THE ACORNBASKET

HEALTHY MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT FOR GENERATIONS OF OUR AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE COMMUNITY

VOLUME 49 | ISSUE 6

THE ACORNBASKET

The Acorn Basket newsletter is published by United Indian Health Services, Inc.

If you have questions, comments or wish you submit articles or be added to our mailing list, please contact:

UIHS Marketing Department
1609 Weeot Way. Arcata, CA 95521
(707)-825-5000 • media@uihs.org

UIHS Marketing Team
Devin Jacot
Richard LaProziaso
Briaunna Sherman

All articles not attributed to an author were composed by the Marketing Department. Please send all comments to media@uihs.org.

Vision
Healthy mind, body and spirit for generations of our American Indian Community.

Purpose
To work together with our clients and community to achieve wellness through health services that reflect the traditional values of our American Indian Community.

United Indian Health Services, Inc.

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Keep track of all the latest news and happenings at:

UIHS.org/News

From the Desk of the CEO:

Celebrating Our Summer Together

Dear UIHS Family and Friends,

Summer is in full swing—and what a season of energy, growth, and connection it's been! As we gather with loved ones, spend time on the rivers and beaches, and take part in ceremony and tradition, I want to celebrate all that we've shared together these past few months—and offer a glimpse at what's ahead.

One of our biggest moments was the Grand Opening of the Valley East site in Arcata! This beautiful new clinic location is a testament to what we can build when we work together with vision, heart, and community. With capacity for thousands of visits annually, Valley East will bring culturally grounded, high-quality care to even more of our relatives. A huge shout-out to the Facilities, Medical, IT, and Admin teams who moved mountains to make it happen.

We were also honored by visits from Acting IHS Director Ben Smith from Washington D.C. and California Area Director for IHS, Beverly Miller. These visits help elevate Tribal voices and highlight the realities we face delivering healthcare in rural Native communities. We toured our clinics, shared our priorities, and reminded our federal partners that we are strong, creative, and rooted in solutions.

Early summer also brought the joy of community-building events—like the 42nd Annual Traditional Indian Health Gathering by the California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB) which UIHS was honored to host. The gathering celebrated the integration of traditional practices with contemporary healthcare approaches and brought together tribal elders, healers, health professionals, and community members to honor and strengthen Indigenous healing traditions.

And of course, our Annual Membership Meeting earlier in the year was a highlight! From department updates to delicious food and laughter, this gathering reflected the unity and momentum we're building together. Whether you came to share your voice, learn more about our plans, or just enjoy time with your neighbors—we're so grateful you were there. We were also honored to have Congressman Jared Huffman join us and to present him the Friends Are Good Medicine award for all his work supporting tribal causes and health.

As we have rolled into summer, I've also seen the small, powerful moments that make UIHS such a special place: staff walking together on lunch breaks, fresh produce coming out of the community gardens, and departments getting creative with wellness challenges and cultural crafts. Whether you're tending the land, supporting a client, or sharing a smile in the hallway—each act matters.

As we enjoy the rest of this vibrant season, here are a few tips to stay well:

- Hydrate often, especially during warmer days.
- Wear sunscreen and protect your skin.
- Take breaks and breathe—especially during construction or busy clinic days.
- Join one of our wellness events or simply spend time outside with your family.

And while we're soaking up the sunshine, we're also preparing for what's next. Fall will bring new beginnings—ongoing construction as we grow into our expansion facilities, the launch of the EPIC software for easier-to-use electronic health records, more community training opportunities, and the next steps in our Strategic Plan focused on Workforce, Infrastructure, Communication, and Access (WICA). It's also back-to-school time, and we'll be here to support families through that transition with care, vaccinations, and wellness resources.

Thank you for all you bring to this village. Your dedication, kindness, and culture are what make UIHS strong. Let's carry this summer's spirit with us into the fall, grounded in purpose and community.

With deep appreciation,

Liz Lara-O'Rourke

Elizabeth Lara-O'Rourke
Chief Executive Officer
United Indian Health Services

Happenings around UIHS

Valley East Open House Event

This past May, UIHS celebrated the grand opening of its newest clinic, Valley East Village, located at 4715 Valley East Blvd., Arcata. The event featured a ribboncutting ceremony and openhouse format, inviting community members to tour the modern facility. Attendees were greeted by UIHS leadership, healthcare providers, and staff, marking a significant expansion in local tribal and community health access.

The clinic's offerings span a full spectrum of services, including primary medical care, dental, pharmacy, vision, behavioral health, and tribal public health programs. Valley East enhances UIHS's capacity to provide culturally-responsive care, with hours set from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and a lunch closure between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.

This opening aligns with UIHS's broader purpose to foster wellness rooted in traditional values. It's also part of a series of recent UIHS initiatives such as the recently opened Eureka Health Village.

By launching this new Village property in Arcata, UIHS reinforces its commitment to expanding accessible, highquality care across its service areas. The community-centered design and comprehensive services make Valley East a key addition to tribal public health infrastructure, ensuring that both tribal and non-tribal patients benefit from convenient access to essential healthcare resources.

Acting IHS Director Ben Smith Visits UIHS

In June, UIHS had the honor of welcoming Ben Smith, the Acting Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), to the North Coast with California Area Director for IHS, Beverly Miller. This special visit gave Acting Director Smith a chance to meet with UIHS leaders and to see the amazing work happening at UIHS up close.

The day started at Potawot Health Village in Arcata with a warm welcome from the Board of Directors and leadership. After a blessing and introductions, Acting Director Smith heard a short presentation about UIHS's history, how it began over 55 years ago, and how it continues to serve tribal people with care, respect, and cultural traditions.

Acting Director Smith toured different areas of Potawot, including the clinic, gardens, and community spaces. Staff showed how UIHS blends modern medicine with traditional healing, using the land, language, and culture as part of the care. He was especially interested in the community garden, the traditional foods program, and the ways UIHS is helping young people stay connected to their roots.

Later, Acting Director Smith joined discussions with leadership and staff to talk about important issues like behavioral health, recruiting healthcare workers, and making sure clients have what they need. The team shared how UIHS has begun the process to switch to a new electronic health system called Epic and how it will help improve care—while also being a big project for staff and patients to learn.

Acting Director Smith also heard about new programs focused on youth wellness, and telehealth services that reach people in remote areas. He praised UIHS for being a model of how Tribal communities can lead the way in creating strong, healthy futures.
His visit was more than just a tour—it was a celebration of the strength, culture, and care that make UIHS so special. It reminded everyone how important it is for Tribal voices to be heard at the national level.

UIHS Annual Meeting

In April, United Indian Health Services UIHS hosted its Annual Meeting at the Potawot Health Village in Arcata, welcoming members, clients, staff, and community partners. The event, which took place during a sunny spring afternoon, combined informative updates with family-friendly festivities. Attendees enjoyed guided tours of the garden, educational booth exhibits, and presentations of UIHS's Annual Business Report. Refreshing food was available while guests played games and entered drawings for exciting prizes like TVs and tablets—prizes were reserved exclusively for on-site participants.

The meeting emphasized community building, offering a space for connection, reflection, and conversation about UIHS's future—especially meaningful during UIHS's 55th anniversary year.

A highlight of the day was the presence of U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman, who joined the gathering at Potawot Village to meet with UIHS's board of directors and executive leaders. His visit emphasized UIHS's importance in tribal health and regional advocacy. The meeting successfully balanced celebration, transparency, and inclusivity—reinforcing UIHS's purpose to serve our communities with culturally grounded healthcare and services.

UIHS Board of Director Elections - 2025

UIHS is governed by a Board of Directors with representatives elected from five regional service areas, each serving three-year terms. The Board oversees policy, finances, cultural responsiveness, and community advocacy. The 2025 election, held for Area 3 (Arcata/Eureka), with ballots due June 11 and results announced June 21. This democratic process ensures UIHS remains accountable and aligned with tribal values and regional needs. Following are the official results of the 2025 election.

Celebrating 55 Years of Care and Community at UIHS

This year, United Indian Health Services (UIHS) proudly celebrates 55 years of dedicated service to our Native communities. Since our founding in 1969, we have grown from a small grassroots effort into a comprehensive, culturally rooted healthcare organization serving thousands across Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Throughout the decades, our mission has remained the same: to provide respectful, holistic, and high-quality care that honors the traditions and strengths of the people we serve.

To mark this milestone, we're excited to announce a special 55-Year Anniversary Celebration event taking place this October. We invite all community members to celebrate with us—keep an eye on the Events Calendar on our website for the official date, location, and details as the event approaches.

As part of our anniversary year, we're also sharing a unique collection of "Then and Now" photos that capture the evolution of UIHS over the past five and a half decades. Look for these side-by-side comparisons in upcoming newsletters, on our website, and at the anniversary event in October.

Here's to 55 years of service, and many more to come!

42nd Annual - Event

The **42nd Annual Traditional Indian Health Gathering**, held in May at Potawot Health Village in Arcata, CA, brought together tribal elders, healers, health professionals, and community members to honor and strengthen Indigenous healing traditions. Centered on the theme "Together, Continuing Our Traditional Healing Ways," the event fostered cultural exchange, wellness education, and intertribal collaboration. Hosted by United Indian Health Services in partnership with the California Rural Indian Health Board, the gathering celebrated the integration of traditional practices with contemporary healthcare approaches.

Summer Wellness Guide

Healthy Activities for Everyone

Summer is the perfect time to focus on your well-being. With longer days and warmer weather, it's easier to get outside, get moving, and reconnect with yourself and your community. Wellness doesn't have to be complicated—it's about small choices that support your physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Whether you're looking for peace, energy, or connection, these healthy activities are easy, accessible, and fun for all ages and fitness levels. Let's make this summer a season of balance, joy, and good health!

