We are continuing to explore ways to use educational programs and economic development initiatives to cultivate community food projects and partnerships. Our Tribal leaders have been discussing a community garden on our lands and also our own Farmers’ Market, selling our own healthy foods and beverages, along with area farmers’ bounty. Our Tribe is committed to preserving and promoting our land, our healthy, traditional foods, and our health. We strive to raise a healthier generation of Meherrin Indian children and showcase the movement we have made here in Ahoskie on doing so! Please help us break ground on our community garden and other health goals!

**American Indian Healthy Eating Project**

Our Tribe has been collaborating with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill since March 2009 on a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded Healthy Eating Research project. Tribal leaders and members provided insight into our local food environment and the potential for community changes to promote healthy eating.
At the Unity Conference 2011, we shared our Tribe’s health initiatives during a collaboration building workshop. Devonna Mountain shared our passion for exploring community food projects and partners and specifically our hopes to break ground on a community garden on our land. During the Unity Conference, we teamed up with six other NC Tribes and four Urban Indian Organizations to request support from Kate B. Reynolds Foundation for a two-year capacity building workshop series focused on community change around healthy eating and active living. Devonna explains “the Tribal Council is excited about continuing the momentum of the American Indian Healthy Eating Project and participating in workshops to help us further our healthy eating, active living, and economic development goals!” Recently, we have been approved for funding and look forward to hopefully beginning Healthy, Native North Carolinians this fall! And, hope to celebrate the launch at our 22nd Annual Pow Wow with traditional foods and dancing this coming October 21th to 23rd!

Tools for Healthy Tribes was created through a partnership between the American Indian Healthy Eating Project and the following Tribes: Coharie Tribe, Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Meherrin Indian Tribe, Sappony, and Waccamaw Siouan Tribe. Explore the website for ways you can help advance American Indian health!

Our youth participated in a Native Youth Healthy Eating Art Contest and their work was part of the Tools for Healthy Tribes! The work of our art contest winner, Chole Hunter, is hanging in the NC Commission of Indian Affairs! Chole won a $50 Walmart gift card!

Healthy, Native North Carolinians

“The American Indian Healthy Eating Project has been blessed to build partnerships with the NC Commission of Indian Affairs, seven Tribes in North Carolina, and with all the Tribal leaders, liaisons, and advisors who have given so much of their time and thoughts to facilitate united approaches to advance American Indian health within their Tribes, across the state, and throughout Indian country.”

Sheila Fleischhacker, PhD, JD
American Indian Health Eating Project
Co-Principal Investigator

Tools for Healthy Tribes: http://americanindianhealthyeating.unc.edu
Dr. Terry Hall has been practicing dentistry for over 27 years. In 1986, he returned home and opened a dental office in Ahoskie. Dr. Hall gets “satisfaction in relieving pain in patients.” He also feels a “sense of achievement in seeing the joy patients express when their smile is restored.”

Dr. Hall believes “the health of the mouth has a physical, emotional, and psychological effect on the patient. Proper nutrition is critical to a healthy mouth, which in turn influences the systemic health of the entire body.”

In addition, Dr. Hall is Vice-Chair of the Hertford County Public Health Authority and a Meherrin Indian Tribe Tribal Council Member. He and his wife Denyce have raised three children; two now off to college!

Dr. Aaron Winston

Over the past decade, Dr. Winston has involved himself in the Native community as a Tribal Council member, traditional dancer, as well as a Pow-Wow drummer and singer. In his professional life, Dr. Winston has “taken the position that it is his pleasure, privilege, and charge to accurately educate and promote healthy living through proper nutrition, exercise, and, of course, Chiropractic.” Since 1999, Dr. Winston owns and operates a thriving Chiropractic practice known as Winston Chiropractic Care, P.C. in Richmond, Virginia. The primary goals of the practice are to care for and educate patients on how to live healthier and happier through Chiropractic and wellness activities. Learn more at: www.winstonchiropractic.com.

Duvonya has practiced pharmacy for over 27 years in both clinical and retail settings, specializing in natural pharmacy and board certified in clinical nutrition. She enjoys “explaining to patients and community members the importance of proper nutrition, vitamin and herbal supplementation, drug-nutrient interactions, and genetics in metabolic pathways and certain disease states.” Duvonya would like to see “our Meherrin tribal members become more aware on how to achieve and maintain healthy bodies. This is much needed in our community in order to manage diabetes, blood pressure/heart disease, obesity, GI problems and other chronic illnesses which can be managed nutritionally.”

Duvonya Chavis, RPh, CCN
Community Spotlight: Devonna Mountain

Devonna has been our lead Tribal Liaison for the American Indian Healthy Eating Project for over a year. She has helped coordinate a modified Talking Circle with our Tribal leaders and project research team on healthy eating and research engagement. Devonna has also coordinated Tribal input on the research project and related papers. She recruited, hosted, and judged our Native Youth Healthy Eating Art Contest too. We appreciate all Devonna has done on this project and towards raising a healthier generation of Meherrin Indian children. “As a mom and Tribal Council member, I believe promoting healthy eating and active living within our Tribe is a critical ingredient to our long term goals of preserving and advancing our Tribe. I love watching my son participate in karate and step competitions. Trying to keep up with him and my growing family keeps me active and inspires me to take on new health goals!”

The First Lady Michelle Obama has been working on developing a special initiative within her Let’s Move! campaign called: Let’s Move! in Indian Country. She is pushing Indian Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations to focus on:

1) Creating a Healthy Start on Life
2) Developing Healthy Schools
3) Increasing Physical Activity
4) Fostering Healthy, Comprehensive Food System Policies

Full Circle Movement—Sign up and MOVE the conversation!

A movement is not an organization separate from Tribal leadership, churches, or families. Full Circle Movement is within each of us and in all of these settings. It happens when we talk and listen to one another, heal together, and focus collectively towards a common goal of encouraging our people to live longer, healthier lives. Let’s look within and speak out together! Join the Movement!

Randi Byrd,
Workshop Coordinator
American Indian Center at UNC
rrbyrd@email.unc.edu
919-843-4189

Tony V. Locklear,
Executive Director
The Healing Lodge
nativeelderassist@yahoo.com
910-522-0900