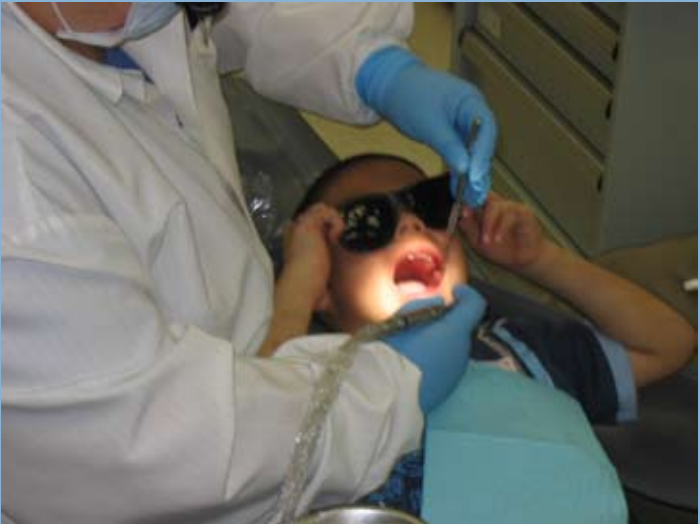


The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and several Jesuit universities (Creighton, Gonzaga, Marquette) have joined forces to address the disparities seen in the oral health of Native Americans. Together they are creating a pipeline collaborative into the dental profession for Native American students with strong tribal and cultural affiliation. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing the nation and is providing grant funds to initiate the pipeline formation. The Jesuits have over a 300 year history of working with Native Americans creating a mutual respect and trust. Due to this relationship the three Jesuit universities participating in the grant have been successful in recruiting a significant number of Native American students to their undergraduate schools. Creighton and Marquette have dental schools prepared to accept qualified Native American students.

The Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in 2000 revealed that Native American populations had not shared equally in the major improvements in dental health that have taken place over the last five decades for most Americans. Native American children suffer from much higher dental decay rates while Native American adults show higher rates of tooth decay and periodontal disease. Much higher rates of untreated disease were found in both children and adult groups. Recent research has also demonstrated a high correlation between oral health and general health.

One of the main reasons for the disparities in oral health seen between Native Americans and the general population is difficulty in accessing dental care. For the last several years approximately 30 Native American students have enrolled in the 56 dental schools located in the continental United States - fewer than one Native American student per dental school. Many of these 30 students do not have strong tribal or cultural affiliations to their ancestors. Research has shown that the best way to place health care providers into under-served areas is to recruit students from those areas into the health professions.



Undergraduate representatives from Creighton, Gonzaga and Marquette will continue to recruit Native Americans to their respective universities. Students at the high school level will be informed of this special opportunity in dentistry. Creighton and Marquette will recruit Native American undergraduates from all three Jesuit universities to their schools of dentistry. Native American students with strong tribal affiliations at other non-Jesuit universities will also be recruited for this program.

Creighton will be the lead school in this collaborative program. Through the Robert Wood Johnson funding it will provide a four-week Summer Enrichment Program annually for first, second and third year undergraduate students who want to investigate the profession of dentistry. Six Native American students will be able to attend this program each year at no cost to the individual.

Qualified Native American students will be encouraged to apply directly for admission to Creighton and Marquette Schools of Dentistry.

Undergraduate Native American students who need to strengthen their undergraduate preparation for dental school will be encouraged to apply to Creighton's highly successful, existing Dental Post-Baccalaureate Program. This one-year program will be expanded from 5 to 8 students and will include 3 Native American students.

Resources

- American Student Dental Association
www.asdanet.org
- American Dental Association
www.ada.org
- American Dental Education Association
www.adea.org
- Society of American Indian Dentists
www.aaip.org/about/said.htm
- Explore Health Careers
www.explorehealthcareers.org

**Tami Buffalohead-McGill,
Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
Director of Student Support
Services, Creighton University**



"As a graduate of Creighton University, I know first hand the welcoming environment available to Native American students. With Native American scholarships, the Native American Studies Program, the Native American Association, Gamma Delta Pi, reservation-based service trips and community outreach, and the annual Pow Wow, Native American students benefit from a continuum of support."



Summer Enrichment Program

- four weeks in June at Creighton University School of Dentistry
- six undergraduate Native American Students
- tuition, transportation, and living allowance provided
- learn about the dental profession
- learn about dental school and the application process

Dental Post-Baccalaureate Program

- one year program at Creighton University
- three Native American students admitted annually
- tuition costs provided by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Creighton University
- strengthen admission credentials to enter dental school
- successful completion of program guarantees admission to one of the two Jesuit dental schools

Eligibility

- Native American undergraduates with strong tribal affiliation
- from any undergraduate institution
- recruitment of Native American students at Creighton, Gonzaga, Marquette and other undergraduate schools



Tracy Charging Crow, Lakota Sioux
Student, Dental Post Baccalaureate program at
Creighton University

"This program has provided an affordable pathway for me to reach my dream for a career in dentistry."

Adrian Sandoval, Navajo
Freshman undergraduate student at
Creighton University

"The Summer Enrichment Program will help me learn about the dental profession and will be a great assistance in choosing a career."



George Blue Spruce, DDS
San Juan - Laguna Pueblo of New Mexico
Creighton University School of Dentistry, 1956
First American Indian Dentist

"Until American Indian youngsters are given the opportunity to assume meaningful leadership roles, Indian self-determination remains a myth."

Rev. Raymond Bucko, S.J.
Professor of Anthropology
Director of the Native Studies Program

"Jesuits have had an ongoing relationship with Native people since the order first came to Brazil in the 1600s. We continue to learn from each other and to respectfully support each other. This program is another instance of our commitment to collaboration."



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Go Forward With Courage
When you are in doubt,
be still, and wait;
When doubt no longer
exists for you, then go
forward with courage.

So long as mists envelop
you, be still;
Be still until the sunlight
pours through and dispels
the mists – as it surely will.
Then act with courage.

- White Eagle -

JESUIT DENTAL SCHOOL RECRUITMENT COLLABORATIVE

For Native American Students



Creighton
UNIVERSITY