



Bakersfield American
B·A·I·H·P
Indian Health Project

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

661-327-4030

www.BakersfieldAIHP.org

501 40th Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301

February

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I hope everyone is staying warm during this winter season, and that you are enjoying the new year with us as we bring forward new services and programs to meet your needs. As we ended the year 2023, BAIHP celebrated so many accomplishments and an achievement we are all excited about is the construction project funded by the Department of Health Care Services Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Project, which will invest \$11 Million to build a 2nd story expansion above our existing site. We will be updating our community as the construction phases start and complete via social media throughout the year.

"The horizon of life is broadened chiefly by the enlargement of the heart."

-Unknown

Angel Galvez spoke at the Honor Flight Kern County Flight 48 dinner ceremony. He acknowledged how, Nationally, there have only been three Honor Flights for Native Americans and this was the first for Kern County. Native Americans have the highest rate of military service per capita compared to other ethnic groups, so being able to honor Native American Veterans specifically is very important. To be able to offer our songs, dances, and prayers at these monuments is something that will stick with these honored heroes for years to come.

M. ANGEL GALVEZ, BS, MAOL
BAIHP CEO



OUR FEATHERS SOARING HIGHER



BAIHP & Kern Regional Center

BAIHP has partnered with Kern Regional Services to provide services to our Native clients. Kern Regional Center's purpose is to provide supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities to help them achieve an independent, productive, and satisfying life.

Any person with a developmental disability (intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or other handicapping condition found to be closely related to intellectual disability or to require similar care) is eligible to **receive free diagnosis and assessment services**. In order to be eligible for ongoing services, the person must be found to have a developmental disability which occurred prior to the age of eighteen and which constitutes a substantial handicap. In addition, **early intervention services can be provided to infants between birth and three years of age** who are believed to be at high risk of having a developmental disability. Further, **pre-natal diagnosis and other genetic counseling services can be provided to pregnant women** who are believed to be at risk of giving birth to a child with a developmental disability.

From the Department of Developmental Services: *"Regional centers provide a wide array of services for individuals with developmental disabilities. Each center provides diagnosis and assessment of eligibility, and helps plan, access, coordinate and monitor services and supports. Once eligibility is determined, most services and supports are free regardless of age or income; however, there are a few exceptions. For example, the Parental Fee Program requires that the parent(s) of a minor receiving 24-hour out-of-home residential services be assessed a fee for services. In making decisions about services needed, the planning team, which includes the person using the services, family members, regional center staff, and others who may be asked to attend the planning meeting by the individual, will join together to discuss the supports needed that are related to the developmental disability."*

Protectors Of Our Young Feathers

BAIHP Family Advocate & Team's Mission is to:

Support Developmentally Delayed youth and their families with Social, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual Growth & Development

- Counseling Services
- Cultural and Traditional Care

Work with Foster youth and their families building healthy lifestyles, cultural exposure, life skills, counseling, and community connections

- Court Advisors
- Housing Support
- Foster Parent Enrollment
- Youth Prevention Programs

Contact us:

Referrals@BakersfieldAIHP.org



Kern Health Equity Partnership

Kern County Public Health set forth to identify challenges and barriers that Kern County residents experience to identify ways to close gaps and address community needs along with partners *Adventist Health, Anthem Blue Cross, Bakersfield American Indian Health Project, Bakersfield Memorial Hospital, Community Action Partnership of Kern, Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Kern Community College District, Kern County Network for Children, Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Kern Health Systems, United Way of Central Eastern California*, and others. In July of 2023, the Kern Health Equity Partnership (KHEP) was established, and the strategic planning series was organized to guide this process.

Kern County Public Health engaged over 200 community members and partners, and convened over 86 partners throughout Kern County through the 6 month-long strategic planning series. These sessions aimed to assess challenges that exist within organizations in serving families throughout Kern County to identify areas of focus listed within this 3-year plan. The goals and objectives are based upon the SMARTIE framework by which they must be Specific, Measurable, Action oriented, Relevant, Time bound, Inclusive, and Equitable. This process included listing organizations throughout the communities of Kern, organizing them into categories to identify domains, and lastly, listing challenges that exist within each domain.

