

APRIL 2021 | VOL.3



VOICES, LANGUAGES AND TEACHINGS

Increasing Safety For Alaska Native Women and Villages



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Tami Truett Jerue

Thank you for joining us for this edition of the AKNWRC's Voices, Languages, and Teachings: Increasing Safety for Alaska Native Women and Villages, many things are happening and it's been challenging to continue some of the work we do during a pandemic. Some of the staff are working virtually still and we have a few staff back in the office. Yet it has not slowed us down and we are still able to continue to support all of the great work in the villages around Alaska.

Many important national legislative highlights have been going on; the House of Representatives has passed a VAWA Reauthorization bill but the Senate has not introduced a VAWA Reauthorization bill at this time.

Both the House and the Senate have introduced a FVPSA Reauthorization bill and we are excited to see these key pieces of legislation passed and put into law. There are enhancements included that will help Tribes in Alaska, as well as our relatives in the lower 48 states.

There is going to be a week of Action highlighting MMIWG starting April 29, 2021. AKNWRC is a co-sponsor on a Facebook live event on May 5- MMIWG2S Alaska Vigil & Heartbeat of the drums. Please be sure to register. There are many events that are happening locally as well, please join and have your voices heard.

AKNWRC OVC Staff hosting a 3-day virtual symposium that was well attended and very informational. Thank you so much to all the staff for making that a success.

AKNWRC has continued the virtual technical assistance and training series and are currently providing a series to the AVCP region and continues through June.

Update on the Advocacy Institute and Pilot Training.

AKNWRC is working with our funder to get approval on the curriculum and continue to move forward on the pilot training. We may have to do portions of this in a virtual space or do a hybrid form of the training which would include some in-person and some virtual. We are hoping that we will be able to resume on site and in person work as soon as it is safe to do so.

Lastly, I would like to reflect on the many challenging things happening in our world, and I hope that you and your families remain safe and strong. We hold you in our hearts and hope for clearer days ahead.

MMIW Week of
Action starts Today

*See page 3 for a list
of events.*

For more on the OVC
Symposium

*See page 6 for a list
of events.*

For more on our
technical assistance

*See page 7 for a list
of events.*

2021 National Week of Action

Take Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls!

The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center and our National Partners Work Group on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls are organizing a National Week of Action (April 29-May 5, 2021) to call the nation and the world to action in honor of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). Take action by participating in these virtual events and organizing additional actions in your communities on or around May 5th.



Thursday, April 29, 2021

- **Traditional Opening—Launch of the National Week**, 12 p.m. MDT | Watch for our e-blast!
- **National Briefing—Addressing the National Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: Advocacy in Action**, 1 p.m. MDT, hosted by NIWRC

Friday, April 30, 2021

- **Webinar—Using International Law to Respond to the MMIW Crisis**, 1 p.m. MDT, hosted by the Indian Law Resource Center

Monday, May 3, 2021

- **Webinar—Nā Hānauna Ho'ōla (Healing Generations)**, 8 a.m. HST (12 p.m. MDT), hosted by the Pouhana O Na Wahine (Pillars of Women)

Tuesday, May 4, 2021

- **Webinar—Spotlight Alaska and the Crisis of MMIWG**, 11 a.m. AKT (1 p.m. MDT), hosted by the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

- **#MMIWGActionNow Twitter Storm**, 10–10:30 a.m. MDT
- **#MMIWGActionNow Twitter Chat**, 12–1 p.m. MDT
- **Webinar—Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Day of Action, Uplifting the Voices of MMIW Survivor Families**, 1 p.m. MDT, hosted by NIWRC
- **Running for Justice: Remembering Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Virtual 5k, 10k & Half Marathon**, hosted by Rising Hearts (May 5-9)

More information and register for all events at
niwrc.org/mmiwgnatlweek21



National
Congress of
American
Indians

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS AND LGBTQ2S RELATIVES

Debra O'Gara

The AKNWRC staff continues its work around the ongoing crisis of our Indigenous women and girls going missing or found murdered, a 550 year struggle with the arrival of the colonizers. Staff has finished a toolkit called “Missing and murdered Indigenous women: An action plan for Alaska Native communities.” Once the toolkit has completed the approval process, we will begin to include the information into community empowerment curriculum, distribute it to our partners and the tribal communities and make it available on our website. AKNWRC is also drafting and will soon be releasing a factsheet about the MMIWG crisis as well.

