20th Annual Oklahoma City Area Director's Indian Health Service, Tribal, Urban Awards Ceremony

"Rooted in Tradition"



July 20, 2023



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A Message from the Area Director

On behalf of the Oklahoma City Area (OCA) Indian Health Service (IHS), I am pleased and honored to recognize the recipients of the 2023 OCA IHS Area Director's Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban (I/T/U) Awards. Today we acknowledge the distinguished service and tireless efforts of our colleagues to improve the health and well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native patients and communities.

The contributions of the recipients in the areas of Length of Service, public health, and Commissioned Corps honor awards represent those of the entire I/T/U family. Each day you labor to make Indian country healthier and safer in countless ways by encouraging healthy habits and disease prevention and supporting our youth and elders.



I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated individuals. I understand the selfless work and personal sacrifice that is demanded of you, and I appreciate your willingness not only to undertake such work, but to embrace it.

I applaud all of this year's recipients. It is through individuals like you that the Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban Health Programs have been able to make a difference in the lives of the American Indians and Alaska Natives whom we serve. I wish you all the best with your continuing career and future life endeavors. My sincere congratulations to all the award recipients.

With gratitude and congratulations,

Joans Elvets

RADM Travis E. Watts, PharmD, BCPS Area Director Oklahoma City Area Indian Health Service





Indian Health Service

The Indian Health Service, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for providing federal health care services to American Indian and Alaska Natives. The provision of health services to members of federally-recognized Tribes grew out of the special government to government relationship between the federal government and Indian Nations. This relationship, established in 1787, is based on Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution, and has been given form and substance by numerous treaties, laws, Supreme Court decisions, and Executive Orders. The Indian Health Service is the principle federal health care provider and health advocate for Indian people.

Mission

The mission of the Indian Health Service, in partnership with American Indian and Alaska Native people, is to raise their physical, mental, social, and spiritual health to the highest level possible.

Goal

The goal of the Indian Health Service is to ensure that comprehensive, culturally acceptable personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Foundation

The foundation of the Indian Health Service is to uphold the Federal Government's obligation to promote healthy American Indian and Alaska Native people, communities, and cultures, and to honor and protect the inherent sovereign rights of Tribal Governments.

Area Director's I/T/U Awards Ceremony Committee

Cherokee Nation - Cindy Martin Chickasaw Nation - Brenda Teel Choctaw Nation - Brandy Griffin Claremore Service Unit - LT Taylor Morris Clinton Service Unit - Corey Rodgers and LT Whitney Moseley Haskell Indian Health Center - Cindy Thomas Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa - Jordan Cox and Tonia Gist Lawton Service Unit - LCDR Tiana George and LCDR Alyssa Plata Muscogee (Creek) Nation - Rhonda Beaver & Shoneen Alexander-Ross Oklahoma City Area Office - Ceremony Coordinator - Robbin Williams Oklahoma City Indian Clinic - Angie Reeves and Rachael Maltby Pawnee Service Unit - LT Jared Barnett Texas Native Health - Brittany Lewis

Wewoka Service Unit - Regina Evans



Master of Ceremonies

Dr. Charles W. Grim

Invocation

Reverend Randy Wade

Presentation of Colors

Choctaw Nation Honor Guard

Flag Song

Young Buffalo Horse Drum Group

Memorial Song

Young Buffalo Horse Drum Group

Entertainment

Phyllis Nuno

Introduction of Dignitaries, Special Guests and Executive Leadership

Welcoming Remarks

RADM Travis E. Watts, Area Director

Closing Remarks

Retiring of the Colors

Victory Song

Young Buffalo Horse Drum Group

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD



Grey Feather by Lance Straughn





































































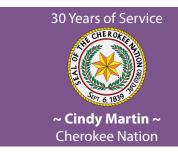












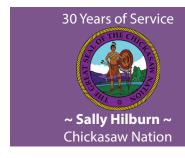




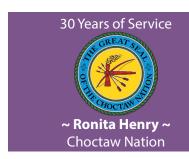


















































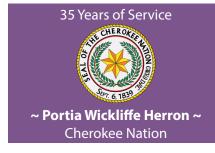








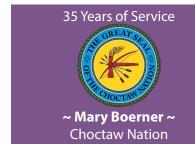






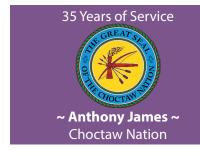






















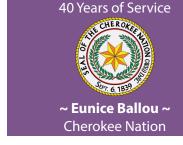




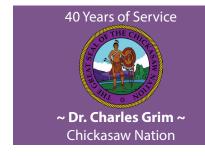






















LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD



PEER RECOGNITION AWARD



Big Sky by Dylan Cavin

~ Erica Dean ~

Claremore Indian Hospital

Erica Dean, MS, RDN, LD, CDCES, FMNS, is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She has been at her current position at Claremore Indian Hospital as a diabetes educator for the past 11 years. Erica is a Registered Dietitian-Nutritionist, Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist, Functional Medicine Nutrition Specialist, and Integrative Nutrition Health Coach. She also holds certifications to teach breath work. She received her Bachelor of Science in Dietetics in 2001 and Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences in 2004 from Oklahoma State University.



~ Krishna Harriman ~

Clinton Indian Health Center

Krishna Harriman started working for the Clinton Indian Health Center in May 2020. In November 2021, she transitioned to a Purchasing Agent position. During the small duration of her working for the Indian Health Center, she has excelled with every task and is always ebullient when doing so. Her willingness to help her peers demonstrates her prominent role in Acquisitions. She strives to achieve her team goals beyond measure as well as her own. She's often a prevalent contact to seek guidance for job tasks. She obtained her Bachelor's at Southwestern Oklahoma State University and is a certified Tribal Citizen of the Cherokee Nation.



~ Harry Ynguanzo ~

El Reno Indian Health Center

Harry Ynguanzo, a member of the Kiowa Tribe, serves as the Maintenance Mechanic for the El Reno Indian Health Center. He has been with the Clinton Service Unit for three years, providing his services for two years in Clinton and the past year at the new El Reno facility. His other duties include safety officer and fleet manager. Harry enjoys working in an environment where he can help patients and staff by making sure the facility is safe and operational.



~ Bonnie Kraft ~

Watonga Indian Health Center

Mrs. Bonnie Kraft has served as the Director of Public Health Nursing for the Clinton Service Unit since 2012. Bonnie is an invaluable leader and is passionate about empowering others through health promotion, disease prevention, and establishing community relationships. Since 2019, Mrs. Kraft has served as Oklahoma Area's Immunization Coordinator and this past year Mrs. Kraft has also fulfilled the role of Watonga Facility Supervisor.



~ Clint Wilson ~

Haskell Indian Health Center

Clint Wilson is a wonderful addition to the Haskell Indian Health Center. He hit the ground running on projects, and his work was immediately noticed. He has received multiple comments about his responsiveness, quality of work, helpfulness and great customer service, has an amiable personality and work ethic. Clint completes any task that is assigned or requested of him, and is always willing to assist other departments. Has helped with many remodeling projects to improve the use and appearance of limited space at Haskell.



~ Tonya Hodge ~

Lawton Indian Hospital

Tonya Hodge is a Registered Nurse with over 17 years of experience in oncology, hospice, and behavioral therapy. She obtained her nursing degree from the University of Oklahoma in 2005 and values kindness, compassion, and emotional stability as essential qualities for providing exceptional care. Tonya has demonstrated strong leadership skills, a commitment to teamwork, and a passion for patient involvement in care decisions. She is currently working at the Lawton Indian Hospital's Med-Surg unit, where she has developed meaningful relationships with her patients while providing them with the highest quality of care possible.



~ **Reanna L. Tselee** ~ Anadarko Indian Health Center

Ms. Reanna L. Tselee, MS, LMFT-S is the Supervisory Mental Health Specialist for the AIHC Behavioral Health Department. She has been with AIHC since November 2020. Ms. Tselee is enrolled with the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma. As part of her supervisory duties, she oversees the operations of three award funding opportunities in hopes to increase access to BH providers and expand services among the local community.



~ **Nicholas Birdshead ~** Carnegie Indian Health Center

Mr. Nicholas Birdshead is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, specifically Arapaho. He also has lineage from the Comanche and Chiricahua Apache Tribes. Mr. Birdshead has served as the on-site IT Specialist for the Anadarko Indian Health Center and the Carnegie Indian Health Center for 3 years.



