



NACS News

*A Tradition
of Caring!*

June/July 2017
Volume 21, Issue 3

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

- 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, New York, 14207, (716) 874-4460, Fax (716) 874-1874
- 1522 Main Street, Niagara Falls, New York, 14305, (716) 299-0914, Fax (716) 299-0903

Protecting Our Children National Conference

submitted by Barbara Clawson Cole, Family Services Director

This April, I, along with Executive Director Michael Martin and Foster Care Coordinator Anna Miller, attended the National Indian Child Welfare Association's (NICWA) 35th Annual Protecting Our Children National American Indian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. The four-day conference event was held in sunny Southern California and hosted by the Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians. The conference left me feeling renewed and inspired. I know we were all able to learn new skills and information that will improve our child welfare services at NACS.

With over 70 workshops by leaders in the field of Indian Child Welfare on topics like working with substance abusing families and establishing Title IV-E eligibility, this conference was invaluable for anyone like me who works with children and families in our community. I also had the privilege of volun-

teering at the conference, by assisting with the workshop evaluation process.

More than 1,240 attendees, including tribal leaders, court judges, child welfare workers, foster/adoptive families, and youth in foster care created an atmosphere of collaboration and sense of common purpose: the well-being of Indigenous children.

This year's event was a record-breaking one for NICWA, who has spent more than 30 years dedicated to this mission. The growth in the number of expert presenters, tribal and organizational sponsors, activated members, and engaged participants speaks heavily to the impact that NICWA has on Native communities, families, and children across Indian Country.

We know that the Indian Child Welfare Act was

borne out of the forced removal of one out of every three children from their homes in the late 1970's. More than 35 years later, there is still a lack of compliance with the law and an overrepresentation of Native children in the child welfare system. That is why NICWA's work and training opportunities, like their Annual Protecting Our Children National Conference, are so important. These trainings help child welfare workers and our partners protect our children and preserve our culture.

I look forward to attending their next conference in Anchorage, Alaska from April 15-18, 2018, for more professional development and skill-building through critical conversations, challenging workshops, and connecting with community experts from across the continent.

Here in Buffalo, New York, I hope that every child will ex-

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MOVING/CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

If you are planning on moving or changing your address, please contact NACS so we may update our mailing list. Call (716) 874-2797, ext. 378 or send an email to: gghosen@nacswny.org

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perience the love of their family, the support of our community, and the strength of their culture. For more information about NICWA and how you can get involved or register for training opportunities, visit www.nicwa.org. If you are interested in how I will be using the information and skills I learned during my favorite annual training event, please reach out to me. I look forward to

working together in our community for the well-being of our children. Email:

Bccole@nacswny.org

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Foster Parent or volunteering with us in protecting children, please call either Anna Miller at 874-2797 ex 301 or myself, Barbara Clawson Cole at 874-2797 ex 319.

Stages of Life Empowerment Program Peer Educators Empowering People (PEEPs) Receive Mini-Grant from HOPE Buffalo

The SOLE Program's Peer Educators have been awarded a mini-grant through HOPE Buffalo to start a peer mentoring program in the city of Buffalo. The PEEPs mentoring program will be a participatory, discussion based program which aims to provide teens with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make responsible decisions in regards to sexual health, and aims to empower the participants to become peer educators as well. The program will feature discussions around the facts and attitudes regarding STI's and birth control, safe sex, healthy relationships, minors' rights, and accessing sexual healthcare, in hopes to create a larger community movement towards healthy teens. The program was created and will be led by our youth Peer Educators- Devonna Loder, Destiny Jackson, and Mohamed Nor. The PEEPs aim to launch the mentoring program this fall. Congratulations on all your hard work!





Heart, Love, & Soul
939 Ontario Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY
(716) 205-0287

Project Homeless Connect was founded in San Francisco in 2004 as a one stop model for people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. Project Connect Niagara replicates this program and connects Niagara County residents with the services they need.

What will I get for attending?

- Access to 30+ local agencies and services
- Personal care items
- Free lunch
- Gift card if you visit 8 or more tables throughout the day

SERVICES PROVIDED AT PROJECT CONNECT NIAGARA

Local agencies will provide a wide range of free services including:

- Dental Care and Referrals
- Employment/Job Readiness Training
- Family Services
- Financial Services
- HIV/AIDS Testing

- Legal Services
 - Medical Services
 - Mental Health Referrals
 - Housing Assistance
 - Substance Abuse Services
 - Veterans Benefits
 - Women’s Health Services
- AND MUCH MORE!**

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Anyone who is at-risk of homelessness, currently experiencing homelessness, or in need of help should attend this FREE event.

If you’re still unsure, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you having a hard time making ends meet?
- Do you not know where you are going to stay next week?
- Do you feel unsafe in your current living situation?
- Do you need to access any of the services listed?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you should come to Project Connect Niagara!

THINGS TO BRING:

If you have them, it may be helpful to bring some of the following items with you:

- Photo Identification
- Social Security Card
- Birth Certificate
- Applications you need help with

ID IS NOT REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE!

HOW TO GET THERE

Free Transportation is available!

Call (716) 205-0287 or visit: niagara.edu/projectconnect for more details.

Public Transit:
 NFTA 52A– St. Mary’s Hospital
 Get off at Ontario Ave. & Main St. For more details, go online: <http://metro.nfta.com/>

Street parking is free and available.

GET CONNECTED!

Online
www.niagara.edu/projectconnect

@projectconnectniagara

Email:
projectconnectniagara@gmail.com

Mission:

A one day, one-stop venue bringing together local agencies to provide our neighbors with access to health care, social services, legal advice, food, and much more.

