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Alaska Native People Shaping Health Care

Volume 15 Issue 2 February/March 2015

Beauty for Ashes program a first for Canada

Southcentral Foundation Family Wellness Warriors Initiative (FWWI) is supporting its first international Beauty for Ashes training in Canada! Five chiefs from the Mamaweswen, Northshore Tribal Council area in Ontario, Canada showed up to the opening ceremonies for the Beauty for Ashes training. The Canadian chiefs endorsed the work of the tribes to end domestic violence, child abuse, and child neglect in their communities.

By Laura E. Young, Anishinabek News

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes . . .” – Isaiah 61:3

The Beauty for Ashes conference is as intense as the problems it tackles and it has come to the North Shore as component of First Nations health care.

In the deep winter quiet of Anderson Lake and the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre in Espanola, 25 members of the communities of the North Shore Tribal Council (from Sault Ste Marie to Sudbury) began working through the challenges of the issues surrounding child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and child neglect over the week of January 13-17. They will then help build



North Shore Tribal Council members in Ontario, Canada, hold their region’s first Beauty for Ashes conference.

Continued on page 3, “BFA North Shore”

Sign up now for Beauty for Ashes training

By SCF Family Wellness Warriors Initiative

The next Beauty for Ashes training held in Anchorage, begins April 6. Whether you work with individuals impacted by domestic violence, child sexual abuse and/or child neglect, or seek a healthier way of relating with your own family, Beauty for Ashes is an opportunity to learn how to be a warrior for family wellness.

Offered by Southcentral Foundation’s Family Wellness Warriors Initiative (FWWI), the five-day, four-night intensive training has shown to be a benefit to both employees and employers. It was designed by Alaska Native people to address the specific issues of domestic violence, abuse and

neglect. Participants experience personal growth during the training that translates into more effective communication skills and healthier relationships at home, in the workplace and throughout the community.

“People often ask about the format of the training,” said FWWI Director Bobbi Outten. “We use a culturally appropriate, faith-based curriculum developed by Alaska Native people. The topics are first presented in large general sessions and then are explored in smaller learning circle settings. This provides a safe space for participants to explore stories and events that have impacted their lives.”

Adults over the age of 21 may apply for Beauty for Ashes training regardless of ethnic or cultural affiliation, location, or gender. After a screening process, applicants will be notified of their eligibility. Participants who complete the training have an opportunity to earn Alaska Pacific University credits and CEUs for an additional fee.

Please visit www.fwwi.org or call (907) 729-5440 for more information. Applications are available online at www.fwwi.org/bfa.cfm.

Benefits of Beauty for Ashes training

- Discover how past harm plays into the ways we relate to and interact with those around us. And learn healthier ways!
- Gain new coping skills to help manage stress, pain, disappointment and hardship.
- Learn how to walk alongside others who desire to resolve the pain and wounds of their past.
- Understand how to safely enter conflict in a way that invites healthier relationships and results in more meaningful and positive outcomes.

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SCF Public Relations Department
4501 Diplomacy Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: (907) 729-4953
SCFMediaRelations@
southcentralfoundation.com
www.southcentralfoundation.com

Managing Editor
Jessica Dorrington
E-mail: jdorrington@
southcentralfoundation.com
Phone: (907) 729-4953

SCF Public Relations Contributors
Director Allison Knox
Manager Karla Starbard
Communications Manager
Connie Irrigoo
Media Relations Specialist
Jeanette Anderson Moores
PR Specialist Kathleen Bonnar
PR Specialist Tara Carey
PR Specialist Richard Perry
PR Specialist Lyla Marey
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Graphic & Web Designer In Training
Ashley Christiansen
Program Coordinator Faye Dotomain

Southcentral Foundation is an Alaska Native owned health care organization serving Alaska Native and American Indian people living in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley and 55 rural villages in the Anchorage Service Unit.

Incorporated in 1982 under the tribal authority of Cook Inlet Region Inc., Southcentral Foundation employs more than 1,850 people in 80 programs.

Southcentral Foundation Mission
Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.

Southcentral Foundation Vision
A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

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News from the Nuka Institute ...

Southcentral Foundation’s Core Concepts to be shared at SXSW

By SCF Nuka Institute

Picture this. At Southcentral Foundation (SCF), a provider, a behavioral health consultant, an administrative support, and a dietitian are sitting in a circle sharing their story.

Why would a health care organization want every employee to learn how to share and receive story? The answer is because we believe our ability to develop relationships with each other and with customer-owners directly impacts our effectiveness as health care workers and the health of our community.

These types of relationships make up SCF’s Nuka System of Care, a name given to the whole health care system created, managed, and owned by Alaska Native people to achieve physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Through an intensive, three-day training called Core Concepts, SCF trains its employees on how to engage in and respond to story, and walk beside customer-owners and co-workers on their journeys toward wellness.

Elements of Core Concepts, which are integrated into SCF’s Nuka System of Care, will be topics of discussion at the 2015 South by Southwest (SXSW) Interactive Festival March 14 in Austin, Texas.

SCF President/CEO Dr. Katherine Gottlieb and SCF Vice President of Medical Services Dr. Douglas Eby will present SCF’s story of whole health care system transformation at the festival. The session is titled “Story-Driven Health: Alaska’s Race to Wellness.”

“What would happen if providers understood we have a story behind our eyes?” asks Gottlieb. “What would happen if we understood the story behind the provider’s eyes? And



what happens if we all recognize that as we’re building our relationship with one another? We recognized that. With the three-day training, all employees are going through that.”

SCF’s story not only presents an exemplary model of change, but perhaps more importantly illustrates what can be accomplished when people choose to control their own destiny.

