



## CDC Senior Tribal Liaisons

CDC is committed to improving the public health of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN). To support this commitment, CDC's Office of the Director (OD) has established two full-time professional staff positions (Senior Tribal Liaisons) within the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (OMHD)/Office of Strategy and Innovation (OSI)/OD:

- Senior Tribal Liaison for Policy and Evaluation
- Senior Tribal Liaison for Science and Public Health

OMHD has responsibility for coordinating the agency's programs and policies that benefit AI/AN communities and is therefore the administrative base for the Senior Tribal Liaisons.

Located in Atlanta, GA and Albuquerque, NM, respectively, these senior staff members report to the Associate Director for Minority Health and serve as official CDC points-of-contact for issues relating to AI/AN health. As noted in the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Consultation Policy, the Senior Tribal Liaisons are,

“ . . . staff within the CDC OD designated by the CDC Director who are knowledgeable about the agency's programs and budgets, have ready access to senior program leadership, and are empowered to speak on behalf of the agency for AI/AN programs, services, issues, and concerns.”

The Senior Tribal Liaisons work closely with the other OD staff offices, CDC's Coordinating Centers (CC), Coordinating Offices (CO), and National Centers/Institute (NC) that have programs and activities designed to benefit AI/AN communities. They also work with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) Office of Tribal Affairs to help coordinate activities across the two agencies. A critical component of their duties is help CDC program staff and CC/CO/NC leadership strategically integrate the many projects, staff, and funding opportunities that comprise CDC's portfolio of AI/AN-related activities and resources.





## **Major Duties and Responsibilities**

### **Senior Tribal Liaison for Policy and Evaluation:**

- Provides expert guidance and advises CDC leadership on policy, evaluation, and training issues relative to AI/AN communities and populations
- Implements HHS and CDC Tribal Consultation Policies and coordinates the CDC Tribal Consultation Advisory Committee
- Serves as CDC liaison to HHS, particularly the Secretary's Intradepartmental Council on Native American Affairs (ICNAA) and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
- Promotes CDC partnerships with nursing and other professional organizations; national and regional tribal based organizations; and national AI/AN advocacy organizations
- Provides AI/AN cultural competency and tribal consultation training for CDC staff
- Strengthens partnerships with tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) and with mainstream universities that have specific initiatives or programs to recruit AI/AN students into health-related fields of study
- Supports AI/AN recruitment efforts within CDC, PHS Commissioned Corps, and HHS
- Promotes AI/AN student training opportunities at CDC
- Tracks agency progress/compliance with executive orders, HHS initiatives, and ICNAA priorities; monitors AI/AN legislative issues and CDC budget initiatives
- Maintains an inventory/database of all CDC funded projects/programs with AI/AN tribes and tribal organizations
- Prepares annual reports on CDC's tribal consultation activities, AI/AN resource allocations, and partnerships with TCUs
- Assists in maintaining and monitoring standardized procedures for tribal eligibility for CDC funding opportunities
- Serves as OMHD liaison to the CDC/ATSDR Minority Initiatives Coordinating Committee (CAMICC) for tribal issues



## **Major Duties and Responsibilities**

### **Senior Tribal Liaison for Science and Public Health:**

- Provides expert guidance and advises CDC leadership on clinical, epidemiologic, and scientific issues relative to AI/AN communities and populations
- Serves as principal CDC liaison to the Indian Health Service (IHS) and facilitates CDC partnerships with the IHS Division of Epidemiology and Disease Prevention
- Serves as CDC liaison to HHS for ICNAA and the HHS AI/AN Health Research Advisory Committee (HRAC)
- Promotes CDC scientific collaborations with Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs) and supports TEC linkages with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)
- Provides expert guidance and collaborates with other CDC programs to strengthen tribal public health infrastructure and public health emergency preparedness
- Leads CDC initiatives to strengthen legal foundations for public health practice in Indian country
- Participates in teaching, training, and mentoring activities for medical/veterinary students, graduate students, Epidemic Intelligence Service officers/fellows, Public Health Prevention Specialists, Preventive Medicine Residents, and other student/trainees
- Supports and provides guidance to CDC field staff assigned to IHS and tribal organizations
- Monitors CDC scientific and investigative activities in Indian country and develops/maintains an inventory of CDC publications focusing on AI/AN health issues
- Collaborates on epidemiologic and public health assessment or research projects, and co-authors scientific manuscripts
- Assists with the facilitation and coordination of CDC outbreak investigations and related activities in Indian country

### **Current Senior Tribal Liaisons:**

**Pelagie ("Mike") Snesrud, R.N.** serves as the Senior Tribal Liaison for Policy and Evaluation. Ms. Snesrud's office is located at CDC's Executive Park Complex (Building 57) in Atlanta. Ms. Snesrud leads OMHD/OD efforts that relate to AI/AN policy, evaluation, and training. Her priority activity areas include:

- Implementing the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Consultation Policy and coordinating the Tribal Consultation Advisory Committee (TCAC)
- Standardizing tribal eligibility guidance across CDC funding opportunity announcements (FOAs)
- Developing recruitment/training/career development opportunities for AI/AN students
- Expanding CDC collaborations with and support for the National Indian Health Board
- Strengthening ties between CDC's Senior Management Officials (SMOs) and tribal governments in the states where SMOs are assigned

**Ralph T. Bryan, M.D.** serves as the Senior Tribal Liaison for Science and Public Health. Dr. Bryan's office is affiliated with the Indian Health Service's (IHS) Division of Epidemiology and Disease Prevention (DEDP) in Albuquerque, NM. Dr. Bryan leads OMHD/OD efforts that relate to AI/AN clinical, epidemiologic, and scientific activities. His priority activity areas include:

- Supporting CDC scientific and public health collaborations with IHS
- Chairing a work group on public health legal foundations in Indian country
- Chairing a tribal pandemic influenza preparedness work group
- Enhancing CDC technical support for tribal epidemiology centers and strengthening their links to the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)
- Supporting CDC participation in the International Indigenous Health Measurement Group

#### **Contact Information:**

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