Top 10 Healthy Activities Anyone Can Do This Summer:

1. **Take a Daily Walk in Nature** -Whether it's a trail, a beach, or just around your neighborhood—fresh air and movement go a long way for mental and physical health.

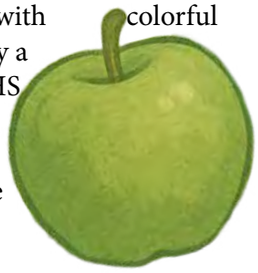
2. **Stretch or Do Yoga Outside** - Start your morning with a few gentle stretches or simple yoga moves in the sun or shade.

3. **Join a UIHS Wellness Walk or Community Event** - Stay connected and stay moving—**check the UIHS calendar for events near you: www.UIHS.org/Events.**

4. **Visit a Farmer's Market** - Choose fresh, local fruits and veggies and enjoy a walk while supporting your community. Be sure to visit the UIHS Potawot Community Food Garden—a certified Farmers Market that works with the UIHS clients, community members, and participants in the CalFresh Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Woman, Infant, and Children (WIC) program.

5. **Drink More Water and Infuse It with Fruit** - Staying hydrated is vital in summer—try adding lemon, cucumber, or berries to your water for a refreshing boost.

6. **Try a New Healthy Recipe with Seasonal Produce** - Cooking at home can be fun and nourishing—experiment with colorful fruits and veggies. And try a consultation with the UIHS Nutritionist who offers personalized nutrition information and guidance on healthy cooking.



7. **Practice Mindfulness or Breathing Exercises Outdoors** - Find a quiet spot, sit comfortably, and spend five minutes just breathing and being present.

8. **Dance, Stretch, or Move to Music** - Turn on your favorite song and move however feels good—it's great for your mood and your body! The UIHS Fitness Coordinator can also help you create an exercise plan by suggesting and discussing activities you feel match your fitness level and individualized goal.

9. **Start a Summer Wellness Journal** - Write down what makes you feel good each day—small wins, gratitude, or goals.

10. **Unplug and Take a "Digital Break"** Once a Week - Spend a few hours away from screens—read, rest, or enjoy time with loved ones.

Here's to a happy, healthy summer!

Small steps add up. However you choose to move, nourish, or relax—do it with care and kindness toward yourself and your loved ones.

FARMERS MARKETS

JULY

Tuesday 7/01
Fri 7/11
Fri 7/18
Fri 7/25

AUGUST

Fri 8/01
Fri 8/08
Tues 8/12
Fri 8/22
Fri 8/29

SEPTEMBER

Fri 9/05
Fri 9/12
Fri 9/19
Tues 9/23

CalFresh FOOD

UIHS United Indian Health Services, Inc.

Summer Hiking in Del Norte and Humboldt Counties

The trails are calling!

This summer, explore the natural beauty of Humboldt and Del Norte counties. In Humboldt, hike among towering redwoods on the Cathedral Trees Trail, enjoy a coastal adventure on the Hammond Trail, or trek to the stunning Fern Canyon. In Del Norte, wander through the Grove of Titans, visit Fern Falls via the Boy Scout Tree Trail, or enjoy a peaceful walk through Stout Grove. Whether you're looking for an easy stroll or a rewarding challenge, there's a trail for everyone. Step outside, breathe in the fresh air, and let nature renew your spirit. Your wellness journey starts with a single step!

Humboldt County: 3 Great Hikes

1. The Big Tree Loop

- Length: ~3.1 mi | Difficulty: Easy–Moderate
- Why go? This easy but incredibly scenic loop is a great introduction to Prairie Creek. It starts at park headquarters and follows the Karl Knapp and Cathedral Tree Trails through some of Prairie Creek's best groves.
- The only drawback is the traffic noise; the hike is much more enjoyable on days when Drury Parkway is closed and the woods are completely still.
- A gem for all skill levels inside Redwood National Park https://www.redwoodhikes.com/PrairieCreek/BigTree.html

2. Trinidad Head Trail

- Length: ~1.4 mi | Difficulty: Moderate
- Highlights: The Trinidad Head Loop Trail, a roughly 1.4-mile loop, offers hikers panoramic views of Trinidad and the northern Humboldt coastline. The trail provides stunning 360-degree scenery, making it a popular destination for both locals and visitors.
- https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/trinidad-head-lighthouse--2

3. Hammond Trail

- Length: Variable (~5–10 mi RT) | Difficulty: Easy
- Why it's cool: A scenic, mostly flat rail trail hugging the Humboldt coast and beaches—great for a mixed hike/bike day
- https://humboldtgov.org/2761/Hammond-Trail

Del Norte County: 3 Great Hikes

1. Mill Creek Trail → Grove of Titans

- Length: ~1.8 mi | Difficulty: Easy
- Main draw: Stand among massive ancient redwoods including the awe inspiring "Titans." Family friendly with short distance https://www.redwoodhikes.com/JedSmith/MillCreek.html

2. Boy Scout Tree Trail → Fern Falls

- Length: ~5.2 mi | Difficulty: Intermediate (~775 ft gain)
- Why hike it? Mix of redwoods, scenic waterfall, and forest solitude—great moderate route
- https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/fern-falls-via-boy-scout-tree-trail

3. Stout Memorial Grove ***(Jedediah Smith State Park)***

- Length: ~1.7 mi | Difficulty: Easy
- Perks: A serene loop through a classic old-growth redwood grove—perfect quick hike on Hwy 199
- https://www.nps.gov/places/stoutgrove.htm

A Note from the Infection Prevention Team

Submitted by Randi Larkin and Michelle Lewis-Lusso

Summer is coming and we have already been experiencing warm days in our coastal and outlying areas. The UIHS Infection Prevention Team has put together the following reminders to help you and your loved ones stay healthy, active, and safe all summer long. Please share these tips with family, friends, and community members—wellness is strongest when we care for one another.

Get Plenty to Drink – when it's hot your body sweats to cool you off. When this happens salt and other important minerals leave your body via your sweat. You will want to stay hydrated by drinking extra amounts of water, juice and sports drinks that have extra electrolytes. You want to avoid caffeinated drinks and alcohol as that can cause dehydration.

Stay Cool Indoors – If you are in higher temperatures especially in the 3 digits, you will want to stay out of the sun and in an air-conditioned area. If you don't have air conditioning, you can go to a shopping mall or public building to cool off.

Schedule Outdoor Activities Carefully – The hottest time of the day is usually between 12pm-4pm. If you must be outdoors during the day, try and go in the morning or after the sun goes down so that you can still be outside but not during the hottest part of the day. Never leave kids or pets in a parked car.

Wear Light Clothing and Sunscreen – Wear light-colored and loose-fitting clothing during the warmer months. A wide-brimmed hat can keep the sun off your face and can keep you cool as well. Make sure to use sunscreen that is higher than at least 15 SPF or higher and follow the package directions. Reapply as necessary.

Mosquitoes and Mosquito-Borne Diseases

Warmer months mean more time outdoors for many of us—but also more mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are small, flying insects that are common throughout California. Mosquitoes bite and feed on the blood of animals and humans. After feeding on blood, a female mosquito will lay eggs on or near water. The young stages of mosquitoes grow in standing water. Not all mosquitoes are a threat to humans but several kinds bite humans, and some can

spread diseases when they bite. West Nile Virus is a common disease that is spread by some mosquitoes in California. The best way to prevent diseases that are spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- use mosquito repellent on clothes and exposed skin when going outdoors (especially at dawn and dusk)
- wear long sleeves and pants for extra protection
- eliminate standing water around your yard

Tick-Borne Diseases

Ticks are small, spider-like creatures more often found outside in wooded or brushy areas with tall grass, rocks, logs, and fallen leaves. Ticks bite and feed by attaching to animals and humans, sticking their mouth parts into the skin, and sucking blood for up to several days.

There are many kinds of ticks in California, but only six kinds are known to bite humans. Sometimes these ticks carry germs that can spread to a person while the tick is attached and cause disease. The best way to avoid getting tick-borne diseases is to prevent tick bites:

1. Use tick repellent when going outside in areas where ticks are common
2. Check yourself, children and pets for ticks often while outside and after your return indoors
3. If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove it right away with tweezers

Ocean/Lake/River Safety

Check for closures on the state or local government website. We all know that our local Eel River gets the Cyanobacteria and multiple different algae late in the summer season. We all must be aware of when it is safe and not safe to be in the Eel River. The Cyanobacteria can appear as dark green, blue-green, black, orange or brown scum. It thrives in warm and nutrient-

rich environments such as stagnant water. This can be very toxic to humans and animals. Watch for:

- Scummy or discolored water (green, blue-green, black, orange, or brown)
- Cloudy or foul-smelling water
- Pipes or drainage flowing into the water
- *Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after swimming in these areas. If soap and water are not available, you an use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Respiratory Viruses are still active in the Summer

You should take precautions against Respiratory Viruses (such as flu, RSV, and COVID-19) and continue to use masks if you are having symptoms or are around someone who is experiencing symptoms. You should also stay home if you are sick so as not to spread it to others that work closely with you. COVID-19 has a new variant that is circulating here in California. The symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or Congested nose (not related to allergies)
- Difficulty Breathing
- Feeling weak or fatigued
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Unexplained muscle aches

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms you can take an at-home test. Each UIHS clinic has free test kits that are available to our clients and their families.