SXSW is a set of film, music, and interactive festivals and conferences, and is attended by 30,000 people from around the world. SCF’s presentation is under the Health and Medtech theme. Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) President/CEO Gloria O’Neill will also present at the SXSW Interactive conference with a session titled “Traditional Storytelling Through World Games,” under the “Gaming and Game Development” theme.



Health care leaders around the world look to Southcentral Foundation (SCF) for help in transforming their health care systems. SCF responds by sharing with them our experience and expertise gained from 30+ years of whole system transformation into what is now SCF’s Nuka System of Care.

BFA Canada, Continued from page 1

the foundation for the same program when it’s launched later this year in North Shore First Nations, and for the urban indigenous population in Sault Ste Marie, says Cheryl Hankard, a traditional health and healing program coordinator at Mamaweswen’s N’Mninoeyaa Aboriginal Health Access Centre based in Serpent River First Nation.

It’s the first time Beauty for Ashes has ever been offered outside Alaska, says Katherine Gottlieb, president and CEO of the Southcentral Foundation, the primary health care provider for the indigenous population in the southern half of Alaska.

Beauty for Ashes is a component of the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative of the Southcentral Foundation.

The roots of the BFA program and process emerged after a survey of the population SCF serves over 15 years ago. The communities indicated that, among other key health issues, they wanted to address the issues of child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and child neglect.

Gottlieb says that, with the endorsement of the community, the SCF called out to “the warriors, the warriors are our men to lead the charge,” which then led to the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative.

Beauty for Ashes seeks “to embrace the entire family no matter what role that person played, whether they were the person harmed, or the person that did the harming,” Gottlieb says.

These are not exclusively problems for the Native population to address: “We have found many non-native people who have issues with child sexual abuse, domestic violence, child neglect. It’s just our target we have decided to end it in our world,” she says.

Several years ago the North Shore Tribal communities were looking at new models of health care that were client-centred and traditionally based. Based on a consultant’s findings of what was currently available,



The Beauty for Ashes conference held Jan. 13-17 in Ontario, Canada, was a collaboration between Southcentral Foundation’s Family Wellness Warrior Initiative and Mamaweswen’s M’Mninoeyaa Aboriginal Health Access Centre. Pictured are the 25 participants along with representatives from both organizations.

the Southcentral Foundation’s Nuka health model was identified for further exploration, says Cheryl Hankard.

A delegation from the North Shore visited Anchorage and was especially intrigued by the Family Wellness Warriors Initiative, Hankard adds.

Hankard has since participated in Beauty for Ashes as part of her training and role as a facilitator. The program was profound and its results cathartic, she says.

As well, Beauty for Ashes is about building relationships, she adds.

“That’s the thread running throughout the program. You’re learning how to respond in a healthy way to our own things and to other people. It’s an amazing program.”

At Espanola’s Anishinabe Spiritual Centre, participants worked through an extensive curriculum during 12-hour days in January. There was much eating and sharing, and laughter, even.

The transformation occurs when silence is broken and stories are shared, but it’s a process that can be hard to describe, because it’s more than getting together in a talking circle, Gottlieb adds.

“You find out what’s been done and how it’s damaged your life. And how you can turn it around for good. You can live with what has happened and continue (living your) life in a better, stronger way. It’s a transformation and a transformative process that happens in those five days.”

With the community members trained, the North Shore looks to secure funding to launch Beauty for Ashes later this fall. The ultimate goal is to run the program one week per month, rotating those who were trained as part of the Alaska Beauty for Ashes training process, says Hankard.

“That was a commitment from the communities because of the value they see in this project,” Hankard says.

Wellness Care Plan: Together sharing responsibility

By SCF Medical Services Division

At the core of Southcentral Foundation’s (SCF) Nuka System of Care is the customer-owner story. Understanding this story in the context of health care involves the relationship between the customer-owner and his or her primary care team. To support both in this challenge, SCF created a system-wide approach emphasizing shared responsibility. As the wellness care plan indicates – shared responsibility means everyone involved has ownership and responsibility for the outcome. In this case, it is the provider team as well as the customer-owner.

SCF’s Wellness Care Plan embodies shared responsibility. It is a dynamic process that actively involves customer-owners and their primary care teams in meaningful dialogue, which is used to develop an action plan for achieving the customer-owner’s identified goals.

“We work in partnership with customer-owners to achieve their wellness goals,” said SCF Behavioral Health Consultant Chelsea Dunham. “It isn’t a one-sided conversation with the provider telling the customer-owner what to do; it is a meaningful dialogue to determine where the customer-owner wants to be health-wise now and in the future. It empowers customer-owners to have ownership in their health.”

Provider team members are trained to listen to the customer-owner’s story, helping to identify – and validate – all of the customer-owner’s concerns. These might include chronic pain, chronic illnesses such as diabetes, or complex medical issues such as chronic



A Southcentral Foundation (SCF) provider checks in with a customer-owner about her wellness goals. obstructive pulmonary disease, anxiety and obesity, to name a few.

Once customer-owners in cooperation with their provider team have determined short- and long-term health goals, a plan is created that outlines specific resources and activities aimed at successfully achieving those goals. The resources may include pharmacists, dietitians, behaviorists, as well as services like health and fitness programs, physical therapy, chiropractic care, interventional pain procedures and behavioral health, among others. The Wellness Care Plan is customized based on the customer-owner’s needs and wants. The provider team will check in with customer-

owners frequently to address concerns, check on progress, and together, make adjustments to the plan as needed.

The Wellness Care Plan is a tool that allows customer-owners, with help from their providers and SCF’s Nuka System of Care resources, to achieve successful health outcomes.

Do you see your provider several times a month for various health concerns? Perhaps you would benefit from a Wellness Care Plan. For more information, contact your primary care team.

Lead the change in the way we talk about suicide

By SCF Denaa Yeets’

When a person is thinking about suicide, talking to someone who understands what they are feeling can often help them to feel better.

