

COMMUNITY NEWS

Community Health Fair attracts community members

BY DON DECKER, YAN

The annual health fair conducted by the CHR (Community Health Representative) along with the Diabetes and WIC Program was met with great success on September 6. This was a good time to get the sugar levels and blood pressure checks.

Numerous seniors from the Nation attended this meeting.

Lunch was cancelled at the senior centers at

both locations as representatives from the CHR and Diabetes department prepared a healthy and nutritious lunch for the workshop participants.

Numerous agencies showed up including Indian Health Service community nurse, CHR and the EPA department who gave a workshop on Clean Air Act.

To make it a little more exciting, raffle prizes were given away during the workshop.



Elders share a moment with Minisha Grey (r) during the health fair. Minisha (3rd from right) worked for the senior program but has moved on.



Tyrone Nightpipe stops in to gather information.



Linda Hartnett of Tunlii (l) and Kevin Jackson of Middle Verde take advantage of veggies and fruit. CHR coordinator Linda Rocha (r) serves the visitors.



Leroy Gibson of Clarkdale is having a blood check by Brandy Gyce from CHR.

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U.N.I.T.Y. youth attending the meeting by speaking to the group.

Mr. Descheenie spoke at the level of the youth and highlighted his topic of asking the questions, "Who are you?," and "Why do you do what you do?." These thought provoking questions got the wheels turning for the youth in attendance. Mr. Descheenie said that one has to have a purpose and that one has to state their purpose in life while interacting with the public.

He also spoke about conformity and asked the youth, "Your seats are arranged a certain way. Does it have to be that way? Can it be arranged a different way? Why are the chairs facing north?," he asked the youth. A youth seated nearby interjected and said, "It could be in a circle."

Mr. Descheenie spoke of the historical precedents established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs going back 100 years ago when all the youth required haircuts and living a regimented life

in boarding schools.

"They made us eat soap when we spoke our language. They made us confirm to their ways. Their ways was more important," he said pointing out how history was different in Indian country.

Mr. Descheenie really encouraged the youth to empower themselves. "You need to push back against this and say, 'This is who I am. This is my name. I would like to do something different,'" he said. The message to the youth was to establish a presence and to take matters into one's own hands and be assertive.

"Open up yourself instead of saying 'I don't know'. Ask yourself, 'Who am I?,' 'What am I about?,' and 'Why do you do what you do?'" asked Mr. Descheenie.

Culture is an important part of values according to Mr. Descheenie.

"There is a culture and your responsibility is to ask, 'Is that culture appropriate (for me)?,' 'Is that culture conducive for me to reach my full potential?.' And it's up to you, totally up to you," he emphasized.

Citing a personal

matter with one of his sons who participated in a special ceremony for young males coming of age into manhood, Mr. Descheenie spoke about how his son sat in a sweat lodge during the ceremony and withstood the intense heat. As part of this ceremony he was also required to run several miles in the middle of winter. "When you are in different moments of intensity it can make you or break you," recalled Mr. Descheenie about his son's ceremony. He said that his son could have concentrated on the pain to make it more painful or he could focus on the goodness. It was at that moment when the medicine man asked the son to sing the holy songs. "He (the son) may not have known the words but he hummed," said Mr. Descheenie about his son.

Mr. Descheenie was insightful and provided many positive suggestions. "Being in U.N.I.T.Y., you need to be very personal, very conscious, making up your own mind and make sure that you have a reason for why you are doing what

you're doing to reconcile with who you are as a person. Make yourself human and it's for your own life. Say, 'I have a voice, I have a right to be heard and hold people accountable and you can get a lot done'" told the youth in attendance.

Debbie Nez-Manuel is also a Navajo and is a certified social worker and runs a foundation called Morning Star Leaders located in Scottsdale. Using modern technology of wifi, Thomasene Cardona, U.N.I.T.Y. sponsor was able to hook Mrs. Manuel up with a tele-conference using

Zoom technology bringing the students into the office of Mrs. Manuel's room.

About 18 students showed up for U.N.I.T.Y. and Mrs. Manuel was surprised of the number of people in the tele-conference. Mrs. Manuel emphasis was to motivate the youth and help them to understand the characteristics and styles of leadership skills. There are certain personal attributes that can be ascertained using a programmed matrix delineating personality types. Using these codes, most people can self-score their assessment of leader-

ship skills. This software can be used by anyone who wants to assess their personality type for leadership.

Mrs. Manuel has an excellent rapport with teens who listened intently as Mrs. Manuel projected the information on the screen.

The U.N.I.T.Y. group is planning other workshops are being planned in the future. You can contact either of the youth sponsors, Mrs. Cardona or Ms. Honwyteva any time for information as the both serve on the Nation's council.



Descheenie talking to UNITY participants