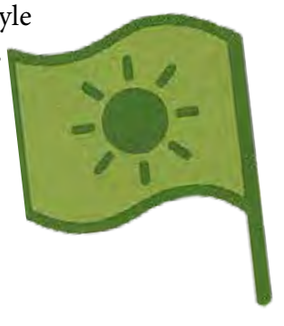
UIHS Summer Camps

By Andre Cramblit

The sun is shining, local Tribal ceremonies are in full swing, and it is time for another sunny traditional event. The 2025 UIHS summer camp, May-Gay-Tolh-Kwe-- which means "the healing place" in the Yurok language-- will be held at Sue-Meg State Park, just north of Trinidad from July 8-11. This year's camp is for UIHS-eligible youth between the ages of 9 and 11 and is an overnight camping experience that is rooted in the traditions of local Tribes. At the camp, youth participate in a full range of cultural and educational activities while enjoying time outdoors.

Different departments from UIHS, like the Community Food Garden, Diabetes, Health Promotion and Education (HPE), Community Health Care, Suicide Prevention, and Traditional Tobacco programs, provide educational presentations to help our youth gain knowledge and skills as they mature. Community speakers also share their cultural experience with the campers. Youth participate in a variety of activities, from Brush Dance protocol, necklace making, beading projects, traditional games, and other cultural activities. A favorite event is the outing to Big Lagoon, where everyone enjoys kayaking on the lagoon and riding in the traditional redwood canoes, if available.

We usually host 60-80 campers each summer, providing a wonderful opportunity for participants to meet other Native youth from throughout our service area. In addition to serving youth, we also hire nearly 30 workers to help run the camp, including camp co-coordinators, adult counselors, peer counselors, security, and of course the cooks who feed our hungry campers and staff. . Campers participate in activities that promote and encourage healthy lifestyle choices, and many enjoy the camp so much that they return year after year, with some even coming back later to work as camp staff.



The Tribal and Cultural Health Staff would like to thank the UIHS Board of Directors and all the staff who help make the summer camp such a successful and valuable experience for our youth.

Precautionary Principle For Health

by Dr. Chris Myers

For years, my son has spent many evenings with Bluetooth headphones nestled in his ears. This lets him stay somewhat engaged with the family while he enjoys Netflix or music. Occasionally, if deeply immersed in his audio, he tunes us out completely, causing that familiar parental frustration of being ignored by our teenagers. Reflecting on this, I wondered about the safety of long-term exposure to Bluetooth radiation directly in his ear canal.

My concerns stem partly from my background in nuclear energy, where the dangers of ionizing radiation, such as direct DNA damage, are well established. I was taught that only ionizing radiation could harm us, implying that non-ionizing radiation, such as radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (RF-EMF), sometimes shortened to just EMF, including Bluetooth signals, posed no significant risk. Yet, recent insights suggest that even low-energy electromagnetic fields can trigger biological harm. Research indicates these fields may enhance reactive oxygen species production, disrupt electron transport chains, and lead to mitochondrial dysfunction. Given that mitochondria are fundamental to cell energy production and overall health, these disruptions could potentially result in broad systemic effects.[1] Delving deeper into current scientific literature, I encountered a meta-analysis published in Environmental Health (2024) investigating associations between mobile phone use, including Bluetooth technology, and brain tumor development. This study presented a statistically significant increase in the risk of tumors, particularly gliomas and acoustic neuromas, among long-term, high-duration users, although the authors cautiously noted variability and the complexity in establishing clear cause-and-effect relationships.[2]

Faced with uncertainty and a bioplausible risk, I asked my son to minimize his use of Bluetooth headphones. However, being the analytical and smart a… leck that he is, he asked me for "proof." After briefly reminiscing on when my words were proof enough, I realized that while definitive proof eludes us, this situation perfectly illustrates the practical utility of the precautionary principle and an opportunity for a teaching moment. This principle, deeply rooted in environmental and public health policy, guides us to proactively address potential risks even when scientific certainty is incomplete.[3,4]

Historically, the precautionary principle emerged prominently in environmental law during the 1970s and gained broader recognition through international agreements like the Rio Declaration (1992) and the Wingspread Statement (1998). At its core, it argues that in situations where an activity presents potential risks of serious or irreversible harm, the lack of full scientific certainty should not delay preventive measures. This approach shifts the burden of proof from proof of harm to proof of safety, requiring proponents of potentially harmful activities to demonstrate their safety rather than waiting for damage to occur.[6,7]

The significance of this approach is underscored by past experiences, such as the delayed public disclosure of the health risks associated with asbestos contamination in talc by companies like Johnson & Johnson, as detailed in the book "No More Tears" (2025). Chronic inflammation from such substances has been linked to cancers and other severe health issues, yet talc remains prevalent in various consumer products, from medications to cosmetics, despite the upcoming European Union ban in 2027.[8]

I believe the precautionary principle aligns closely with native values. Indigenous cultures around the world are wary of the unknown ramifications of changes to the environment and our health. They possess the humility to acknowledge the complexity of the natural world and how much remains unknown. Given these insights, my personal and family recommendations for a health approach incorporate the precautionary principle as a fundamental decision-making tool. We choose to avoid exposure to potentially harmful substances or technologies when safer alternatives are available or when clear safety has not been established. It's not always easy. Information isn't clear, or it's fragmented. "Progress" in some ways is advancing faster than safety measures and communication of potential risk.

I encourage everyone to also make the precautionary principle a core philosophy of your decision-making, taking preventive action to protect health and environmental integrity, especially amidst uncertainty. Embracing this principle can significantly guide safer, healthier lifestyle choices. If you're interested in applying this approach practically, resources such as the Environmental Working Group (ewg.com), the Healthy Living app, Yuka app (my personal favorite), Open Food Facts app, and Think Dirty app provide valuable tools to assess product safety, enabling informed decisions that prioritize health and well-being.

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Use these apps to scan food and personal care products and keep track of the ingredients.

The Healthy Living app:
ewg.org/apps/
Scan food and personal care products and see the Healthy Living Rating

Open Food Facts app:
https://world.openfoodfacts.org/
A food products database you can use to make better food choices.

Think Dirty
https://www.thinkdirtyapp.com/
Scan cosmetic and hygiene products, uncover ingredients, and make healthier choices.

Yuka:
https://yuka.io/en/app/
Analyzes food, product and hygiene products and provides detailed data sheets and scores.

Coming This Fall: Our New Electronic Health Record System – Epic!

We're excited to announce that UIHS will be launching a brand-new electronic health record system this fall – Epic! This powerful, user-friendly system will make it easier than ever for you to manage your healthcare, stay connected to your providers, and access important health information all in one place.

From technology teams to front desk staff to your healthcare providers, everyone is preparing to make this shift as seamless as possible for you.

So, what makes Epic so exciting?

- MyChart Access: You'll be able to use MyChart to view test results, request prescription refills, message your care team, and even schedule appointments — all from your smartphone or computer.
- Real-Time Information: Your providers will have instant access to your medical history, which means faster, more accurate care.
- Connected Care: Whether you're at a clinic in Arcata or visiting another provider across the state, your health records can follow you securely, ensuring continuity of care.
- Easy Communication: You'll be able to send and receive messages securely, helping you stay connected to your care team without needing a phone call.

As fall approaches, we'll be sharing more information, including tips on using MyChart, support resources, and how you can prepare to make the most of Epic.

Stay tuned to **www.UIHS.org/Epic-Engage/** for more info!

Thank you for trusting UIHS with your care. We're committed to using the best tools available to serve you — and Epic is one of them!

2025 HAWC Walk & Run at Potawot Village

The HAWC Walk & Run is an annual community event that promotes holistic wellness through physical activity, cultural connection, and health education. The HAWC Walk reflects UIHS's commitment to integrating traditional values into modern health practices.

Held at Potawot Health Village in Arcata, California, the HAWC Walk invites participants of all ages and fitness levels to engage in a walk or run along the village's scenic trails. The event often includes wellness booths, cultural demonstrations, and healthy food tastings, creating a festive atmosphere that celebrates community and well-being.

Beyond physical activity, the HAWC Walk serves as an educational platform. UIHS's Diabetes Awareness Program, for instance, has utilized the event to distribute mindfulness booklets and provide information on managing and preventing diabetes through lifestyle changes.

The HAWC Walk & Run exemplifies UIHS's holistic approach to health, blending physical fitness, cultural heritage, and community engagement. By fostering a supportive environment, the event encourages participants to embrace wellness in all aspects of life.

NEED A RIDE TO YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT?

WE GOT YOU!

UIHS offers limited transportation services for both UIHS and non-UIHS clinical appointments.

Contact our dedicated transportation team:

Humboldt (707)825-5070

Del Norte (707)464-2750

Empowering Diabetes Wellness with Coach Beverly Thomassian

Hosted at Potawot Health Village – April 2, 2025
This spring, UIHS welcomed nationally renowned diabetes educator Coach Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, CDCES, BC-ADM for a special event dedicated to diabetes awareness and empowerment. Held at Potawot Health Village, the interactive training session brought together clients, staff, and community members for an afternoon of lively discussion, hands-on learning, and inspiration.

Coach Beverly is known for her passionate, down-to-earth approach to diabetes education. As a long-time clinician and advocate working with tribal health programs, she brought real-world strategies to the UIHS audience—helping attendees feel both seen and supported.
The session focused on practical tools for managing diabetes day-to-day, including the "ABCs" of care (A1C, Blood Pressure, and Cholesterol), medication options, healthy eating myths and truths, and how to advocate for your own care. With humor, empathy, and energy, Beverly created a safe and encouraging space for questions, shared experiences, and personal breakthroughs.

