

Newsletter

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CEO REPORT - November, 2024

Selina De La Pena, CEO
of Fresno American
Indian Health Project

FAIHP Leadership Joins Governor Newsom’s Economic Initiative

FAIHP Leadership gets a seat at the table with Governor Gavin Newsom for the California Jobs First Initiative! Many thanks to Felicia Batts, Director of Care Integration for serving the past two years on the Regional Table representing Tribal and Native partners within the four-county region of Fresno, Madera, Kings & Tulare County. This region is one of 13 in the state of California and all regions have been working diligently on developing an area specific Economic Development Plan.

In our region, Felicia has represented FAIHP well and helped to produce the completed, submitted and approved 502-page intensive community driven plan for the “Sierra San Joaquin Jobs Initiative”. This plan was submitted to the Governor’s office by the August deadline and he was so impressed with the work on the Central Valley that he scheduled an in person visit on recently to meet with local stakeholders.

Although members of the Regional Table were invited to attend, Felicia was one of six individuals invited to present our local efforts at an in-person meeting with the Governor on November 21, 2024. The meeting was held at the West Fresno Community College Center in Southwest Fresno. Secretaries Dee Myers and Stewart Knox were in attendance, along with Senator Caballero, Assemblymember Soria, and Assemblymember Arambula.

This work today follows a long history of FAIHP involvement in Economic Development for the Native Community. As far back as 2013, this was an outcome and an area of focus of our Community Health Needs Assessment. Financial Self-Sufficiency was a key item for our System of Care Model. This year, we received funding from the James Irvine Foundation to begin exploring small business development and nurturing entrepreneurial opportunities for our Market Place vendors and participants.

Thank you to the Community Advisory Committee for discussing this topic and helping us to understand more about community economic development needs and interests. Stay tuned, this will be a topic of focus well into the next year and beyond!

To see the Sierra San Joaquin Jobs Initiative plan, scan this code:



TRIBES: Felicia Batts

Felicia Batts is the Director of Care Integration at the Fresno American Indian Health Project, where she leads health equity and quality improvement initiatives. With over 25 years of healthcare experience, Felicia focuses on strategic projects aimed at improving population health. She has worked extensively in community health and holds a Master of Science in Public Health from Fresno State. Felicia is committed to addressing social determinants of health and improving care access for underserved populations.

To see the Fresno State Sierra San Joaquin Jobs Overview, scan this code:





CEO REPORT - November, 2024

Selina De La Pena, CEO
of Fresno American
Indian Health Project

Veterans Day Parade

On November 11th, we proudly participated in the Veterans Day Parade, showcasing the FAIHP float alongside community members who are veterans and their supporters. This meaningful event honored the bravery and sacrifice of our Native veterans and celebrated their vital contributions to our community and nation.

HIV/AIDS Walk

FAIHP participated in the annual HIV/AIDS Walk hosted by Westcare, bringing home the award for the largest team! This achievement reflects our strong commitment to health advocacy and community solidarity. Thank you to all who joined and supported this important event.

Client Satisfaction Survey

We've launched our client satisfaction surveys to gather valuable feedback about our services. These surveys play an essential role in ensuring we meet the needs of our community while maintaining the highest standards of care. If you haven't completed your survey yet, please take a moment to share your insights. Your voice helps us grow and improve!

Shout Out to Our Amazing Outreach Volunteers!

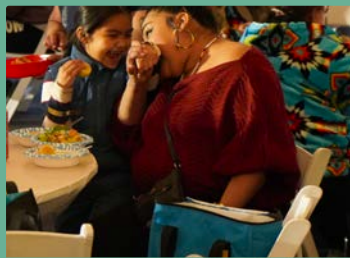
As the year comes to a close, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible Outreach Volunteers for their dedication and hard work throughout 2024. Our Outreach Volunteers are the heart of our events, the bridge to our community, and the champions of spreading the word about FAIHP's services and resources. Many are longtime community members who have personally benefited from FAIHP's programs, making them passionate advocates and experts on the impact of our organization. A special thank-you to this year's outreach stars:

- Irene Padilla
- Cynthia Igasan
- Nicole Wells
- Graciella Torres
- Jasmine Bill
- Jade Torres



We're also deeply grateful to the many other volunteers who contribute across all areas of FAIHP. If you've lent a hand in any capacity this year, know that your support is valued and appreciated. Thank you for being an essential part of the FAIHP family!

