



NACS NEWS

*A Tradition
of Caring*

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Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

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"Gen-I" Ambassadors Celebrated at White House Tribal Nations Conference and in MTV Rebel Music Film

Posted by Raina Thiele and Jodi Gillette on January 21, 2015 at 06:08 PM EST

On December 3rd, President Obama hosted the 6th annual White House Tribal Nations conference where he announced Generation Indigenous ("Gen-I"), a new initiative focused on removing the barriers that stand between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed using a comprehensive, culturally appropriate approach. In addition to leaders from the 566 federally-recognized Native nations, for the first time, 37 high-school aged "Gen-I" Native Youth Ambassadors were invited to engage with the President, Vice President, and Cabinet

Officials representing the White House Council on Native American Affairs on key issues facing tribes. The Conference built on the President's visit to the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation in June, during which he and First Lady Michelle Obama met with a group of Lakota young

adults and learned about the obstacles and problems they had experienced resulting from substance abuse, violence and other poverty-related issues.

Through "Gen I", the Youth Ambassadors represented the voice of Native youth at the

inspiring group with big plans for making a positive impact in their communities. Over the course of their trip to D.C., they participated in exciting events in advance of the Conference, including a White House screening of MTV's riveting [Rebel Music: Native America premiere episode](#) followed by a

panel discussion including Rebel Music creator Nusrat Durrani and Lakota rapper Frank Waln and a signing ceremony for a new MOU between the Indian Health Service and Nike N7, which included a visit with 2014 FIFA World Cup Kiowa soccer

player Chris Wondolowski. Several

of the Ambassadors were featured in a new MTV video "[Meet Generation Indigenous](#)" that followed two of the youth on their inspiring journey from their home communities to Washington, D.C.



December 3, 2014. (by Photo courtesy of the Indian Health Service)

Conference by joining with tribal leaders in breakout sessions and panels and participating in leadership development programming. Click [here](#) to learn more about Gen-I! The 2014 Youth Ambassadors came from across the country, from Alaska to North Carolina, and are an

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If you are planning on moving or changing your address, please contact NACS so we may update our mailing list. Call (716) 874-2797 or send an email to:

gghosen@nacswny.org

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The MTV Gen-I video featured young leaders like Youth Ambassador Dahkota Brown of the Wilton Band of Miwok Indians and Janay Jumping Eagle of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Dahkota founded the organization Native Education Raising Dedicated Students (NERDS), which aims to decrease the dropout rate of Native youth by giving Native students a safe, helpful and healthy place to do their homework. Janay is also actively speaking out about suicide and dedicated her most recent basketball season to at risk youth.

As the youth reflect on their experience at the Tribal Nations Conference, they are more inspired and motivated than ever before to create positive change in their communities. One of those stu-

dents is Rory Wheeler of the Seneca Nation of Indians who said he's "honored to serve as a founding member of Generation Indigenous and plan[s] on doing great things to enhance the lives of Native Youth across Indian Country." Or Darius Jackson from the Gila River Indian Community who said the conference was "the highlight of [his] life so far." And Kelsey Janway of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma who said that, as Ambassadors, "We're going to be those people who make the difference."

All of the 2014 Youth Ambassadors are incredibly impressive and will continue their work with the Administration and non-federal partners to help sculpt and support the "Gen-I" Initiative. We would like to thank each of them for setting a positive example and being a force for good in their communities.

Meet The NACS New Employees

Brittney Anderson

My job title is Family Preservation Caseworker. I am originally from the Rochester area. I have a lot of experience working in the Human Service field. I have a Master's in Criminal Justice. I was a Service Coordinator for about 3 years in the Early Intervention field. I enjoy listening to music and reading a lot of books. I also enjoy kickboxing and basketball. I look forward to being a part of the NACS community.



Christina Ogle

Many of you know that I was once part of this community for two years before leaving December of 2013 to move to Indianapolis, Indiana. During my year away, I was part of a non-profit called *National Youth Advocate Program*, where I was employed as a foster care caseworker. While there, I also got married and am now officially Cristina Ogle! Many of you will ask me how to pronounce my last name, and I am very much ok with that 😊





SAVE THE DATE!!!

**Another Celebrating
with a Good Mind
event!**

6th Annual Dance of the Decades!!!

Friday, March 20, 2015

6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Refreshments!

