The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the national non-profit organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health and public health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban areas. NCUIH is the only national representative of the 41 Title V Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) under the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). NCUIH strives to improve the health of the over 70% of the AI/AN population that lives in urban areas, supported by quality, accessible health services.

Building Safe Havens for Native American Youth and Adults Through Coalition Building
The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the national non-profit organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health and public health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban areas. NCUIH is the only national representative of the 41 Title V Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) under the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). NCUIH strives to improve the health of the over 70% of the AI/AN population that lives in urban areas, supported by quality, accessible health care centers.
Nesika Illahee, Our Place
[neh-sigh-kah il-la-hee]
All Projects Start with a Vision (and guided by relationships)

Sami Jo Difunctorum
Siletz Tribal Housing Authority

Paul Lumley
NAYA Family Center

Amy Thompson
Native American Rehabilitation Association
Native Americans represent 2.5% of the total population of Multnomah County

According to 2019 data from the Point in Time Count:
- 12% of homeless individuals identify as Native American
- 16% of homeless families identify as Native American
- 76% self-identified having a disabling condition, compared to 72% overall
- 27% have more than 3 disabling conditions, compared to 9% overall

We know this data does not capture the full extent of homelessness experienced by the community
It begins to capture the need for supportive housing services
Nesika Illahee

59 units of affordable housing in the Cully neighborhood:

Unit Mix

- (13) studios
- (30) 1-bedroom
- (9) 2-bedroom
- (7) 3-bedroom
Partners and key roles

• NAYA – Co-Owner/service provider

• NARA – resident services/programming partner

• Siletz - Tribal investor/ IHGB – binding agreement (tribal preference)

• Community Development Partners – Co-Owner/Developer

• Viridian Property Management

• Home Forward (local housing authority) – rent assistance

• Joint Office for Homeless Services (Multnomah County) – rent assistance
Mission Statement of Housing at Nesika Illahee

We are a housing community which supports the wellbeing of individuals recovering from substance use disorders in the Nesika Illahee community and beyond by promoting a smoke, drug and alcohol-free environment and working in a culturally responsive approach with individuals and families through their recovery process.
NARA’s services include:

Primary Health Care (FQHC/HRSA/IHS funded) and Dental Care

Substance Abuse treatment:
- Residential and Outpatient for both adults and youth

Mental Health treatment:
- Including services for families, children, and adults
- Specialty programs for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)

Support Services, including supported employment, recovery coaching and peer services, and housing support
NARA’s Housing Services

• Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
  - over 100 households served, including 10 at Nesika Illahee
• Short-Term Rent Assistance – Over 300 households served this past year
• Street Outreach and Engagement, with a focus on housing placement
• Coordinated Entry assessments – give # (Will talk more about this)
• Specialty programs for Elders and Veterans, both of which will be expanding next year to include 65 more PSH placements
• Three new collaborative projects nearing construction, which will provide 55 units of PSH
• Additional collaborations with NAYA in the works
Resident Services at Nesika Illahee

Partnership with NARA:

• Goal is to provide assistance to help residents maintain housing stability and access needed support services.

• Works collaboratively with property management and other service providers, including NAYA and Siletz

• Facilitates community-building activities

• Works one-on-one with residents to connect with resources
On-site Programming

- Regular Community Meetings
- Community Garden
- Recovery-focused support groups (Red Road)
- Flu shot clinic
- Planned for post-pandemic:
  - art groups
  - Dental van day
  - Women’s healthcare screening day
  - Diabetes education
  - Community meals
  - Children and Youth activities
  - Cultural activities (Talking Circle, Drum group)
Many support staff from NARA, NAYA, and Siletz also regularly meet with residents in the building

- Recovery Peer Mentors
- Addictions Outreach staff (assist with stabilizing residents who have relapsed by facilitating access to detox centers and treatment programs)
- Supportive Housing Specialists (Masters’ level behavioral health clinicians)
- Alcohol and Drug Counselors
- Domestic Violence advocates
- Housing advocates
- Mental Health case managers
Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG)