Participants left with more than just information—they left with motivation. From learning how to interpret lab numbers to understanding the power of small lifestyle changes, the session emphasized that living well with diabetes is not only possible, it's personal. This event is part of UIHS's ongoing commitment to strengthening community health through culturally centered education and support. A heartfelt thanks to Beverly for her wisdom, and to the Diabetes Awareness Program for bringing powerful resources to our people.

Stay tuned for more community health events (www.uihs.org/Events) in the coming seasons—and remember, your wellness journey is supported every step of the way.

The Native Will Project

Have your simple will written, for free. UIHS General Counsel, Neal Latt, a licensed California attorney, is initiating an independent, pro bono (FREE) semiannual (twice a year) event to prepare simple wills for tribal elders, ages 60 and up.

If you are a tribal elder 60 or over, you may call Serena Brooks at (707) 825-4136 to schedule your one-hour appointment to meet confidentially with Neal to prepare your simple will. Appointments are made on a first come, first served basis, so call now!

Saturday, September 6, 2025
10am - 5pm at Potawot

First Come, First Served
By Appointment Only

Meet the Executive Leadership Team

Elizabeth Lara-O'Rourke
Chief Executive Officer

Elizabeth Lara-O'Rourke is the Chief Executive Officer of United Indian Health Services (UIHS), leading the organization since November 2021. A lifelong Humboldt County resident of Hupa, Yurok, and Chilula heritage, Liz brings over 35 years of experience with UIHS, having served in roles ranging from Patient Registration Technician to Tribal Public Health Director before becoming CEO. Her extensive background gives her a deep understanding of the unique healthcare needs of American Indian communities in California's North Coast.

Liz holds a Bachelor's degree in Communication and Native American Studies from Humboldt State University and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco. Deeply involved in tribal traditions, she is dedicated to ensuring UIHS delivers health care that honors both the clinical and cultural needs of the American Indian / Alaskan Native population it serves.

Cecil P Wilson III, CPA, MSA
Chief Financial Officer

Cecil's journey began in Seattle, WA as a Certified Public Accountant and auditor. This began a 45-year career in financial management and accounting. Most of his career included employment as a Certified Public Accountant, a Chief Financial Officer and/or Executive Vice President with an emphasis in adult care for the acutely disabled (27 years). Mr. Wilson has worked with UIHS since November 2021. He is an active member of the Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah OK.

Born in Kansas City, Kansas 3/8/55
Cum Laude, Harding University 1976, BS in Accounting (3.25 GPA) and Magna Cum Laude University of Phoenix 2010, MSA (3.85 GPA).
1975 – National Debate and Speech Champion, Philadelphia, PA
1976 – Runner-up National Business Team competition, Atlanta GA
1976 – Student Body Vice President, President Alpha Omega Fraternity, Harding University
2012-2022 – Head Coach Women's Wrestling, Eureka High, Eureka
2021 – Selected as Coach of the Year, Eureka High Coaching Association
1989 – Sempai in Shotokan and Seido Karate.

Dr. Chris Myers
Chief Clinical Officer

Dr. Myers has served as the Chief Clinical Officer at UIHS since 2021, bringing a diverse range of experience and leadership. He began his career in the U.S. Navy, operating nuclear reactors aboard submarines and aircraft carriers. Trusted as a teenage nuclear operator and later as an instructor, he learned responsibility and trustworthiness early on.

Chris holds a bachelor's in Nuclear Engineering Technology, a medical degree, board certification in General Surgery, and is still slow-walking an MBA from Penn State, clearly demonstrating his commitment to lifelong learning and his debt tolerance.

When he's not working, you'll often find Chris surfing, exploring nature, soaking up sunshine, and strategically avoiding screen time. Between his experience in emergency general surgery, nuclear operations, and as a competitive Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu athlete, very few things can shake his cool, calm demeanor under pressure. Ultimately, he strives to foster a community rooted in humor, humility, and collaboration and is incredibly excited about UIHS's future.

Kathy Busenius, CHC
Chief Compliance and Privacy Officer

Kathy is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and has over 44 years of experience working in Tribal and Community Health programs. She has over 40 years at UIHS alone which means she holds historical knowledge of this organization.

She is certified in healthcare compliance (CHC). In her earlier years with the organization, she became the first UIHS Certified Professional Coder, shortly after that she became a Certified Coding Instructor.

Over the years she has specialized in coding, billing, compliance auditing, office, and patient account management as well as overseeing member services and purchased referred care.

In 2018 she graduated from the UCSF Clinic Leadership Institute which was an intensive eighteen-month leadership training program. With a strong commitment to compliance and education, she has trained staff, conducted audits, and helped other California tribal health programs improve compliance in coding, billing and reimbursement processes while maintaining regulatory standards.

Rob England
Tribal Public Health Director

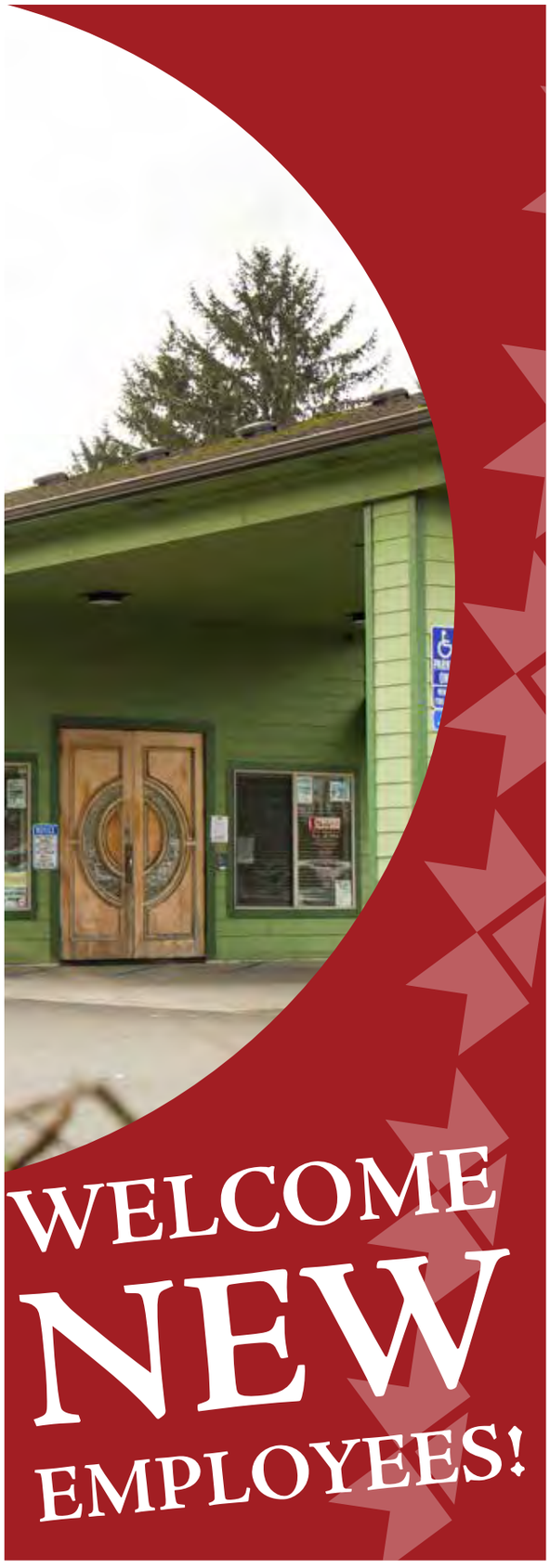
Rob England is a member of the Yurok Tribe and has always lived near his ancestral home. He has Bachelor's Degrees in Psychology and Native American Studies, and completed his Master's degree in Psychology.

He currently serves as the Tribal Public Health Director. He has twenty-five years of experience working directly with Tribal communities. He believes the answers for Tribal populations reside within the communities themselves.

His Weaving Culture into Suicide Prevention Strategies webinar was developed into a resource for the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and this cultural strategy was further highlighted in The Surgeon General's Call to Action on Suicide Prevention. In 2021, Rob received a National Impact Award through the National Indian Health Board for his work in healthcare and suicide prevention. He also contributed a published short story on lived experience with suicide and the impact on Tribal communities while also sharing the positive impact on cultural identity in the men's mental health book "Guts, Grit & The Grind: A Mental Mechanics Manual".

Barbara Pfeifer
Ambulatory Operations Director

With nearly twenty years at United Indian Health Services (UIHS), Barbara began her journey as the Diabetes Manager at Potawot Health Village before moving to Crescent City to serve as Regional Director. For the past four years, she has proudly led as the Ambulatory Operations Director for UIHS's clinical division. Her path to healthcare was anything but conventional—she grew up in Minnesota, worked in zoos and animal rehab across the country, and eventually landed in Arcata, where she earned her degree in anthropology. She is deeply passionate about her work, her UIHS family, and her two fur babies.



Anna Boatsman
TPH Admin Assistant -PHV

Andrew Butcher
IS Specialist

Alisia Colegrove
MSR—PHV

Rebecca Fissahaye
Fiscal Tech—PHV

Ann Grimes
PRC Tech

Pasha Hoaglen
PRC Specialist-PHV

Marlette Grant-Jackson
HR Admin Asst.-PHV

Cesar Kartaltepe
Maintenance Tech

Xa'tle T'sing Lincoln
Maintenance Tech

Holly Lopez
HIM Tech—CC

Talisha Mason
Dental Provider—CC

Jazmen McGinnis
Dental Asst.– Da'bourke

Zoe Thomson
BH/FOA-PHV

Linda Villano
Clinical RN-PHV

Amber Ward
Driver

Byron Whyte
Provider

Andrew Freeman
Provider—CC

Elizabeth Lewis
HPE Supervisor-PHV

Hanna Posey
UCD Clerkship

Andrea Wrisley
HR Generalist

UNITED INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES, INC.