Resources available to Alaskans 24 hours a day include the Alaska Careline at 1-877-266-HELP (4357) or by texting “4help” to 839863. Additionally, SCF Behavioral Health is available to the Native Community during regular business hours, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, at (907) 729-2500, option 1.

Talking about suicide can be difficult. For those who want to learn more about safe ways to respond and show concern, Southcentral Foundation’s (SCF) Denaa Yeets’ program provides free safeTALK training. This is a half-day workshop that prepares adults, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. The following is a brief overview of some of the safeTALK training guidelines.

SPEAK. Talk to a person who might be thinking about suicide. When someone you know “just kids”

about suicide they may be testing you to see if it is safe to talk about it. There are many different ways to ask; for example, “Sometimes when people are feeling or going through some of the things you are, they think about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?”

“Sometimes when people are feeling or going through some of the things you are, they think about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?”

CONNECT. If you have asked, “Are you thinking of suicide?” and they reply that they are, ask them to talk with you about the reasons they are having these thoughts.

You do not need to provide therapy. Listening to them is showing that you care. Talking about their thoughts and what they are going through can be a great help.

Avoid saying things like, “You have so much to live for,” or “Think about how this will hurt your family.” Instead, show concern and compassion by saying,

McGrath community members attend prevention training

By McGrath Regional Health Center

Southcentral Foundation staff from the McGrath Regional Health Center attended a substance abuse prevention skills training with other McGrath community members in early January. The training was developed by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to strengthen prevention systems and the nation’s behavioral health workforce.

During the intense four-day training, the McGrath coalition – comprised of representatives from the community and local businesses – learned strategies to prevent substance abuse and promote mental and emotional well-being. Specific community needs and strengths were identified, along with choices and actions that affect

the community’s health and wellness.

Trainees learned that to be successful, an entire community must be involved in the prevention of substance abuse. The trainers mentioned the importance of identifying stakeholders in the community who can be involved in the planning process.

SAMHSA emphasizes a community-based approach for more effective prevention work. Trainings such as these build community members’ skills in selecting, implementing and evaluating prevention activities. The McGrath coalition is eager to put their training into action.

Quit Tobacco Program Group Appointments

Happy to be Tobacco Free!

The Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Quit Tobacco Program includes a 1-hour tobacco class, individual appointments and phone consultations. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact the SCF Health Education Department at (907) 729-2689 in Anchorage or (907) 631-7630 in Wasilla.



Through Southcentral Foundation’s (SCF) Native Men’s Wellness Program, Alaska Native and American Indian men are raising awareness about their health and wellness issues.

“Native men need to embrace and practice their cultures, traditions and spiritual ways,” said Harrison. “They need to protect their families and the natural world that provides for us and all living beings.”

When asked about his hopes and dreams for NMWP participants and their families he said, “We need our Native men to become healthy again, to search inward and learn more about what it means for them to be Native, as an individual. Once we are comfortable in our own skin then we can continue on the long journey to be a better father, uncle, grandfather and husband.”

The NMWP is dedicated to raising awareness of Alaska Native and American Indian men’s health and wellness issues. For more information, please contact NMWP Program Coordinator Shon Stewman at (907) 729-5208.



Dr. Demitrius LaTocha, director of the BenteĦ Nuutah Valley Native Primary Care Center Dental Clinic, and Southcentral Foundation Vice President of Resource and Development/Chief of Staff Dr. Kevin Gottlieb, visit with Alaska’s newly elected Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott during a visit last year.

Crowns, bridges and dentures go digital

An overview of SCF’s cutting-edge dental technologies

By SCF Dental

The Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Dental Department has carefully chosen to add AvaDent digital dentures to its lineup of prosthodontic options for customer-owners. With AvaDent, dentures can be made in only two appointments. The digital process offers a precise fit made possible by technology, but with the caring support of SCF Dental providers. The durable, bacteria-resistant materials used by AvaDent are also the best available.

Another benefit of AvaDent is that if a denture gets lost or broken, the customer-owner’s information is readily available in the computer system, which means they can be replaced without going through the fitting process again. This improves the convenience for customer-owners who live far away from the Alaska Native Health Campus or have other limitations.

Technologies for crowns and bridges have also evolved, with impressions taken by a small camera and the final product designed and customized for each customer-owner by computer. This system is the most accurate on the market.

The crowns and bridges are made using zirconium, an element similar to cubic zirconia (which is best known as a synthetic diamond substitute). Zirconium is durable, fracture and bacteria resistant, and one of the most biocompatible materials available.

Whether it is dentures, partial dentures, crowns or implant restorations, SCF Dental is continually looking for the latest and greatest services to offer customer-owners.

To learn more about these services, please contact your dentist or call Southcentral Foundation Dental Department at (907) 729-2000.

Building strong families through partnership

By SCF Nutaqsiivik Nurse-Family Partnership

For more than 20 years, Southcentral Foundation’s (SCF) nurse home visiting program has walked alongside new moms and their families helping them prepare for their new arrivals. The journey with the SCF Nutaqsiivik Nurse-Family Partnership begins before the customer-owner is in her 28th week of pregnancy and lasts until her child turns two years old. The program is voluntary and is offered at no-cost to eligible customer-owners. Along with the home visits, the families receive the standard prenatal care and subsequent well-child check-ups.

Currently, 175 mothers/families are enrolled in Nutaqsiivik. Each is partnered with a registered nurse who offers support and education on pregnancy and child development, as well as home safety. The nurse establishes a rapport with the mom and new family through frequent visits – in and out of the home – and is available to help find community resources and referrals. The nurse also coordinates care within SCF’s

Nuka System of Care and throughout the tribal health care system as needed.