The domains are:

- **Access to Care:** Lack of Providers, Distance/Geography, and Transportation
- **Education/Health Literacy:** Literacy Levels, Cultural, and Community Health Workers/Promotoras/Social Service Providers
- **Socio-economic Status/Poverty:** Living Wage, Economic Workforce Development, and Systemic Barriers

Over 130 potential activities were identified in this process that were grouped and refined within the goals and objectives in this plan. This work requires systemic change and partnership among all local health agencies. While some objectives may be specific to community groups and geographic areas, the goals and objectives are designed to establish a blueprint that can be replicated in communities experiencing similar needs. Thus, this plan aims to establish a framework of work that can be replicated in communities throughout all of Kern County.

Kern County Board of Supervisors approved the KHEP Health Equity Plan at their January 9th meeting.



Collaborating Continuity of Care

Our team at Bakersfield American Indian Health Project believes fostering collaborative relationships is critical to success. Our Wellness Program has been a crucial instrument to collaborate with our community to build better relationships and to enhance continuity of care for our elder population.

This year we have **expanded our Wellness curriculum into Tuesday and Thursday afternoons** to further help our Native population improve their well-being through our Bingocize program. Furthermore, **BAIHP's gym will be opening in March** offering one-on-one sessions with Joseph Anderson a certified Personal Trainer through the Native American Fitness Council.

BAIHP's Wellness Program also **coordinates with a Registered Dietitian to provide nutritional classes** to better contribute to the quality of life for our clients. BAIHP is committed to helping our Native Population maintain a healthy body weight and to reduce the risk of obesity or being overweight to not only help protect against infections, but to reduce the risk of disease and chronic conditions.

Memorial Painting

Recently, one of our regular Bingocize attendees passed away. To honor her, we have her space memorialized with a Bingocize shirt and card. Additionally one of our clients created a beautiful painting in her memory including one of her favorite animals - the hummingbird. You can find the painting in our Sage Room if you attend Bingocize.

Prior to her, another one of our frequenters passed away as well. His daughter mentioned he had a fascination with the eagle and also with technology - he loved to work with computers.

Yet another who has moved on was a very humble man. It was shared with us that he had a passion for boxing in his younger years.

Bingocize is not just a physical activity to keep you moving, it is a community in itself and every participant is very valuable to us. We will miss them all dearly.



BAIHP Food Pantry with CAPK

Through the Community Action Partnership of Kern's (CAPK) food bank, BAIHP provides access to rescued foods to its registered members who have difficulty purchasing enough to avoid hunger. BAIHP strives to promote health equity and combating food insecurity with edible and nutritious food is at the top of our list. Rescued foods are donated to CAPK's food bank that would have been otherwise thrown away. These foods may be near or past their sell by date but are still perfectly edible. According to the USDA, "High-acid canned foods (e.g. tomatoes and fruits) will keep their best quality for 12 to 18 months. Whereas, low-acid canned foods (e.g. meats and vegetables) will keep for two to five years". BAIHP offers food assistance to all its registered clients, including those registered through ECM.



SMARTIE Goal Training

Big THANK YOU to Anastasia Lester from Kern Family Health Care (Kern Health Systems) for teaching our staff about S.M.A.R.T.I.E Goals! She is an absolutely phenomenal presenter.

The SMART Goal system (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) has been in place across many organizations, but the addition of the I & E (Inclusion & Equity) are now included, making sure that often overlooked voices are heard every time.

BAIHP is committed to making sure our staff understand the importance of staying up-to-date on resources that will help us help you.



BAIHP Youth Group

Join our Native American Youth Group!

BAIHP has started a Native American youth group for youth aged 12-18 lead by Cheyenne Bond, CADC II, CAMP II (Choctaw). The group focuses on commercial versus traditional tobacco, keeping our cultures alive, and mental health.

This last month, the group surveyed their background and participated in a consumer testing session with the Red Medicine Tobacco Prevention Project. The future of the group will include cigarette clean ups, hikes, camping, and opportunities to become better public speakers.

Email cbond@bakersfieldaihp.org for more information!



