



# Community Mobilization and Planning Event



Community Mobilization and Planning Committee: (Front from Left) Shirley Salway, Rosalita Saunders, Russell Saunders and Jeff Wilson. (Back from Left) Shirley Wakole, Karen Simmons, Robin Tiger, Laura Guest, Jan Maxwell, Marilyn Thurman and Clarissa Littlehead. (photo Sac and Fox News)

## A Report On The March GONA Conference

by Connie O'Marra Community Coordinator Native Aspirations Project

The Sac and Fox community held a Gathering of Native Americans event (GONA) March 19-22, 2012 as part of the community's focus on bullying prevention using resources and funding Native Aspirations project. The Native Aspirations project is a national technical assistance and training project that serves 57 communities in the United States including Alaska. The Substance Abuse Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) is an agency under Health and Human services which provides a number of grants for prevention efforts for substance abuse, suicide, bullying violence, abuse and neglect and other pressing issues. Over 180 members of the Sac and Fox community attended the event which promoted wellness in the community through a recognition of the

value of Sac and Fox culture, language and traditions.

GONA consultants Dennis Lorenzo and Arlene Wise from New Mexico facilitated the event which focused on creating a sense of belonging among the Sac and Fox community members. After icebreakers and introductions were done, a number of team building exercises were conducted. Later the participants formed clan groups, listed their individual and clan/community strengths and create banners using the available arts and crafts provided for the GONA. Mr. Lorenzo and Ms. Wise facilitated the remainder of the GONA and helped the participants understand the importance of working together to address historical and lateral trauma in order to reduce the incidents of youth violence

bullying and suicide in the community.

Some of the highlights of GONA Event included: The movie, "The Honor of All: The Story of Alkali Lake" was shown on the last two days to help the community understand the effects of historical trauma and another community's ability to develop healing strategies for addressing substance abuse. Many community members made positive remarks about the film. It appeared as if the community was taking first steps towards healing and wellness and some appeared ready to begin the planning activities. Elders shared their wisdom, knowledge and stories, which helped other participants, establish a stronger connection with the history of their community and their important traditions. Some participants shared their personal

stories, which appeared to help others focus on healing and hope, and made way for the community to move forward with the project. Participants from the community also volunteered to help with the drum call and opening prayers on a daily basis, and were very supportive of the event overall.

Individuals at the GONA created vision for what they would like to see in their community to reduce bullying and increase community wellness. Goals and activities for youth were developed at the Community Mobilization and Planning meeting held on June 10 and 11, 2012. All community members are encouraged to join the efforts and attend bi-monthly meetings on Fridays in the Sac and Fox community. For more information contact Karen Simmons at 918-968-9531.



## Neuropathy: The Nerve Damage of Diabetes ....

submitted by LaDona Johnson CHR Coordinator



### What are diabetic neuropathies?

Diabetic neuropathies are a family of nerve disorders caused by diabetes. People with diabetes can, over time, develop nerve damage throughout the body. Some people with nerve damage have no symptoms. Others may have symptoms such as pain, tingling, or numbness-loss of feeling-in the hands, arms, feet, and legs. Nerve problems can occur in every organ system, including the digestive tract, heart, and sex organs.

About 60 to 70 percent of people with diabetes have some form of neuropathy. People with diabetes can develop nerve problems at any time, but risk rises with age and longer duration of diabetes. The highest rates of neuropathy are among people who have had diabetes for at least 25 years. Diabetic neuropathies also

appear to be more common in people who have problems controlling their blood glucose, also called blood sugar, as well as those with high levels of blood fat and blood pressure and those who are overweight.

### What causes diabetic neuropathies?

The causes are probably different for different types of diabetic neuropathy. Researchers are studying how prolonged exposure to high blood glucose causes nerve damage. Nerve damage is likely due to a combination of factors:

- \*metabolic factors, such as high blood glucose, long duration of diabetes, abnormal blood fat levels, and possibly low levels of insulin
- \*neurovascular factors, leading to damage to the blood vessels that carry oxygen and nutrients to nerves
- \*autoimmune factors that cause inflammation in nerves
- \*mechanical injury to nerves, such as carpal tunnel syndrome
- \*inherited traits that increase susceptibility to nerve disease

\*lifestyle factors, such as smoking or alcohol use

### What are the symptoms of diabetic neuropathies?

Symptoms depend on the type of neuropathy and which nerves are affected. Some people with nerve damage have no symptoms at all. For others, the first symptom is often numbness, tingling, or pain in the feet. Symptoms are often minor at first, and because most nerve damage occurs over several years, mild cases may go unnoticed for a long time. Symptoms can involve the sensory, motor, and autonomic-or involuntary-nervous systems. In some people, mainly those with focal neuropathy, the onset of pain may be sudden and severe.

Symptoms of nerve damage may include:

- \*numbness, tingling, or pain in the toes, feet, legs, hands, arms, and fingers
- \*wasting of the muscles of the feet or hands
- \*indigestion, nausea, or vomiting
- \*diarrhea or constipation

- \*dizziness or faintness due to a drop in blood pressure after standing or sitting up
- \*problems with urination
- \*erectile dysfunction in men or vaginal dryness in women
- \*weakness

Symptoms that are not due to neuropathy, but often accompany it, include weight loss and depression.

### How can I prevent diabetic neuropathies?

The best way to prevent neuropathy is to keep your blood glucose levels as close to the normal range as possible. Maintaining safe blood glucose levels protects nerves throughout the body.

Information provided by the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC)

### For more information

Contact the following organization: American Diabetes Association 1701 North Beauregard Street Alexandria, VA 22311

Email: [AskADA@diabetes.org](mailto:AskADA@diabetes.org)  
Internet: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)