“We meet these moms where they are and travel with them as they begin this new chapter in their lives. We listen, answer questions, make suggestions and assist them with finding resources,” said SCF Nutaqsiivik Clinical Coordinator Kelly Murphy. “Our goal is build strong families.”

To participate in Nutaqsiivik, customer-owners must be enrolled before the 28th week of their pregnancies and be eligible for WIC, Denali KidCare or Medicaid.

For more information, please talk to your primary care team or call (907) 729-2490.

Classes for expectant parents in the Valley

By VNPCC Wellness Center

For many parents, labor and birth can be both overwhelming and exciting at the same time, no matter how many times you have experienced it. If you are Alaska Native or American Indian, live in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley and are currently pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant, resources are available to support you in your childbirth journey.

The BenteĦ Nuutah Valley Native Primary Care Center (VNPCC) Wellness Center now offers birthing basics, a two-day childbirth class. This class is for expectant mothers in or nearing the third trimester of pregnancy. Partner/spouse participation is also encouraged.

Birthing basics provides information on the stages of labor, comfort techniques, medical procedures, breastfeeding and newborn care. The class offers a supportive environment with other parents-to-be who have similar questions and challenges.

Each class is two hours, and snacks and drinks are provided. Participants who complete both classes have the opportunity to win door prizes.

The next birthing basics class series starts in Wasilla on Thursday, Feb. 19. If you are interested in signing up, please call the VNPCC Wellness Center at (907) 631-7630.

The birthing basics class is also available monthly in Anchorage. Please call the SCF Health Education and Wellness Center in Anchorage at (907) 729-2689 to register or for more information. To view all Wellness Center classes available in both Wasilla and Anchorage, visit www.southcentralfoundation.com/healthInfo.cfm and click on the class schedule for your location of choice. Note, as services at the VNPCC expand, additional classes will be offered in Wasilla.



Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Nutaqsiivik nurse Jeanine Wheeler with Jamie Rose and baby Emily Schenker at the Nutaqsiivik Graduation and Christmas Party Dec. 18.

Protecting your privacy

By SCF Corporate Compliance

Southcentral Foundation’s (SCF) commitment to quality is a major emphasis within the organization and serves as one of three key points of the SCF mission and vision. As part of this commitment, the SCF Corporate Compliance Department works with customer-owners and employees to ensure SCF is providing quality health care services while maintaining ethical behavior in all interactions.

Working together

SCF respects the privacy of customer-owners and employees and protects their confidential information in accordance with all applicable laws. We do not disclose information without appropriate approval and we exercise care to ensure confidential information is carefully maintained, managed and safeguarded. SCF has created a culture of quality and safety where all customer-owners, employees and external partners are valued as trusted collaborators on the journey to wellness.

As SCF works to protect privacy, feedback from customer-owners is an integral part of the process. SCF Corporate Compliance Department responds to customer-owner feedback and helps to resolve any issues related to privacy, documentation and billing, and/or other legal matters.

What are my rights?

Visit www.southcentralfoundation.com/ethics-compliance.cfm to review the Notice of Privacy Practices and SCF Code of Conduct & Ethics. The Notice of Privacy Practices gives you information about privacy rights and how health information may be used. The SCF Code of Conduct & Ethics offers details on customer-owner rights and responsibilities.

For more information or to provide feedback, please contact the SCF Corporate Compliance Department at (907) 729-4200. You may also provide feedback via a 24-hour Customer-Owner Hotline, which is available by dialing (877) 837-4251.



With great respect for customer-owners, Southcentral Foundation (SCF) works to protect confidentiality in all departments and programs.

EARTH study returns to Anchorage

By SCF Research

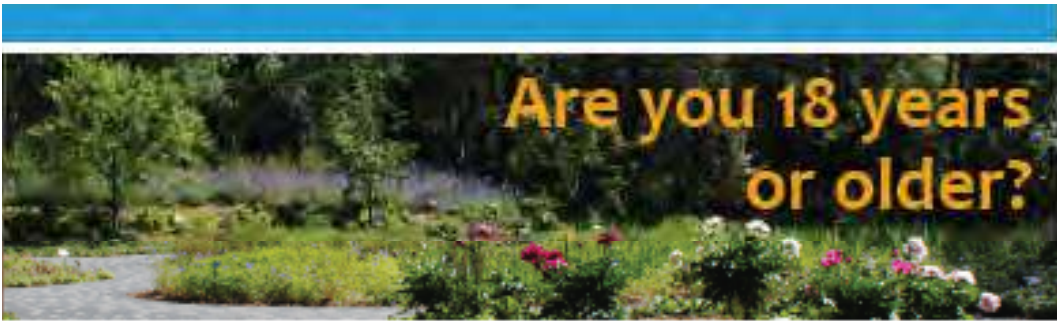
The Education and Research Towards Health (EARTH) study investigates the role of diet, physical activity, and other lifestyle and cultural factors in the development of chronic diseases.

Between March 2004 and August 2006, Southcentral Foundation (SCF) and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) partnered to enroll 1,131 Alaska Native and American Indian people into the study in the Anchorage area. The data collected has provided insight on the factors that impact the progression of chronic diseases in the Native Community.

The EARTH study will soon begin a second round of data collection. This study will help provide a better understanding of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and different types of cancer.

Past participants will be contacted and invited to participate again. The time commitment is about two hours, not including a nine-hour period of fasting. The appointment will involve body measurements, a blood draw and urine sample, and the completion of a medical history and lifestyle questionnaire. Participants will receive a \$30 gift card for their time.

If you have any questions about the study, or are a past participant interested in participating again, please contact the SCF Research Department at (907) 729-4333 or jbeans@southcentralfoundation.com.



Genes, Nicotine and Medication Response

You may be eligible for a gene study about nicotine, the active ingredient in tobacco. People who currently use tobacco, previously used tobacco or have never used tobacco are all eligible.

The Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Research Department is seeking volunteers for a study to learn more about how genes determine the way peoples’ bodies process tobacco and the medications used to help people quit tobacco.

Study participation will take 15-20 minutes.
You will receive a \$20 gift card for your time!
Your participation will not affect your services at SCF in any way.

We will be recruiting and conducting the study

Feb. 24 and 25

9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Anchorage Native Primary Care Center

in rooms 1127-1129

4320 Diplomacy Drive

Appointments and drop-ins are welcome.

For more information or if you are interested in participating, please contact:
Southcentral Foundation Research Department
(907) 729-8575
www.southcentralfoundation.com



Warning: Nonprescription contact lenses put eyes at risk

By SCF Public Relations

Have you ever wanted to change your eye color or appearance with contacts, even though you didn’t need corrective lenses? Without supervision by an optometrist or ophthalmologist, it is dangerous and may result in vision loss.

“There is a growing problem in Alaska, and the nation, with eye injuries due to the use of unregulated, over-the-counter, decorative contact lenses, particularly by tweens, teens and young adults,” said Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Optometry Clinical Director Grant Humphreys. “We saw two cases in 2014 where customer owners suffered permanent scarring due to costume contact lenses, and there were several more cases of severe eye damage.”

Health risks of wearing over-the-counter, “one-size-fits-all” contact lenses include: corneal abrasions – scratches due to the lenses not fitting the person’s eyes correctly; corneal ulcers, sores on the cornea that will heal but may leave scars that affect vision; and infections caused from bacteria.

“Whether you wear glasses now and want to wear contact lenses, or have perfect vision and just want to make a fashion statement, make an appointment to see an eye-care professional,” adds Humphreys.



An eye-care professional will perform an eye examination prior to issuing a prescription.

Avon helps fund early detection

By SCF Public Relations

The Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Breast and Cervical Health Program is one of 58 nonprofit, community-based health programs in the U.S. to receive a 2015 grant from the Avon Breast Health Outreach Program to support early breast cancer detection. This is the 15th year SCF has received the one-year award, which is \$50,000 this year.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, and the leading single cause of death overall in women 40-55 years of age. According to the American Cancer Society, 450 new cases of breast cancer will be detected in Alaska this year, and 70 women will die from the disease. For Alaska Native women, breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer and the leading cause of cancer death.

Early detection of breast cancer affords the best opportunity for successful treatment. The SCF Breast and Cervical Health Program ensures that Alaska Native and American Indian women in the Anchorage Service Unit, encompassing greater Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and more than 55 villages in Alaska, have access to early breast cancer detection information and options.

“Since 2000, we’ve informed more than 36,100 women about the importance of early detection of breast cancer and have referred more than 27,250 women for mammograms and clinical breast exams, thanks in part to the Avon Foundation for Women grant,” said SCF Vice President of Medical Services Dr. Douglas Eby.

For more information on early detection through the SCF Breast and Cervical Health Program, call (907) 729-8891. For more information about breast cancer, visit the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org or

Southcentral Foundation is currently recruiting for the following vacancies:



- Administrative Supports
 - Program Coordinators
 - Certified Medical Assistants
 - Couriers and Drivers
 - Health Benefits Specialist
- Case Management Supports
 - Maintenance Technicians
 - Managers
 - Mental Health Workers
 - Supervisors



Visit www.southcentralfoundation.com to view all vacancies and apply online.

Exciting changes in ANMC Family Birthing

By ANTHC Marketing and Communications

As part of Alaska Native Medical Center’s (ANMC) commitment to providing the very best care and experience, the hospital is continuing its multi-phase, large-scale construction project on ANMC’s Family Birthing Services and finishing the last phases of construction.

The entire Family Birthing Services area is included in this construction project, with upgrades and improvements complete in the OB Triage and Support Areas. Six stand-alone OB Triage rooms for expectant mothers have been added. Additionally, the nutrition room, nurses’ station, lounge areas, bathrooms and equipment storage rooms have all been updated.

In Labor and Delivery, customer-owners will benefit from three new rooms and updates to the original rooms. Once construction is complete in March, ANMC will have a total of eight labor and delivery rooms. Once the new C-section operating room is open, ANMC will also have two rooms for C-section procedures.



Upgrades and improvements to the ANMC Family Birthing Center is in the last phase.

“We are so happy to have a new, more efficient space,” said ANMC Director of Family Birthing Services Shelly Inda. “These construction improvements make such a big difference and our new mothers and their families are loving the improvements.”

Construction crews are also fully updating and refreshing all postpartum mother/baby rooms. So far, 10 postpartum rooms have been fully remodeled, and the last two are under construction. The improvements in

each room include new paint, flooring, wood paneling, cabinets, tile, fixtures in bathrooms and high-efficiency

lighting. All postpartum rooms will be completely updated by mid-February.

For more information on ANMC Family Birthing Services construction and upgrades, please contact ANTHC Senior Health Facilities Architect Ted Dickerson at (907) 729-3553 or mdickerson@anthc.org.

Life House Community Health Center expands services in Sutton

By C’eyiits’ Hwnax Life House Community Health Center

For just over a year now, the C’eyiits’ Hwnax Life House Community Health Center (CHC) located in Sutton has been providing medical services to both Alaska Native and non-Native people between Palmer and Eureka, including Chickaloon, Glacier View and Sutton/Alpine. A sliding fee scale is used to determine discounts based on household income and size. In addition, veterans residing in the area use the center for Veterans Affairs supported medical services.

Currently, the Life House CHC offers primary care services in one exam room and one talking room. By the end of 2015, however, the services will expand into a new facility, to be named *Ahtnahwt’aene’ Naydini’aa den* (Ahtna Chickaloon People Place), located on 10 acres of Chickaloon land off the Glenn Highway in Sutton.