Cultural Workshop Classes



Stay tuned as BAIHP is developing the start of a new Cultural Workshop Class with one of our Cultural Coordinators, Jackson Copeland. Create and learn the history of your own cultural pieces such as: **Turtle Rattles, Moccasins, Medicine Bags, and more!**

If the class interests you, call or email jcopeland@bakersfieldaihp.org or follow our social media to stay up-to-date.





Tax Season 2024



It's that time of year again. Time to gather all your documents and receipts and go through the tedium of filing your taxes for the past year, 2023. However, with new IRS updates and investments in support systems, this task shouldn't feel as intimidating or cumbersome. There is a plethora of resources available to help you make it through this taxing task! First let's look at some key dates:

-  **January 12:** IRS Free File opens.
-  **January 29:** Filing season start date for individual tax returns.
-  **April 15:** Due date of filing a tax return or to request an extension for most of the nation.
-  **October 15:** Due date for extension filers.

Although the IRS will not officially begin accepting and processing tax returns until Jan. 29, you don't need to wait until then to work on your taxes. Most software companies accept electronic submissions and then hold them until the IRS is ready to begin processing later this month. IRS Free File will also be available on IRS.gov starting Jan. 12 in advance of the filing season opening. Some new and expanded tools and other resources include:

-  Expanded in-person service at Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs). The IRS will also offer extended hours at many TACs nationwide.
-  Increased help available on the toll-free line (1-800-829-1040 for individuals) and an expanded customer call back feature designed to significantly reduce wait times.
-  Improvements to the *Where's My Refund?* tool will allow taxpayers to see more detailed refund status messages in plain language. These updates will also ensure *Where's My Refund* works seamlessly on mobile devices. The new updates will reduce the need for taxpayers to call the IRS for answers to basic questions.
-  Enhanced paperless processing that will enable taxpayers to submit all correspondence, non-tax forms, and responses to notices digitally and will be able to e-File 20 additional tax forms.
-  An enhanced IRS Individual Online Account that includes chat, the option to schedule and cancel future payments, revise payment plans and validate and save bank accounts.
-  A new, pilot tax filing service called Direct File that gives eligible taxpayers a new choice to file their 2023 federal tax returns online, for free, directly with the IRS. It will be rolled out in phases and is expected to be widely available in mid-March.
-  The Interactive Tax Assistant (ITA) is a tool that provides answers to questions specific to individual circumstances. Based on input, it can determine if a person should file a tax return, their filing status, if someone can be claimed as a dependent, if a type of income is taxable, if a filer is eligible to claim a credit or if an expense can be deducted.
-  People can use the IRS Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with Credentials and Select Qualifications to find a preparer who is skilled in tax preparation and accurately files income tax returns. Most tax return preparers provide outstanding and professional tax service, but be sure to check tips for choosing a tax preparer and how to avoid unethical "ghost" return preparers.
-  Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs, volunteers are available nationwide to provide free tax assistance to low-to-moderate income (generally under \$64,000 in adjusted gross income) and elderly taxpayers (age 60 and older).
-  A Department of Defense program, MilTax generally offers free return preparation and electronic filing software for federal income tax returns and up to three state income tax returns for all military members, and some veterans, with no income limit.

Filing an accurate return can help taxpayers avoid refund delays or later IRS mailings about a problem. People should report all their taxable income and wait to file until they receive all income related documents. This is especially important for people who may receive various Forms 1099 from banks or other payers reporting unemployment compensation, dividends, pensions, annuities or retirement plan distributions.

People should plan to file electronically with direct deposit. This is still the fastest and easiest way to file and receive a refund. To avoid delays in processing, people should avoid filing paper returns whenever possible. Although the IRS issues most refunds in less than 21 days, the IRS cautions taxpayers not to rely on receiving a refund by a certain date, especially when making major purchases or paying bills. Some returns may require additional review and may take longer.

For further information about any of the tools in this article, please visit www.irs.gov. And may the IRS be kind to your patience and your wallets this year!

TRANSPORTATION

If you need transportation, please call or request a form **48 hours in advance** to schedule an appointment with our transportation specialist.

- Transportation is available for Bakersfield, Arvin, Lamont and Oildale
- No cost Transportation is provided on a first come, first served basis to all registered AIAN and ECM clients.

