Organization, an Aboriginal-designed and -controlled body, will influence and advance the health and well-being of Aboriginal Peoples through carrying out knowledge-based strategies.

The NAHO Bulletin is an electronic publication produced monthly to provide readers with an update of the activities of NAHO and its First Nations, Ajunnginiq (Inuit), and Métis Centres.

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Inuk Elder Mariano Aukilarjuk of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, demonstrated some of his traditional tools for a crowd that formed after his talk on Inuit traditional knowledge.

NAHO Events

The National Aboriginal Health Organization will hold two regional forums in the spring. For more information, please contact Mary Alainga in NAHO's Ajunnginiq (Inuit) Centre at 56 Sparks Street, Suite 400, Ottawa, ON K1P 5A9, Phone: (613) 237-9462 or 1-877-602-4445, e-mail malainga@naho.ca, or visit NAHO's Web site at www.naho.ca.

Quebec Forum

March 25-27

Quebec City, QC

To be held in co-operation with the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission

Northern Forum

May 7-9

Explorer Hotel
Yellowknife, NWT

Theme: Aboriginal Health, Gaining Knowledge

Activities motivate and build self-esteem while entertaining youth delegates

By Colleen Toulouse

Youth delegates at Health – Get With It! experienced a variety of culturally-relevant activities to motivate and strengthen their self-confidence.

About 50 youth from across Canada attended the National Aboriginal Health Organization's First Annual Conference and Health Information Fair held in Ottawa Jan. 21-23. It was an opportunity to network and build lasting, working relationships with each other.

"The conference was a success," Conference Youth Co-ordinator/Liasion Jason Whitebear said. "The youth took home a wealth of knowledge from inspirational speaker Mr. Billy Mills, panels on healthy lifestyles, health careers, and the session provided by Aboriginal Youth Network."

The afternoon session with Olympic gold medallist Mills was well received by the youth in attendance. He shared his story of his passion for running and how he pursued excellence in the world of sports.

Growing up on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, Mills was orphaned at the age of 12. He once read that Olympians are chosen by gods. He thought it was a way he could be reunited with his mother.

The Lakota athlete won the 10,000-metre event at the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan. The strength to win came from early in life. His father encouraged him to find and explore positive desires, to be self-motivated, and to be prepared to work to achieve personal goals.

Mills lives his life as a warrior, explaining that, as a warrior, you assume responsibility for yourself.

"Billy Mills was great!" said Tara Worme of Saskatoon, Sask. "It's nice to hear someone so positive and directed towards youth. I like his world views and how, through his Lakota heritage, he identifies with a warrior."

Christopher Herodier, Jr., was one of the youth who asked Mills for an autograph. "His speech was inspiring. I've gained self-esteem and see things in other ways."

Herodier enjoyed the conference and health information fair. He learned about important health issues and opportunities



Above: Olympic gold medallist Billy Mills was a big hit with the youth contingent.

Right: A Turtle Concepts fashion show helps Aboriginal youth take pride in who they are.



for Aboriginal youth. "I want to join Turtle Concepts."

An entertaining evening with Turtle Concepts and Nunavut Sivuniksavut further strengthened participants' perceptions of being proud Aboriginal youth. It had the crowd clapping and cheering. "Make some noise as we go along because that's what makes it good for the youth as they come out (on stage)," Turtle Concepts' Dave Jones told the group at the start of the night.

Turtle Concepts recruits youth from different communities to help teach other youth through healing and wellness workshops. The event featured a fashion show with clothing from such designers participating in the NAHO conference as Dorothy Grant and Tammy Beauvais.

"The youth are learning to hold their heads high and look past the negative labels given to First Nations people," Jones said. "We take negative issues, put a positive twist, and put a little art to it. (Aboriginal people) are on the move and definitely changing the way people have viewed us for years."

Leah Boissoneau advises youth to pursue dreams and to listen to those who encourage them. "I see so many shy people in our communities. You have to learn to break the shell. I do get quiet like they do and I know where they are coming from. I try to break the barrier."

Erwin Bruyere credits such approaches for helping him grow. It gave him the opportunity to try new things, travel, and to strut down the catwalk. "I hear a few cheers out there from girls," Bruyere

said. "I was quiet and shy, but I've come a long way. I feel good."

Nunavut Sivuniksavut shared the beauty of the Inuit culture through singing, dancing, and drumming.

Nunavut Sivuniksavut is a college program that accepts 20 Inuit youth from Nunavut to spend eight months in Ottawa. They gain valuable life experience and learn about Inuit history, organizations, land claims, and other relevant issues for their future careers in Nunavut.

"Turtle Concepts and Nunavut Sivuniksavut put on quite a show for our youth," Whitebear said. "As Aboriginal youth face a number of complex issues, there was also a strong and positive message that we should be proud of who we are and where we come from."

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Results of NAHO's Healthy Active Living Photography Contest

By Virginia St-Denis

Judging was difficult in the National Aboriginal Health Organization's first photography contest. More than 80 people from urban, rural, and remote communities in nearly every province and territory took part in the contest. They submitted nearly 400 images of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis of all ages taking part in a variety of healthy activities.

"We held a photography contest as a way to get the communities involved in promoting healthy lifestyles of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. We had them show us what they do in their communities to maintain their health," NAHO Executive Director Richard Jock said. "I am amazed and pleased with the number of entries we received. They show many fun and simple, everyday activities that keep people active and healthy."

Judging of the photographs was part of NAHO's First Annual Conference and Health Information Fair, entitled Health – Get With It! It was held at the Ottawa Congress Centre Jan. 21 to 23. Entries were displayed at the conference where delegates voted for their favourites. Winners, based on popular vote, were announced during the closing ceremonies. Judging was so close. Only one or two votes decided many of the awards.

