



BAIHP Board of Directors with UAI Executive Leaders.
Strength in Unity. Power in Diversity.



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

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

661-327-4030

www.BakersfieldAIHP.org

501 40th Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301

March

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In March, the California Urban Indian Health CEOs and Executive Director of the California Consortium for Urban Indian Health met with IHS Director Tso (pictured in the middle in blue) to speak about California Urban Indian's needs. "*We advocate for all Native Americans living in California,*" said Angel Galvez CEO, and hope that all who receive health care services can achieve the greatest impact of IHS led initiatives to improve quality of life.



Additionally, CEO Angel Galvez and the BAIHP Board of Directors met with United American Indian Involvement (UAI). The meeting was part of us uniting efforts to keep our sacred practices alive across our region. Bringing leadership opportunities to our Native communities at a local level. Lastly, strengthening partnerships between Boards and Executive Leaders (see front page photo).

M. ANGEL GALVEZ, BS, MAOL
BAIHP CEO

OUR FEATHERS SOARING HIGHER

Bingocize Honors Ventura Ruiz

It was an Honor to serve our country with a community who lived by a set of enduring core values that guided actions and bolstered our resolve. Values that became the building blocks to make the right decisions at the right time.

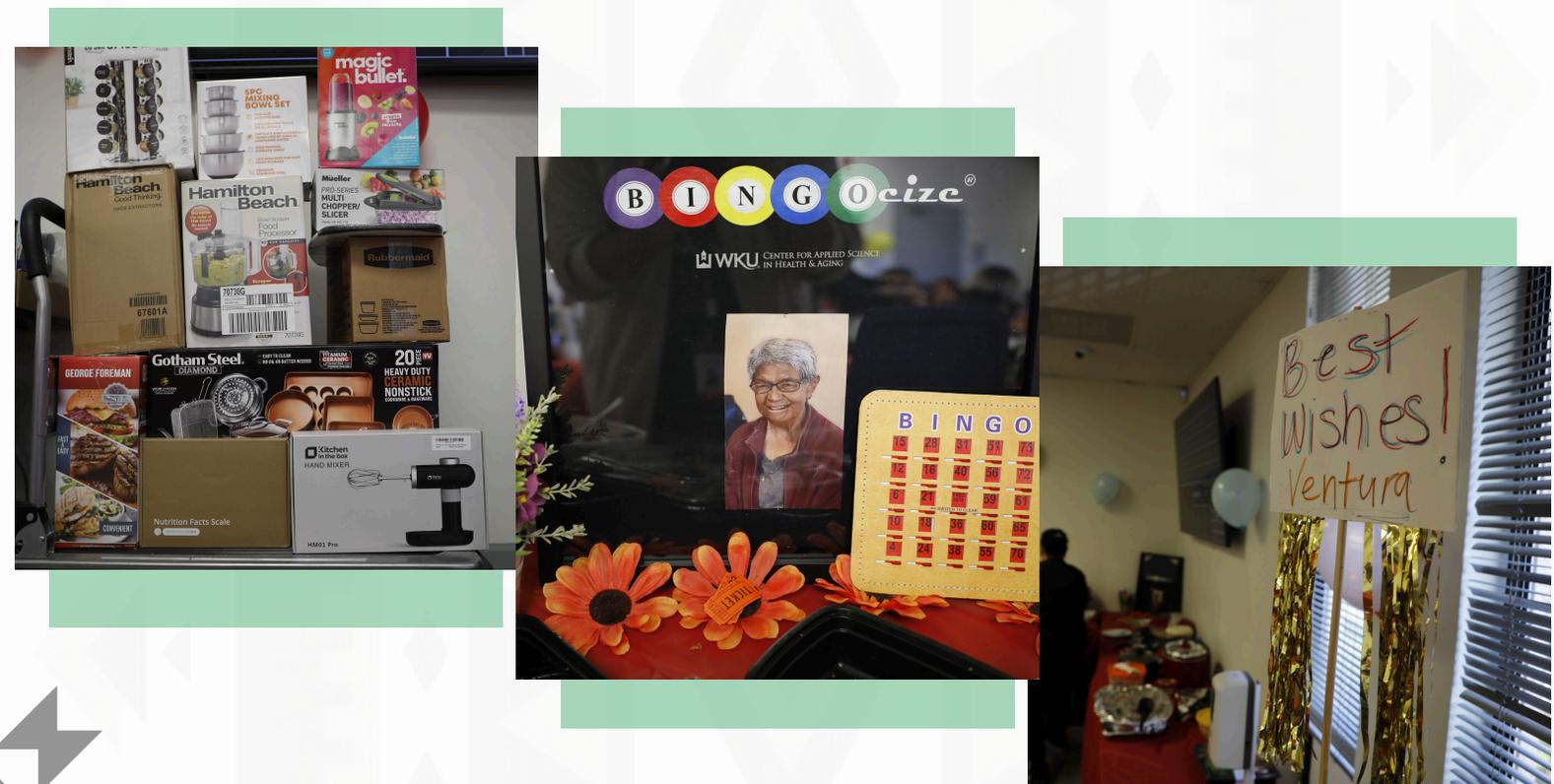
“Honor, courage and commitment lead us to victory over the physical, mental and moral battles faced during combat, or while serving in our communities on behalf of our Nation.”

