



## HEALTH SERVICES

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### **Summary**

The Health Service program operates a food shelf, teaches traditional Native uses of tobacco and smoking prevention, culturally-specific sex education and heart attack prevention, and counsels pregnant women about infant mortality.

### **Program Areas**

#### **Heart of Many Nations**

This project was created to promote healthy lifestyle choices and address the leading cause of death in the American Indian population – heart disease. The project provides education and awareness through a culturally specific curriculum.

#### **Horizons Unlimited**

The only culturally sensitive food shelf in the Twin Cities serving the urban American Indian population.

#### **Live It!**

A culturally-specific sex education teen pregnancy prevention curriculum that teaches American Indian youth the four stages of life and the importance of integrating traditional teachings into their lives for healthier living. There is an emphasis on health issues that directly impact the American Indian community, including infant mortality & morbidity.

#### **Mashkiki Ogichidaag (Medicine Warriors)**

Teaches American Indian youth about the traditional uses of tobacco, including prayer, offerings, gift-giving, cleansing and medicine. The aim is to develop Native American youth into traditional tobacco advocates. The youth then engage the local community in commercial tobacco prevention, cessation and policy work.

#### **Women of Traditional Birthing**

Supporting pregnant American Indian women through mentoring, education and community outreach. The program also partners with health clinics and other service providers to ensure the continuing health of American Indian infants.



***“These are my people I’m feeding, and I have been there, I know what it is like to need to use a food shelf.”***

Maren Hardy about her role as food shelf manager for Horizons Unlimited

## **Facts and Stats**

- Horizon Unlimited has been supplying food to the urban American Indian population since 1952.
- American Indians have the highest cardiovascular disease mortality rate of any racial or ethnic group in the state (Minnesota Department of Health, 2007).
- More than 18,000 people benefited from the holiday food basket program in 2009.
- American Indians die more frequently from heart disease at younger ages than other racial and ethnic groups in the United States.
- Through various trainings, Live It! served 135 young people in 2009.
- Youth participating in Mashkiki Ogichidaag were instrumental in convincing the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board to implement a stricter no-smoking policy in 2010.

## **Director**

George Spears, 612-722-8722 x376, [gspears@diw-mn.org](mailto:gspears@diw-mn.org)



*“To see these youth grow and set goals and strengthen their knowledge in a healthy way (body, mind and spirit) is far beyond what we expected to achieve as staff. To support and teach them now is vital to our tribal people and our community.”*

Community leader commenting on Live It!