



## CIRCLE-NARCH February 2025 Newsletter

**Welcome to the Center for Indigenous Research Collaboration Learning & Excellence (CIRCLE) NARCH February 2025 newsletter! CIRCLE-NARCH is a partnership between the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations and the Division on Addiction at Cambridge Health Alliance, a Harvard Medical School teaching hospital. We produce original research and evidence-based trainings. Our flagship training, *xaʔtús* (First Face) for Mental Health, prepares peers, teachers, coaches, and other Tribal community members to be the “First Face” supporting someone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis or challenge.**

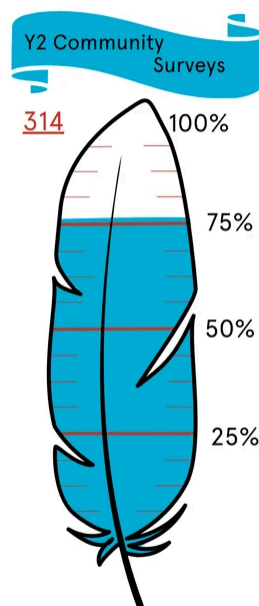
### Here's what we have been up to this month!

- The Training & Research Coordinators (TRCs) are analyzing data from the Healing Lodge staff training and evaluation to include in an academic paper. We look forward to learning about the effectiveness of First Face trainings among Healing Lodge staff.
- The TRCs recently mailed out over 400 postcards to update training participants' contact information. It's important to stay in touch with participants over the course of a long-term study like ours. If you received a postcard, please update your information and send it back.

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### Our Impact at a Glance

These days, the TRCs are working hard to collect Year 2 community surveys in all seven partner Tribal communities. As of this month, they've collected 314 of 400 Year 2 community surveys! If the TRCs come to your community to administer these surveys, please consider completing one.



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## Upcoming Events

- On February 25th, the TRCs will travel to the Government Center in Nespelem to administer Year 2 community surveys.
- On February 26th the TRCs will present the findings from the Healing Lodge staff training evaluation to the Healing Lodge leadership.
- In March, the TRCs will travel to Worley, Idaho to conduct Year 2 of community surveys with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe.

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## Meet the Team

This month, we are proud to introduce you to a new member of the CIRCLE Working Group: Joey Buckner

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My name is Joey Buckner, and I am a proud member of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. I serve as the Wellbriety Services Manager at Marimn Health, a position I have held for over two years. In addition to my primary role, I oversee the Youth Advocacy Services Program, as well as the Women & Children's and Men's Healing Clean and Sober Houses.

I first learned about the First Face initiative when we sent some of my staff to a training session at the Coeur d'Alene Casino. Looking ahead, my hope for the First Face program is that it will educate everyone on the matter of mental health and substance use disorders, enabling them to identify these challenges and assist others effectively.



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## Prevention Corner

Did you know that February is American Heart Month? The Strong Heart Study is the largest longitudinal study of heart health among Native Americans. The study began in 1988, with Phase 1 consisting of 4,500 eligible Tribal members 45-74 years of age. As the study progressed into Phase 2 and Phase 3, additional extended family members of various ages down to 15 years of age were included.



This partnership between the National Institutes of Health National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and twelve Tribal Nations within Arizona, Oklahoma, and the Dakotas has provided career opportunities for Native American scholars to participate in programs that can benefit their Tribes. For more information on the study and research design, click [here](#). To watch the video presented by the NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute on some of the research, that has come out of this study click [here](#).

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## Culture Connections

## Sweetheart dance making room for Two-spirit couples:



In 2017 at the San Manuel Powwow, Two-spirit couple Sean Snyder (Navajo and Southern Ute) and Adrian Stevens (Shoshone Bannock, Ute, and Apache) broke barriers by competing in the Sweetheart Dance competition. To watch the video of their dance, click [here](#). The couple spent months on the choreography and working on their matching regalia alongside of supportive family members.

Traditionally, the Sweetheart style displays synchronized dance steps between two opposite-sex partners. Sean and Adrian were disqualified after their first round because of the discrimination that exists toward the Two-spirit community. Their story made waves across Indian country and beyond, which led to the couple becoming ambassadors for the LGBTQ+ members of Tribal nations. Sean and Adrian went on to compete in the Sweetheart dance in other powwows and place in their category.



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