Ventura Ruiz, Registrar, has served BAIHP without these core values having been drilled into her, yet she exemplified them exponentially throughout her tenure serving the American Indian and Alaskan Native communities of Kern County. Ventura served with Honor and received love in return. The love for Ventura’s service was displayed at the end of this season’s Bingocize Workgroup with a ceremonious potluck coupled with story telling and our Winner of Winners raffle drawing where we witnessed our Creator bless a family for their Courage during a season of loss. Congratulations to the family of Barbera Gomez, whose Commitment to representing her memory every Tuesday and Thursday, was rewarded with many mementoes and more stories to Honor her legacy.

Thank you, Ventura, for bringing our community together! You have provided a sense of belonging, support, and connection for individual well-being by delivering a sense of purpose and direction. Your commitment has shaped BAIHP into a hub for resource sharing wither it be sharing knowledge, the telling of stories, or from resources that address equity and inclusivity, our small groups are a testament to your commitment.

In a world fraught with challenges and uncertainties, Ventura’s tenure with BAIHP is a story that serves as a reminder of the love that lies within each of us, waiting to be unleashed through passion, perseverance, and unwavering dedication. As long as there are individuals like Ventura Ruiz, the spirit of Honor, Courage, and Commitment will continue to illuminate the path towards a brighter future for generations to come.

Happy Retirement Ventura!



Protecting Our Young Feathers

Protectors of our Young Feathers is a new program through BAIHP's collaboration with The Department of Human Services and Kern Regional Center. The Family Advocate and Community healthcare workers support our foster youth and intellectual/developmentally delayed youth and their families. The program helps to build healthy life skills, cultural exposure, social and emotional growth, and development.

Department of Human services (DHS)

The purpose of DHS is to care for and enrich the lives of children, families and individuals, provide customer-centered services, ensuring safe, protected and permanent homes for children in the community. The youth and their families can also receive counseling and Anger Management services, Court advocacy and youth prevention programs.

Kern Regional Center (KRC)

The purpose of KRC is to provide supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities to help them achieve an independent, productive, and satisfying life. They are contracted by the State of California through the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to coordinate community-based services and support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

For more information please contact information our Family Advocate, Pamela Haring, please call 661- 327-4030 or email Referrals@BakersfieldAIHP.org

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



Data, Evaluation, & Grant Writing Conference

California Rural Indian Health Board, Inc. (CRIHB) and California Tribal Epidemiology Center held the 7th Annual Data, Evaluation, & Grant Writing Conference that took place on March 4-7, 2024, in Anaheim, California. The conference was attended by Johnny Delgado, Grants Program Director, and Analy Martinez, Grants Program Analyst.

The focus of the conference was to strengthen evaluation, data utilization, and grant writing to support services for the American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) population in California. The grant workshops presented writing techniques, resources, grant databases, and relevant data platforms. Additionally, the workshops offered best practices for identifying and evaluating grant opportunities that align with organizations and tribes that serve the AIAN people. It was a great opportunity for shared learning, identifying best practices, networking, and connecting with partners across the state.

Additional topics such as Mindfulness Practices and Harm Reduction, Exploring Perspective with Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews, Data Decolonization and AIAN Suicide, Opioid Surveillance in Indigenous Communities, and Overdose Detection Methods were covered throughout the conference.

The insightful keynote speakers included Robert Aguilar, Pauma Band of Mission Indians, Dr. Elaine Davidson, M.D., Indian Health Council a consortium of nine tribes located in North County San Diego, O'Nesha Cochran-Dumas, Oglala Sioux, Dr. Amy West, Southern Cheyenne, and Flaman McCloud, Big Valley Rancheria. Each keynote speaker provided a high-level presentation of their current projects and challenges.

The Narcan Overview and demonstration was led by the Tribal Opioid Response Coordinator for CRIHB and Certification of Completion was granted. We would like to extend our appreciation to CRIHB for holding the conference and providing travel scholarships for Johnny and Analy.