Community Highlights



In partnership with BSR, the BSR Community Resource Center hosted an Indigenous Cooking Contest! Participants shared traditional or traditionally inspired food. Some dishes judges tasted: saltgrass cucumbers, gooseberry jam, elk stew, bison beans, and MUCH MORE!



Also in November was FAIHP's annual Indigenous Food Challenge! Participants were provided a bag of ingredients, and several recipes! Those who made one or more recipes and provided photos were entered into our raffle!



Some members of FAIHP Staff and community attended the Alcatraz Indigenous Peoples' Day Sunrise Ceremony. Together, participants honored the ongoing efforts to protect sacred lands, preserve traditions, and share the rich histories of Indigenous Peoples in California and beyond.



FAIHP's Red Warrior Project participated in Fresno's HIV/AIDS walk, and took home the honor of the Largest Registered Team this year!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Monday:

- 9am-12pm
Psychoeducation and
Process Group (SUDS
Services)
- 1pm Hatha Yoga

Tuesday:

- 5:30pm Beading

Wednesday:

- 3pm Tai Chi
- 12 pm Phoenix Group (1st
and last Wed monthly)
- 5:30pm Sacred Circle

Thursday:

- 12-2pm WISE Elder
Support Group (2nd
and 4th Thursday)
- 5-7:30pm Hatha Yoga

Friday:

- 10am Tai Chi
- 12pm-1pm
Wellbriety Meeting

Monthly Events

Native Marketplace
December 7th, 2024
9am-2pm

Nutrition and Wellness Class
Third Thursday Monthly
December 19th 12pm-2pm

Talking 2 Spirit
Friday, December 27th
2:30-5:00pm

**Native American Young Adult
Committee (NAYAC)**
December 19th
6pm-8pm

Holiday Closures

**FAIHP Offices will be
CLOSED:**

December 24th + 25th, 2024
December 31st, 2024
January 1st, 2025



YOUTH DEPARTMENT NEWS

Youth Council Feature - Bella Garcia

Munahuu! Bella Garcia iiNaniyan!

FAIHP: Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you became involved with the Fresno American Indian Health Project, and our Youth Council?

BG: Hello, my name is Bella Garcia and I am an enrolled citizen of North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California. I currently attend Clovis High School as a senior, where I serve as President of the Native American and Indigenous People's Club on campus. Outside of school, I currently serve as Vice President of the Native Youth Council at Fresno American Indian Health Project. I am the youngest daughter of four children, and was born and raised in the Central Valley. I have been involved with the Fresno American Indian Health Project my entire life. I have attended Clubhouse, Daughters of Traditions, and Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) for the past several years.

What inspired you to take on leadership roles, both within your school and the broader Native community?

BG: Both of my sisters inspired me to take on leadership roles, in a school setting as well as in the Native community. My sisters have always been my role models since I was younger, and I am grateful to watch them grow into strong, beautiful, independent women. My two older sisters wanted to start a Native club on campus, and I introduced the club last year, for the first time since 2008. I have been motivated and surrounded by my sisters who have always paved the way for me to follow. They have truly guided me through everything and have helped shape me into the young woman I am today.

You organized Clovis Unified's Native American Student Conference. What was your vision for this event, and how did you bring it to life?

BG: In November I had the opportunity to help organize the 2nd. Annual CUSD Native American Student Success Conference. My vision for this event was to bring some good medicine to the conference, in the form of bringing a hint of Pow Wow dancing. I am very grateful for Spirit Ground Singers and all my family and relatives who came out to dance. I was able to bring this vision to life by communicating with the community, family, friends, and relatives. The students at the conference experienced a hint of what Pow Wow dancing looks like.

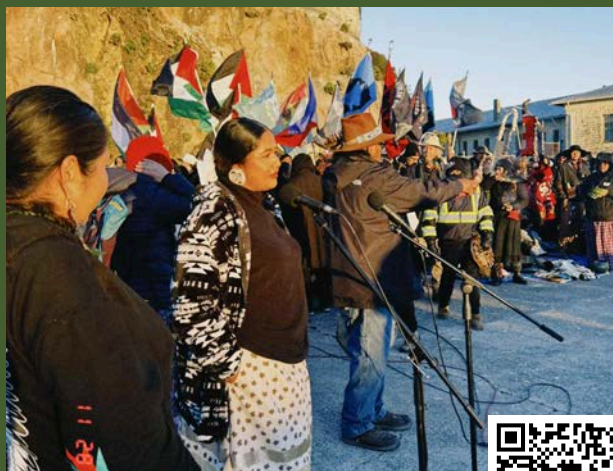


Speaking at the Alcatraz Sunrise Ceremony is such an incredible honor. What did that experience mean to you personally?