Phase one of the new building is slated to break ground in April and will include several exam and talking rooms, a room for minor procedures, and space for radiology, dietician services and telepharmacy. The new building will also offer a wellness center with an exercise area, locker rooms with showers, and health education classes. The second floor will house the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council’s (CVTC) Health & Social Services Department, including transportation, Elders’ programs, behavioral health and family advocates.

“We’ve been working for 10 years to medically serve the communities of Glacier View, Chickaloon, Sutton and Palmer,” said Chickaloon Traditional Chief and Chairman Gary Harrison. “This new facility will greatly enhance the health and wellness of the people in our area.”



The new *Ahtnahwt’aene’ Naydini’aa den* building will house the C’eyiits’ Hwnax Life House Community Health Center by the end of the year.

F-E Contracting, a local firm, was selected as the general contractor. They have served as the contractor for other Matanuska-Susitna Valley projects such as the Palmer Senior Services Center and the Valley Recycling Center.

The new construction is funded in part by Rasmuson Foundation and Mat-Su Health Foundation.

“We are very appreciative of the financial support these two organizations have provided,” said CVTC Council Member/Health & Social Services Director Lisa Wade.

Southcentral Foundation (SCF) and CVTC operate the Life House CHC collaboratively. It is currently open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Take the ‘Shake Off the Salt’ heart healthy quiz!

1. My body needs salt. True or False?

True. Sodium is the primary component of salt. Sodium helps regulate fluids and blood pressure. Too much sodium, though, makes your body retain water, which puts an extra burden on your heart and blood vessels. A low-salt diet can help control high blood pressure. By controlling high blood pressure, you can relieve stress on your heart, blood vessels, kidneys and liver.

2. How much sodium per day is healthy?

- A. 2,300 mg of sodium
- B. 1 teaspoon of salt
- C. 3,400 mg of sodium
- D. 1,500 mg of sodium

The answer is **“A”** or **“B,”** because 2,300 mg of sodium is equal to 1 teaspoon of salt!

On average, Americans consume 3,400 mg of sodium per day. That’s more than 1,000 mg over what is typically recommended! The recommendations are even lower (at 1,500 mg) if you:

- Are over the age of 51
- Have high blood pressure (hypertension)
- Have diabetes or pre-diabetes
- Have chronic kidney disease

Ask your provider about the amount of sodium that may be best for you!

3. What is the source of most of the sodium in an average American diet?

- A. Naturally found in food
- B. Added while eating or cooking
- C. Found in restaurant meals
- D. Found in processed foods from grocery stores (e.g., pizza, sandwiches, soups, breads, deli meats)

The answer is **“D,”** with 68 percent of the sodium in the average American diet coming from processed foods such as store-bought pizza, sandwiches, soups, breads and deli meats. Only 4 percent is found naturally in food, while 13 percent is added by the consumer and 15 percent is found already added to restaurant meals.

4. What can I do to reduce salt in my diet?

- A. Use salt-free seasoning
- B. Ask for low-sodium foods
- C. Choose fresh and whole foods
- D. Make fresh meals at home
- E. All of the above!

The answer is **“E.”** There are many ways to reduce salt in your diet. Give your tastebuds time to adjust to less salt. Try alternatives such as fresh or dried herbs, flavored vinegars, lemon juice and salt-free seasoning blends.

5. Circle one item you are willing to do today to reduce the amount of salt in your diet:

- A. Read labels for sodium content and serving sizes
- B. Keep salt off of the table at home
- C. Rinse canned foods
- D. Avoid fast food

Love Your Heart Health Fair

DATE
Friday, Feb. 13

TIME
11 a.m.-1 p.m.

LOCATION
Anchorage Native
Primary Care Center Lobby

A fun lunchtime event focusing on heart health for Alaska Native women.

Heart disease is still the No. 1 killer of women, causing more deaths among women than all forms of cancer. : But did you know that 80 percent of women’s heart disease and stroke events could be prevented with lifestyle changes?

Visit educational booths and join activities including blood pressure checks, gentle yoga and a station for making Valentine’s Day cards. Refreshments will include a special Love Your Heart trail mix and a healthy drink. Anyone that completes a pledge card at the event to “Love Your Heart” and make healthy lifestyle changes will be entered to win a prize basket or Fitbit®.





The Alaska Dome, off Changepoint Drive in Anchorage, serves as the new location for the Ida'Ina Friendship Gathering.

Ida’Ina Friendship Gathering

Tebughna Foundation hosts a gathering to celebrate friendship

By SCF Public Relations

The annual Ida’Ina Friendship Gathering, hosted by Tebughna Foundation, will be in a new location this year. The popular intertribal gathering will be held at The Alaska Dome, 6501 Changepoint Drive, April 3-5. The Ida’Ina Friendship Gathering is free and open to the public, and is a drug- and alcohol-free, family-friendly event.

The gathering is, for some, the highlight at the center of two weeks of early springtime community events hosted by Tebughna Foundation. It offers performances from dance and drum groups, arts and crafts booths, and vendor booths such as the one hosted by

Southcentral Foundation. Cook Inlet Region Inc. (CIRI) will hold a job fair prior to the gathering on April 3, noon-5 p.m. Participants may bring their resumes for the job fair, and then stick around The Alaska Dome to enjoy the gathering festivities after the job fair ends.

Ida’Ina, pronounced “ee-da ee-na,” is a Dena’ina word that means friendship. Tebughna Foundation Executive Director Emil McCord emphasized that the Ida’Ina Friendship Gathering is geared to bring people together and foster friendships from various groups of people.

This theme is shared by the 3rd Annual

RAISE interns take part in international education conference

By SCF Public Relations

Three graduate interns and an intern supervisor from the Southcentral Foundation (SCF) RAISE Program traveled to Honolulu, Hawaii, for the 13th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education (HICE) Jan. 5-8.