We can assist with transportation to and from:

- Medical Appointments
- Dental Appointments
- Vision Appointments
- Behavioral Health Appointments



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Bingocize | Tuesday and Thursday 10AM - 11AM & 2PM - 3PM

Play Bingo & Get Healthy! Fall Prevention, Community, and Culture

Youth Group | Every Other Tuesday 5PM - 6:30PM

Ages 12 - 18

Cultural Talking Circles, Activities, Mental Health, Prevention and Building Community

Tai-Chi | Tuesday and Thursday 11AM - 12PM

Balance and Fall Prevention

Regalia Making | Tuesday 5PM - 7:30PM

Ages 12+ (12-15 require chaperone)

Sewing & Leather Work | Limited Spots (10) - RSVP to save your seat

Nutrition Classes | Wednesday 10AM - 11AM (Education) | 1PM - 2PM (Cooking)

Nutrition Education, Learn & Practice Healthy Cooking & Diabetes Education Available Upon Request

Veteran's Talking Circle | First Wednesday of the Month 9AM - 11AM

Community & Culture Focus | Safe Space to Share

Women's Talking Circle | Wednesday 1:30PM - 3:30PM

Community & Culture Focus | Safe Space to Share

Wellbriety | Wednesday 3PM - 4:30PM

12 Step Program With Guidance from The Red Road to Wellbriety from White Bison

"To Be Sober and Well"

Meets Court Mandated Requirements

Beading Class | Wednesday 5PM - 7:30PM

Various Beading Activities. Learn Traditional Beading Styles

Drum & Dance Group | Thursday 6PM - 7:30PM

All Ages | Native Drumming Class, Pow-Wow Style Dancing and Etiquette



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KERN
COUNTY
HUMAN SERVICES

4TH ANNUAL SPRING GATHERING

*Join us on Saturday,
March 23rd, 2024 | 11AM - 5:30PM
501 40th St, Bakersfield, CA 93301*

Spring represents **rebirth, growth**, and marks a time of **renewal**. Everything is connected and works together to move through the four seasons of **Mother Earth**. Understanding this helps us focus on what is important for this season of our lives. We may focus on the **good in our lives**, on **self-improvement**, and cleanse the past to move forward with **positivity**.



Event Includes

- Cultural Activities
- Cultural Artifact Display
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Suicide Prevention
- Learning and Healing Circles
- Youth Engagement & Activities
- Domestic Violence and Prevention
- Wellness Services

For more information or vendor participation
Call: (661) 327-4030 | Email: BAIHPCommunity@BakersfieldAIHP.org



BAIHP Sponsored Events 2024 Calendar



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Spring Gathering – Keepers of Tradition – 501 40th Street, Bakersfield, CA

March 23, 2024 (Saturday 11:00 AM - 5:30 PM) [Exhibitors, Partners, and Vendors Welcomed.]

BAIHP is excited to host our annual Spring Gathering on March 23rd, 2024, at our clinic. The event is a celebration in which diverse indigenous peoples gather for the purpose of drumming, dancing, singing, and honoring the traditions of our Native ancestors. Spring represents a time of rebirth and resiliency. This gathering allows for American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), Indigenous peoples, and their families to gather and celebrate sacred practices of culture, traditions, values, and rituals while enjoying and learning about BAIHP's cultural and traditional services and programs offered. This event also offers an annual community assessment to discuss current and future program planning.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month – Keepers of Tradition – 501 40th Street, Bakersfield, CA

May 17, 2024 (Friday 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM)

May marks National Mental Health Awareness Month. BAIHP hosts a community event to bring awareness of resources available to American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) communities in Kern County. The lack of access to transportation, distance from facilities, poverty, and stigma all impact the well-being of AIAN's ability to get mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services. At this one-day event, participants will hear about the stories of hope, resilience, and sacredness by those who have achieved wellness and recovery and sober living. Indigenous Wellness Center group programs and services highlights and updates. (Keepers of Tradition Dinner in the garden area.)

Bright Future Big Careers Drive Thru – 501 40th Street, Bakersfield, CA

July 20, 2024 (Saturday 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM)

August is National Back-to-School Month. The event is to provide our AIAN school-enrolled children, youth and adults with educational materials and supportive educational and behavioral health services. BAIHP will be hosting a backpack giveaway stuffed with prevention materials and resources on bullying, tobacco, drugs, substance use prevention, sexual transmitted diseases prevention and provide sport physicals and vaccines to help students succeed and achieve in school and at home.