BG: On November 28th, I spoke at the Sunrise Ceremony at Alcatraz Island in front of five thousand relatives. I am truly honored and grateful to have been invited to speak at Alcatraz Island and proud to be representing my family, tribe, and community. Speaking at the Ceremony reminded me how important it is we hear from our young people, as well as support them in any way possible.

You're also actively involved in organizing Youth Council activities. Can you share some of the projects or events you've worked on recently?

BG: The Native Youth Council focuses on developing our indigenous youth into effective leaders. Youth Council's focus and priority is supporting our Native graduate students, specifically from the Clovis Unified School District. As young people, it is important for us to support and connect with other young people, elders, and the community. We are currently hosting a blanket drive for those in need this winter, we will also be fundraising at the Native Marketplace, and we are planning a Native Youth Gala for next year. As Vice President, and on behalf of Youth Council, we appreciate any donations and are grateful for the endless support from the community.



To read the entire interview with Bella, visit our website or scan this QR CODE:



Family Spirit

National Toy and Gifts Month

By: Neredia Boyle, MPH
Health Educator II, Family Spirit

When choosing toys and gifts it's important to think of and age appropriateness. Failing to do so can present potential hazards. Always consider whether a toy suit the recipient's age and specific developmental abilities, especially for babies and children under three years old.

Checklist for Buying Safe Toys:

As the holiday season approaches and throughout the year, think of the following criteria for Selecting Toys that are suitable for children of all ages:

- Avoid presents with sharp edges, points, or spikes.
- Avoid toys with shooting parts that can cause choking or injury, especially for children under three years old. BB guns should not be considered toys.
- Ensure the product has the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) seal of approval.
- Do NOT give toys with small parts to young children, as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is NOT appropriate for kids under age three years.
- Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements
- Do NOT give crayons and makers unless they are labeled "nontoxic"

Checklist for Parents and Caregivers:

If someone else has bought your children a gift, thoroughly inspect any gift given to your children by someone else. Ensure that is sturdy and is age and ability-appropriate.

Remember the following guidelines for Toy Safety:

- Immediately discard wrapping and packaging
- Show your child how to use the toy safely
- Keep a close watch on your child while they're playing with toys
- Dispose of any toy that is broken or missing parts
- Keep younger children from playing with toys intended for older siblings
- Store toys so they do not cause falls or trips when not in use
- Ensure that only adults handle and change batteries ☐ they might get hot and cause burns.

Nutrition

Stay Mindful with Tips for Holiday Eating

By Roberto Couto - MS, RDN - Health Educator II
Registered Dietitian

The holidays are a time to savor the joy of Friends, Family, and delicious Food. Contrary to popular belief, you can indulge in all three without worrying about the extra pounds! The key is "Mindful Eating"!

Here are a few simple strategies for avoiding overeating and maintaining a healthy weight during the holiday season.

1) Don't Skip Meals

In preparation for a big holiday party or feast, remember not to skip meals throughout the day, as this may result in overeating at your one big meal of the day. Breakfast is essential, as research shows that those who eat this important morning meal tend to consume fewer calories throughout the day.

2) Everything in Moderation

Holiday meals are large, buffet-style, and include seconds. It is important to include nutrient-rich foods, such as lean proteins and plenty of fruits and vegetables. This approach at the holiday dinner table will allow you to maintain a healthy diet that can even include dessert!

3) Use a Smaller Plate

Start eating by filling your plate with vegetables before going to the entrees or desserts. Eating a salad before your meal can help you reduce calories. Eat slowly for every bite, and before you return for seconds, wait 10 minutes to see if you are still hungry. This pause lets your brain catch up with your stomach, helping you avoid overeating.

4) Get Moving!

This is a great time to walk, catch up with family members, or play games after dinner.



NURSES CORNER

Stay Healthy During the Holidays: December is Medical Health Awareness Month!