RAISE Intern Supervisor Jewelz Crandall found the conference to be a great opportunity for the interns to talk with people about indigenous education. Thirty-three countries were represented this year by conference participants.

Kalani Tucker, one of the RAISE interns, was initially intimidated by the age difference between her and most of the other conference participants. Her concerns were quickly squashed by the warm welcome the interns received. Being embraced by the other participants boosted Tucker’s confidence and left her with the feeling of being able to be professional and fit in to any situation. Tucker’s favorite lesson from the conference was the importance of “using improvisation in the classroom.” She believes this will stick with her and she will be able to apply it to situations later in life.

For RAISE intern Haily Olson, her favorite part of the conference was the people. She enjoyed the bonding opportunity with her co-workers and the interactions with people from other countries. She felt that the conference was well organized and very suitable for those who want to teach.

“This conference was an eye opener and a review of the world of teaching,” said

Olson. “Everyone had so much knowledge and you can never quit learning from them.”

Olson also appreciated the emphasis on respecting the land and culture. Olson connected with the Hawaiian practice of giving back to the land to show respect. An artist herself, she was also intrigued by a few of the Korean teachers who “use art to teach imagination and nature.”

The third RAISE intern participant, Sierra Shangin, was impressed with the conference’s focus on communication. The topics included different ways to communicate while teaching and how to teach communication skills to the younger generation. She mentioned how this applies to her work at the RAISE program, where she assists students after school with their studies or projects. Shangin has attended other conferences, but this conference stood out because of the focus on students and how to help the student. Shangin appreciated “the concentration on education versus the politics of education.”



Southcentral Foundation (SCF) RAISE graduate interns Haily Olson, Kalani Tucker and Sierra Shangin begin their first day of the Hawaii International Conference on Education.

Ida’Ina Basketball Tournament that takes place a week prior to the Ida’Ina Friendship Gathering. The March 24-28 tournament offers cash prizes for the top three winning teams, including \$2,500 for first place, \$2,000 for second place and \$1,500 for third place. Up to 10 male teams and 10 female teams may register for the basketball tournament. At least 80 percent of each team must be of Alaska Native or American Indian heritage. The entry fee is \$600 per team.

For more information about the Ida’Ina basketball tournament, please contact Emil McCord at (907) 646-3115 or Dooner Edenshaw at (907) 230-8780. If you would like to reserve a vendor booth at the Ida’Ina Gathering, you can contact Roxann Baker at (907) 646-3142 or tebughna@yonek.com. For more information on any of the events hosted by Tebughna Foundation, please visit www.tebughnafoundation.com.

Open enrollment ends soon for Tribally Sponsored Health Insurance

By SCF Public Relations

A Tribally Sponsored Health Insurance Program (TSHIP) was introduced in December 2013, to help pay a limited number of health insurance policies for eligible Alaska Native and American Indian people. The program is still active today. TSHIP opens up opportunities for health services that may not otherwise be covered, including medical care outside of Alaska. Participants continue to be eligible for all IHS and tribal health program benefits.

Open enrollment for TSHIP ends for some eligible customer-owners on Feb. 15, with the exception of ANCSA shareholders and enrolled members of federally recognized tribes who may continue to enroll after this date.

Customer-owners and their members of their family qualify if they:

- Are eligible for Indian Health Service (IHS) benefits.
- Meet certain income guidelines.
- Are not covered by or eligible for:
 - Medicare
 - Medicaid (Denali Care)
 - Denali KidCare
 - Veterans Health
 - Employer sponsored health insurance

TSHIP is a collaboration of 10 tribes and tribal organizations in Alaska, including Southcentral Foundation (SCF), whose boards have committed some funding for the project. The health insurance is voluntary and authorized by Congress under the Affordable Care Act.

SCF customer-owners who are interested in participating in the Tribally Sponsored Health Insurance may contact SCF at (907) 729-7225 or email TSHIP@southcentralfoundation.com. If outside the SCF service area, please email sponsorship@anthc.org. For more information about using insurance for services at Alaska Native Medical Center, visit www.anmc.org/auxiliary/insurance.

Southcentral Foundation Learning Circles

These activities are free and are open to the community. Please visit the Learning Circle and Events Calendar online at southcentralfoundation.localist.com for more information.

FEBRUARY

Weekly

Thursdays

Wellness Matters Night

Potluck 5:30 p.m., Learning Circles 6:30-7:45 p.m.
Heritage Building
4155 Tudor Centre Drive

Learning circles are for adults ages 18 and older and have themes such as Recovery Support, Life Skills, Grief and Loss, Men’s Cultural, Anger Management and Reentry Support. Please contact (907) 729-5443 for more information

Feb. 13

Love Your Heart Health Fair

11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center lobby

See Page 9 for more information.

Alaska Women’s Recovery Project Valentine’s Day tea for women (children also welcome)

11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Southcentral Foundation Gathering Room
4501 Diplomacy Drive
Please call (907) 729-5190 to reserve a spot.

March

Weekly

Mondays

Healthy Food Fun demonstrations and samples “Whole grains”

11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center
Healthy Kitchen Room 1127

Thursdays

Wellness Matters Night

Potluck 5:30 p.m., Learning Circles 6:30-7:45 p.m.
Heritage Building
4155 Tudor Centre Drive

See February calendar listing above for more information.

March 6

Cooking Contest “Focus on Fiber”

Drop food off 7 -9 a.m.
Entries will be judged from 11 a.m.
Winners will be announced at noon
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center
Healthy Kitchen Room 1127

For more information, please call (907) 729-2689.

