



# Introduction to the Proceedings of the Third Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition

Mindy S Kurzer<sup>1</sup> and Treena Wasontio Delormier<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Food Science and Nutrition and the Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute, University of Minnesota, Saint Paul, MN, USA and <sup>2</sup>School of Human Nutrition, Centre for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment (CINE), McGill University, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec, Canada

Copyright © The Author(s) 2020. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. For commercial re-use, please contact [journals.permissions@oup.com](mailto:journals.permissions@oup.com)

Manuscript received December 11, 2019. Initial review completed December 18, 2019. Revision accepted December 30, 2019.

These proceedings were supported by a gift from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community to the University of Minnesota's Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute.

Author disclosures: MSK has been a consultant to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and has been financially supported to lead the conference and to co-edit these proceedings. TWD reports no conflicts of interest.

MSK is an Editor on *Current Developments in Nutrition* and played no role in the Journal's evaluation of this manuscript.

This article appears as part of the supplement "Proceedings of the Third Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition," sponsored by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's Seeds of Native Health campaign through a gift to the University of Minnesota. The guest editors of the supplement, Treena Delormier and Mindy S Kurzer, have no conflicts of interest. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and are not attributable to the sponsors or the publisher, Editor, or Editorial Board of *Current Developments in Nutrition*.

Address correspondence to MSK (e-mail: [mkurzer@umn.edu](mailto:mkurzer@umn.edu)).

The Third Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition was held at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Prior Lake, Minnesota, 2–5 October 2018. This conference was cohosted by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) and the University of Minnesota Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute, through a gift from the SMSC's Seeds of Native Health campaign to the University of Minnesota. It was held on SMSC land, as were the first 2 conferences, and continued the conference series work of sharing the most novel and high-impact research and programs that address the nutrition and health inequities faced by Native American and other Indigenous communities.

This conference had the same goals as the first 2 conferences in the series: 1) raise awareness about the serious nutritional issues Native American people experience, 2) identify strategies and solutions to these problems, 3) identify gaps in knowledge, 4) disseminate information about current work and showcase promising projects, 5) celebrate successes, and 6) build relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders, experts, and advocates. The third conference once again worked to elevate both academic research and Indigenous knowledge and to showcase the importance of bringing the strengths of both knowledge systems together.

The third conference (1) continued the success of the first 2 conferences. It was attended by 589 nutrition professionals and practitioners working on tribal and Indigenous nutritional health from 38 states plus Washington, DC, and American Samoa; 4 Canadian provinces; Ecuador; Guatemala; and New Zealand. Over half of all conference participants were affiliated with a Native tribe or Indigenous community. Twenty-five percent of the attendees stated their professional affiliation as nutrition educators, public health workers, or clinical health practitioners; 22% identified as researchers, students, or higher-education employees; 20% were tribal officials, em-

ployees, or community members; and 15% were affiliated with non-profits working in Indian Country. Federal, state, or local government employees, consultants, AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) volunteers, and funders made up the remaining 16% of attendees.

A planning committee made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics and tribal, community, and nonprofit leaders was responsible for putting together the conference program (see conference website for a list of planning committee members). Session themes at the third conference included "Nutrition across the Lifecycle," "Intergenerational Learning about Food and Nutrition," Youth Voices," "Food Systems, Food Sovereignty and Nutrition," and "The Importance of Recovery from Historical Trauma to Health and Nutrition." The final report of the conference can be accessed online (2).

These proceedings highlight the innovation and breadth of the exciting initiatives presented at the conference, reflecting work done with First Nations in Canada as well as Native American communities in the United States. The 6 articles in these proceedings showcase successful community-academic research collaborations in early care (3) and school (4) environments and tribally owned convenience stores (5), describe successful programs that use Indigenous knowledge (6), present data on sex differences in diabetes prevalence and health care utilization (7), and discuss strategies to increase biodiversity to improve food systems and health outcomes (8).

The guest editors thank the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community for their generous support of this conference series, as well as the planning committee members (listed on the conference website) who volunteered their time and ideas to create an excellent program. The Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Conference (9), held in 2019, will be published in 2020. The fifth conference in this series will take place at

Mystic Lake Center, Prior Lake, Minnesota, 20–23 September 2020. We look forward to hosting future conferences that will continue to bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals from academic, clinical, nonprofit, and community settings to showcase the strengths of Native food systems and to develop collaborations that will create new knowledge in this area.

### Acknowledgments

The authors' responsibilities were as follows—both authors: read and approved the final manuscript.

### References

1. Third Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition [Internet]. [Accessed 2019 Dec 24]. Available from: [seedsofnativehealth.org/2018conference](https://seedsofnativehealth.org/2018conference).
2. Final report of the Third Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition [Internet]. [Accessed 2019 Dec 24]. Available from: [seedsofnativehealth.org/2018report](https://seedsofnativehealth.org/2018report).
3. Sisson S, Sleet K, Rickman R, Love C, Bledsoe A, Williams M, Blue Bird Jernigan V. The impact of 2017 CACFP meal pattern requirement change on menu quality in tribal early care environments: the FRESH study. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):12–22.
4. Sleet K, Sisson S, Dev D, Love C, Williams M, Hoffman L, Blue Bird Jernigan V. The impact of responsive feeding practice training on teacher feeding behaviors in tribal early care and education: the FRESH study. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):23–32.
5. Taniguchi TE, Salvatore AL, Williams MB, Love CV, Noonan CJ, Cannady TK, Standridge J, Fox J, Spiegel J, Owens J, et al. Process evaluation tool development and fidelity of healthy retail interventions in American Indian tribally-owned convenience stores: the THRIVE study. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):33–41.
6. Neathway CC, Yung K. Community champions for safe, sustainable, traditional food systems. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):49–52.
7. Huyser KR, Rockell J, Blue Bird Jernigan V, Taniguchi T, Wilson C, Manson SM, O'Connell J. Sex differences in diabetes prevalence, comorbidities, and healthcare utilization among American Indians living in the Northern Plains. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):42–48.
8. Shetty K, Sarkar D, Walker-Swaney J. Food diversity and indigenous food systems to combat diet-linked chronic diseases. *Curr Dev Nutr* 2020;4(Suppl 1):3–11.
9. Fourth Annual Conference on Native American Nutrition [Internet]. [Accessed 2019 Dec 24]. Available from: [seedsofnativehealth.org/2019conference](https://seedsofnativehealth.org/2019conference).