COME JOIN OUR VILLAGE

WE ARE HIRING

WE CURRENTLY HAVE MULTIPLE OPENINGS

We are seeking dedicated and compassionate employees to join our team. Make a difference in the lives of the American Indian community and work with a passionate and supportive team.

- **Competitive Salary**
- **Health, dental, vision, and life insurance**
- **Retirement Plans: 403(b) with employer match**
- **Generous PTO**
- **Professional Development**

United Indian Health Services, Inc.

Calendar

JULY

Recurring Activities

Swimming Group - Humboldt:
Tuesdays, 2:00–3:00, Arcata Community Pool

Swimming Group - Del Norte:
Wednesdays, 6:45–7:45, Fred Endert Municipal Pool, Crescent City

Blood Pressure & Blood Sugar Screening - Wednesdays & Thursdays
Howonquet Hall - Smith River - 12pm-4pm

Good Medicine Group (Potawot Garden): Wednesdays 7/9, 7/16, 7/23, 7/30, 1:00–3:00

Farmers Market
Fridays, 12pm-2pm, Potawot Health Village, Arcata

Events

July 8–11
Youth Summer Camp, Sue-meg State Park

Wednesday, 7/9:
Cooking Class, 3:30, PHV Boardrooms

Friday, 7/11:
OAC (Opioid Awareness Coalition) Virtual Meeting, 12:30–1:30

Support Group, Elk Valley, 2:00–3:30

Saturday, 7/19:
Volunteer Day, Ku'wah-dah-wilth Restoration Easement, 9:30–12:30

Tuesday, 7/15:
Community Outreach, Weitchpec, 11:00–2:00

Friday, 7/18:
Educational & Community Outreach
Potawot Health Village - Arcata 12pm-2pm

Friday, 7/25:
Educational & Community Outreach
Potawot Health Village - Arcata 12pm-2pm

Question, Persuade, Refer Webinar, 2:00–4:00 (virtual)

AUGUST

Recurring Activities

Swimming Group - Humboldt:
Tuesdays, 2:00–3:00, Arcata Community Pool

Swimming Group - Del Norte:
Wednesdays, 6:45–7:45, Fred Endert Municipal Pool, Crescent City

Blood Pressure & Blood Sugar Screening - Wednesdays & Thursdays
Howonquet Hall - Smith River - 12pm-4pm

Farmers Market (Potawot):
Friday 8/1, Friday 8/8, Tuesday 8/12, Friday 8/22, Friday 8/29

Events

Friday, 8/1:
Educational & Community Outreach
Potawot Health Village - Arcata 12pm-2pm

Women's Purification Ceremony
Potawot Sweat Lodge, 3:30pm-6pm

Of Events

Online Calendar: UIHS.org/Events

Wednesday, 8/6:
Annual Board and Staff Awards
Potawot Village, Arcata

Indigenous Breastfeeding Day
All UIHS locations

Friday, 8/8:
OAC (Opioid Awareness Coalition) Virtual Meeting, 12:30–1:30

Diabetes Support Group
2:00pm-3:30pm, Elk Valley Tribal Office, Crescent City

Saturday, 8/9:
Educational & Community Outreach, Weitchpec
Weitchpec Health Village, 12:00pm-2:00pm

Wednesday, 8/13:
Cooking Class, 3:30pm-5:00pm, PHV Boardrooms

Co-ed Purification Ceremony, Potawot Sweat Lodge, 5:30pm-9pm

Tuesday, 8/19:
Educational & Community Outreach, Crescent City
Taa-ʻat-dvn (Crescent City Clinic), 12:00pm-2:00pm

Thursday, 8/21: Community Cultural Night, 6:00–7:30 (virtual)

Friday, 8/22:
Educational & Community Outreach
Potawot Health Village - Arcata 12pm-2pm

Saturday, 8/23:
HAWC Walk & Run, Potawot Health Village, 10:00–2:00

Friday, 8/29:
Question, Persuade, Refer Webinar, 2:00–4:00 (virtual)

Overdose Awareness Day, Potawot & Crescent City (Taa-ʼat-dvn), 10:00–12:00

Looking ahead...

SEPTEMBER

Monday 9/1 - All Clinics Closed

Saturday 9/6 - The Native Will Project 10 AM, Potawot Village, Arcata

Saturday, 9/7 - F St. Block Party, F St Eureka

Saturday, 9/7 - Out of the Darkness Walk, Arcata Plaza

Friday 9/7 - California Indian Day

OCTOBER

Friday, 10/4: Day of Caring, PHV Garden

Friday, 10/11: Harvest Party, Del Norte

Friday, 10/11: 55 Year Annivesary Celebration Event

Friday, 10/18: Harvest Party, PHV

Friday, 10/25: Elder's Honoring, Location TBD

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, 11/20: Great American Smokeout, UIHS locations

Friday, 11/22: Survivors of Suicide Loss, PHV

Looking Ahead to Fall

While the sun is still high and summer is in full swing, it's never too early to start planning ahead. As we enjoy warm days, community events, and family gatherings, now is the perfect time to begin thinking about what's around the corner—fall.

Back-to-School Health Prep

For families with school-age children, fall means back-to-school season. Be sure to schedule your child's **sports physicals and annual wellness visits now**—appointments fill up fast in August and early September. Getting in early helps avoid the last-minute rush and ensures your child is ready for all school-related activities. Immunization updates, vision and hearing screenings, and dental check-ups can all be done now to set your kids up for a healthy start to the school year.

Seasonal Check-Ins

Fall is also a great time to reassess your personal and family health goals. With cooler weather approaching, it may be the right moment to follow up on chronic conditions, refill medications, or check in on mental wellness. Reach out to your UIHS provider to get ahead on preventive care or ongoing treatment needs.

Fun Things to Look Forward To

Even as we soak in the joys of summer, fall brings its own highlights:

- The UIHS 55-Year Anniversary Celebration in October, full of cultural events and community pride
- Harvest gatherings and traditional food celebrations
- Community walks and hikes in the crisp fall air
- Flu shot clinics to keep your family protected during cold and flu season

By looking ahead now, we can help make the transition into fall a smooth and healthy one for all UIHS clients. Call your local clinic today to book your appointments—and keep an eye on our events calendar at www.unitedindianhealthservices.org/events for all the great things coming this fall!

Back-to-School Vaccines

by Greg Carlson

As the school year begins, it's time to make sure our Native children are healthy and ready to learn. Vaccines protect kids from serious illnesses like measles, whooping cough, and the flu—diseases that spread quickly in schools and can harm our elders and communities.

In California, students must have certain vaccines before starting school. These include shots for DTaP, polio, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), hepatitis B, and chickenpox. For 7th graders, a Tdap booster and a second chickenpox shot are also required. Staying up to date helps kids stay in class, take part in sports and culture, and protect others.

UIHS offers free vaccines for eligible Native youth in Northern California. With care rooted in Native values, UIHS helps families meet California's Shots for School rules while keeping our communities strong.

Vaccination is more than personal health—it's an act of love. When we vaccinate, we protect our elders, honor our ancestors, and care for future generations. Every shot helps keep our people safe, our traditions alive, and our communities well.

Now is the time to schedule your child's school vaccines. Ask your local UIHS clinic or provider about required and recommended shots, including HPV and COVID-19 for older students.

Let's start the school year strong. Vaccinate before school begins—and help protect the future of our people.

Discover What UIHS Has to Offer

A Commitment to Community Health

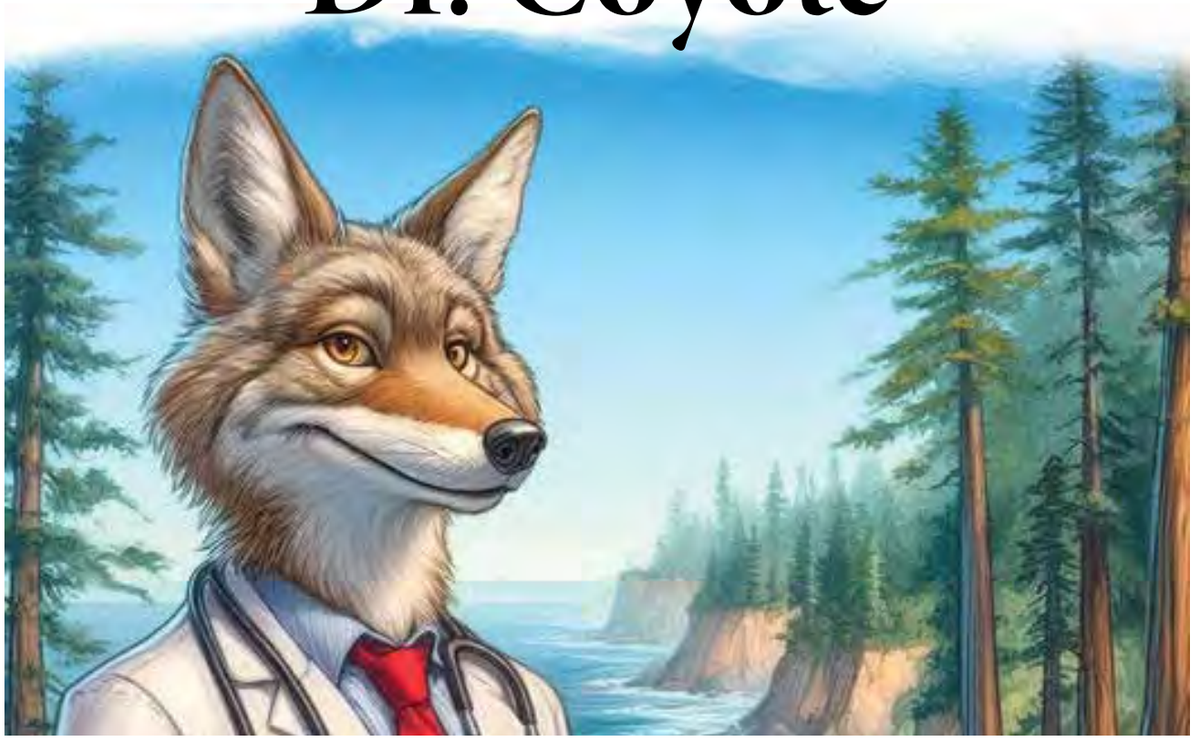
At UIHS, we are more than just a healthcare provider—we are a community-based organization committed to improving the health and well-being of the American Indian/ Alaskan Native population and the broader community in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Whether you're a longtime client or just learning about UIHS, our services are designed to support every stage of life with culturally respectful and high-quality care.

