



Mission

To alleviate the unequal burden of cancer among Native Americans of the Southwest through research, training, and community outreach programs in collaboration with the communities we serve.





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The Partnership for Native American Cancer Prevention (NACP) is a partnership of Native American communities, Northern Arizona University, the University of Arizona Cancer Center, and the National Cancer Institute to address cancer health disparities in Native Americans.

Greetings!

John F. Kennedy noted that, “we must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives.” This month, we express our gratitude to members of NACP’s Internal Advisory Committee who have transitioned to new activities and welcome the new members who have taken their place. We share insights on cervical cancer., and news of recent NACP honors and publications. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Jani Ingram Francine Gachupin Jason Wilder Margaret Briebl

Insights on Cervical Cancer from Dr. Andrew Kraft

We all wish that there was a vaccine that could prevent cancer. The cause of cervical cancer is the human papillomavirus and we do have an effective vaccine against this virus. This vaccine is as effective as the ones now being used to prevent death from COVID-19 and can prevent papillomavirus from causing cancer. Early cervical cancer has no signs and symptoms. Later disease can be associated with vaginal bleeding and pelvic pain. Cervical cancer can kill young women in their 30’s. Sometimes, it is diagnosed in pregnancy. Like many cancers, early diagnosis and surgery can be curative. One of the NACP research teams is investigating the role of specific bacteria in the vaginal canal in cervical cancer occurrence in Native Americans. *Remember if teenagers get vaccinated, cervical cancer can be prevented!!*

Congratulations Dr. Juanita Merchant



Dr. Merchant

Dr. Juanita Merchant at the University of Arizona was recently named as one of 1,000 Inspiring Black Scientists in America. She is a co-leader on the NACP research project focused on stomach cancer. The honor recognizes Dr. Merchant’s contributions as a physician, scientist, and mentor. She was selected for this recognition by a community of scholars who are celebrating Black talent by spreading the word about the many outstanding Black scientists in the scientific community.

Recent Publications



Drs. Ingram and Rock

Dr. Jani Ingram along with former students Dr. Tommy Rock and Lindsey Jones at Northern Arizona University recently published a paper titled “Approaches for Disseminating Environmental Research Findings to Navajo Communities” in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* (<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18136753>). The paper reports the use of three different dissemination approaches for providing environmental research results back to Navajo communities from different research projects. The objectives of the dissemination are to provide the

results to the community, have a dialogue about the results, and learn more about the environmental concerns of the community for potential future research projects. The paper provides lessons learned and recommendations for other researchers interested in effectively disseminating their research findings.



Recent Publications (cont.)



Dr. Lee

Dr. Naomi Lee at Northern Arizona University contributed to a study that is titled, “Cultural identity central to Native American persistence in science.” It will be published in the journal *Cultural Studies of Science Education*. The study explored the relationships of science self-efficacy (confidence to accomplish scientific-related tasks), science identity (feeling of belonging to the scientific community), and cultural identity among Native American students and their persistence to stay in science. Information was gathered from surveys and interviews with Native American students from four culturally-tailored summer internship programs. The findings showed that Native American students are more likely to persist in the sciences when provided a sense of belonging to the scientific community that did not conflict with their cultural identities. Based on their findings, the authors make recommendations for training programs to more effectively increase the representation of Native Americans in science fields. The recommendations are centered on the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and values through a framework referred to as the Indigenous science internship model (ISIM).

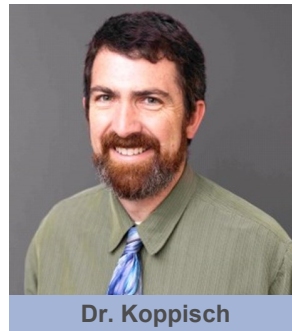
Changes to the Internal Advisory Committee (IAC)



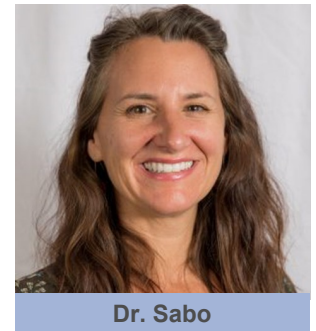
Dr. Jagodzinski



Dr. von Hippel



Dr. Koppisch



Dr. Sabo

NACP would like to thank Drs. Paul Jagodzinski and Frank von Hippel for their service as Internal Advisory Committee (IAC) members. Dr. Jagodzinski of NAU has guided NACP for the past 13 years; he provided insights into our research projects particularly those focused on basic science. Dr. von Hippel served on the IAC for three years; he moved from NAU to UA where he will be leading the “One Health” initiative at UA. NACP welcomes Drs. Andy Koppisch and Samantha Sabo from NAU to our IAC. Dr. Koppisch is a biochemist and serves as the Interim Associate Vice President for Research. Dr. Sabo is a health scientist whose research focuses on social and political context of chronic disease in vulnerable populations. NACP looks forward to the expertise Drs. Koppisch and Sabo bring to our Partnership.

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