- Filled in capital financing gaps
- Allows for Tribal Preference, 20 units for 25 years
- Created need for rental assistance
Tribal preference
20 units for 25 years

First preference:
Applicant where Head of Household is an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians or the HOH is not an enrolled Siletz Tribal member but the family includes a minor or dependent child who is an enrolled Siletz Tribal member

Second preference:
Applicant where no member of applicant’s household is an enrolled Siletz Tribal member but at least one member of the household is an enrolled member of another federally recognized tribe

Tribal Preference in Lease-up:
• Nesika Illahee 83% Native households
• At another NAYA housing project without Native preference, the lease up was only 10% Native families
Additional partnerships for rental assistance

Challenges:
- Local funders did not have experience with IHBG and Tribal Preference
- Project was already underway, so didn’t qualify for certain types of assistance

Tools:
- Persistent outreach and developing relationships over many months
- Legal consultation
- Leveraging existing resources (i.e. staff to provide support services)

Results:
- Home Forward providing $200,000 per year in rental assistance for IHBG units
- Joint Office for Homeless Services providing a long-term rent subsidy for 10 formerly homeless households
Lessons Learned for Next Projects

• Build partnerships early in the process
• Review and understand all funding restrictions in advance
• Communication – regular meetings with all partners
• Flexibility to adapt to changing needs
• Need to educate public entities about IHBG rules, Native preference
• Need to expand access/ remove barriers to (federal and state) housing funds
• Need to get tax credit law changed to allow section 8 and LIHTC together
ROLE OF CULTURALLY SPECIFIC HOUSING IN THE FIGHT TO END HOMELESSNESS

Angela Gauthier, LMFT - Associate Director
Travis Decory- Cultural Specialist/Suicide Prevention Advocate
Agenda

Topic one: History of Ain Dah Yung Center
Topic two: Overview of Services
Topic three: Application of Cultural Services
Topic four: Securing a Place for Culturally Specific Housing Services
Topic one
HISTORY OF ADY CENTER
RED SCHOOL HOUSE

• Located in St. Paul, MN
• Founded in 1972 by parents concerned about low achievement levels and high dropout rates among Native American students.
• The intention of the school was to create a learning environment for Native students to have a school of their own where they could learn both culture-based academics and their culture.

Source: http://www.aim-ic.org/red-school-house
Ain Dah Yung (Our Home)
Emergency Shelter

• Began in 1983 to provide a safe home for students at the Red School House.
• Founded by the community for the community.
• Mission: Provide a healing place within the community for American Indian youth and families to thrive in safety and wholeness.

9/3/20XX Presentation Title
Topic two
OVERVIEW OF SERVICES
**Emergency Shelter**
- 10 beds
- Ages 5-17
- Serves youth experiencing homelessness & placements from child welfare.

**Beverley A. Benjamin Youth Lodge**
- 6 bed transitional living program
- Ages 16-21
- Serves youth exiting homelessness. Youth live rent free and have an opportunity to focus on education and employment.

**Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung**
- Opened Nov. 2019
- 42 Unit Permanent Supportive Housing.
- Offers housing and safe harbor case management, access to cultural services, and mental health care.
ADY Center Housing Support Services

Street Outreach

- Provides street-based services to homeless, precariously housed, runaway and at-risk youth, in collaboration with StreetWorks.
- The mission of the StreetWorks Collaborative is to foster a diverse collaboration of youth, communities, and youth-serving agencies that coordinate effective and impactful street-based, site-based, and school-based outreach programs.
- [https://www.streetworksmn.org/](https://www.streetworksmn.org/)

Safe Harbor

- Case management services to sexually exploited and/or trafficked youth.
- Reaches out to clients who have lived experiences of exploitation to offer them services to heal from that trauma.
**ADY Center Family & Prevention Services**

**Oyate Nawajin**
- Serves families at risk of/in CPS.
- ICWA Compliance & legal representation.
- Family advocacy and group work.

