

### *Background/purpose*

Public health and medical studies in American Indian / Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations have not commonly included AI/AN researchers in principal roles. This leadership disparity may be attributed, in part, to the low numbers of AI/AN researchers who have sufficient training and leadership experience to plan and conduct epidemiologic and health research studies. Under Indian Health Service and National Institutes of Health funding, we have planned and implemented a three-week intensive training program aimed at increasing biomedical research skills among AI/AN health professional and students. We offer a core series of courses to provide fundamental training in research that is needed by all biomedical researchers. Our courses include a large portion of AI/AN faculty in key teaching and mentorship roles. Furthermore we offer a diverse set of health research courses each year. Course offerings are modified year to year. Sixty-seven (67) trainees participated in the 2008 Summer Institute. The paper describes the evaluation of the outcomes and impact the Summer Institute had on the 2008 cohort of students.

### *Methods*

We assessed the experience of the training program at the time it occurred through course evaluations (n=186), while the outcomes evaluation focused on utility of the knowledge gained six months after participating in the training program (n=49). The impact evaluation also focused on the benefit of the Summer Institute training experience in the workplace environment.

### *Results/outcomes*

Overall, the evaluation suggests that graduates were quite positive in their assessments of the training program and their ability to utilize the newly gained knowledge and skills in the workplace or in their academic pursuits. Supervisors confirmed that graduates had grown from their learning experiences at the Summer Institute training and this growth was having a positive impact on their organization.

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