

“Culturally and Traditionally Keeping Women Healthy”

SPEAKERS:

- **Wanda Agnew, PhD, LRD**
- **Reba J. Walker, RN, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation**
- **Twila Martin-Kekahbah, M.ED, MFA, Turtle Mountain Band Chippewa Nation**
- **Alice Musumba, MPH, Epidemiologist**

The Women's Health Event was inspired by the National Women's Health Week, May 9-15, 2010.

National Women's Health Week is a weeklong health observance coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health (OWH). National Women's Health Week empowers women to make their health a top priority. With the theme "It's Your Time," the nationwide initiative encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. Important steps include:

- Getting at least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, one hour and 15

minutes of vigorous physical activity, or a combination of both each week.

- Paying attention to mental health, including getting enough sleep and managing stress.



Women's Health Event

- Eating a nutritious diet
- Visiting a health care professional to receive regular checkups and preventive screenings
- Avoiding risky behaviors, such as smoking and not wearing a seatbelt

In the State of North Dakota a proclamation recognizing Women's Health Week was signed by Governor John Hoeven in May of 2010. The website below is the link where a copy of the proclamation can be found.

<http://governor.state.nd.us/proc/docs/2010/05/20100509.pdf>

On May 26, 2010, The Office for the Elimination of Health Disparities (OEHD) sponsored a Women's Health Event in Memorial Hall at the State Capitol.

Four Women were invited to speak on the cultural and traditional ways the family kept their women healthy.



**Phyllis Howard, Director
OEHD**

Wanda's heritage is Norwegian-Russian



Wanda Agnew

Wanda's heritage is Norwegian-Russian which she portrayed in her women's health event presentation. She is big on community projects especially those that bring

women together as she called the "Sisterhood of Women." As a licensed dietitian she spoke about the foods

prepared by Russian and Norwegian women in the kitchen, from the garden, that kept the family healthy, which was the theme of the event. Her performance of "Mama's Table" by the Oak Ridge Boys resonated with us as we remembered our mothers table that

often brought our families together.



Reba is a Mandan Tribal elder



Reba J. Walker

Reba is a Mandan Tribal elder, whose family always had healthy food on the

table from the family garden. In summer she along with family picked berries that were made into jams and jellies. She

talked about garden seeds which are owned by the females in the family and the varieties that made Oscar Will's catalog famous. "Will", she said, "took corn from the Mandan's native corn he obtained from Fort Stevenson in 1882, and developed a corn that grew well in the area, which he named Pride of Dakota Flint." Although

she didn't sing any garden songs, she told the audience they "were love songs sung by the young women while working in the garden."



Twila is Chippewa enrolled with the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa



**Twila
Martin-
Kekahbah**

Twila is Chippewa enrolled with the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. Language and the tribe's seven teachings

are very important parts of her life helping her to maintain a healthy and well-balanced lifestyle. Gardening and berry picking were important summer events for her family. She told how her mother always made 100 jars of everything from vegetables to jams, which kept the family healthy throughout the year.

In her travels to 34 different countries, she always sought out foods that had some resemblance to her tribal foods.



Alice is an Epidemiologist in the Cancer Division of the Department of Health

Alice received her Agriculture undergraduate degree from the University of Nairobi, in Kenya. Her Masters degree in public health is from the University of Texas, at Houston Health



Science Center and is a charter class member of Certified Public Health. She was taught by the women in the village to keep the family healthy by practicing the tribal traditions which are passed from woman to woman. She was taught that women mentor other women, especially during pregnancy. Women are charged with keeping the home and preparing healthy foods for the family. When children become ill women healed

them with traditional medicines practiced by the tribal groups. She said "it truly takes a village to bring up a child."



Alice Musumba



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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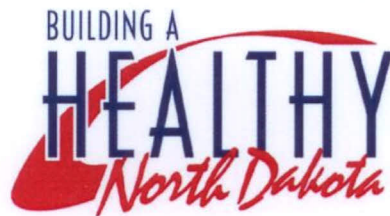
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Vision:

North Dakota's long-range health vision is to achieve health equity for all people.

Mission:

The mission of the Office for the Elimination of Health Disparities is to lead statewide efforts to address health disparities. Working toward fulfilling the mission, an office addressing health inequities was established in the North Dakota Department of Health in 2007.



Thank you to the speakers and to all of those that were able to make it to this event.



**Women's Health Event
Memorial Hall
State Capitol Building
May 26, 2010**