August 27, 2019

Dear UW Faculty,

The month of September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month. To address the high rates of suicide in Native youth ages 15-24 years, the Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center will host a Suicide Listening Session Forum. The forum will provide an opportunity to hear from, and interact with, national and local subject matter experts in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) behavioral health.

This also includes, health care providers, graduate students, tribal leaders, suicide prevention program personnel, education personnel, representatives from Native organizations, and community members committed to addressing the mental health needs of AI/AN students in secondary and tertiary education.

I humbly invite you and other University of Wisconsin staff to join us in this very important discussion about addressing suicide risk on an individual and system level for Native students in Wisconsin.

**Event Details:**

**What:** Suicide Listening Session Forum: Join a Discussion about Suicide Risk in Native College Students

**When:** Thursday, September 12, 2019
8:30 am - 3:00 p.m.

**Where:** Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, Legacy Ballroom

**Notes:** Lunch is included. A Hotel Room Block is reserved for those that may be travelling from a distance. RSVP: To secure attendance. Register at Eventbrite: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/suicide-listening-session-forum-tickets-68605674419](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/suicide-listening-session-forum-tickets-68605674419)

**The objectives of the Suicide Listening Session Forum are to:**

1. Increase awareness and understanding of suicide risk in AI/AN youth ages 15-24 years;
2. Create insight into the factors that place AI/AN youth at greater risk for suicide;
3. Identify how high schools, colleges, and universities can support the behavioral health needs of AI/AN students;
4. Strengthen collaboration between high schools, colleges, universities, and AI/AN behavioral health programs, AI/AN behavioral health service providers, and Native organizations;
5. Provide best practice recommendations for establishing culturally responsive systems of care to address behavioral health needs and suicide risk in AI/AN students.

Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Roger (Dale) Walker (Cherokee). Dr. Walker is an Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at the Oregon Health & Science University. He is Director of the One Sky Center, [www.oneskycenter.org](http://www.oneskycenter.org), a National Resource Center for American Indian Health, Education and research.
This Center provides expert consultation, training, and technical assistance that facilitates strategic planning and leadership development for optimal health service delivery for tribes and Native communities across North America. It also provides program evaluations and dissemination of evidence-based, culturally appropriate best practices. We will also hear from an AI/AN expert health panel and an undergraduate/graduate student panel. The AI/AN expert health panel will offer information geared at developing culturally competent systems of care for AI/AN students in secondary and tertiary school settings. An AI/AN undergraduate/graduate student panel will convene to shed light on specific mental health and wellness issues prevalent among native college youth, and the types of support these students found helpful while obtaining their education.

Supporting the mental health and wellness of youth in our communities and identifying ways to support families is a top priority for GLIIHC and for many of us. Please join us for this Suicide Listening Session Forum to begin these important discussions together. If you have any questions regarding the Listening Session Forum, please contact Deborah Black, Deputy Director, Department of Behavioral Health at (414) 316-5046 or at dblack@gliihc.net.

Thank you,

Lyle Ignace, MD., MP.H
Executive Director