We recently joined an Alaska specific work group with Native Movement, Native Peoples Alliance, Alaska Native Heritage Center and Data for Indigenous Justice, to conduct public outreach and presentations on MMIWG, monitor and work on strengthening and increasing community safety through the Alaska legislature and administration.

We are a member of the federal initiated MMIP Task Force and continue to conduct monthly MMIW meetings for the purpose of strategizing, sharing information, and supporting individuals and organizations that are working



“

*Staff has
finished a
toolkit
and...factsheet
about the
MMIWG crisis
as well.*

on this issue. Staff also partnered with a team from the CDC to write an article on the health crisis for our Indigenous communities and families due to the long term effects of the violence perpetrated on our sisters. The article has been included in the recently published journal by the Department of Justice.

A new report by the Data for Indigenous Justice, just released in March 2021 reveals new and more accurate information about the numbers for MMIWG's in Alaska. The actual numbers are significantly larger than previously reported. The report, entitled, "We are calling to you" found that there are currently 149 missing and 80 murdered Indigenous women and girls for a total of 229. These numbers do not include LGBTQ2S which are believed to be on the rise.

Primary solutions to this growing crisis are: continue to build awareness of and speak out about the issue of violence in our communities; increase the abilities for tribes to develop their own justice systems to provide protection orders and accountability for perpetrators; increase tribal control of public safety with tribal law enforcement; demand for coordination and communication between local, state and federal law enforcement so that investigations can begin right away.

1 <https://dataforindigenousjustice.com/we-are-calling-to-you/> New data report released March 2021.

2 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two-spirit – LGBTQ2S

“

*A new report
by the Data
for Indigenous
Justice, just
released in
March of 2021*

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME (OVC) SYMPOSIUM

Tiana Teter & Devin Huffman

The Alaska Native Women's Resource Center hosted our first OVC Symposium to Develop Tribally Derived Victim and Survivor Services and Programs on April 6-8th, 2021. This was a virtual engagement due to COVID-19. We were thankful to have Unified Solutions, Fox Valley, Victims for Justice, Alaska Native Justice Center, OVC Tribal Financial Management Center, OVC Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center, JustGrants, Diane Gout of Gray OAK Consulting and the Office of Victims of Crime tribal grant managers presenting. We are honored to have had all of these organizations support AKNWRC'S OVC Symposium.

We wanted to thank all the attendees that participating in our symposium. AKNWRC was able to cover a range of topics, touching on financial management to cultural response to victim and survivor services. We had participants from all over the state of Alaska, both current OVC grantees and tribes and communities interested in becoming OVC grantees. We were so happy to provide this event and we hope this is just the start to providing future events such as this. We would like to thank our OVC Grant Manager, Mary Terry-Atlas, for her dedicated assistance and support in developing the symposium.

We would especially like to thank Acting Director Katherine Darke Schmitt for her welcoming remarks and the other Alaska Grant managers for their input and participation.



“

AKNWRC was able to cover a range of topics, touching on financial management to cultural response to victim and survivor services.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UPDATE

Janelle Chapin

AKNWRC has continued to deliver our technical assistance virtually throughout the pandemic. We are currently working with the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) on a fourteen-week series on domestic violence and sexual assault responses in our villages. This series was put together with the help of AVCP's Tribal Court Development Department and includes guest partners presenting from Indian law Resource Center and Yupik Women's Coalition, as well as many topic specialists from throughout the state.

AKNWRC has worked to make sure, no matter the internet capacity of the community, that tribes are able to participate. Each week our staff emails out the PowerPoints two days before the session. Our platform allows for our participants to either sign in via computer or call using a toll-free number. We have had a great turn out and discussion each week.

If your tribe is interested in technical assistance please feel free to reach out to Janelle Chapin at Janelle.chapin@aknwrc.org.



“

*If your tribe is
interested in
technical
assistance
please feel free
to reach out to
Janelle
Chapin at
Janelle.chapin@aknwrc.org*