UIHS offers a wide range of health services, including medical, dental, vision, behavioral health, and pharmacy care. We also provide community health education, nutrition counseling, wellness programs, and maternal-child health support. Our facilities include multiple health centers and outreach programs that bring care closer to home for tribal communities. In addition to direct clinical care, UIHS integrates traditional tribal healing and spiritual practices, recognizing the importance of holistic health. From diabetes prevention to youth development, elder support, and substance use recovery, UIHS is here to serve the whole person—mind, body, and spirit.

- Primary Medical Care for all ages
- Dental Services
- Vision Services and Optical Shop
- Behavioral Health & Counseling
- Pharmacy Services
- Nutrition Counseling & Diabetes Education
- Women, Infant & Children (WIC) Program
- Maternal and Child Health Support
- Substance Use Treatment & Recovery Programs
- Community Health & Wellness Education
- Youth and Family Services
- Elder Outreach & Support
- Transportation Assistance for Medical Appointments
- Traditional Medicine & Healing Practices

See more at www.UIHS.org

Dr. Coyote



Dear Dr. Coyote,

I understand that tribes here in the Northern California are starting the ceremony season. Could you please share with us any ideas or suggestions you have for people who will be attending for the first time.

Signed, Eager To Attend Ceremonies.

Dear Eager;

It is true many dances are starting up again for the year. It brings me a good feeling to see such important cultural events return to our people. Local Tribes shared cultural ceremonies and rituals as they lived in the same environment. The religion of the local people is based on individual effort through ritual cleanliness and ceremonies that include the entire tribe.

The Tribes of this region practice the annual World Renewal Ceremonies, such as the Karuk Pikyavish, the Tolowa Nee-dash, the Hupa and Yurok White Deerskin Dance, the Wiyot World Renewal Ceremony and most Tribes perform the Sacred Jump Dance. The purpose of the ceremonies is to restore the world or "fix the earth", as one tribe described it. This includes songs and dances that have been preserved for countless generations. Local Tribes also host the Brush Dance which is both a social event and a healing ceremony in which the people of the local Tribes dance, sing, make medicine and pray in order to bless or heal a sick child or infant.

The dance takes place in a Brush Dance pit, and it involves men, boys and young girls. The herbal healing ceremony includes singing, chanting, rhythmic dancing around the medicine fire in the pit and jumping center to confront the evil or sickness. The spectators sit on benches around the pit, also pray and help in the spiritual treatment of the child.

Girls had a coming-of-age ceremony commonly called a Flower Dance. This was a rigorous challenge that showed the community that the young girl had learned what was needed to be a productive member of her tribe.

There are a few things for people to keep in mind regarding ceremony protocol. First and foremost is when you attend any ceremony is to be in the proper frame of mind. This involves having positive thoughts and feelings surrounding yourself. If you are having a bad day or in a fight with someone at the dance leave it outside of the ceremonial site or take the higher road and take yourself home.

Another important rule is that these dances are drug and alcohol free. If you are under the influence of any substance make a good choice and stay away from the dance.

It is always polite to not show up empty handed. The kitchen is responsible to serve many meals to whoever and how many people show up. Bring something that is quick and easy to prepare that they can serve as part of a regular meal or set out as an in between activities snack.

There are other rules to follow, if you have any questions just ask someone you know. For example, there are places that are not appropriate for some people to be. Like no men in the women's camp and visa versa. Women who are on their moon time should avoid being in the kitchen. Women are expected to wear a long skirt when attending ceremonies but be sure and layer up as it can get quite chilly at night.

The dances themselves are non-recording times. Refrain from taking pictures or making an audio recording. Sometimes there will be a special time set aside after a dance to take pictures, just keep your eyes open and if you have any questions simply ask if it is ok.

Take the opportunity if you are fortunate enough to +to take part in a deeply significant event. Your participation is part of the good spirit and prayers that make these ceremonies so powerful.

Signed, Ready To Jump Center Dr. Coyote.

Provider Spotlight

Caring for Families Across Generations

Meet Dr. Katie Cassel, MD
Associate Medical Director, Del Norte County

Dr. Katie Cassel is a longtime family medicine physician at United Indian Health Services, bringing more than 25 years of experience to the communities of Arcata, Klamath, and Smith River. A graduate of UC Berkeley and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Dr. Cassel is board certified in family medicine and deeply committed to holistic, culturally respectful care.

Her practice covers everything from newborn checkups to elder care, with a focus on chronic disease management, preventive screenings, and mental wellness. Patients appreciate her calm, thoughtful approach and her ability to listen, support, and guide them on their health journey.

Dr. Cassel is a tribal member of the Muscogee Creek Nation and lives with her husband and two cats. She enjoys spending her free time with her two children and watching her grandson grow. Dr. Cassel loves to cook and takes every moment possible to hike and enjoy the beauty of the north coast.

She is also active in public health initiatives, including efforts to eliminate hepatitis C in tribal communities. Whether in the Klamath clinic, out in the community, or connected by telehealth she works to make care more accessible and meaningful for every client she serves.

We're honored to have Dr. Cassel on our team and her continued dedication to our UIHS community.

Compassionate Care in Family Medicine

Meet Heather Kyte, PA-C
Associate Medical Director, Humboldt County

If you've visited Jaroujiji Health Clinic in Eureka, there's a good chance you've crossed paths with Heather Kyte, PA-C. As a certified Physician Assistant serving clients through United Indian Health Services, Heather brings more than a decade of experience in family medicine to the community.

Heather is known for her calm, welcoming demeanor and her ability to truly listen. Whether she's helping a child through their annual check-up or working with an elder to manage a chronic condition, Heather provides thorough, compassionate care with a focus on long-term wellness. Her clinical interests include preventive health, women's health, and chronic disease management—and she is especially committed to providing culturally respectful, patient-centered service.

Originally from the East Coast, Heather earned her degree from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Since then, she has worked in diverse healthcare settings and now calls the North Coast home

Clients often share that Heather makes them feel at ease, informed, and well cared for—qualities that reflect UIHS's mission of providing health services with respect for every individual's unique needs.

We're proud to have Heather on our team and grateful for the experience and heart she brings to our UIHS community.

Where is my Provider?

Want to know where your providers are with all the recent changes?

We've made it easy to find them! Visit the UIHS website for provider details in three convenient places:

1) Full Provider List & Printable Flyer:
www.UIHS.org/our-providers

2) Provider Bios & Photos:
www.UIHS.org/medical

3) Clinic Locations with Providers:
Check each clinic's web-page to see which providers are available at that location.

UIHS Provider List
Download & Print Flyer

NATIVE Tobacco Project

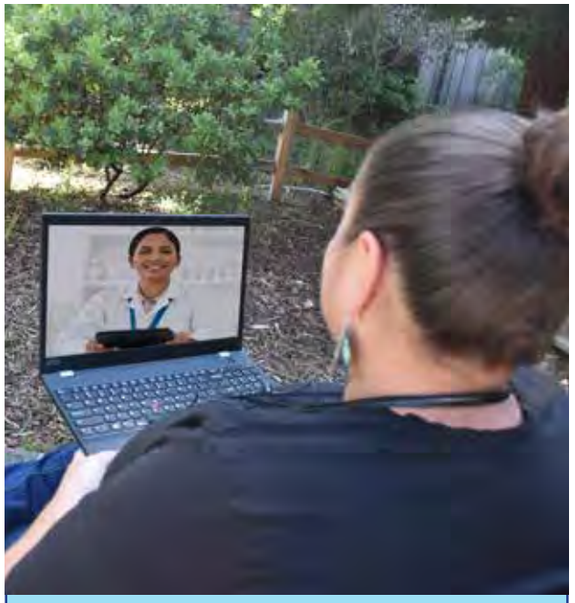
Information & Education Day 2025

United Indian Health Services' Sadie Spargur, Health Promotion & Education Specialist ll

The United Indian Health Services' NATIVE Tobacco Project team attended the Information & Education Days in Sacramento in May of 2025, filled with learning, meetings, and collaboration: our team meeting focused on five meetings for legislative discussion on building stronger communities. Capital Information & Educational Days is an annual event organized by the American Heart Association's Tobacco Endgame Center for Organizing and Engagement. The event aims to educate the California legislature to address the dangers of commercial tobacco on communities and local efforts against the impact of commercial tobacco products.

The NATIVE Tobacco Project attended the Native Caucus, Women's Caucus, Rural Caucus, Senate District Legislative and Assembly District Legislative meetings. This was an incredible opportunity to share about the work that we are doing locally and address the needs of our community. Our team shared how Tribal communities continue to be disproportionately impacted by commercial tobacco products.