~ **Melissa Cryer** ~ Oklahoma City Area Office

Melissa Cryer started her career at IHS in June 2018 as an Administrative Support Assistant. Her main responsibility is third party billing for the OCAO Tele-Behavioral Health Clinic. In 2022, she became a Certified Professional Biller. She is involved in the implementation and tracking of the yearly QPR training, and is also on the Planning Committee for the IHS Oklahoma Behavioral Health Conference. Mostly recently, she has taken on the Medicare credentialing process for contract radiologists at all the service units. She also performs timekeeping tasks and enters procurement requests in UFMS. Melissa is a member of the Cherokee Nation.



~ John Brown ~

Pawnee Indian Health Center

Mr. John Brown has served as the laboratory supervisor for the Pawnee Indian Health Center for over 2 years. During 2022, he provided leadership to his department as they streamlined processes to increase efficiency and better serve our patients. John is the ultimate team player. If there is any issue that he can help with throughout his department to increase patient access and care, he is always willing to help. He has partnered with the medical clinic to work together on numerous projects. John has been a great addition and a great asset to the Pawnee Indian Health Center.



~ Crystal Hogshooter ~

Wewoka Indian Health Center

Crystal Hogshooter has worked as a Medical Laboratory Technician at Wewoka IHS since 2015. She is a member of the Seminole Tribe. Crystal manages the reference lab interface program and has made multiple improvements in both eliminating rejections and mapping issues. She is also responsible for monitoring completion of the Proficiency Program. Crystal is an essential element to the staff who performs 150,000 tests annually and collects specimens on 60-80 patients each day. She works with a smile and is an incredible asset in supporting the Indian Health Services Mission.



~ Katy Kiener ~

Cherokee Nation AMO Health Center

Katy Kiener serves as a Licensed Practical Nurse for the Amo Health Center. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 14 years. Ms. Kiener is responsible for caring for and ensuring patients are up to date on all required screenings. She coordinates care with ancillary services while keeping the best interest of the patient first. Through her exemplary work she has helped her care team achieve their diabetic outcome measures. She is a beautiful example of what it means to have a "nurse's heart" and provide the best possible care to her patients.



~ Vera Stone ~

Cherokee Nation Cooweescoowee Health Center

Vera Renee Stone serves as a Pharmacy Technician at Cooweescoowee Health Center. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 7 years. Her responsibilities and roles include processing prescriptions, ScriptPro equipment lead, OmniCell lead, maintaining pharmacy inventory, and preparing expiring medications for return. In addition to her role, she serves as the Activities Committee President. She plays an active role in employee engagement activities for the health center that include activities benefiting the community. This engagement creates a cohesive team and boosts employee morale.



~ Nora Fields ~

Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center

Nora Fields serves as a Licensed Practical Nurse wound care specialist at the Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center. She has worked for the organization for 31 years. She provides input for care plan consideration and promotes wound prevention and healing through education to patients, family members, and caregivers. She has a positive impact on the quality of life, physical activity, as well as meeting personal goals of our patients. Nora has aided in the prevention of 80 documented major lower extremity amputations; greatly impacting the personal lives of these patients. She is dedicated to the overall wellbeing of others.



~ Daryl Rogers ~

Cherokee Nation Redbird Smith Health Center

Daryl Rogers serves as the Assistant Ambulatory Nurse Manager at Redbird Smith Health Center. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 3 years. Daryl is responsible for managing a team of Nurses and Nursing Assistants helping to ensure quality care of our patients. Daryl is known for her willingness to assist when and where needed. She has helped cover extra duty shifts at the Cherokee Nation W.W. Hastings Hospital when needed. She is completely a vested employee for the operations and care of our patients. Daryl is a strong leader that makes a positive impact on our team.



~ Kimberly Spence ~

Cherokee Nation Sam Hider Health Center

Kimberly Spence serves as a Patient Access Representative in Optometry at Sam Hider Health Center. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 6 years. Kimberly works to ensure accuracy of patient registration demographics. She embraces challenges to accomplish tasks. Her diligence and dedication has a direct impact on the health center as it boosts revenue and allows us to further help our patients needs be met. She is committed to the delivery of customer services by going out of her way to contact patients who miss appointments to reschedule. Patients often comment on her professionalism and courteousness.



~ Jeanice Admire ~

Cherokee Nation Three Rivers Health Center

Jeanice Admire serves as a Pharmacy Technician at Three Rivers Health Center. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 14 years. Jeanice manages assisting patients at the lobby and drive through windows. She has excellent customer service and makes each patient feel valued and promptly answers patient phone calls and questions. She helps process renewal medication orders and assists with the inventory management for the department. Jeanice holds a key role in the department running smoothly daily. She is always willing to work with the team to face challenges and resolve problems.



~ Amy Davis ~

Cherokee Nation Vinita Health Center

Amy Davis serves as the Ambulatory Care Nurse Manager for the Vinita Health Center. She has work for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 10 years. As the Nurse Manger, Ms. Davis' responsibilities include the coordination and leadership of 25 team members at the health center. Her team members are a direct line of communication to the patient for their needs, they provide support for the medical staff, oversee Women's Health Case Management, Diabetes Education and Community Health Nursing. She has a positive impact on our patients and demonstrates leadership traits and professional skills that help ensure quality patient care.



~ Nathan Eric Enlow ~

Cherokee Nation W. W. Hastings Hospital

Nathan Eric Enlow services as the Surgical Services Nurse Manager for the W. W. Hastings Hospital and Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center. He has been with Cherokee Nation Health Services for over a combined 10 years. Eric plans and organizes staff and surgical schedules, assists with policy development, review, and implementation, and leads his team. He is a proponent of change management for services and programming expansion efforts. He has a passion for patient care through emergency and surgical services. Through this passion, he demonstrates excellent skill and abilities that result in safe and quality healthcare for our patients.



~ Rickie Brown ~

Cherokee Nation Wilma P. Mankiller Health Center

Rickie Brown serves as a Clinic Caretaker for the Wilma P. Mankiller Health Center. Mr. Brown has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 8 years. His responsibilities include caretaking duties and maintaining facility grounds. He is always willing to help anyone without hesitation whether it be a patient or employee. Mr. Brown is a dedicated team member, always putting extra effort and taking pride in the work to help maintain his home clinic in his hometown of Stilwell. This dedication and work ethic makes him a great asset to our team and a valued member of our work family.



~ Leona Reuck ~

Cherokee Nation Will Rogers Health Center

Leona Reuck serves as the Community Health Representative Transportation scheduler. She has worked for Cherokee Nation Health Services for 14 years. Her duties include scheduling transportation services for the northern health centers. She collects data and provides patient education about the transportation services available. Leona does an excellent job keeping the schedule, managing 5 drivers and average of 250 transports per month. She was instrumental in streamlining processes to make greater access for our patients. Leona demonstrates the excellent time management and organizational skills needed in her role to make it successful. She is a vital member of our team.



~ Shelia Prince ~

Chickasaw Nation Ardmore Health Clinic

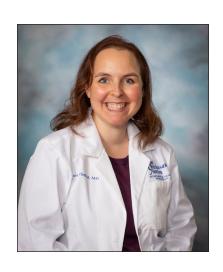
Sheila is a Medical Support Technician, and she has been with the Chickasaw Nation for 10 years. Her commitment and devotion have had a positive impact on the patients of the Chickasaw Nation and their families. Sheila has never shied away from a task. She is always willing to go above and beyond for her patients and her team. She continues to take an active role in building and propelling her team to operate at their best. At the heart of it all, Sheila is a fierce advocate for her patients and for her team.



~ Stephanie Schofield ~

Chickasaw Nation Medical Center

Dr. Schofield is our medical lead on the Empowered Living Team which is a referral-based specialty pediatric obesity clinic at the Chickasaw Nation Medical Center and our Satellite clinic in Ardmore. She has been able to create a high performing work environment and is the first on her team to recognize superior performance such as when someone goes above and beyond to serve a patient. Dr. Schofield values improving access to care and sets high expectations based on our core values for the team.



Peer Recognition Award Tribal

~ Taylor Martin ~

Chickasaw Nation Purcell Health Clinic

Taylor has worked for the Chickasaw Nation for 3 ½ years and currently is our Registration Assistant Manager for our Purcell clinic. He has worked in the medical field for 14 years. Taylor's duties include ensuring policy, procedures and excellent customer service are the foundation of the clinic visit. He is a valuable asset to the clinic as a leader and is never afraid to help wherever he is needed.



~ Jeanette O'Flannagan ~

Chickasaw Nation Tishomingo Health Clinic

Jeanette has worked for the Chickasaw Nation for 19 years and is currently an LPN for our Chickasaw Nation Tishomingo Clinic Primary Care department. She is a dedicated employee that enjoys providing patient care. Jeanette exhibits daily all the core values that are the foundation for Chickasaw Nation services. She has an unwavering commitment to her team and a can-do attitude with a willingness to be proactive and assist wherever she is needed.