December is the perfect time to prioritize your health with prevention and preparation. Here's how you can stay healthy this holiday season:

National Influenza Vaccination Week (Dec 1-7):

It's not too late to protect yourself and your loved ones with a flu shot! Flu season is still active, and vaccination reduces your risk of illness, keeping you healthy for holiday gatherings.

Tips for Staying Healthy:

1. Prevent Colds and Flu:
 - Wash hands regularly with soap and water.
 - Use hand sanitizer on the go.
 - Avoid touching your face.
2. Manage Holiday Stress:
 - Stick to a schedule to avoid overwhelm.
 - Take time to rest and recharge.
 - Engage in mindfulness or relaxing activities.
3. Stay Active and Eat Smart:
 - Balance treats with nutrient-rich meals.
 - Enjoy activities like walking or yoga.
 - Stay hydrated.
4. Prioritize Mental Health:
 - Reach out to friends and family for support.
5. Practice Winter Safety:
 - Wear warm layers and use caution on icy surfaces.
 - Ensure your home is safely heated.
6. Check on Neighbors:
 - Call or visit those who may feel isolated.

Year-End Health Reminders:

Book annual check-ups, refill prescriptions, and review your health goals for the New Year.

Contact Us Today:

Fresno American Indian Health Project
559-320-0490 (option 2 for Medical)
Clinic Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 AM–5:00 PM
Stay Safe and Healthy This December!



NATIVE WELLNESS

By Michael Jimenez,
Peer Support Specialist, CADCIH



Turtles at the Garden

Greetings relatives, my name is Michael Jimenez and I serve as the Peer Support Specialist here at Fresno American Indian Health Project. I am honored to work with our community who suffer from hurts, habits, and hang-ups. On October 18th I had the privilege to hold our weekly Wellbriety 12-step meeting at our very own Community Garden across from the Discovery Center. Our Garden Coordinator Michelle Pipkin alongside various community members have created an atmosphere in the garden that makes for an escape from the city in our own backyard. We had a great turnout for the meeting as Sierra Tribal Consortium aka the Turtle Lodge filled the seats.

I am grateful to the relationships and bridges FAIHP and STC have continued to foster through various events. Each individual brought their own stories and were able to share the hope and wisdom that comes with the lifestyle we attain on and off the Red Road. The Red Road is what the path of recovery from drugs and, or alcohol is referred to in Wellbriety. Traditional AA/NA meetings are held in a row formation. Wellbriety meetings are held in circles to keep true to our reliance on the sacred circle which represents the seasons, and life cycles. Our relatives who attend the meetings understand that the sanctity of the circle is concealed in their hearts. When they share their stories and everyone's voice is heard, the circle becomes a sacred place. Each person carries their own medicine and these meetings allow us to openly share our experience and hope in a good way.

I appreciate the staff at STC for bringing the Turtles and allowing us to share the experience in the garden. A special thank you to our garden coordinator for all the hard work she has done there. We look forward to future opportunities with STC and the Community Garden.



For more information on our recovery and sobriety programs, contact Michael Jimenez at mjimenez@faihp.org



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

By Veronica Taylor, Outpatient Therapist

December is here and 2024 is coming to a close. Many use this period to reflect on experiences from the past year. December is also an excellent time to begin considering new intentions for the year ahead. Choosing to take small steps toward wellness can make a huge difference in how you feel all year long. Here are some tips to begin 2025 on a positive note:

Create a Self-Care Routine

Set aside time for enjoyable activities that relax and recharge you. Maybe it's a morning walk, reading, gardening, or taking a hot bath. Try to make self-care a consistent part of your week, even if it's just 5 minutes a day.

Practice Mindfulness

When we focus our attention on what's happening in our mind, body and surroundings without judgment, we are engaging in mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness can help reduce stress and improve our ability to cope with difficult situations. Setting aside a few minutes each day for activities like deep breathing, meditating, or stretching can have a significant calming effect.



Set Realistic Goals

"Go big or go home" is an approach to goal-setting that tends to leave us feeling overwhelmed and unmotivated. Instead, try creating smaller goals you believe you can achieve in the short-term. For example, if you'd like to get more organized, aim to declutter one drawer or space each week. Reaching smaller milestones provides a sense of accomplishment, which can help keep us motivated!



