



2023 Winter Convention Portland, Oregon

RESOLUTION #2023 – 09

“SUPPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CENTER FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH”

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of ATNI; and

WHEREAS, there are twenty-nine Tribes in Washington State (Washington), as well as a large Urban American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) population; and

WHEREAS, there are tremendous barriers to health among AI/AN people in Washington that include but are not limited to a lower life expectancy, disproportionate disease, inadequate access to health services, poor educational attainment, poverty, systemic racism and

discrimination, environmental impacts and cultural barriers that impact the AI/AN Tribal and Urban Native communities; and

WHEREAS, there is currently a significant shortage of AI/AN physicians in Washington, where there are 147 AI/AN physicians for an AI/AN population of 188,354, or 1 AI/AN physician per 1281 population; by contrast there are 13,310 White physicians, or 1 White physician per 413 population. *See* 2018 Washington State Medical Commission report; and

WHEREAS, there are tremendous barriers due to a low high school graduation rate in Washington that leads to underrepresentation of pre-medical AI/AN students at both the undergraduate and medical school levels, and these barriers impact the retention and academic success of AI/AN medical students; and

WHEREAS, the University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM) serves Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho, known as the WWAMI region, where the main school is located in Seattle, Washington, with foundational sites at universities and colleges within the WWAMI region; and

WHEREAS, there are three medical schools in Washington including the University of Washington School of Medicine, Washington State University Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (WSUCOM) and Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant shortage of American Indian medical students in Washington from Washington Tribes; whereby, there are 33 AI/AN medical students at the UWSOM, throughout WWAMI, with an overall enrollment of over 1,000 medical students, however, only 4 students identify coming from a Washington Tribe; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant shortage of AI/AN academic faculty nationally, where a 2018 publication showed that although there are approximately 174,570 full-time academic faculty, only .048% were AI/AN. *See* Reshaping the Journey: American Indians and Alaska Natives in Medicine, October 2018, Association of American Medical Colleges; and

WHEREAS, the consequence of the underrepresentation of pre-medical AI/AN students and of AI/AN academic faculty is a severe AI/AN physician shortage for the Tribal and Urban AI/AN communities and in academic medicine; and

WHEREAS, the UW Center for Indigenous Health (CTIH) at the UWSOM is positioned to address the AI/AN physician shortage, along with the other Washington Medical Schools, by increasing the number of AI/AN medical students through supporting learners from elementary school through college to strengthen the number of AI/AN matriculating into and successfully completing medical school; and

WHEREAS, the CTIH will support a system for AI/AN academic faculty in the UWSOM to guarantee academic progress coupled with cultural humility for addressing and researching AI/AN health inequities; and

WHEREAS, the CTIH will expand opportunities for AI/AN premedical and medical students, and academic faculty through the UWSOM, which will in turn increase the AI/AN physicians entering the workforce for Washington's Tribal and Urban Native communities; and

WHEREAS, a budget proviso of \$500,000 funded by the Washington State Legislature for a new University of Washington Center for Indigenous Health will greatly improve the wellness and quality of life for Tribal and Urban Native communities by increasing the number of AI/AN physicians in the workforce and increasing the number of AI/AN academic faculty doing research on AI/AN health inequities and serving as mentors to medical students and junior academic faculty; now

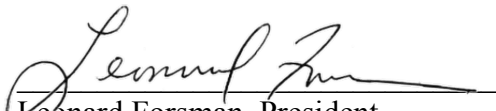
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, ATNI supports the University of Washington CTIH including the focus to foster AI/AN learners from elementary to college to strengthen a competitive applicant pool of AI/AN pre-medical students into and successfully through Washington medical schools; and

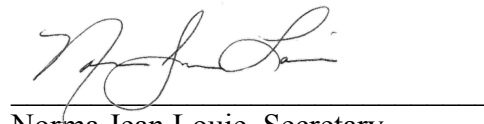
THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ATNI supports the University of Washington CTIH to foster a support system for AI/AN academic faculty in the UWSOM and UW Medicine to guarantee academic progress and cultural humility for AI/AN academic faculty to address AI/AN health inequities and issues; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, ATNI requests that the Washington State Legislatures support a new University of Washington Center of Indigenous Health via a budget proviso of \$500,000 for the CTIH to work with Washington Medical Schools to recruit and retain AI/AN medical students, and AI/AN junior academic faculty to successful careers in the workforce serving Tribal and Urban Native communities.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2023 Winter Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Portland, Oregon, on January 22-26, 2023 with a quorum approving.


Leonard Forsman, President


Norma Jean Louie, Secretary