



## National Public Health Leadership Development Network

2007 Balderson Leadership Project Awards

**WINNER**

### Great Basin Public Health Leadership Institute

#### Individual/Team Members

Name	Grad. Year From Institute	Credentials	Job Title	Place of Employment
Jerianne H. Kolby	2007	CPM	Homeland Security Grant Program Manager	Utah Dept. of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security
Konnie Parke	2007	RN	Strategic National Stockpile Clinical Coordinator	Utah Dept. of Health, Bureau of Emergency Services

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### Tribal Readiness Within Utah Borders

Overview: American Indian reservations within Utah borders are physically isolated from neighboring communities and their resources, i.e. emergency medical services, hospitals, utilities, etc. Reservation lands may be over a hundred miles away from the nearest hospital or clinic, requiring travel on unpaved roads often made impassable by bad weather. Most tribes are sovereign nations. Tribal members have expressed feelings of mistrust/isolation with governmental entities, and among other tribes. All Reservation lands within Utah's boundaries share borders with neighboring states, counties and local public health jurisdictions. Confusion about Tribal Sovereignty results in a lack of outreach and coordination from bordering governments and departments. This is especially true when it comes to sharing funds and resources from state and federal governments. Not only are tribes physically isolated from each other, they do not share the same form of government, religion, traditions, cultural heritage, and oral traditions. American Indian tribes are not, however, isolated from disease outbreaks, natural or man-made disasters, or other emergencies. Tribal members within Utah borders are also among the most vulnerable of populations, having the greatest health disparities, and the least resources within the state.

Focus: The initial focus of the project was to conduct and provide training to the Tribes on a tool called the Tribal Capability Assessment Readiness (T-CAR). It became immediately apparent that the more important first step entailed building or rebuilding relationships, and enabling future partnerships and resource sharing between the Tribes, state and other governmental agencies, and in so doing, improving relationships between the tribes.

Process: The project was a collaboration between two individuals attending Year 3 of Great Basin Public Health Leadership Institute (GBPHLI). They formed a team representing the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland

Security (DHS). The project was designed to meet shared objectives of both agencies, and addressed a critical need within an underserved population. There had been a poor history of past collaborative efforts because of a reciprocal lack of understanding and trust. The starting point was the development of positive relationships based on trust, respect, and creating personal friendships with Tribal leaders and members. The team members established a plan for outreach to tribal leaders resulting in over 20 visits to nine tribes in ten months. They collectively logged over 18,000 miles, 1,500 emails, 200 phone calls, and 64 in-person meetings; the number continues to rise.

Outcomes: There were many positive outcomes. The Team helped the Tribes develop by-laws creating the Utah Tribal Emergency Response Committee (UTERC), which resulted in a coordinated process for Tribes to receive grants from the state and other entities. Recently, UTERC received a grant to purchase emergency generators. In June, the DHS arranged and coordinated through a local church the delivery and donation of emergency bottled water and filters for the water storage tanks for the Navajo Mountain as they continue to have problems with their failed water system. This fall, the Navajo Nation will participate in the Statewide Public Health Emergency Response Exercise (SPHERE). They will set up an Emergency Operations Center at Window Rock, Arizona, and they will simulate an emergency drop for the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). We believe that this is the first event of this type in the nation.

Leadership Lessons Learned: Team members have a strong appreciation for the importance of creating solid relationships based on trust, respect, cultural sensitivity, and a willingness to work with Tribes at their pace, and using their processes. Results from this experience have been shared with EMS, DHS, and at other professional venues such as the annual meeting of the Utah Public Health Association.