~ Sabrina Beaird ~

Choctaw Nation Atoka Health Services

Sabrina Beaird serves as a registered nurse in family practice at the Choctaw Nation Atoka Health Clinic and has worked for Choctaw Nation for five years. Sabrina's loyalty to her tribe and co-workers, as well as her dedicated work ethic is very much evident in the quality of care she provides daily. Sabrina is a passionate patient advocate, and her patients are not the only ones to benefit from her 18+ years of experience as a registered nurse, her teammates do as well. She humbly brings a wealth of knowledge, leadership skills, and communication skills to the table.



~ Chelsea Golden ~

Choctaw Nation Broken Bow and Idabel Health Services

Chelsea Golden serves as a RN Unit Manager at the Choctaw Nation Health Clinic in Idabel. Chelsea has worked for the Choctaw Nation for one year and in a short time she has earned the respect of all her fellow peers. Chelsea has excelled in her role and her natural leadership skills can be seen in the way she helps our tribal members and community. Chelsea is very passionate in assisting our tribal members in improving the quality of their lives.



~ SuzAnne Cryer ~ Choctaw Nation Durant Health Services

SuzAnne Cryer works for the Choctaw Nation Durant Regional Medical Clinic switchboard team. During the last year, she has easily become one of the most reliable peers in the call center. SuzAnne continues to have consistent performance while handling a high call volume all while never diminishing her level of service to patients. SuzAnne will stay on the phone to provide in depth details to ensure patients questions are addressed and they feel comfortable about their upcoming visit to DRMC. She repeatedly demonstrates her willingness to volunteer for any additional duties. She is a true asset to our team.



~ Lisa Jones ~

Choctaw Nation Extended Non-Clinical Care Services

Lisa Jones, RN, Case Manager for the Choctaw Nation Healthy Aging program, has been an asset since joining the program 2 years ago. She goes beyond what is required for the position. She is very conscientious to meet the needs of the elders she serves. She spends countless hours providing care for their medical needs as well as making sure they meet their appointments, have groceries, and access to other resources available to them to keep them at their optimal health and as independent as possible.



~ April Justice ~

Choctaw Nation Hugo Health Services

April Justice serves as a Phlebotomist at the Choctaw Nation Clinic in Hugo. She has worked for Choctaw Nation for 2 years. Even though she has been there a short time, April strives to find ways to improve flow and functionality in the lab. April frequently receives compliments and recognition from patients for her compassionate care and upbeat attitude. The staff enjoy working alongside her each and every day. April is passionate about her profession and never hesitates to take on extra duties. Her hard work, dedication, and teamwork has made her a great asset to the Hugo lab department.



~ Dr. Misti Crawley ~

Choctaw Nation McAlester Health Services

Dr. Misty Crawley serves as the Pediatrician at the Choctaw Nation McAlester Health Clinic. She has worked with the Choctaw Nation Health Services for 10 years. She serves as the Pediatric Department lead at the McAlester Clinic and assists with on call duties for the Choctaw Nation Health Care Center. Dr. Crawley is routinely recognized for her exceptional bedside manner by both the staff and the community. Her knowledge, skill set, dedication, and empathy set her apart from others.



~ Patty Hickman ~

Choctaw Nation Poteau Health Services

Patty Hickman serves as the Employee Prescription Program Manager for Choctaw Nation Health Services. Patty routinely demonstrates superior customer service skills and makes sure that her customers have a positive experience. Through Patty's effort and development of a high performing team, the program grew by more than 20% in 2022. In an additional role as the Rubin White Clinic registration supervisor, Patty strives to promote best practices and opportunities for staff development. Patty has developed a well-earned reputation as an outstanding colleague and mentor within the Rubin White Health Clinic and across our health system.



Peer Recognition Award Tribal

~ Jamie Edwards ~

Choctaw Nation Stigler Health Services

Jamie Edwards serves as the Administrative Assistant at the Choctaw Nation Stigler Clinic. She has been with the facility for 15 years. She served as the Medical Record supervisor from 2007 until 2021. In 2021 she transferred to Administrative Assistant. She took on many tasks to assist the Facility Director in managing the clinic daily. This included the Dental off-site clinic. Jamie took on the role of making sure we always had a covid screener at the door even if it meant that she would be the screener. She promotes a positive atmosphere and good morale among the staff.



~ Mary Woodral ~

Choctaw Nation Talihina Health Services

Mary Woodral serves as Office Manager for Choctaw Nation Health Care Center's Administration Department. She has worked for Choctaw Nation Health Services for 16 years. Mary serves as Office Manager for Talihina Administration, Switchboard Operators Supervisor, Senior Manager of the Hospitality House, oversees the recipients of the Chief Batton Scholarship, and is a member of Health Services' Core Labor Day Team. Mary goes above and beyond in all aspects of her career and is an invaluable asset to the Choctaw Nation.



~ Lindsley Harry ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Eufaula Indian Health Center

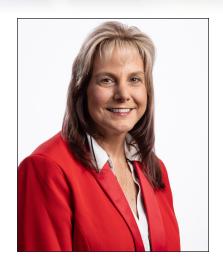
Ms. Lindsley Harry serves as the Grants Manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. During her 14 years with MCN, she has displayed grants management leadership in assuring assistance with managing grant applications. She is responsible for grant protocols and manages pre- and post-awards. Ms. Harry assisted with the development of the \$14 million dollars in federal funding with existing agencies. Successful projects included Public Health, Prevention, and Treatment. Her work has led to providing additional funding to ensure 90,000 plus Creek Citizens and healthy generations of Native people.



~ Patricia Henderson ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Koweta Indian Health Center

Ms. Patricia Henderson is a nationally certified pharmacy technician serving as the Lead Pharmacy Technician. Patricia displays leadership by being punctual and leading a crew of three other pharmacy technicians. For 11 years, Patricia has excelled assisting our elderly patients with medication refills whether in person or over the phone. Her level of service and commitment has played a key role in the ability of the pharmacy team to deliver quality and timely care to our patients.



~ Carolyn Fultz ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Community Hospital

Ms. Carolyn Fultz has served as the Dietary Manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health at the Creek Nation Community Hospital in Okemah for the past 30 years. She has displayed leadership, loyalty, and exceptional guidance in assuring dietary processes are met at the highest standards possible. She has steered the development of dietary protocols and best practices across our health system while implementing healthier dining options for patients, visitors, and staff.



~ Kevin Schultz ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health

Mr. Schultz has served as a Financial Analyst for the Muscogee Nation Department of Health for over 12 years. He has assisted with the development, installation, and support of several systems within the Department of Health. These systems are designed to manage the day-to-day financial processes as well as timekeeping for all health employees. Staff across the health system rely on Kevin's expertise. He is a recognized problem solver and guides the development and management of monthly reporting that provides financial, operational, and productivity metrics across the health system.



~ Michael Ford ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Medical Center

Mike Ford, RN, serves as the Director of Nursing at the Muscogee Nation Medical Center. Mike began his journey as a registered nurse in 2007. His career with the Muscogee Nation Department of Health began in 2012 in the Emergency Department. Mike was promoted to Director of Nursing in 2021. Mike is an exceptional leader. His leadership is linked with his desire to make a positive difference for his patients, families, and staff. Mike is highly visible in our acute inpatient unit, as well as our emergency department. He is always approachable and available to patients, family, and his staff.



~ Zackary Lethermon ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Okemah Indian Health Center

Mr. Zack Lethermon is a skilled Epic EHR analyst who has dedicated the past 18 months to maintaining MCN Health's electronic charting system to the highest standards. His work has enabled the organization to be the first IHS facility to go live with Epic, and he played a pivotal role in the implementation and support for the emergency department and electronic health information exchange applications. His expertise makes him an asset to the organization, and his contributions have been instrumental in advancing our mission of improving patient care delivery across the health system.



~ Kelsey Two Bears ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Okmulgee Indian Health Center

Mrs. Kelsey Two Bears has served as a Family Medicine Physician Assistant at Okmulgee Indian Health Center for the last 6 years. She is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and has Keetoowah ancestry. She is very passionate about serving her tribe in her role as a healthcare provider and is a fierce advocate for all her patients. She enjoys training the next generation of Physician Assistants and serves as a preceptor for Northeastern State University Physician Assistant Program, winning "Preceptor of the Year" award in 2022 for the first graduating class.



