American Indian and Alaska Native Students Practice, Manage, and Lead as Nurses in Indian Country: Celebrating 20 years of the *Caring for Our Own Program*

Virtual Workshop
September 16-17, 2021
Laura Larsson, PhD, MPH, RN
Montana State University
Background

1995 – 1998
Professor Emeritus Kathleen Chafey noticed differential attrition rates

1999 – Present
Grant funded program

Present
Parity in the classroom

Future
Racial Concordance in the professional arena, health equity for AI/AN populations via
– Access to culturally responsive, clinically excellent care
– Access to primary care where they live
Racial Composition of RNs and LPNs compared to Montana’s Population

What Have We Learned in 20+ Years?

Accomplishments
121 degrees conferred

90% work in Tribal Communities

Policy work
– DE-BSN

Retention is 66%

Growth Rate

Photo Credit: Laura S. Larsson, Montana State University
Challenges
Unknown 1st time NCLEX pass rate

8.7 percent male

Pre-req. fraction dilemma

Use of metrics in Holistic Admissions

Photo Credit: Laura S. Larsson, Montana State University
RETENTION STRATEGIES
Four Pillars Model of the Caring for Our Own Program

Image Copyright: CO-OP, Montana State University
Welcome Home!
Grand Opening
American Indian Hall

Photo Credit: Adrian Sanchez-Gonzalez, Montana State University
Sense of Place

Honoring Ceremony at Pinning

Photo Credit: Laura S. Larsson, Montana State University
Caring for Our Own Program Model, Four Pillars of Living Well: Sense of Place, Academic Readiness, Social Connection, and Financial Security
“Before coming to HOPE week I was wondering whether or not I truly wanted to do nursing or even stay here at MSU due to financial reasons. After gaining more knowledge and connections to places and people both on and off of campus I have now gained a new sight into what I want to achieve here at MSU. I have gained a new sense of community with CO-OP and my peers at HOPE week and I truly loved this experience!”
Caring for Our Own Program Model: Four Pillars of Living Well: Sense of Place, Academic Readiness, Social Connection, and Financial Security
Social Connection

Photo Credit: Laura S. Larsson, Montana State University
Social Connection

Photo Credit: Tom Schulz, Montana State University
Caring for Our Own Program Model: Four Pillars of Living Well: Sense of Place, Academic Readiness, Social Support, and **Financial Security**
MSU CON, CO-OP Student Grant Support

FUTURE OF NURSING™
Campaign for Action

Support Services
- Recruitment: Outreach, recruitment and career awareness building
- Retention: Cultural, social and academic support and mentoring
- Scholarship: Financial support with service payback obligations
- Post-Graduation: Support for certification, employment, continuing education

Funder: Indian Health Service; American Indians Into Nursing
Grant Period: 2019 - 2024

Scholarship / Stipends
- Undergraduate Funding: Supports early academic access and a solid foundation in pre-requisite courses
- Retention: Cultural, social and academic support and mentoring
- Scholarship: Financial support

Funder: HRSA-2L-006; Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students
Grant Period: 2020 - 2021

Student Support

Research
- Recruitment: Outreach, recruitment and career awareness building
- Retention: Cultural, social and academic support and mentoring
- Scholarship: Financial support
- Systems: Curricular, partnership development, holistic admissions, faculty recruitment
- Post-Graduation: Support for certification, employment, continuing education

Funder: HRSA-2L-020; Nursing Workforce Diversity
Grant Period: 2021 - 2025
Funder: HRSA-18-012; Nursing Education, Practice, Quality and Retention
Grant Period: 2018 - 2022

Systems / Program / Partnerships

Research Funding: Provides infrastructure for student travel with research-active faculty to gain clinical experience at partners in: Ft. Peck, Blackfeet and Northern Cheyenne Nations

Funder: HRSA-18-014; Oral Health Subaward
Grant Period: 2018 - 2022

American Indian, Rural and Underserved Students and Communities
ORGANIZATION & EVALUATION
CO-OP Student Well-being

Photo Credit: Laura S. Larsson, MSU
Implications

Keep recruiting

Improve retention

More AI/AN males

More AI/AN faculty

AI/AN Preceptors

Photo Credit: May Heriza, Montana State University
Questions or Comments?

Photo Credit: Adrian Sanchez-Gonzalez, Montana State University