S.A.L.T (Save A Life Today) / N.A.M.I (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Walk – The Park at Riverwalk

September XX, 2024 (Date TBD 7:30 AM - 2:30 PM)

BAIHP will be co-sponsoring the Annual SALT Walk. S.A.L.T (Save A Life Today) is a local Kern County nonprofit organization developed by Ellen Eggert and dedicated to preventing suicide and assisting those bereaved by suicide. BAIHP uses this event as an opportunity to promote Grant-funded Behavioral Health and Substance Use Services which are promoted across other agencies known to serve AIAN peoples. Staff members engage in outreach and engagement with community and providers.

G.O.N.A (Gathering of Native Americans) – 501 40th Street, Bakersfield, CA

October 12, 2024 (Saturday 10:00 AM - 7:30 PM) [Exhibitors and Partners Welcomed. NO VENDORS]

This event will be focused on the four elements which incorporate the values of human growth and responsibility: belonging, mastery, interdependence, and generosity. Our goals for the GONA/GOAN are to provide Native communities with a framework to examine historical trauma and its effect on mental and substance use disorders, suicide, and the promotion of mental health, reinforce cultural continuity with families living on tribal reservations, in urban or rural areas, and in Alaska Native villages, provide an integrative experience that offers hope, encouragement, and a positive foundation for action and healing, and increase protective factors linked to the health and safe development of AIAN children and their families.

Native American Heritage Health Fair – Marriot Convention Center

November 02, 2024 (Saturday 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM) [Exhibitors, Partners, and Vendors Welcomed.]

The month of November is a time to celebrate the rich and diverse culture, tradition, and histories of AIAN peoples, and to acknowledge the important contributions of Native and Indigenous peoples in Kern County. Native American Heritage Month is also an opportune time to educate the public about tribes, and pueblos, rancherias: to raise a general awareness about the unique challenges faced both historically and in the present time, and the ways in which tribal nations have worked to conquer these challenges.

For more information, please email us at BAIHPcommunity@BakersfieldAIHP.org or call us at 327-4030

BAIHP Board Updates

Congratulations to **Johnny Nieto** on becoming the elected Vice Chair!

Updated Board Positions are:

Jackie Lopez (Chair, Tejon)

Johnny Nieto (Vice Chair, Tule River Yokuts)

Bridget Escalera (Treasurer, Chalon)

Laura Juarez (Secretary, Comanche)

Salvador Hernandez (Member, Chumash/Salinan)

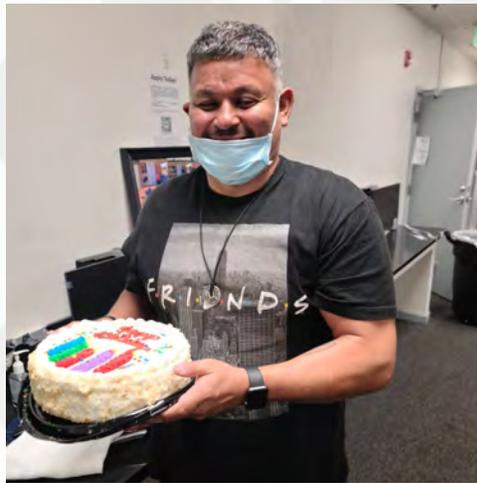
Michelle Jara-Rangel (Member, Yaqui-Mexican)

Angel Galvez (Non-Voting Member)



BAIHP Staff Birthdays

Subscribe to get our newsletters directly!



January
Joshua (20th)



OUR MISSION

To serve the American Indian and Alaska Natives residing in Kern County by providing services that contribute to the health and vitality of the community in a respectful manner with high regard for cultural values, Tribal affiliation, and spiritual and personal values of individuals.

OUR VISION

BAIHP envisions a vibrant, healthful life for future generations of American Indians & Alaska Natives in Kern County by delivering sustainable, culturally integrated services, and fostering continuous community connections and whole wellness.



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