**Ninijanisag**
- Serves youth ages 8 – 24.
- Culture is prevention model.
- Chemical Dependency, non-traditional tobacco use, suicide prevention, health and wellness.

ADY Center medicine gardens
Topic three

APPLICATION OF CULTURAL SERVICES
CULTURE IS PREVENTION
MINO OSKI AIN DAH YUNG (GOOD NEW HOME)
What does native specific housing mean to ADYC?

• Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung opened its doors in November 2019, after a multi-year capital campaign.

• It is a 42-unit permanent supportive housing complex for youth leaving homelessness ages 18-24.

• The building and its services were all designed with creating a clearly indigenous space for the native youth are committed to serving.
Unique features of Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung

• The building is clearly identifiable as an indigenous space, in a city that did not have this previously.

• ADY Center worked very hard to garner support for an increased amount of community gathering spaces- not typically afforded to housing developments.

• We have a culturally activities center, a food pantry, clothing closet, and a credit store all on site. We have a commercial kitchen to cook for the community and a large gathering space where we host trainings and community events.
Unique features of Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung

We worked with city to create a sweat lodge on site. Medicine gardens and a private outside area. An art gallery space that features works from residents and native artists. Teaching kitchens and community gathering spaces on each of the resident floors.
Topic four

Securing a Place for Culturally Specific Housing
• A federal mandate for Coordinated Entry drastically impacted the way people are referred to housing nationwide.
• How culturally specific services are funded.
• Lack of understanding from greater community about the need for these specific services.
• CE is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.

What is Coordinated Entry (CE)?

Coordinated Entry impacts all housing providers nationally.

Programs receiving federal, state and county funds will likely be mandated to participate in the CE system.

CE systems are built and managed at a hyper local level- therefore look very different across regions.
Why does the CE system pose a threat to culturally specific programs?

- Requirement to adhere to fair housing.
- Concern that using someone’s identity (as it is defined as a protected class) to make a referral will violate fair housing.
  - race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability
- Assessments used may have not been validated on a diverse mix of communities, therefore has blind spots.
- Tendency to look at people facing homelessness through a deficit-based lens.
- Over reliant on data collected by the system as an accurate representation on who is experiencing homelessness and types of housing needed.
The positive news?

ADY CENTER HAS LED AN INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE A SOLUTION.
What we know...

Across the board BIPOC communities are overrepresented within homelessness nationwide.

Systemic problems and racism have been the cause of these disparities.

Indigenous people do not experience higher rates of homelessness and housing instability because they are indigenous. They have experiences because of systems that supported the creation of this issue.

Homelessness looks different in different communities. Our current system was built by leaders using their perspective of homelessness—specifically—defining homelessness by the stereotype of a white, chronically homeless male, with chemical dependency and mental health needs.
WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

With much research and legal aid, we have developed a process that follows the federal mandate and fair housing.

Local Continuums of Care (CoC) use available data on disparate numbers within the homeless populations on a local, state, and national level.
**WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?**

The CoC adopts/develops an assessment which focuses on the experiences of those who have disparate representation within the system. Ex. Historical trauma, removal of lands, history of boarding schools, slavery, redlining.

By making this change, the CoC is making a statement that the disparate numbers of homelessness are because of systemic problems, not personal deficits.

Identify programs within each area that provide culturally specific services and connect them with the CoC.
The outcome of these changes...

Ensure that BIPOC people experiencing homelessness can be housed in a program built for their unique needs and experiences.

Currently this policy has passed in our local CoC, however, we are working to provide this as a national solution to culturally specific housing organizations.

Believe this will lead to better outcomes for BIPOC communities (housing stability, employment, education, and greater positive community participation).
Thank you

Angela Gauthier & Travis DeCory

Angela.Gauthier@adycenter.org
Travis.DeCory@adycenter.org

www.adycenter.org
FB @ADYCenter