The California Tobacco Endgame Center for Organizing & Engagement was committed to making I & E Days successful and impactful. Commercial tobacco is costing our state billions of dollars per year. This trip to advocate and promote a need for healthier communities was a success. Let's celebrate @AssemblymemberJamesRamos, @AssemblymemberChrisRogers, @SenatorMikeMcGuire, for their commitment to the health of their constituents by boldly standing up to #BigBadTobacco. Together we are saving lives. #VoicesAgainstTobacco! #SavingLives! #BuildingHealthierCommunities!



Telehealth Visits

Telehealth is a safe and easy way to get care. Whether you're feeling sick, need a follow-up, or want to talk about your medications, our providers are here for you. All you need is a phone, tablet, or computer. You'll talk with your provider just like you would in the clinic — only from the comfort of your home.

Why try Telehealth?

- Save travel time and gas
- Stay safe and comfortable at home
- Connect easily with your care team

Many clients have already used telehealth and love how simple it is. For busy parents, elders, or anyone with a tight schedule, it's a great way to keep up with your health without the extra hassle.

It's quick to get started. Just call your clinic like you normally would, and ask if telehealth is available for your visit.

See: **www.UIHS.org/Telehealth**

Da'-ye' Ghes-na' Family Wellness Project Services

Elidia Adams-Loya, HPE Supervisor, United Indian Health Services, Inc.

United Indian Health Services Inc, Da'-ye' Ghes-na' Family Wellness Project will work with clients and communities, children, youth, adults and their families who have been exposed to or are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and family violence to receive assistance, supports, care, information, and education from project staff that empowers them to make informed decisions in their personal lives that assist them in their healing journey. We can assist any person that is a client of United Indian Health Services.

Clients are entitled to the following services to assist them in escaping existing or potentially violent home environments. Services may be provided following an individual assessment of the situation, and on a case-by-case basis.

Available services:

- Assistance in creating a safety plan
- Assistance with finding emergency shelter
- Referring to available resources
- Being a confidential ear
- Assisting with protective orders
- Assisting with transportation needs
- Childcare assistance
- Job assistance
- Cultural classes
- Training/Workshops
- Providing basic toiletries
- Accompaniment to law enforcement interviews
- Accompaniment to tribal/non-tribal to court
- Assistance with acquiring identification, tribal/non-tribal

For more information, please contact the Tribal Public Health Division at 707.825.5070

What is Domestic Violence?

Elidia Adams-Loya, HPE Supervisor, Da'-ye' Ghes-na' Family Wellness Project

Domestic violence and dating violence happens when an intimate partner uses a repetitive pattern of abuse to maintain power and control over their partner. Abuse can physically harm, arouse fear, prevent a person from acting freely, or force them to behave in ways they do not want.

Abuse can happen to anyone. It is not limited to a specific age, class, religion, male or female. Abuse can happen in relationships where couples are married, living together, dating or have children together. Violent behavior can appear at any time in a relationship, though possessive, controlling and other alarming behavior often reveals itself as the relationship becomes more serious.

We know it can be difficult to talk about domestic violence in Tribal communities when people ignore that it's happening or feel uncomfortable when the subject comes up. However, the reality is that American Indians and Alaska Natives experience domestic violence at higher rates than other groups.

American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women, 4 out of 5 (84.3%) have experienced violence in their lifetime. For AI/AN men, 4 out of 5 men (81.6%) have experienced violence in their lifetime.

There are several types of abuse. People in abusive relationships often experience more than one type of abuse. Abusive behaviors can include, but are not limited to physical abuse, emotional abuse, cultural abuse, spiritual abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse and digital abuse.

Domestic violence and dating violence are not Native American traditions, and neither is ever okay.

If you or anyone you know is experiencing domestic violence, please contact the tribal Public Health Division at 707.825.5070 or the StrongHearts Native Helpline at 1.844.7NATIVE (762-8483).

UIHS CLINIC *Then...*

Then & Now: Honoring 55 Years of Growth and Care

As we celebrate 55 years of service to our communities, we're taking a moment to reflect on where UIHS started—and just how far we have come together. On the left side, you'll find a collection of historic photos capturing the early days of United Indian Health Services. These images, full of heart and humble beginnings, remind us of a time when our facilities were small, our staff even smaller, and every milestone was a community effort.

Flip your eyes to the right side of the page and you'll see those same locations today—transformed. From modest trailers and rented spaces to state-of-the-art health centers rooted in traditional values, the evolution of our sites is a testament to the vision, resilience, and dedication of the people we serve and those who serve them.

Each "Then & Now" pair tells a story of growth—not just in bricks and mortar, but in trust, relationships, and cultural strength. What was once an idea—tribal communities coming together to care for their own—has grown into a thriving network of health and wellness centers across Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Today, UIHS provides integrated care that honors the spirit and traditions of the people we serve.

SITES ...*And Now*

1970 - 2025 55 ANNIVERSARY UNITED INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

This photo feature is more than a walk down memory lane—it's a celebration of progress and partnership. Every new clinic, renovation, and upgrade represents decades of advocacy, teamwork, and community input. And while the buildings may look different, our purpose remains unchanged: to provide high-quality, culturally grounded care that honors our past and invests in our future.

Here's to 55 years of growing together—and to the many stories still to come.

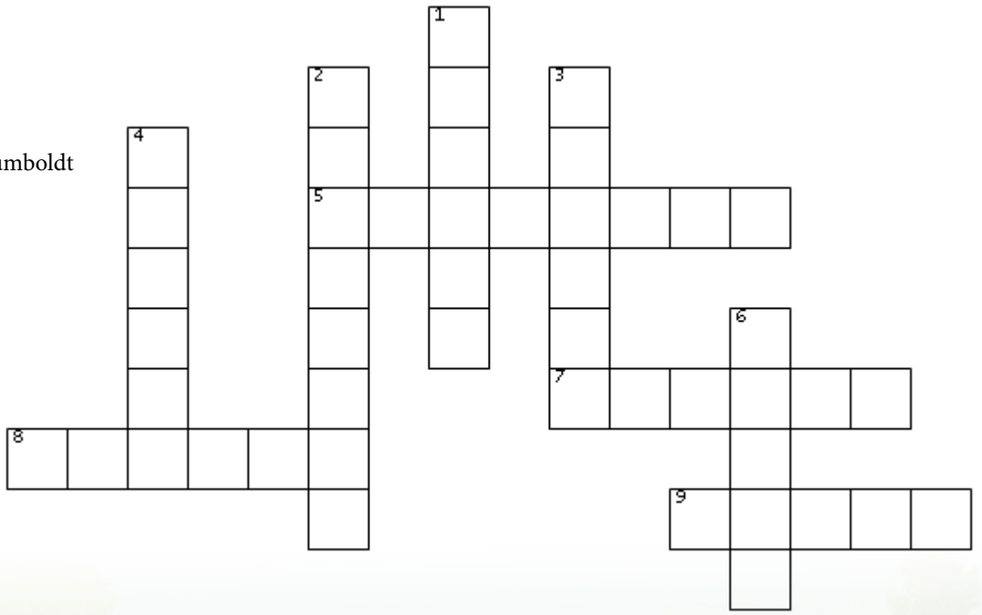
Cavity Free Club

Hudson Bobillot	6 Yrs Old
Joseph Lemley	11 Yrs Old
Josie Jameson	5 Yrs Old
Emmett Lawson	4 Yrs Old
Otto	6 Yrs Old
Lola	4 Yrs Old
Cameron	9 Yrs Old
Harlynn	12 Yrs Old
Makenna	9 Yrs Old
Kash	5 Yrs Old
Emma	12 Yrs Old
Thiago Chavez	4 Yrs Old
Bailey Thompson	7 Yrs Old
Rene Nunez	6 Yrs Old
Rayden Husted	7 Yrs Old
Genesis Gonzalez	7 Yrs Old
Damian Allen Jr.	3 Yrs Old
Braxxtyn Allen	1 Yrs Old
Brendan Gensaw	10 Yrs Old
Lincoln Gensaw	7 Yrs Old
Sophia Keeling	8 Yrs Old
Naa Din Nus Hostler	5 Yrs Old
Axel Ownsbey	7 Yrs Old
Ryder Singletary	6 Yrs Old
Parker Friedrich	9 Yrs Old
T Key Roh Smith	4 Yrs Old
Madalynn Bullwinkel	3 Yrs Old
Makoah Mathewson	12 Yrs Old
Alynn (Alfreda) Velazquez	10 Yrs Old
Gunner Murray	9 Yrs Old
Palmer Murray	4 Yrs Old
Quincy Titus	10 Yrs Old
Tyler Rexford	10 Yrs Old
Jerome Everta	15 Yrs Old
Karmynn Cole	9 Yrs Old
Lillyanna Phillippi	11 Yrs Old
Fisher Moulton	9 Yrs Old
Lonan Aguilera	9 Yrs Old
Kate Gertsch	4 Yrs Old
Evin Hall	11 Yrs Old
Annalee Rodriguez	9 Yrs Old
Austyn Duran	6 Yrs Old
Nita George	6 Yrs Old
Kynadi Guerrero	10 Yrs Old
Olivine Veradona Morgan	3 Yrs Old
Thomas Hawk Davis Bolanos	6 Yrs Old
Amorette Baloy	9 Yrs Old
Antonio Iskra II	
Marlo Myers	4 Yrs Old
Koda Nelson	12 Yrs Old
Ayva Avelar	8 Yrs Old
Jaxon Schultheis	7 Yrs Old
Wade Townsend	3 Yrs Old
Abby Boyer	11 Yrs Old
Caleb Lingren	2 Yrs Old
Leah John	14 Yrs Old
Juniper Soares	2 Yrs Old
Greyson Hicks	11 Yrs Old
Temperance Smith	5 Yrs Old
Caitlyn Sand	9 Yrs Old
Karrie Sanderson	12 Yrs Old
Quintin Ramos	3 Yrs Old
Casssius Trujillo	6 Yrs Old
Valentina Jaime	4 Yrs Old
Waa-Sayn-Ni Bommelyn	11 Yrs Old
Mee-Srii-Ghvih-Ha Bommelyn	4 Yrs Old
Eugene Morales	15 Yrs Old
Ishyuux Marshall	7 Yrs Old
Davina Brown	9 Yrs Old
Terra Tupper	5 Yrs Old
Kennedy Howard	12 Yrs Old
Yaamach Marshall	7 Yrs Old
Houston Goucher	3 Yrs Old

