

Washburn calls for Hope for Life Day during National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month to raise awareness throughout Indian Country

WASHINGTON – As part of President Obama’s Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) and Tiwahe initiatives, Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn recently announced that he is calling for Sept. 10 to be known as Hope for Life Day to raise awareness in Indian Country about suicide prevention during National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

Suicide strikes Native youth especially hard. The suicide rate among American Indians age 15-34 is more than two times higher than the national average.

“Suicide wounds every person, family and community it touches,” Washburn said. “Native communities suffer from a suicide rate that is more than twice the national average. There is no greater tragedy in Indian Country. Our president has heard about the effects of suicide on Native communities and has directed his administration to work harder to address it. There are no easy cures and it will require a broad commitment to address it. Hope for Life Day will bring greater awareness of this issue in Indian Country and provide information about suicide prevention to help save lives.”

In August, the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention’s American Indian and Alaska Native Task Force announced the first National American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Suicide Prevention Hope for Life Day.

Going forward, Hope for Life Day will be held annually on Sept. 10 in conjunction with World Suicide Prevention Day.

President Obama’s Gen-I initiative focuses on removing the barriers that stand between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed, using a comprehensive, culturally appropriate approach to help improve the lives and opportunities for Native youth.

The Tiwahe Initiative, launched in FY 2015, addresses family welfare and poverty issues; invests in education, economic development and sustainable stewardship of natural resources; and advances a strategy to reduce incarceration in Indian Country.

The Hope for Life Day is part of the Action Alliance’s AI/AN Task Force’s efforts to change the conversation about suicide and promote hope, life, cultural resiliency and community transformation.

It is an effort specifically designed for Tribal communities to raise awareness about suicide and seek ways to address it, particularly among the teens and adults who are at a high level of risk for taking their own lives.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control:

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives age 15-34.

- The suicide rate among American Indian and Alaska Native adolescents and young adults age 15-34 is 2.5 times higher than the national average for that age group.

The task force has developed the Hope for Life Day toolkit to assist health professionals and grassroots organizers working in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The AI/AN Task Force is a public partnership formed to advance the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention as it pertains to AI/AN communities. The assistant secretary is joined in co-leading the task force by Indian Health Service Principal Deputy Director Robert G. McSwain.

The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention is the public-private partnership working to advance the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and make suicide prevention a national priority.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, through the Education Development Center, Inc., operates the Secretariat for the Action Alliance, which was launched in 2010 by former U.S. Health and Human Services

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates with the goal of saving 20,000 lives in five years.

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which directly administers or funds Tribally based infrastructure, economic development, law enforcement and justice, social services (including child welfare), Tribal governance, and trust land and natural and energy resources management programs for the nation’s federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes.

The assistant secretary also oversees the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), which operates the federal 183-school system for American Indian and Alaska Native elementary and secondary students from federally recognized Tribes.

BIE also provides post-secondary education opportunities through higher education scholarships and operational support funding to more than 20 Tribal colleges and universities, two Tribal technical colleges, Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., and the Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, N.M.

10th Annual Northwest Indian Storytelling Festival

Presented by Northwest Indian Storytellers Association and Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.
 Friday October 16th, 7:00 - 9:30 PCC Cascade, Moriarty Auditorium
 Saturday October 17th, 7:00 - 9:30 Portland Art Museum, Mark Building



For more information and details visit <http://wisdomoftheelders.org/nisa>
 Email nisa@wisdomoftheelders.org or call D’Ana Soto (503) 775-4014

Free resource available for Oregonians who have problems with their insurance

Many people don’t realize there is a state resource that can help when they are faced with a denied claim, a confusing policy or uncertainty about coverage choices.

The Oregon Insurance Division has recently launched an awareness campaign to make sure Oregonians know they have a team of experienced consumer advocates available to help with problems related to health, auto, life or other types of insurance.

Advocates help explain complex policies, resolve miscommunications with insurance companies and in cases where there has been a mistake, work toward a resolution. Last year, advocates helped clients reclaim more than \$1 million in unpaid benefits.

The Insurance Division also can assist on the front end, when you’re buying insurance, to help you avoid common mistakes.

These services can be a big help to you, your friends and families, so visit online at insurance.oregon.gov or call an advocate at 888-877-4894 if you have any questions.

The service is free, confidential, and available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**INSURANCE PROBLEMS?
 WE CAN HELP.**

Call 888-877-4894 or visit Insurance.Oregon.gov



Siletz News Letters Policy

Siletz News, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Siletz News* and other tribal issues.

All letters must include the author’s signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. *Siletz News* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain profane language, libelous statements, personal attacks, or unsubstantiated statements.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Siletz News*, Tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

Please note: The general manager of the Siletz Tribe is the editor-in-chief of *Siletz News*.

Editor-in-Chief: Brenda Bremner

Editor: Diane Rodriguez