~ Kalen Roper ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Sapulpa Indian Health Center

Ms. Kalen Roper is an Optometry Technician with the Sapulpa Indian Health Center and has served there for a little over 5 years. She assists with the ocular care of her patients. Collaboration is her strength and she helps in other departments as often as needed. She is a diligent, caring, and passionate about her job.



~ George Polecat ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Physical Rehabilitation Center

Mr. George Polecat has served as the Materials Management Inventory Analyst for Muscogee Nation Department of Health for 22 years. He enjoys meeting the personnel across the health system and lending a helping hand. He likes being able to complete a variety of different duties and continues to be an asset to the organization.



~ Kelsey Haynes ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council Oak Comprehensive Healthcare

Mrs. Kelsey Haynes, MHS, PA-C serves as the Family Medicine/Employee Health Physician Associate for Council Oak Comprehensive Healthcare. She has displayed superior leadership qualities by enhancing her patient panel over the last year, as well as playing an instrumental role as the employee health provider on site, keeping our employees healthy and at work. She is responsible for frequent projects and continues to display exemplary behavior as both a provider and a leader. This innovative approach has resulted in superior care for our citizens and is making a major difference in outcomes within our health system.



~ William Mussler ~

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Wetumka Indian Health Center

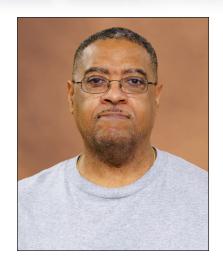
For almost six years, Mr. Willie Mussler, Chief Pharmacist at the Wetumka Indian Health Center, has enjoyed serving the citizens of the Muscogee Nation. Willie brought to his position over 30 years of retail and clinical experience along with an understanding of the importance of compassion in healthcare from his years volunteering in underserved clinics.



~ Ray Hawthorne ~

Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa

Ray Hawthorne is recognized for his consistent superior performance in maintaining the beauty of the Indian Health Care Resource Center facility. Ray has provided custodial services at our agency for approximately 14 years. His supervisor shared that his primary focus is to maintain the cleanliness and beautification of our facility and states, "He responds to all calls, from every department, for any needs that may pop up at any time. Ray is always willing to step in wherever and whenever needed."



~ Elizabeth Yates ~

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Elizabeth Yates has been a Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) for 19 years and has served as the lead PTA at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic for six years. She is a certified fall prevention specialist and certified in kinesiology taping. Elizabeth is passionate about patient care and guiding patients through their rehab process. She leads them through exercise prescriptions, patient education, and lifestyle modifications to give them the tools to improve their physical health and function. Elizabeth is currently working to establish a partnership with Oklahoma City Community College to become the first OKCIC PTA Clinical Instructor.



~ Mike Frazier ~

Texas Native Health

Mike Frazier has served as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor at Texas Native Health for 14 years. He has been a practicing licensed counselor for over 40 years. Mike obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Texas Wesleyan University. He is passionate about making a difference in the lives of his Native American community.



MERIT AWARD



Preparing the Meal by Lance Straughn

MERIT AWARD INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

~ Emily Bernett ~ Claremore Service Unit

Emily Bernett joined the Indian Health Service (IHS) in 2021 and currently serves as the Assistant Laboratory Supervisor at Claremore Indian Hospital. Emily received a Bachelor of Science Medical Technologist in 2001 from Oklahoma State University. She brings over 20 years of laboratory testing and management experience to IHS and is excited to continue her career helping patients. Emily has been married to Namath Bernett for 18 years and they have two daughters ages 15 and 12.



~ Stevi Brown ~

Clinton Service Unit

Stevi Brown has been with the Clinton Service Unit for 7 years. From 2008-2011 she worked at the Watonga Municipal Hospital and from 2009-2017 she worked for the Weatherford Regional Hospital. She is currently the Radiology Supervisor at the Clinton Indian Health Center. Stevi strives to provide more for her patients by going above and beyond to add services close to home such as diagnostic mammography, mobile MRI and soon echocardiography at the Clinton Service Unit. Stevi is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.



~ Tracey Walker ~

Haskell Indian Health Center

Tracey Walker is an LPN for the Haskell Indian Health Center, being with IHS for 5 ½ years. Tracey began at the White Cloud Health Station then transferred to the Haskell Indian Health Center. Before starting at Haskell, Tracey filled in multiple times at Haskell as a Nurse or Phlebotomist when short staffed, having to travel over two hours a day without any complaint. She trained other staff members in multiple departments on appropriately swabbing patients when COVID hit. She has a team player mentality, willingness to step up and help whenever needed. She is an outstanding employee with a great attitude.



MERIT AWARD INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

~ **Denise Aguilera** ~ Lawton Service Unit

Denise Aguilera is a Family Nurse Practitioner at the Lawton Service Unit with a Bachelors in Nursing from the University of Oklahoma and a graduate degree in advanced practice nursing from Bradley University. She joined the Lawton Indian Health Services in 2018, starting in the Emergency Department before moving to the Adult Care Clinic as a Family Nurse Practitioner in February 2021. Denise's aim is to establish a strong rapport with her patients, which is crucial for providing quality care. She believes that building trust with patients takes time and expertise and remains committed to this goal in her practice.



~ **Shelli Cook** ~ Oklahoma City Area Office

Shelli Cook is an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation. She obtained her Associates Degree in Business from the University of Phoenix. Shelli has worked in customer service and served as a medical clerk for over twenty years. For the past seven years, she has worked at the IHS Oklahoma City Area Office in the Purchased Referred Care (PRC) Program. In her PRC role, Shelli performs patient registration, processes claims, and assists with payment resolution. Shelli is passionate about her role in PRC and is always looking for ways to streamline processes and improve the PRC Program. Additionally, Shelli processes appeals and contracts facilities for patient care.



~ **April Moore** ~ Pawnee Service Unit

Ms. April Moore is an enrolled member of the Sac and Fox Nation and has worked at the Pawnee Indian Health Center for 15 years as the Voucher Examiner. In October, the Business Office had a patient registration employee accept position with the HIM department. In December 2022, they lost another employee to OCAO HR. April's willingness to fill in for patient registration on a daily basis and keep up with her normal duties was unmeasurable. With a depleted patient registration staff, April stepped in to assist with patient registration. She assisted where she was needed to maintain the mission.



MERIT AWARD INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

~ Kimberly Harjoche ~

Wewoka Service Unit

Kimberly Harjoche has been employed with Wewoka Indian Health Clinic since 2015 and is an enrolled member of the Seminole Nation. During her time with Wewoka, Kim has served as an Appointment Clerk, Medical Records Technician, and most recently as Executive Administrative Assistant. During 2022, Kim took on additional duties as the Human Resource Specialist and Personnel Security Specialist. Kim leads by example, maintains a strong work ethic, and demonstrates resilience and service to others. Kim diligently strives to serve in a positive manner and goes above and beyond to accomplish the IHS mission.





~ Michele Marshall ~ Cherokee Nation

Michele Marshall, RN serves as the Hospital Nursing Director, Nurse Stroke Coordinator, and Transfer Review Coordinator for Cherokee Nation W.W. Hastings Hospital. Michele is a leader that looks for a means to bring excellence to patient care. She takes an active role in policy and process development, program implementation, and assisting overseeing inpatient health services. Michele brings extensive knowledge in all areas including ICU, Emergency Department, Surgery, and Dialysis. Her knowledge, commitment, and tireless contributions was instrumental in leading W.W. Hastings to achieve both Acute and Primary Stroke Certifications through Det Norske Veritas (DNV).



~ Kimberly Wilson ~ Chickasaw Nation

Kimberly has worked for the Chickasaw Nation for 11 years. She currently serves as a Public Health Nurse Logistics Specialist. She coordinates and plans the technical and logistical details for all Public Health Nursing events. Her work ethic and overall approach aligns with the Chickasaw Nation's core values of Teamwork, Can Do Attitude and Selfishness without being asked. Her entire focus is on promoting wellness and optimal health for our Chickasaw People. Her caring nature and skills are central to her success.



~ Wendy Brown ~

Choctaw Nation

Wendy Brown serves as the nurse manager/administrative Breast Cancer program lead at Choctaw Nation Health Service Authority (CNHSA) in Talihina. She has worked for The Choctaw Nation at CNHSA for 29 years. She manages a surgical clinic comprised of three general surgeons, one RN case manager and three LPNs, an orthopedic clinic with two mid-level providers, one orthopedic surgeon and two LPNs, and a breast cancer and cancer survivorship clinic including one certified breast surgeon, one specialized cancer survivorship PA-C, one certified RN breast cancer nurse navigator, one certified LPN breast health clinical navigator, and one LPN.