March 12

Tobacco-Free Kids Day

Noon-2 p.m.
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center lobby

March 13 and 27

Get Your Garden Growing

11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center lobby

March 24

American Diabetes Alert Day

10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Anchorage Native Primary Care Center lobby

‘Health Coverage Exemptions’ during tax season

By SCF Public Relations

As Alaska Native and American Indian people prepare to file their 2014 taxes, it is an important time to remember the Native Community’s special protection and benefits from the Affordable Care Act.

Under the ACA, adequate health care coverage is required to be exempt from Internal Revenue Service tax penalties. However, Alaska Native and American Indian people are not required to purchase additional health care coverage or pay the tax penalty if they can provide proof of:

- Eligibility for services from a Tribal health clinic or Indian Health Service facility, or
- Enrollment in a Federally Recognized Tribe, or
- Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) shareholder status (village or regional).

At this point in time, because of the delay in processing paper applications for exemption, people are encouraged to file their exemption along with their

2014 tax return. IRS Tax Form 8965, titled “Health Coverage Exemptions,” can be used to claim the Indian Status Exemption. If you have already completed the paper application process and received an Exemption Certificate Number (ECN) by mail, this is the same form where you will report the ECN before submitting your tax return.

IRS Tax Form 8965 can be found at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i8965.pdf and the instructions for filing at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i8965.pdf. You may also email the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Health Reform Team at healthreform@anthc.org for assistance or to get on an email distribution list to receive IRS Tax Form 8965.

For more information and helpful tips, please visit www.anthc.org/aca.

Alaska Native Heritage Center opens new education center

By Alaska Native Heritage Center

The new Mabel W. Pike Education Center at the Alaska Native Heritage Center opened to the public on Jan. 9. The education center represents the future of traditional arts education in Anchorage, and was designed exclusively for instruction of Alaska Native games, dance and art. This is the first time in history that the Heritage Center will have dedicated space for its education programs.

The Mabel W. Pike Education Center was made possible due to support from the Ford Foundation and the State of Alaska. It was named to honor the legacy of Tlingit Elder and founding board member Mabel Pike, who dedicated her life to creating Alaska Native art and teaching it to others, especially to Alaska Native youth.

From adult workshops to a robust youth education program, the Heritage Center continues to find innovative ways to fulfill its mission of sharing, perpetuating and preserving Alaska Native cultures, languages, traditions and values.

For more information in regards to the Mabel W. Pike Education Center or the Alaska Native Heritage Center, please call (907) 330-8800 or visit their website at www.alaskanative.net.



The Mabel W. Pike Learning Center opened Jan. 9. Image by Brian Adams.



Jeff Kinneeveuk, ANHC Board chair; Joe Pike, Mabel Pike’s son; and Annette Evans Smith, ANHC President and CEO pictured from left to right cut the ribbon. Image by Brian Adams.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Shopping 12:30 to 2 p.m. Value Village Northway Mall Fred Meyer Sears Mall Wal-Mart Please call (907) 729-6500 for transportation. Space is limited!	Sew and Bead Group 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Bingo 12:15 to 1 p.m.	Health Education on Nutrition and Wellness 12:30 to 2 p.m. Please call the Southcentral Foundation Health Education Department at (907) 729-2689 for more information.	Game Day 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Every first, second and third Friday of each month) Game Day is Elder directed, with a variety of games offered. Movie Day 12:30 p.m. (Fourth Friday of each month) Popcorn and juice are provided.

Located at the SCF Elder Program (6901 East Tudor Road, Anchorage)

Important Phone Numbers

SCF Elder Program Event Hotline: (907) 729-6588	Food Bank of Alaska: (907) 272-3663
Alaska Native Medical Center: (907) 563-2662	Division of Public Assistance: (907) 269-6599
Cook Inlet Housing Authority: (907) 793-3000	American Association of Retired Persons (AARP): (907) 272-1444
Senior Benefits: (907) 352-4150	Salvation Army Meals on Wheels: (907) 349-0613
Anchor Rides: (907) 343-2550	Anchorage Police Department (non-emergency): (907) 786-8500
People Mover: (907) 343-4536	

Russian Orthodox Christmas for Elders

By SCF Elder Program

Saint Innocent Russian Orthodox Church and Elder George Kudrin worked together with Southcentral Foundation (SCF) to offer a starring event at the SCF Elder program on Jan. 9.

Father Peter Chris, Deacon Michael Trefon and the Saint Innocent Russian Orthodox Church carolers provided on-site Russian Orthodox starring, a continuation of the Nativity of Christ, for Alaska Native Elders who take part in the SCF Elder Program. The starring was followed by lunch, cookies and coffee.

The starring at the SCF Elder Program was a smaller version of the event held earlier in the week on Russian Orthodox Christmas at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center. The Saint Innocent Russian Orthodox Church and members facilitated and attended both starring events.



Father Peter Chris (at left in blue robe) leads the choir at the Russian Orthodox Christmas event Jan. 9.

Keeping your heart health in check


By SCF Elder Program

Weekly blood pressure checks have been available at the Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Elder Program since 2012. A collaboration with the SCF Home Based Services Department, this weekly activity allows Elder customer-owners to participate in tracking their heart health, while also enjoying Elder Program lunch, bead and sew activities the same day.

The on-site blood pressure checks are open for all customer-owners ages 55 or older. Certified nurse aides provide the service every Tuesday, 10 a.m.-noon.

Since the inception of the program, the nurse aides have identified five customer-owners with heart health issues that could lead to a stroke or heart attack. In each case, the customer-owners were notified so that they could be seen by their providers for follow-up and receive appropriate medical attention. The customer-owners were able to receive treatment before their health conditions escalated.

Blood pressure checks are an easy, preventive screening that can save lives. If the results show high blood pressure, steps can be taken that will reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke and/or kidney failure. Lowering your blood pressure can help you live longer and feel better.



Elders can participate in blood pressure checks on the same day as their bead and sew activities at the Southcentral Foundation (SCF) Elder Program.