**Contests
&
Prizes!!!**

NACS Common Area

1005 Grant St.

Buffalo, NY 14207

For more information, please call 874-2797 ext. 308
We CAN have FUN without drugs or alcohol!

Free Income Tax Preparation

submitted by Carmen Brown, N.E.S.T. Worker

Before the holiday season has a chance to die down, commercials start to bombard all media outlets asking people to come get their taxes filed with them. You can file your taxes FOR FREE if your yearly income was less than \$53,000! If that applies to you, get down to a free filing location and let a volunteer income tax assistant (VITA) file your taxes for you! If you would prefer filing on your own, go to:

www.myfreetaxes.com
where you can still file free.

I won't name names here, but many of these places prey on people not being aware of the options available to them. What is even crazier, these people charge large amounts of money for what is already yours! Like through a common process called a rapid tax loan, or rapid refund loan. Say a person who would normally get \$1,200 back in their refund takes a loan out against his or her own money, ultimately receiving \$800. A typically e-filed refund could take up to three weeks to clear, or as little as a week. What is a week or two for \$400 more in funds!

We have all had those moments in our lives where extra cash sooner, rather than later, would truly make a difference. Since getting older, and entering my adult phase of life, tax season has felt like a continuation of Christmas! Whatever

the amount of money is, the federal and state governments have it set aside for you, and you have earned it! Through all hardships, and pre-mapped out spending plans the day that money hits your bank account, or the check in that mailbox of yours - make sure you keep it all for yourself and your family. It is your money!

Throughout this tax season, I'll be preparing taxes at University of Buffalo's Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) on Mondays and Thursdays from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm, and also on two Saturdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, March 14th and April 11th. EOC is Located downtown at 555 Ellicott Street, next door to the City Mission. I'll also be preparing on Wednesdays at Northwest Buffalo Community Center from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, located at 155 Lawn Avenue.

Filing taxes is not always a comfortable thing to do, like many things that involve money. You want the most you can possibly get- what is yours! Going to a free tax filing location might be your best option; it saves you the hassle of filing on your own and these locations make sure to get you the largest refund possible. VITA preparers can also answer questions you may have about the "Shared Responsibility Penal-

ty" in attachment to the Affordable Healthcare Act (ACA). Many Natives qualify for an exemption to this healthcare penalty, among other unique guidelines in the ACA.

Any questions you might have about this particular area, please contact:

nacs.nest@gmail.com

Stay tuned for future articles, in NACS newspaper, going into greater depth on how the ACA affects indigenous people.

2015 VITA Tax Site Schedule:

First Shiloh Baptist Church

15 Pine Street, Buffalo, NY, 14204. Open 1/24/15 until 4/15/15. Walk-ins welcome **Tuesdays and Wednesdays** from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm and **Saturdays** from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. **Thursdays** are by appointment only from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. Call 2-1-1 to schedule an appointment.

Matt Urban Hope Center

385 Paderewski Drive, Buffalo, NY, 14212. Open 1/27/15 until 4/14/15 by appointment only. Appointments are taken for **Tuesdays** from 11:00 am-5:00 pm. Call 2-1-1 to schedule an appointment.

Riverside Library

820 Tonawanda Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

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Tuesday by appointment only from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Call 716-875-0562 to schedule an appointment

Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers (BFNC)

2495 Main Street, Buffalo, NY, 14214. Suite #330.
Open 1/24/15 until 4/16/15.
Walk ins welcome **Mondays and Wednesdays** from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm, **Tuesday and Thursday** from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm and **Saturdays** from

10:00 am to 3:00 pm. (Sign language interpretation is available at this site; please call 716-362-0744 ahead of time to make arrangements.)



NACS Medicaid Services Update

submitted by Michael Doreen, Medicaid Services Coordinator

Raising children with a Developmental Disability can be very stressful and exhausting; dealing with challenging behaviors, special medical needs, financial difficulties and the desire to give your loved one the best life they can have. These attempts are often road blocked by the many challenges a family can encounter. Even more so when Individuals and families cannot access the services necessary to achieve their needs and individual goals. Often time individuals and families do not know these services exist or are available to them or their loved one.

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties provides Medicaid Services Coordination that assists eligible individuals in gaining access to necessary services and supports appropriate to the needs and life

goals vital to enhancing their overall quality of life.