Reduce Screen Time

Too much screen time can increase stress and anxiety. Try setting boundaries with your electronic devices by limiting social media use after a certain time of day, or by establishing tech-free zones at home. For example, you might create a tech-free zone at the dining table or limit screen time an hour before bedtime. Unplugging allows us more time for relaxation and quality time with others.



Connect with Community

Engaging with our social supports is essential to wellness. Positive relationships help us feel grounded and cared for. Try setting goals to connect with others more often, whether you plan video chats, phone calls, coffee dates or simply spending quality time together.

Be Kind to Yourself

Sometimes we can be our own worst critics, especially when things don't go as planned. It's important to practice self-compassion by speaking to yourself with kindness and patience. Remind yourself that errors and setbacks are an important part of learning and growing!

Support Your Physical Health

Sleep and physical activity are closely linked to mental wellness. Try setting a regular bedtime and create a calming environment to improve your quality of rest. Adding a few minutes of exercise to your daily routine can also boost your mood and help reduce stress. Going for a short walk, dancing to your favorite song, or doing gentle stretches are great ways to move your body.



Reframing Traumatic Generational Cycles for Suicide Prevention Awareness

By Storm Heredia, Peer Mentor

Indigenous people are resilient people. We've endured years of turmoil, genocide, disconnection to culture, land, and families. Yet, as resilient as we are, we're not beyond experiences of trauma, depression, anxiety and mental suffering. Historical trauma and intergenerational trauma go hand in hand. Intergenerational trauma are negative coping cycles passed down from one generation of people to the next. Breaking the generational trauma is difficult to do. Often we are unaware of the cycle we are living through until we have an epiphany, or someone brings it to light. Now is the time to identify what those cycles are, and reshape them into positive ones to revitalize our livelihood and live how our ancestors prayed for. These tips from "WeRNative" can help break these cycles.



Self-reflection

Self-reflection is the process of deep thinking upon what it is you want to improve on. If you notice negative habits of family behavior occurring to you, or from you to others this is the perfect time to pause, think about what was said or done, and figure out what triggered those emotions or thoughts. Self-reflection will help you become aware of these cycles, and can eventually lead to breaking them and creating new ones.

Setting boundaries

Setting boundaries is very useful in times where you must create space between you and a loved one. Setting a boundary between you and them could be useful for organizing your own thoughts, beliefs and feelings without external influence. Setting a boundary is not the same as cutting them off completely, rather it's more like loving them from afar. The more you practice it, the better you will become.

Cultural connection.

Your sense of cultural identity may be shaken from years of colonial oppression. This could be a great time to sift through what is culturally unique to you, and what cruel habits were taught to your ancestors that unknowingly passed down. This will greatly affect the way you identify, cope with and reframe traumatic experiences once passed down as a norm.

Overall, it is not an easy process to heal from, but it can be done. It takes time, effort and the will to confront the demons that once thrived in your family. On this journey, hard emotions may arise. Remember to keep close to your self-care practice and hold onto the reasons you're doing this. Eventually you will see how much progress you've made. Stay strong and as always, stay well.

Fresno American Indian Health Project

1551 E Shaw Ave, Suite 139

Fresno, CA 93710

Donation Opportunity

FAIHP is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization and depends on support from the community. All donations are tax-deductible. If you or an individual or business you know would like to make a contribution they may do so by check.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

DONATION AMOUNT: _____

Please make all checks payable to:
Fresno American Indian Health Project

1551 E. Shaw Avenue, Suite 139, Fresno CA 93710.

Our Services Include

- Medical Appointments
- Health Screenings
- Behavioral Health Services
- Alcohol & Drug Prevention
- Health Education Classes
- Case Management
- Transportation
- Health Referrals
- Youth After School Program
- Nutrition Counseling

Our Board of Directors

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Learn more about the board

at www.faihp.org/about-us/board-of-directors

The Board of Directors meets the 4th Tuesday of every month, at 5:30pm. If you'd like to attend the board meeting, contact Kylie Sherman at ksherman@faihp.org or by calling 559-320-0490.

The Fresno American Indian Health Project is a culturally sensitive health access and advocacy program designed to enhance the health and well being of the American Indian community in the City of Fresno, CA. The Health Project provides public health services and access to free & low cost quality health care. The primary program services are medical, behavioral health, comprehensive case management, public health nursing, providing health services and prevention education.