Donna Cona, TechSupport.ca, CESO Aboriginal Services, Aboriginal Computer Solutions, Arnon Corporation, Les Suites, and Fairmont Le Château Montebello donated prizes.

CESO Aboriginal Services Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer Lee G. Morrison and Donna Cona Director of Management Consulting Audrey Lawrence announced the winners.

In the Community Life category, Mary B. Anderson of Makkovik, Nfld., was the runaway winner with her photograph entitled Lunch Time. Traditional Cree Way Walking Out Ceremony by Marjorie House of Chisasibi, Que., was the second-place finisher. In third place was Checking Net During Freeze Up by Morris Neyelle of Deline, N.W.T.

Leona McIntyre of Carberry, Man., won the Aboriginal Spirit Category for her photo entitled Life: Young Traditional Grass

Right: The Community Life winner was Mary B. Anderson of Makkovik, Nfld., for Lunch Time.

Below: The Active Elders winner was Sherri Water Chief of Strathmore, Alta., for Elder Prepares Dry Meat.



Above: The Aboriginal Spirit winner was Leona McIntyre of Carberry, Man., for Life: Young Traditional Grass Dance Dancer.

Left: The Sports & Recreation winner was Tom Terry of Sioux Lookout, Ont., for Winter Camping with Our Dogs.

Dance Dancer. Agnes Mamgark of Arviat, Nunavut, took second for his image Boating and Fishing with Sons. Elizabeth Osawamick of Hastings, Ont., rounded out the top three with her picture of a Fancy Feather Dancer.

Sherri Water Chief of Strathmore, Alta., won the Active Elders category for her photograph Elder Prepares Dry Meat at the Indian Village at the Calgary Stampede 2002. Feeding of the Fire by Morris Neyelle of Deline, N.W.T., finished second. Elder with Spunk! by Wanda Nikal of Smithers, B.C., took third.

Sports and Recreation had the most entries. Tom Terry of Sioux Lookout, Ont., won that category with Winter Camping with Our Dogs. Mary B. Anderson of Makkovik,

Nfld., finished second with Sports Day. Christa Holloway of Morley, Alta., placed third with The Big Hit.

First-place winners received \$1,000 in cash and prizes, second \$500, and third \$250.

Winning photographs will be used to create a poster to be distributed nationally to community offices, health conferences, schools, Aboriginal organizations, and more.

A 2004 calendar is also being planned. It will include inspirational messages and key dates such as National Aboriginal Diabetes Day, National Fitness Month, and Weedless Wednesday.

Other great entries that did not win will be used on NAHO's health promotional materials.

Call for Papers

Population Health: Risk and Resistance

NAHO is calling for papers to be considered for the second edition of Journal of Aboriginal Health. The theme of the second edition is Population Health: Risk and Resistance and will be edited by Kimberly Scott, Principal, Kishk Anaquot Health Research. Articles will be considered which illustrate practical solutions to the fundamental question: Given what we know about the relationship between health determinants and health status, what can be done to reduce risk and improve resistance? In the best-case scenario, articles would be offered where policy and practice have resulted in improved population health status.

Reducing Environment Risks

Articles will address solutions related to any single element or combination of elements in the population health framework such as:

- socio-economics;
- self-determination/governance;
- culture, language, and spirituality;
- resurrecting or strengthening relationship to the land;
- social organization;
- accessible, adequate, and culturally-sensitive housing, or community design;
- environmental integrity;
- traditional foods;
- alternative energy sources and sewage disposal systems;
- water or air quality; and
- globalization, local access to goods and services, or institutional completeness.

Improving Individual Resistance

Evidence of individual resilience either genetic, nutritional, social, or psychological is clear in health status and lifestyle patterns which appear to be very polarized in Indigenous groups who endure the same socioeconomic and political conditions. Articles will be entertained that explain or address the factors that appear to improve personal resistance and address internal forces such as:

- genetics;
- early childhood, family dynamics and relationships;
- psychological forces (e.g. identity, self-esteem, sense of belonging, mental health, source of control, attribution styles);
- coping or resilience; or
- any other individual characteristics that affect host response.

Complete manuscripts suitable for peer review are due by May 2, 2003. Inquiries related to the suitability of manuscripts may be directed to Kimberly Scott at kascott@cyberus.ca.

Please check the NAHO Web site at www.naho.ca for updates or contact:

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Monthly Reflection

“The springs... to bathe in them gives new life; to drink them cures every bodily ill.”

Cherokee Wisdom
A Cherokee Feast of Days

Research Funding Notices

Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health

The Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health has announced 2003 funding opportunities.

The deadline for letters of intent for the Aboriginal Community-Based Research Program as well as the Opportunity for New Researchers in Aboriginal Health is May 1. Full proposals are due June 1.

Further information is available on the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Web site at www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca. Click on the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health and then the Top Story.

Canadian International Development Agency

The Indigenous Peoples Partnership Programme (IPPP) of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is now operational. CIDA is now accepting proposals for funding under this mechanism.

An application package has been prepared and is available on CIDA's Web site at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca. Under Regions and Countries at the top of the page, click on The Americas. Click on the Call for Proposals for CIDA's Indigenous Peoples Partnership Programme under the list of countries. If you wish to receive the information by mail, please send your mailing address to: PPPA_IPPP@acdi-cida.gc.ca or fax to (819) 953-1516.

The deadline for proposals to be considered in this first round is March 3. Proposals received after this date will be considered in the next round. The second round of proposal review will likely take place in May.

Several unsolicited proposals for IPPP-funding have already been received by CIDA. To be considered, these proposals must be re-submitted according to the IPPP guidelines. None of the proposals received prior to Feb. 1, 2003, will be considered for IPPP funding.