Medicaid Services Coordination (MSC) is a Medicaid State Plan service that is provided by the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). This service assists Individuals with developmental disabilities and mental retardation gain access to appropriate and necessary services within the community. MSC is provided by a Service Coordinator who will work closely with the family or Individual to identify needs and desires

through a person centered approach.

The service coordinator will complete an initial Individual Service Plan (ISP) with the individual or family to assist them in achieving their personal and unique goals which may include, community involvement, enjoyable leisure activities as well as, needed medical and clinical services.

Who's eligible? To be eligible for Medicaid Services Coordination (MSC) services you must have been diagnosed with a qualifying developmental disability before age 22. Developmental disabilities are a variety of conditions that become apparent during childhood and cause mental or physical limitations. These qualifying conditions are: Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, Mental Retardation, Neurologi-

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cal Impairments and Familial Dysautonomia.

Those receiving MSC services may be eligible for Medicaid Waiver Services which may include but are not limited to Family Education, Transitional Services, Residential and Day Habilitation, Supported Employment, Pre-Vocational Services, Respite and In-Home Behavioral Supports, as well

as Adaptive equipment. These services are in addition to what schools provide and are geared more toward serving individuals with developmental disabilities.

These services are life long and will follow the Individual even if they decide to receive services from another agency. With these necessary services in place you can assure that you or your loved one can experience life at its

fullest and be a contributing member of their community.

For more information, please contact, Michael Doreen, Medicaid Service Coordinator (716) 874-2797 Extension 323.



Erie County Health Department's Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Wants You To Know...

submitted by Pete Hill, Health & Wellness Director

It's flu season! Young children, especially those under 6 months of age who cannot receive the immunization, and the elderly are at higher risk for flu complications, which can even lead to death. In spite of all the negative publicity that the influenza (flu) vaccine is receiving, it is still your best option to preventing the flu. Undoubtedly some protection is better than none! So, if you haven't received a flu vaccination yet, visit your provider or neighborhood pharmacy to secure one NOW!

At the same time, you can discuss receiving a zoster vaccination to protect against shingles if you are over 60 years of age. Shingles is a painful, often times debilitating and chronic, disease. One in every three people will devel-

op shingles, and some may even suffer more than one occurrence. If you have insurance which does not cover the vaccine, call the Erie Co. Department of Health,



Immunization Action Plan Program at **858-2373** or **858-2371** to determine if they can help you obtain the vaccine through the local health department clinic.

As well, speak to your provider regarding the pneumonia vaccine – there are now two vaccines which every

adult over 65 (or younger, with health issues) should receive. Whether you have already received one or two, or none, determine which you might still need NOW!

If you have children or grandchildren 11 years or older, please consider the recommended human papillomavirus (HPV) and meningitis (MCV) vaccines, which should be administered at the same visit they receive their required Tdap vaccine for 6th grade. HPV prevents cervical cancer and genital warts, and MCV prevents against a rare but often fatal disease.

So be proactive and receive the immunizations that can prevent serious illness or even death!

Alcohol-Free Weekend: The Alcohol Awareness Month Challenge

submitted by Star Wheeler, Prevention Specialist

(Taken from www.duffysrehab.com)

One weekend. No alcohol. Can you do it?

To create public awareness for its [Alcohol Awareness Month](#), the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence extends an open invitation to all Americans to refrain from drinking alcohol during the weekend of April 3rd through 5th and calling it their Alcohol-Free Weekend.

Why Should I Take the Alcohol-Free Weekend Challenge?

For many **social drinkers**, abstaining from alcohol might seem unnecessary. If you're not addicted to alcohol, why is it so important for you to go without it for a weekend?

Even if you do not consider yourself as someone with an alcohol problem, this is an opportunity for you to show support for those who are coping with alcohol-related problems. You see, some of us are not like you. We are not able to drink responsibly. Once we start, we can't stop. And this causes problems.

While you may not struggle with an alcohol addiction, this is your chance to show your support for those of us who have been or are still caught in the grip of addiction. Do you want to help those whose lives are being ravaged by the monster of addiction? Do you support the alcoholic's journey to a better life in recovery? **THIS** is your chance to show it!

