Kerry Hawk Lessard: United Remnant Band of Shawnee

Kerry Lessard is a Community Health Educator and Outreach Case Manager for the HIV-infected at Chase Brexton Health Services in Baltimore, MD. Kerry co-authored and facilitates the “Don’t Forget Us” program at Native American Lifelines, the Indian Health Services contract site for Baltimore, Maryland.


Mike Martin was born and raised in Buffalo, New York and is the Executive Director of Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Counties, Inc. In 2008, Michael was selected by the Americans for Indian Opportunity organization to become one of 18 Native Americans across the United States to participate in their two-year American Indian Ambassador Leadership Program.

Rodney Haring, PhD: Seneca Tribe

Rodney C. Haring, PhD, LMSW is founder of One Feather Consulting, LLC and is visiting research faculty at the Native American Research and Training Center, University of Arizona. Dr. Haring is an enrolled member of the Seneca Nation of Indians and resides on the Cattaraugus Territory. He holds a doctoral degree in social work from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo. He is also on the board of directors of the Native Research Network, a New York State-licensed master of social work, and an adjunct professor at SUNY Fredonia. He has evaluation and research experience from Harvard Medical School, the Research Institute on Addictions; SUNY Buffalo; SUNY Stony Brook, and the private sector. He recently coauthored a book chapter titled “Reflections on Ethical Issues in Research With Aboriginal Peoples.” Dr. Haring has presented at numerous conferences worldwide on the issues of health disparities in Indian Country. He was the recipient of the Seneca Nation of Indians Professional Scholarship, the Chief Freeman Johnson Scholar Award and is an American Indian Graduate Center fellow.

Neal Rzepkowski, MD

Dr. Rzepkowski has been a medical provider for those who are HIV-infected for over 20 years. He has a private practice in Dunkirk New York which specializes in opiate dependence, holistic and complimentary medicine. Dr. Rzepkowski is affiliated with Erie County Medical Center in Buffalo and sees patients in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties.
HIV in the Circle of Life: Challenges in the Native Community

This conference is for anyone serving Native populations in a health care capacity. It will discuss the importance of early identification of HIV and treatment. It will review models in place in Native Communities which have established programs for substance abuse interventions and coping with historical trauma.

Distinguished Faculty

Ron Lessard: Mohawk and Abenaki Tribes

Ron Lessard is the Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs for the Corporation for National and Community Service which includes AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, NCCC, Senior Corps, NCCC, and Learn and Serve America programs. He is the agency’s primary liaison to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Tribal communities and the organizations and federal agencies that serve them. He works across all program and support units to increase Native American participation in national service and works to develop and enhance programming to address the unique needs of Native American communities. Reporting directly to the CPO, he promotes coordination among the agency’s programs and partners, collects information on challenges facing Native American communities, and evaluates progress. He chairs the CNCS Committee on Native American Affairs and the Education sub-committee of the Interagency Working Group on Indian Affairs.

Joseph P. Stone, PhD Blackfeet (Pukuni) Tribe

Dr. Stone is a licensed psychologist and licensed mental health counselor in Washington and Oregon. He is an international certified alcohol and counselor working as Chief of the Gallup Indian Medical Center Behavioral Health Service. Dr. Stone has worked for many years on the integration of a clinical framework recognizing the issues of historical trauma.

R. Dale Walker, MD Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

Dr. Walker was named the 2009 American Indian Physician of the year by the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP). The AAIP honor is “For distinguished service for improving the quality of health care for Native Americans and Alaskan Natives.” Dr. Walker is only one of two Native American physicians in the country who are certified in addictions. He has nearly 30 years experience in the addiction field. Dr. Walker is currently the Director of the One Sky Center and Center for American Health Research located at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland, Oregon.