~ Meagan Brady ~ Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Dr. Meagan Brady, MD is a family medicine specialist for Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health. She has recently been appointed as the Chief of Staff for the Southern Region of Muscogee Nation. She is passionate about making a meaningful difference in her patient's lives and cares for them like family. She enjoys building relationships with her patients and collaborating on their health decisions. Dr. Brady is a valuable member of the Okemah Indian Health Center and has been employed with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation for nine years.



MERIT AWARD URBAN

~ John Young ~

Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa

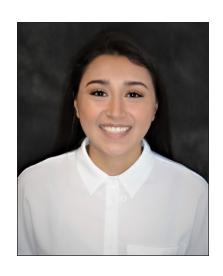
John Young, an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation, serves as the Marketing and Communications Manager for Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa (IHCRC). He has worked for the organization since 2014. When John started, IHCRC did not have a marketing department. John played a pivotal role in establishing the organization's marketing and communication strategies including the implementation of social media marketing channels. John leads marketing support for all departments and creates marketing materials for the entire organization. He is committed to getting the job done and shining the best possible light on the organization and his fellow staff.



~ Skyler Factor ~

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Skyler Factor began her career at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic in the dental department as a student intern. After completing her Dental Assistant program, she joined OKCIC dental department full-time as an assistant. During her first year, she noticed an opportunity to improve the sterilization of instruments and took it upon herself to receive the training and experience needed to improve. The dental department now sterilized instruments for the whole clinic. Skyler found additional success as an Optometry Coordinator and helped to improve access to care. She enjoys serving the Native American community and providing quality care to patients.



~ Dr. Audrey Cha ~

Texas Native Health

Dr. Audrey Cha graduated from UCLA with an undergraduate degree in Biology. During her time at UCLA, Dr. Cha pursued a career in dentistry to fulfill her desire to be in a profession where she would have a positive impact on her patient's wellbeing. Dr. Cha completed a year's residency at the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry. Dr. Cha is a model employee. Her focus is on health promotion, disease prevention, and optimal oral health for her Native American patients.



EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AWARD CLINICAL



Turtle by Lance Straughn

~ LT Santhosh Thomas ~ Muscogee (Creek) Nation

LT Santhosh Thomas serves as the Pharmacist Clinician for the Okemah Indian Health Center (OIHC) for the past 5 years. He has displayed clinical excellence in assuring the improvement of health outcomes. He was responsible for Medicaid expansion efforts and for starting/managing a Chronic Disease Management (CDM) clinic. His innovative approach has resulted in 5.06% A1C reduction which is triple the national average for similar settings. He is recognized for his hard work to secure Medicaid benefits for more than 700 patients at OIHC along with identifying trends within a pharmacogenetic pilot project and establishing antibiotic stewardship for outpatient clinics.



EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AWARD NON-CLINICAL



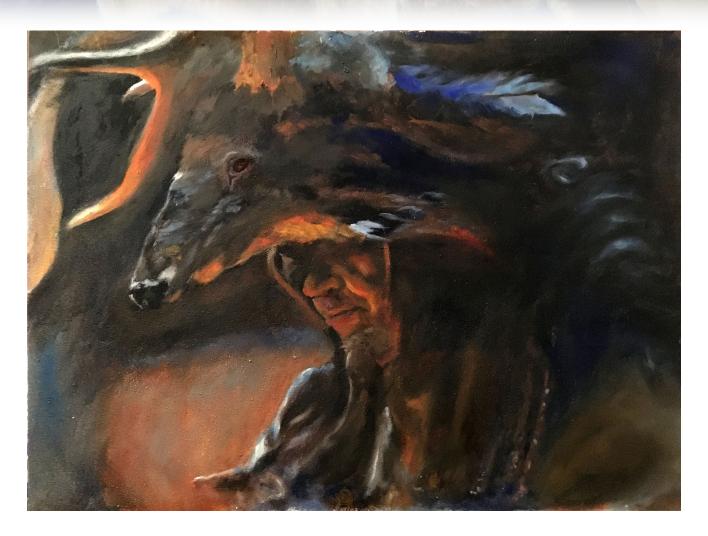
Her Strength Carries by Bill Williams

~ CAPT Brian Wren ~ Oklahoma City Area Office

CAPT Brian Wren has held several clinical, technical and administrative positions during his 24 year career. He has held positions at the federal and tribal level. He currently serves as the OCA Pharmacy and Lab Consultant. He previously served as Chief Analytics/Revenue/Corporate Compliance Officer at the Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority and several other positions in the OCA such as Clinic Director, Chief of Pharmacy, Pharmacy Clinical Coordinator and staff Pharmacist. CAPT Wren has developed or directed multiple projects centered around patient engagement and outcomes, revenue generation, business intelligence, tribal advocacy and provider compensation. CAPT Wren is a member of the Cherokee Nation.



EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE AWARD HEALTH PROMOTION AND WELLNESS



The Healer by Lance Straughn

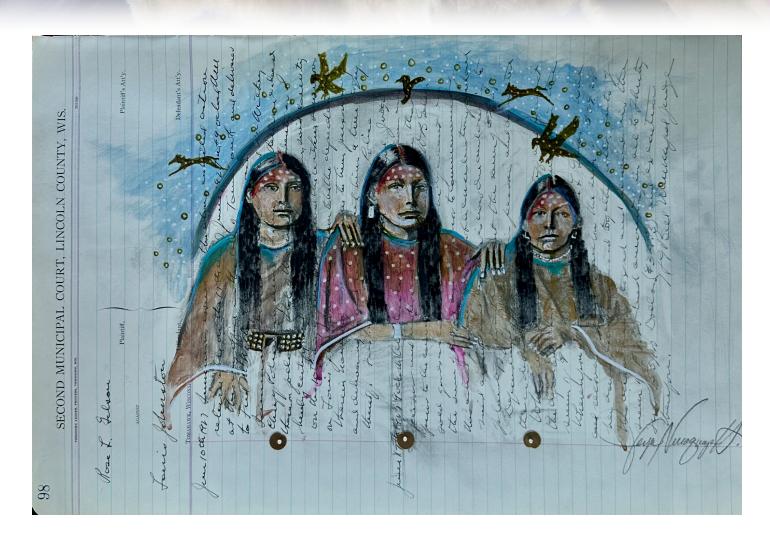
~ Scott Robison ~

Wewoka Indian Health Center

Scott is a Muscogee Nation tribal member and has been serving tribal communities in the field of Diabetes Prevention, Health Promotion, and School Wellness for 29 years. He is the Community Health Director for the Wewoka Indian Health Center. During the 16 years prior to coming to Wewoka, he served as the Exercise Programs Coordinator for the Muscogee Nation Diabetes Program, K-6 Physical Education teacher for the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians in NC, and the Academic Coordinator for the Muscogee Nation Boarding School. Scott participates in his tribal culture by making Mvskoke ballsticks for his tribe's stickball games.



EXCEPTIONAL GROUP PERFORMANCE AWARD CLINICAL



Sisters by Joyce Nevaquaya Harris

~ MAT/TOR Program ~

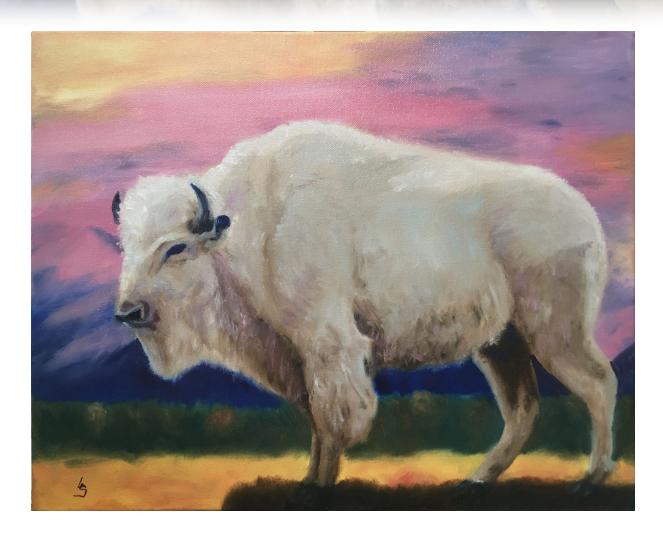
Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health

The MAT Team has been operational for 1.5 years. This team displays consistent tenacity, initiative, improved access to quality and equitable care, and continual development of training for stigma reduction, awareness, prevention, harm reduction, and safety measures. The MAT Team's accomplishments include a CLEET Certified MH training for LEO; a policy for Rapid ER Induction and Mobilizing the MAT Team; hired first PRSS; FY2023 PRSS Mentoring Initiative; disseminated over 2,500 Narcan; trained rural FDs, schools, and over 650 students on how to identify an overdose and administer Narcan; performed over 700 patient visits; and created the Opioid Crisis Summit.