Scam Alert - Pig Butchering

Pig Butchering Scam: Protect Yourself and Your Wallet

Pig butchering scams are a type of sophisticated financial fraud that has gained international notoriety and impact. These scams involve a **long con**, where scammers build a **fake friendship** or **romantic relationship** with their targets over an extended period, "fattening them up" to prepare for the metaphorical slaughter. Here's a breakdown of how they typically operate:

- **Building Trust:** Scammers initiate contact through **social media, dating apps, or messaging platforms**. They often create **fake profiles** with **appealing photos** and backgrounds to lure victims. Over time, they engage in **regular, in-depth conversations** to build a **deep emotional connection** and **gain the victim's trust**. It can **start very innocent**, even a **text message** seeming like a wrong number situation, then leading to casual, daily conversation.
- **Fake Investment Opportunity:** Once a relationship is established, the scammer introduces a **seemingly lucrative investment opportunity** to the victim. This investment could be in **cryptocurrencies, stocks, or other financial products that promise high returns**. Even if the target doesn't initially show interest, they may continue to boast about the money they are gaining from the investments to pique their interest.
- **Educating the Victim:** The scammer educates the victim on how to make the investment, usually **assuring the victim that they are not giving the money to them personally**. They guide the victim on how to transfer funds into their own account, which is **fake or controlled**. They may also direct the victim to **download fraudulent trading apps** or visit websites that **mimic legitimate investment platforms** to make their scheme **appear credible**. They look and behave like real investment apps or websites and even appear to **have many high ratings by other users**.
- **Profits and Reinforcement:** Initially, victims might see "**profits**" from their investments (**which are fake**) to create excitement, **encourage further investment**, and convince them of the investment's legitimacy. This success is designed to **motivate the victim to invest more money**.
- **The "Slaughter":** After substantial funds have been invested, the scammer finds a reason to **urgently require more investment** or **invents a crisis that necessitates additional funds**. An example may be a "**required tax bill**" needing to be paid first if the victim **tries to withdraw funds**. It is one last attempt to get every bit of money possible from the victim. Eventually, the scammer **disappears with all the money**, leaving the victim **unable to retrieve their investment**.

These scams are highly sophisticated, employing psychological manipulation techniques. **Scammers are patient**, often taking **months to groom their victims**, and they are skilled at **exploiting human emotions** to achieve their financial goals. **Anyone** could easily fall victim to this scam if not educated.

Pig butchering scams are particularly insidious because they not only result in **significant financial losses** for the victims but also are usually **perpetrated by someone who is a victim** as well, someone who has **been tricked into a fake employment opportunity** and then **human trafficked** and forced to con others. Authorities worldwide have been working to combat these scams, but their evolving nature and the use of technology make them challenging to eradicate. **Awareness** and **education** are key tools for individuals to protect themselves against such deceptive practices. **Please talk to your friends and family to make them aware as well.**



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!

NEW WEEKLY ACTIVITY

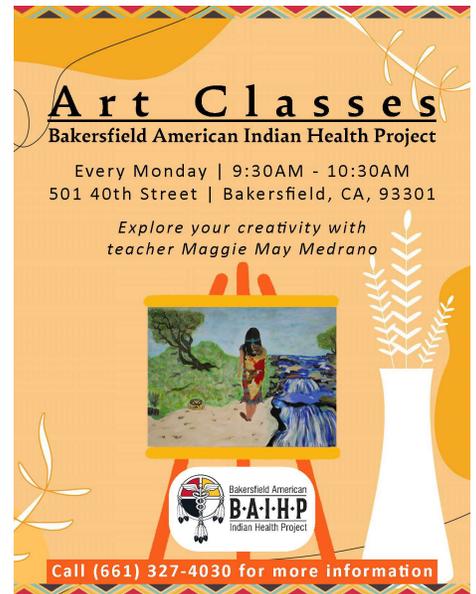


Bakersfield American Indian Health Project is excited to announce the start of a new weekly activities - Art Classes with Maggie May Medrano!

Explore your creativity with traditional art styles every Monday from 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM.

In our Sage room, you might have seen Maggie's art before, and it was highlighted in our last newsletter. We're honored to have her teaching this class for our community.

Come and enjoy building your own community around this activity!



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Art Class | Monday 9:30AM - 10:30AM

Explore your creativity with traditional art

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

Balance and Fall Prevention

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

Ages 12 - 18

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

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"

May Meet 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

UPDATED STREET SIGN



If you stop by our clinic at 501 40th Street, you might have noticed we have upgraded our street sign attached to the Columbus Medical Plaza. Check it out next time you're here!

Subscribe to get our newsletters directly!



Birthday Shoutouts - Happy Birthday to Cheyenne Bond (March 27th) and Juan "Jesse" Behill (March 30th)

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.

www.bakersfieldaihp.org

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