MINI CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
5. Getting wet to beat the heat
7. The best places to swim in Del Norte and Humboldt
8. One of many services at UIHS
9. ___back riding

DOWN
1. Taking a walk down the trail
2. The sport with pitchers and batters
3. The season for fun
4. One of many services at UIHS
6. Delicious Summer Fruit



WORD SEARCH

C	U	H	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N	C
C	H	A	W	C	W	A	L	K	S	C	H	S
A	C	M	E	U	R	N	O	E	G	Y	C	U
V	O	M	J	P	C	N	N	R	N	C	E	M
I	M	O	S	Q	U	I	T	O	S	G	V	M
T	P	N	E	U	G	V	M	A	T	E	A	E
Y	A	D	E	A	A	E	E	C	R	F	C	R
F	S	T	K	M	R	R	C	U	R	M	C	C
R	S	R	N	E	D	S	T	P	I	R	I	A
E	I	A	C	D	E	A	U	T	U	M	N	M
E	O	I	M	E	N	R	M	R	D	G	E	P
I	N	L	K	E	S	Y	S	D	S	G	S	R
C	S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N	T	E	U

sunscreen
gardens
anniversary
wellness
nature
Hammond trail
mosquitos
summer camp
hawcwalk
autumn
vaccines
health services
elder outreach
ceremony
generations
compassion
education
telehealth
farmers market
cavity free

Our 2025 Board Election Results

UNITED INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION
JUNE 11, 2025

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

AREA 3	VOTE BY MAIL	HAND TALLY	TOTAL	%
GAIL BURCELL	17	0	17	15.89%
MADISON FLYNN	30	1	31	28.97%
CAROL LARSEN	59	0	59	55.14%

VOTER PARTICIPATION		
REGISTERED VOTERS AREA 3	BALLOTS COUNTED	PARTICIPATION %
1369	107	7.82%
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS	TOTAL BALLOTS COUNTED ALL AREAS	PARTICIPATION %
1369	107	7.82%

For more information regarding elections see:

www.UIHS.org/Board-Elections/

Board Members

Primary
Paula(Pimm) Tripp-Allen, Joe Giovannetti, Shirley Laos, Fawn Murphy, Denise Padgette, Laura White Woods, Carol Larsen, Laura Borden, Melissa Myers, Teresa Ballew, Aileen Meyer, LaWanda Green, Debbie Boardman, Lana McCovey

Alternate
Charlene Storr, Corbin Childs, John Green, Lezlie Heckel, Madison Flynn, Lana McCovey

Board Members contact:

- 1600 Weeot Way, Arcata CA 95521-5734
- Telephone: 707.825.5000
- Fax 707.825.6747

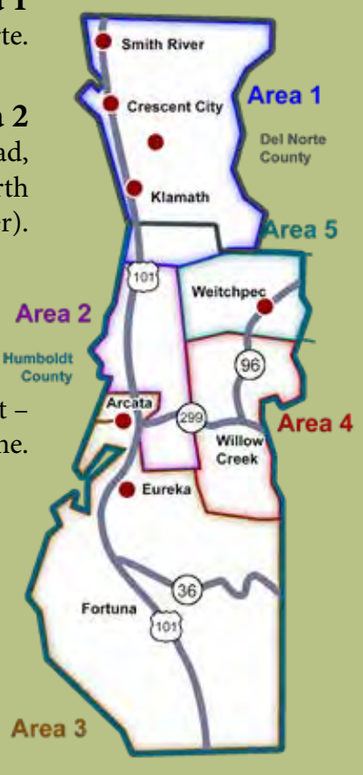
Area 1
In and around Del Norte.

Area 2
In and around Orick, Trinidad, Mckinleyville, and Blue Lake (North of the Mad River).

Area 3
In and around Arcata, Eureka and all points south to the Humboldt – Mendocino County Line.

Area 4
In and around Hoopa and Willow Creek.

Area 5
In and around Pecwan, Weitchpec and Orleans.



Resource List

UIHS	
Potawot Health Village (Arcata)	
All Services	(707) 825-5000
Dental	(707) 825-5040
Medical	(707) 825-5010
Pharmacy	(707) 825-5020
Vision	(707) 825-4129
WIC	(707) 825-5030
Behavioral Health	(707) 825-5060
PT/OT	(707) 296-2540
Tribal Public Health	(707) 825-5070
Nutrition	(707) 825-5070
Purchased Referred Care	(707) 825-5080
Client Records	(707) 825-5065
Elk Valley	(707) 464-2919
Eureka 1.0 Clinic	(707) 442-0380
Jaroujiji Health Clinic	(707) 296-2500
Eureka Medical Clinic	(707) 442-0380
Gou Wen-Out Wuk	(707) 296-2540
Valley East Village	(707) 825-3700
Hop'-ew Puel (Klamath)	(707) 482-2181
Taa-'at-dvn (Crescent City)	(707) 464-2750
Xaa-wan'-k'wvt (Smith River)	(707) 487-0215
Weitchpec Health Center	(530) 625-4300
Da'bouruk Dental Clinic	(707) 296-2525
WIC (All clinics)	(707) 825-5030

Local	
Rape Crisis Team Del Norte	(707) 465-2851
Rape Crisis Team Humboldt	(707) 445-2881
Victim Witness Assistance	(707) 445-7417
Child Welfare	(707) 445-6180
Elder Support Services	(707) 476-2100
Humboldt Crisis Unit	(707) 445-7715
Del Norte Public Health	(707) 464-3191
Humboldt DHHS	(707) 445-6200
DHHS Transition-Age Youth	(707) 476-4944
Planned Parenthood Eureka	(707) 442-5700
Queer Humboldt	(707) 502-2890
Hum Domestic Violence	(707) 443-6042
Health Insurance Advocacy	(707) 444-3000
Harrington House Shelter	(707) 465-3013
Bikers Against Child Abuse	(707) 496-3004

If you know of a resource that should be added to the list, please contact us at media@uihs.org

Tribal	
Yurok Health and Human Services	(707) 482-1350
Tolowa Dee-ni' Family Services	(707) 487-9255
California Indian Legal Services	(707) 443-8397
Bear River Rancheria	(707) 733-1900
Blue Lake Rancheria	(707) 668-5101
California Tribal TANF	(707) 476-0344
Hoopa TANF	(530) 625-4816
Karuk Tribe	(530) 493-1600
NCIDC	(707) 445-8451
Stop the Violence Coalition	(530) 625-1662
Tolowa Dee-ni' In A Good Way Place	(503) 230-1951
Yurok Tribe Klamath	(707) 482-1350

Elk Valley Office
2298 Norris Ave.
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Xaa-wan'-k'wvt
501 N Indian Rd.
Smith River, CA 95567
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Jaroujiji Health Clinic
434, 7th Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Monday-Friday
8:00AM-5:00PM
Closed for Lunch 12pm-1pm

Eureka Medical Clinic
2505 Lucas Street, Suite A
Eureka, CA 95501
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Taa-'at-dvn
1675 Northcrest Drive
Crescent City, CA 95531
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
Saturday 9am-2pm

Valley East Village
4715 Vallet East Blvd
Arcata, CA 95521
Monday-Friday 8am-4pm
Closed for lunch 12pm-1pm

Gou Wen-Out Wuk
2121 Myrtle Ave
Eureka CA, 95501
Monday–Friday
8:00am–5:00pm
Closed for lunch
12:00pm-1:00pm

Potawot Health Village
1600 Weeot Way
Arcata, CA 95521
Monday-Friday
8:00AM-5:00PM
Saturday 9:00pm-2:00pm
Pharmacy 8:30pm-5:30pm

Weitchpec
11500 CA-96
Weitchpec, CA 95546
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-3pm (Medical)
2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month 9:30am-3pm

Da'bouruk Dental Clinic
525 7th Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Monday-Friday
8:00AM-5:00PM
Closed for Lunch

Hop'-ew Puel
241 Salmon Avenue
Klamath, CA 95548
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8am-4pm

1600 Weeot Way
Arcata, CA 95521

Acornbasket

Chief Executive Officer: Elizabeth Lara-O'Rourke
Layout/Design: Richard LaPreziosa, Devin Jacot

Mini Crossword Answers:
Across - 5. swimming - 7. rivers - 8. dental - 9. horse
Down - 1. hiking - 2. baseball - 3. summer - 4. vision - 6. melon

Get Acornbasket Newsletter mailed or emailed to you!
Please fill in this form and return to:

Marketing Department
United Indian Health Services, Inc.
1600 Weeot Way, Arcata, CA 95521

Name: _____
Street/P.O. Box: _____
City: _____
State: _____ ***Zip*** _____
Email: _____

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