Left to Right: Erick Leef, Megan Lowry-Pinasco, Billy Sadler and Ricky Sturman. Not pictured: Ashley Nichols

EXAMINITAL GROUP PERFORMANCE AWARD NONECLINICAL



The Majestic by Lance Straughn

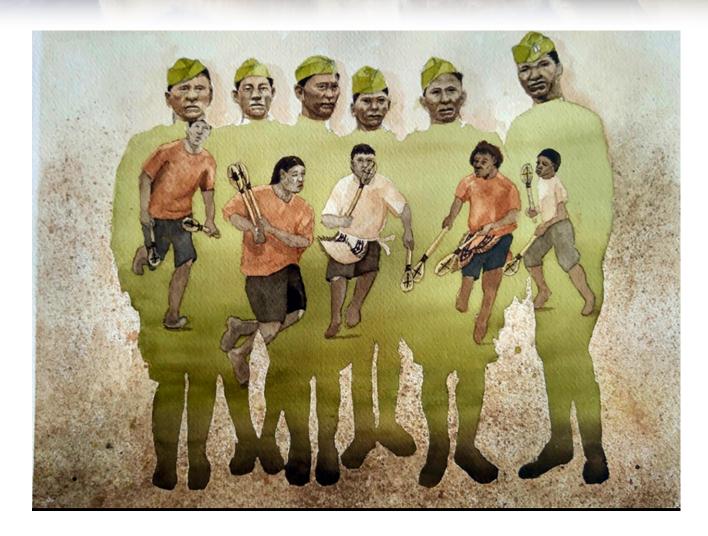
~ Communications Team ~ Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic's Communications Team helps bring American Indian health to the forefront by expanding digital outreach and staying current with the evolving media landscape. The team significantly increases digital impressions by revamping content strategies, branching out to new social media platforms, and installing a digital sign on campus. Expanding digital outreach has allowed OKCIC to recruit current and new patients to programs. The team also uses a bi-annual magazine, press releases, and other physical media to reach patients. The team's efforts help make health care information more accessible to patients and the community.



Left to Right: Angie Reeves, Rachael Maltby, Mikayla Fagan

EXCEPTIONAL GROUP PERFORMANCE AWARD HEALTH PROMOTION AND WELLNESS



Code Talkers by Gwen Coleman Lester

~ Public Health Educators ~

Cherokee Nation

Cherokee Nation Public Health Educators (PHE) play vital roles in improving the well-being of individuals and communities across the Cherokee Reservation. The Cherokee Nation Public Health Educator Team was able to identify vulnerable areas across the Cherokee Nation Reservation to assess needs related physical activity, nutrition, and cultural awareness. The PHE team successfully offered community support and activities to address the physical activity and nutrition aspects of the major community health concerns of diabetes and heart disease. These included walking groups in over 40 schools, smoking cessation classes, and diabetes prevention classes.



Left to Right: Kindle Spry, Steven Hatcher, Sarah Hawk, Barbara Neal, Mandy Russell, Cindy Tuder, Hillary Mead (supervisor), Emily Mealin (standing in back), Ben Buckskin, Kasey Maxwell, Julie Miller, Shaina Kindle, Jordan Purcell and Kassandra Rosas

SUPERIOR MANAGEMENT AWARD



Creation Story by Gwen Coleman Lester

~ CDR Shannon Lowe ~

Haskell Indian Health Center

CDR Shannon Lowe is the Administrative Officer for the Haskell Indian Health Center, with 15 years of service in the Indian Health Service. She oversees the Administrative Operations for the facility including \$34 million dollar budget, with directly supervising 14 employees and 5 Supervisors. Shannon actively works to modernize and update the 1970's facility, these changes have made an amazing difference inside and out, along with hiring more staff and additional services needed for patients. Shannon is very dedicated to the IHS Mission and deserving of the Superior Management Award.



AREA IMPACT AWARD



Good Medicine by Lance Straughn

AREA IMPACT AWARD

~ LTJG Mathew Atherton ~

Lawton Indian Hospital

Mathew Atherton is a Registered Dental Hygienist at Lawton Service Unit and Anadarko Outpatient Clinic in Oklahoma, with a tenure of 3 years. He provides direct dental care to patients at Lawton Indian Hospital and is committed to improving patient access to health services in the state. Atherton partners with tribal and state organizations to bring better healthcare to the 35,000 Native Americans in the Lawton Service Area. He is regarded as a leader and community health advocate who creates patient access programs to enhance the health of the population.



~ CAPT Amy Rubin ~ Oklahoma City Area Office

CAPT Amy Rubin began her career with the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and the Indian Health Service in 1999 as a pharmacist with the Clinton Service Unit. She served in various roles with the Clinton Service Unit from 1999-2009. In 2009, she started as a Clinical Informaticist at the Oklahoma City Area Office. She obtained her Pharmacy Doctor degree in 2003 and Masters in Medical Informatics in 2011. CAPT Rubin is also currently serving as the Acting Chief Information Officer for Oklahoma City Area.



~ Stephanie Riser ~

Choctaw Nation

Stephanie Riser is a Medical Laboratory Scientist with 23 years' experience. She joined the Choctaw Nation Healthcare Services team in 2010 as a bench tech at our Poteau Location. Since 2010 Stephanie's responsibilities have steadily increased as it became apparent what an asset she is to our healthcare services. In 2016 Stephanie was promoted to the position of Lab Supervisor at the Choctaw Nation Lab in Poteau. In 2020, she took on the role of the Laboratory Information Supervisor. She was responsible for developing the Laboratory Information System (LIS) that replaced the RPMS LIS in October 2022.



AREA IMPACT AWARD

~ **Bryan Bain ~** Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Bryan Bain serves as the Continuous Improvement Director at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic. This role evaluates current processes, identifies key impacts, recommends changes, and leads the implementation of efficient process changes. He brought methodology, rigor, and systematic approaches to the organizations while prioritizing patients' needs. Bryan helped to propel Oklahoma City Indian Clinic toward its vision to be the national model for American Indian health care. He is dedicated to superior performance, improving the patient experience, and impacting operations and best practices for American Indian health area-wide.



AREA DIRECTORIS GROUP AREA IMPACT AWARD



Sparring Partners by Lance Straughn

AREA DIRECTOR'S GROUP AREA IMPACT AWARD

~ El Reno Indian Health Center ~

In 2013 the El Reno Indian Health Center was struck by a tornado, causing irreparable damage to the building. As a result, patient services were halted and staff were displaced. A year later, through collaboration with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribe, a building was purchased that allowed for partial services for the next few years. The new El Reno Indian Health Center was completed in March 2022. When the clinic officially opened the first week of April 2022, it was due to the resiliency of the staff and their dedication to the Clinton Service Unit's mission to "Exceed the Need".



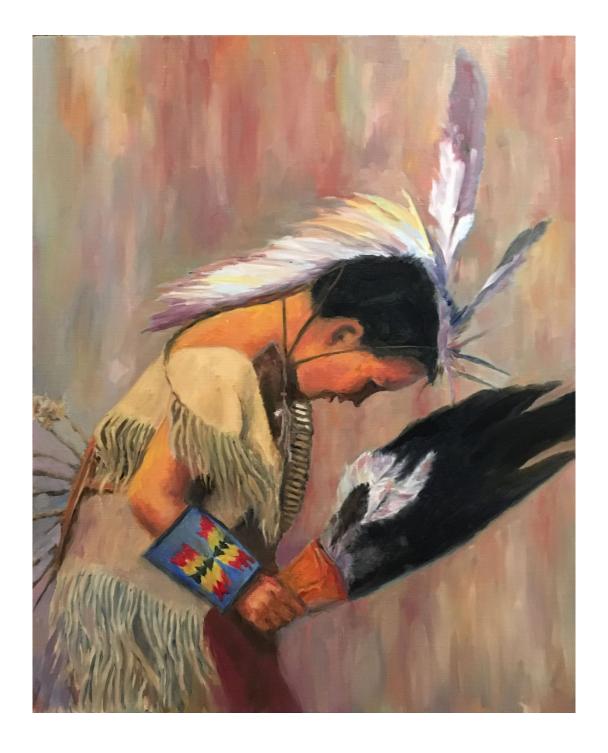
~ Newcastle Medical Center Joint Venture Group ~ Chickasaw Nation

This group of staff from the Chickasaw Nation Department of Health and Oklahoma City Area Indian Health Services worked together as a single unit with a single purpose and accomplished a tremendous amount of work in a relatively short amount of time. There were more than 170 hours of meetings that involved them coming in early and staying late but all were 100% committed to the task at hand. This team will have effects for decades to come on the First Americans in the Oklahoma City area.