Will you stand with us in seeking to provide help and hope for those who need it? **Will you join with us for just one weekend without alcohol?**

Taking the Alcohol-Free Weekend Challenge

This 72-hour experiment is also a chance to find out just how important alcohol means to you. Those who find it difficult or experience discomfort during the alcohol-free weekend may be experiencing early signs of dependence and may even require [professional detoxification](#). We encourage these individuals or families to contact a support group or treatment center and [learn more](#) about [alcoholism](#) and its early symptoms.

How do I know if I or a loved one needs help?

Addiction is a subtle process, and many are not aware they have a problem with drinking—until they are forced to go without it. Dependence on alcohol manifests itself both psychologically and physically when drinking ceases. For example, feelings of anxiety, distress, restlessness, depression, and cravings may indicate that alcohol has become more than a just a method of relaxation or socialization.

Also, if your body has become used to the continual presence of alcohol, suddenly stopping can cause physical effects, such as

- Sweating
- Tremors
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headache
- Insomnia

Although mild, these symptoms may progress to more severe conditions for some. In more severe cases, professional care may be necessary to ensure safety and comfort as you abstain.

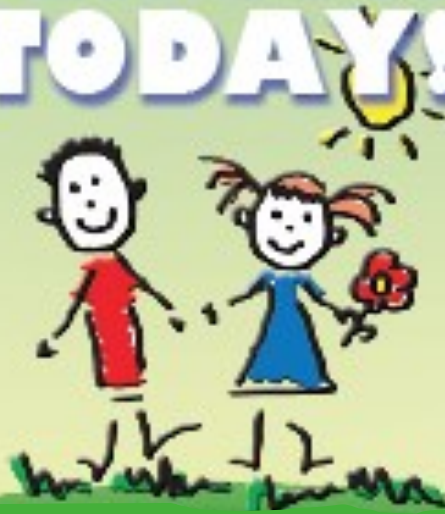
Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
"A Tradition of Caring"

If You Are...

Someone who LOVES children
Able to provide a child with a safe & stable home,
Over 21, Healthy, Single or Married,
Working or stay-at-home parent &
Able to work well with a team...

ENRICH THE PRESENT & TRANSFORM THE FUTURE

BECOME A FOSTER PARENT TODAY!



1005 Grant Street
Buffalo, New York 14207
Phone: (716) 874-4460
Fax: (716) 874-1874

1522 Main Street
Niagara Falls, NY 14305
Phone: (716) 299-0914
Fax (716) 299-0903

If you answered yes to any of these questions and would like to make a difference in the lives of Western New York Children of all ages, please contact NACS Foster Care Program about becoming a foster/adoptive parent. The Foster Care Program Coordinator would be happy to speak with you and explain the process.



Please call the Foster Care Program at
716 874.2797 Ext. 303

www.nacswny.org

Funded by: NYS Office of Children & Family Services; Erie County Department of Social Services

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2015
SOLE FAMILY NIGHT PROGRAMS

MONTHLY EVENTS WITH DINNER

ERIE COUNTY DATES:

3/11/15; 4/8/15; 5/13/15; 6/10/15

WEDNESDAYS FROM 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Native American Community Services
1005 Grant Street
Buffalo, NY 14207



NIAGARA COUNTY DATES:

3/19/15; 4/16/15; 5/21/15; 6/18/15

THURSDAYS FROM 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Family and Children's Services Building
Community Room
1522 Main Street; Niagara Falls, NY 14305

**For more information or to request our monthly Family Night flyers,
please contact SOLE HOTLINE at: (716) 874-2797 x318**

Funded by: NYS Department of Health/Bureau of Family Health; NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation; as well as businesses, foundations, and caring individuals.

Native American Community Services
of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
1005 Grant Street
Buffalo, New York, 14207

YES, I'D LIKE TO HELP NACS TO CONTINUE IT'S TRADITION OF CARING!!

Please accept my contribution of:

- ☐ \$5 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50
☐ \$100 ☐ Other: _____

I'd like to volunteer my time. I can...

Name

Address

City / State / Zip Code

Phone

☐ Please add me to your mailing list!

Please detach and return to:

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
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FUNDED BY: Erie County Department of Social Services; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; NYS DOH/Family Health; Niagara County Youth Bureau; NYS Education Dept.; NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities; Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; US Department of Labor; United Way of Buffalo & Erie County; U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services/Administration for Native Americans; Peter & Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation; Service Collaborative of WNY, Inc., as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.