This event is brought to you in partnership with:

Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless



July is Juvenile Arthritis Month

submitted by Corey Yamamura, Family Services

One of the biggest rheumatic diseases that affects adults, also greatly impacts children! Juvenile arthritis (JA) is a term to describe several autoimmune and inflammatory conditions that develop in children under the age of 16.

According to the Arthritis Foundation Website, there are 7 various types of JA:

- ▶ [Juvenile idiopathic arthritis \(JIA\)](#). Considered the most common form of arthritis, JIA includes six subtypes: oligoarthritis, polyarthritis, systemic, enthesitis-related, juvenile psoriatic arthritis or undifferentiated.
- ▶ [Juvenile dermatomyositis](#). An inflammatory disease, juvenile dermatomyositis causes muscle weakness and a skin rash on the eyelids and knuckles.
- ▶ [Juvenile lupus](#). Lupus is an autoimmune disease. The most common form is systemic lupus erythematosus, or SLE. Lupus can affect the joints, skin, kidneys, blood and other areas of the body.
- ▶ [Juvenile scleroderma](#). Scleroderma, which literally means “hard skin,” describes a group of conditions that causes the skin to tighten and harden.
- ▶ [Kawasaki disease](#). This disease causes blood-vessel inflammation that can lead to heart complications.
- ▶ [Mixed connective tissue disease](#). This disease may include features of arthritis, lupus dermatomyositis and scleroderma, and is associated with very high levels of a particular anti-nuclear antibody called anti-RNP.
- ▶ [Fibromyalgia](#). This chronic pain syndrome is an arthritis-related condition, which can cause stiffness and aching, along with fatigue, disrupted sleep and other symptoms. More common in girls, fibromyalgia is seldom diagnosed before puberty.

As with any type of medical treatment, helping the child with social and emotional aspects of the situation is also beneficial to the holistic approach. For additional information or support, the local arthritis foundation office can be reached by calling 212-984-8700.

August is Eye Care Month

submitted by Corey Yamamura, Family Services

When summer winds down and children are preparing to head back to school, August is a very important month. August is Children’s Eye Health and Safety Month. By scheduling your child for an eye exam, early detection of multiple issues can be fixed and/or eliminated; such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism, just to name a few.

There are various sources for those that are above Medicaid eligibility, but are in financial need. One such source is <http://www.allaboutvision.com/eye-exam/free-exam.htm>.



BUNDLED ARROWS YOUTH AWARD 2017

Native American Community Services is accepting nominations until **Friday, September 8, 2017**, for its **seventh** annual youth recognition award to be presented this year at the NACS Gala in October 2017 at a location to be announced.

The award will honor a Native American youth between the ages of 13 to 20 residing in Erie or Niagara Counties who actively works to make a difference in their family, school and/or local community while serving as a positive role model for other Native youth.

Previous Youth Award winners include: Jake Van Every, Zach Cruz, Robert Van Every, Kiana Marshall, Quinna Hamby and Sierra LaBorgne.

For further information on award criteria and to receive nomination forms, please contact Norine Borkowski at 874-2797, extension 304 or e-mail:

nborkowski@nacswny.org



Every-Kid-in-a-Park 4th Grade Free Entry Program Guidelines for Use in New York State Parks

New York State Parks will accept the National Park Service's (NPS) Every-Kid-in-a Park pass (pictured below) upon presentation for free entry for 4th grade students into all State Parks in 2017. The pass applies only to the vehicle entry fee, and the 4th grader must be present in the vehicle. The pass will also be accepted at state historic sites for the pass holder and up to 3 adults for house tour fees. This is a pilot program as part of a series of initiatives to encourage youth visitation to state parks, historic sites and public lands. Fourth grade students can obtain and print their pass at <https://www.everykidinapark.gov/>

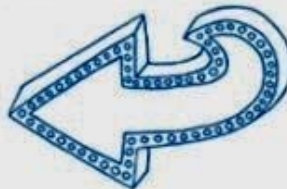


A message from NACS' Family Services:

ADOPT

IF YOU CAN'T ADOPT:

FOSTER



IF YOU CAN'T FOSTER:

SPONSOR



IF YOU CAN'T SPONSOR:

VOLUNTEER



IF YOU CAN'T VOLUNTEER:

DONATE



IF YOU CAN'T DONATE:

EDUCATE



AdoptionMamaBlog.com





Summer Contest for Native Youth

We know that culture plays an important role in maintaining and improving our community's health. Whether it's hitting the powwow trail or pulling in canoe journey, summer is a great time to connect with your culture. Encourage youth you know to get involved in cultural activities and share their experience by entering this month's We R Native contest.

This month's contest asks American Indian and Alaska Native youth 15-24 years old, "**How do you #REPRESENT? What are some ways you're connecting with culture and showing your Native Pride this summer?**" Youth can enter [online](#) or by sharing their story on social media using #represent #weRnative. Stories will be featured on weRnative.org and youth will be entered to win up to \$150 (1st place), \$100 (2nd place), or \$75 (3rd place)!

Deadline for entries: August 20th

Enter today!

You can apply online at:
<http://www.wernative.org/contests/Summer-2017>



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

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** **
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

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Please add me to your mailing list!

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

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; NYS Education Dept.; NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities; Erie County Youth Bureau, Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; US Department of Labor; United Way of Buffalo & Erie County; W.K Kellogg Foundation; U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, ANA; as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.