Left to Right: Cody Dewitt, Richard Roland, and Drue Martin. Not pictured are Tina Amos and Joseph Jones.

AREA DIRECTOR'S INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD



Canyon Dancer by Lance Straughn

AREA DIRECTOR'S INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Indian Health Service ~ Chris Foreman ~ Oklahoma City Area Office

Chris Foreman obtained his Bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems in 2002 from Northeastern State University. He began his career with IHS in 2004 as an Information Technology Specialist at W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah, OK. In 2008, he transitioned into an IPA employee working for Cherokee Nation Health Services as a Senior Health Systems Analyst. He served in various information technology roles while working for Cherokee Nation Health Services. In 2021, Chris began working for Oklahoma City Area Office as a Human Resources Information Technology Specialist. He is also currently serving as the HSPD-12 Coordinator for the Oklahoma City Area.



Tribal ~ Jodi Robinson ~Choctaw Nation

Jodi Robinson currently serves as RN Charge Nurse in the Surgery Clinic at the Choctaw Nation Durant Regional Medical Clinic. She has been a nurse for 24 years with the last 5 years being with Choctaw Nation Health Services. Her previous experience includes Intensive Care, Cardiac Cath Lab and Cardiac Rehabilitation which is an asset to her leadership role on the Rapid Response team. She is frequently asked for new ideas and to serve on committees because of her experience and commitment to delivering the highest level of care to tribal members.

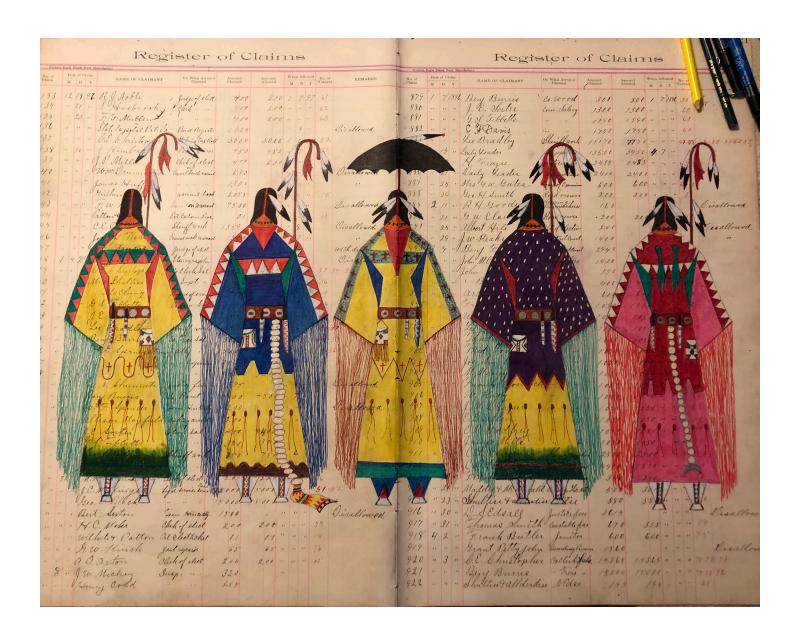


Urban~ James Foreman ~Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

James Foreman serves as the Social Services Specialist in the Public Health Department for Oklahoma City Indian Clinic. He has worked for the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic for nine years and is a proud member of the Chickasaw Nation. He began his career at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic in the nursing department and later transitioned to fulfill his passion for Social Services. James Foreman has a tireless and unwavering commitment to promoting the health, welfare, and social needs of Native Americans. James relentlessly works to locate vital resources for every patient he encounters with a people-first approach.



AREA DIRECTOR'S GROUP EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD



The Dance by Paul Hacker

AREA DIRECTOR'S GROUP EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Indian Health Service

~ Radiology Team ~

Claremore Indian Hospital

The radiology team at the Claremore Indian Hospital provides care for their patients 24 hours a day providing services such as Diagnostic X-ray, Ultrasound, DEXA scans, Mammography, MRI, and Echocardiography. The staff take pride in the service they provide and enjoy helping their patients in any way they can.



Tribal ~ Psychiatry Clinic ~

Chickasaw Nation

The Psychiatry Clinic provides services at all Chickasaw Nation Medical Center locations allowing patients to connect through telemedicine. This clinic demonstrates outstanding team spirit with exemplary work performance. The clinic's dedication to improving mental health care in the community has been nothing short of remarkable. Their accomplishments have had a significant impact on the clinic and the community it serves. They have done an outstanding job in expanding mental health services, increasing access to care, and improving patient outcomes.



Left to Right: Melinda Lucas LPN, David Manuel RN Clinic Manager, Lanita Yandell LPN, Kimberly Worden RN Case Manager, Rebecca Kiogima LPN, Dr. Marilyn Holman, Dr. Christie Snow, Jessica Dillman LPN. Dr. Steohen Gonzalez. Dr. Ronald Pence. Not pictured: Dr. Todd Poque. Dr. Erin Walling

Urban

\sim The Missed Call Project Team \sim

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic's Missed Call Project team solved a decade long phone system problem and significantly increased the level of customer service offered. Thirty-two specific changes were made to reduce the missed phone calls per day from an average of 248 missed calls to only 30 missed calls. Additionally, the team was able to reduce the overall call volume from 6,500 per day to 4,200. These improvements provide a customer-friendly phone system, reduce customer complaints, and reduce the need for additional staff to answer and return calls.



Left to Right: Keri Harjo, Monica McKee, Bryan Bain, Jennifer Pham, Tracee Barton

AREA DIRECTOR'S HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP AWARD



Bear Clan Guardian by Lance Straughn

AREA DIRECTOR'S HEALTHOARE LEADERSHIP AWARD

~ CDR Deonda Roberson ~

Clinton Indian Health Center

CDR Deonda Roberson is the Quality Director at the Clinton Service Unit; serving in this position the past six years and as the Performance Improvement Officer for nine years. As a Registered Nurse, CDR Roberson began her career with IHS in 1996 at the Clinton Indian Health Center. Throughout CDR Roberson's 26 years with IHS, she has launched quality improvement systems, multiple strategies, and strives to provide a working environment of creative problem solving, empowerment, and ownership. CDR Roberson directs and oversees the service unit's Quality Improvement Program, Safety & Risk Management Program, and is responsible for all accreditation activities.



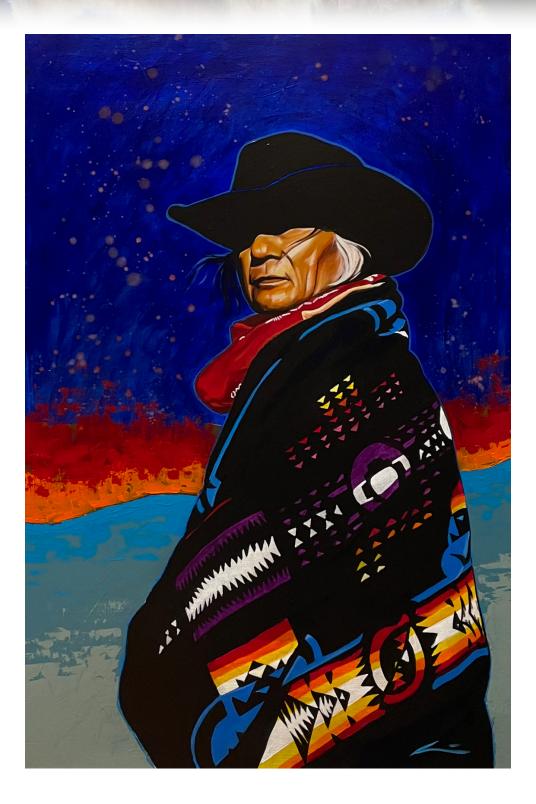
~ Dr. Janice Hixson ~

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Janice Hixson, MD, Chickasaw Nation and Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, serves as the Chief Medical Officer at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic. She is Board Certified in Pediatrics and has served at Oklahoma City Indian Clinic for 22 years. In her current position, she manages the clinical providers to ensure safe and effective medical services to the American Indian population. She consistently makes significant contributions to the delivery of healthcare for American Indians, especially children, across Oklahoma City and beyond. As a leader, she develops future medical providers and instills her passion and commitment to first-rate patient care in her colleagues.



AREA DIRECTOR'S INDIVIDUAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



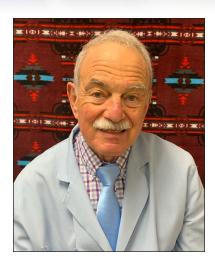
Wildfire by Dylan Cavin

AREA DIRECTOR'S INDIMIDUAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

~ Dr. Ronald Fried ~

Wewoka Indian Health Center

Dr. Ronald Fried has served Indian Health Service for 51 years. In the last 25 years, he provided nearly 79,000 patient visits. During his career at the Shawnee, Wewoka, and Pawnee Indian Health System facilities, Dr. Fried served as Clinical Director, volunteered at his local free clinic, and has been acknowledged with many awards. He is inspired by a quote from Jackie Robinson, "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." His hope is that his career has impacted the lives of his patients and peers.



~ Patricia Hawk ~

Cherokee Nation

Patricia Hawk serves as the Community Health Nursing Supervisor for the Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center. She has worked and served Cherokee Nation Health Services since 1990. Patricia is responsible for managing a team of nurses that work directly with individuals, families, and the communities within Cherokee Nation to improve health, promote healthy behaviors, and prevent disease. Patricia leads by example and puts the needs of others, especially our Cherokee elders, first. She is a shining example of servant leadership by always being first to show up to help and last to leave.





~ Choctaw Nation Color Guard ~

Choctaw warriors have bravely served the Choctaw Nation and their country for generations. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is proud of the brave men and women who have sacrificed everything to serve. For over 20 years a special group of Chahta warriors have made it their duty to honor Choctaw veterans.

The Choctaw Nation Color Guard was formed in 1998, thanks to the help of the chief, Gregory E. Pyle. In 1998, a group of 18 Choctaw veterans became the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Color Guard and made their first public appearance at the Trail of Tears Commemorative Walk. Since its conception, the Choctaw Nation Color Guard has grown to a 23-person group, with five active original members. Two of the original members, are still active members at the age of 81.



For 20 years, the Choctaw Nation Color Guard has been a staple at tribal events, ceremonies, local parades and Choctaw veteran funerals. The Color Guard isn't just about carrying the flags in parades or attending events. It is truly all about honoring the Choctaw veterans. According to Chief Gary Batton "They model the Chahta spirit of faith, family and culture. They are Tvshka warriors who have fought for their families and for God and Country. The Color Guard are servant leaders who volunteer their time to represent the Choctaw Nation at numerous events. They represent our Choctaw people with honor, especially when they help with the services of those who have served in our military and have passed on."

~ Young Buffalo Horse Drum Group ~

Young Buffalo Horse is an intertribal drum group formed in March 2010 at a Powwow in Gainesville, Texas. This group is comprised of various Tribal Nations representing different communities such as the Lakota, Ojibwe, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Sac and Fox, Chickasaw, Seminole and the Choctaw.

There have been a great deal of accomplishments associated with Young Buffalo Horse. From competing in singing contests, to serving as Host Drum at powwows, to being nominated for an Aboriginal People's Choice Award in 2013,



these triumphs give inspiration to the members to push themselves toward being the best they can be.

Many miles have been traveled throughout the years of singing as a group, and just as many memories have been made. Most members are full-time employees, have families, go to school, or even a combination of the three. No matter how many obligations are faced, Young Buffalo Horse dedicates time to gather around the Tewehikana (drum).



~ Phyllis Leeann Nuno ~

Phyllis Leeann Nuno is a member of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and has tribal affiliations with Sac & Fox, Cherokee, Oklahoma Choctaw, Mississippi Choctaw, and Oneida Nations. She was born and raised in Oklahoma but currently resides in Mesquite, TX. Phyllis serves as the Secretary of the MMIWTX Rematriate organization and is active in many other ways in the Native American community of the DFW area. She obtained a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science degree from the University of Texas Arlington in May 2023, where she also served as the Vice President of the Native American Student Association. She plans to advance her education to become a Physician Assistant and serve the Native American community. She has been honing her singing skills since she was a young girl and now advocates for the conservation of language, culture, and history by sharing tribal songs and hymns that will continue to be passed down through generations.



~ Bill Williams ~

William (Bill) Williams a member of the Cherokee Nation has been a professional artist for over 45 years. Bill served twenty-four years at the University of Oklahoma as the Art Director for the Publications Office. He is an award winning graphic designer, photographer and illustrator. His photography was used in an 8 volume series of photographic coffee books, written & edited by Dr. R. H. Hancock, also from the University of Oklahoma.



~ Dylan Cavin ~

Dylan Cavin was born in Chickasha, Oklahoma. He is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation. He has been drawing ever since he can remember; however it wasn't until middle school, when he developed his interest of comic books, that he put a handle on what he wanted to do with his life. Dylan attended the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma on an Art Talent scholarship. It was here that he found his passion for painting and figure drawing. Dylan graduated with a BFA in 2000. Dylan has received many honors and awards within the past few years of his increasingly successful art career, including Best of Show at the Choctaw 9th annual Art Show, First place in the Graphics Category at the 2012 Red Earth Festival, and First place in Graphics Category at The 2012 Southeastern Art Show and Market.





~ Lance Straughn ~

Lance Straughn was born and raised in the Pickens District of the Chickasaw Nation. Lance gained an appreciation for the Native American culture at an early age. He gained first-hand experience in Native American traditions attending stomp dances with his Chickasaw grandmother, an original Chickasaw Enrollee. He has called on the memories of these experiences in creating his art. A self-taught artist, he started developing his talent at an early age, drawing on anything he could find, and using the native clay to make small figures for toys. His sculptures and paintings have won awards at several competitions including SEASAM, Five Civilized Tribes Museum, and the Goddard Center.



~ Gwen Coleman Lester ~

Gwen Coleman Lester is a member and registered Choctaw artist of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Gwen paints and draws anything that relates to Choctaw history and culture. She uses a myriad of styles and mediums. The sizes range from miniatures to murals. Gwen regularly participates in Native art festivals and museum exhibits and competitions. She was inducted as a Master Artist for the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in 2007. Choctaw Nation has purchased her art as well as commissioning her work in murals. Gwen has done book covers for a major publisher and fully illustrated two children's books.



~ Paul Hacker ~

Paul Hacker is a native Oklahoman. He is Choctaw / Cherokee. He is a believer in keeping alive Native American artistic traditional skills and cultural heritage. Paul meticulously handcrafts traditional Plains Indian flutes, custom knives, and replicates historical Native American pottery. His most recent undertaking is ledger art, taking inspiration from St Augustine where the Cheyenne Native Americans were held captive. A winner of over 170 prestigious awards and honors, Paul Hacker is a 1992-1993 award winner with the Smithsonian Institution - National Museum of the American Indian.





~ Joyce Nevaquaya Harris ~

Joyce Nevaquay Harris is an enrolled member of the Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma. The daughter of Comanche master artist Doc Tate Nevaquaya and sister of painter Tim Tate Nevaquaya, Joyce was destined to carry on the family tradition of painting. In the 1980's she began painting with oils, and in 2015 she started to experiment with acrylic paints. Joyce's painting is deeply influenced by her father's stories. Most of her artworks are created without a sketch, the brush and paints are all she needs to freely express herself. Joyce blends together the subject and design to create textured contemporary pieces with traditional motifs.



~ Leslie Pate ~

Ms. Leslie Pate is the sole proprietor of Tribes Gallery, Native American Art Calendar, Inc. and Tribes Appraisers. With over 36 years of experience in the art industry, she is a valuable resource to many throughout Oklahoma and across the nation.

Her journey with the arts began in her teens as she ventured to gallery shows & events with her parents. Obtaining her real estate license at 18 she maintains Degrees in GIS, Psychology & Geography.

However, her six year apprenticeship under the tutelage of Doris Littrell, paved Leslie's way into the world of a Gallerist & Appraiser. Tribes Gallery is distinguished for its expertise in the field of American Indian Art. Located in Norman, Oklahoma, Tribes is considered a treasure where people can indulge themselves in the history, culture and celebration of Native American art. A fixture in



Norman since 1990, Tribes has evolved into a much broader range of styles and mediums than when it first opened, and has been described as a visual feast where within the walls one will find works from Pre-Columbian to Current.

The vast inventory includes all mediums, styles and genres. From Bedre Chocolates to pottery, baskets, textiles, jewelry, alabaster & bronze sculptures and a variety of other items, including Made in Oklahoma products in the gift shop. There is something for everyone. Stop by and see the new location and expansion.



