

Executive Summary

2020

ALASKA INDIGENOUS RESEARCH PROGRAM

PROMOTING RESILIENCE, HEALTH AND WELLNESS



ALASKA NATIVE
TRIBAL HEALTH
CONSORTIUM



ALASKA
PACIFIC
UNIVERSITY

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Project Background

The Alaska Indigenous Research Program (AKIRP) works to further advance the resilience, health, and wellness of Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) Peoples and their communities, students, health professionals and researchers. There is a great need to move beyond the limitations of currently available research training programs and for locally available research education and training opportunities. The program offers cross-cultural research education and experience for students, health practitioners, researchers, or community members who are interested in Indigenous health research. In collaboration with AN/AI communities, AKIRP was designed to increase the cultural competency of health researchers and scientists by emphasizing the importance of conducting research with a Tribally-driven and culturally responsive framework.

Overall Goal

The goal of this collaborative and capacity-building project between the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Alaska Pacific University is to develop a three week credit-bearing program at the APU campus in Anchorage, Alaska. The objective is to offer a local research training program for AN/AI college students, researchers and health professionals, as well as non-Native people who were trained outside of Alaska or not familiar with Alaska Native communities, traditions and practices. The program offers an opportunity for researchers and health professionals to strengthen their capacity to conduct culturally responsive and respectful health research which addresses the unique structure and health needs of Indigenous Peoples through the following learning objectives:

Overall Program Learning Objectives

- Understand Indigenous and Western ways of knowing as a foundation for Alaska Native health research
- Understand Indigenous methodologies in Alaska Native health research
- Understand community-based participatory research and how it aligns with the research process
- Recognize levels of community engagement and ownership of Alaska Native health research
- Understand the principles of ethics in Indigenous health research
- Describe the impact of past health research practices on current perceptions of health research among Indigenous/ Alaska Native peoples

Memorable Quotes from Participants

“Thank you again for including me in this experience, it was quite inspirational and valuable. I was able to hear some of my mentors and researchers whose work I have learned a great deal from during grad school. I was reflecting to colleagues and mentors that the content presented pulled components and lessons I learned throughout grad school together and gave me a sense of real world applications.”

Course Learning Objectives

Week One: Advanced Research May 4-8

Integrate Indigenous research methods and ways of knowing

Implement community-based participatory research practices

Apply best practices in community engagement: building rapport and connections with communities

Implement meaningful communication strategies and practices in dissemination of findings to communities

Recognize the role of historical trauma and research and how it impacts research projects

Week Two: Research Ethics May 11-15

Understand the historical context of the Alaska Area Institutional Review Board (IRB), university IRBs and Tribal review

Describe the role of historical trauma in health disparities and Indigenous mistrust in research and researchers

Understand how to navigate IRBs and the Tribal review processes

Manage varying expectations of IRBs and Tribal review

Describe researcher pathways for ethical health research with Indigenous communities

Week Three: Introductory Research May 18-22

Describe Indigenous and Western research methods

Understand how to implement community-based participatory research practices

Articulate the steps involved in the research process/cycle

Understand the role and value of different members of the research team

Describe different genres of health research

Understand the role of Indigenous health research in public health and its impact

Understand culturally relevant dissemination practices

Creation of Spirit of the Wolf Design

During the planning phases of 2020 AKIRP, Joseph and Martha Senungetuk, Elders-in-residence at APU and renowned artists provided creative input and designs to Matthew Bailey, Marketing Media Web Specialist with the Alaska Native Epidemiology Center at ANTHC who digitized and edited their work into a logo called, “Spirit of the Wolf,” a mask representing the Alaska Indigenous Research Program’s values, goals and mission. Together, Joseph, Martha and Karli Tyance Hassell described the significance of the mask to include in publications (see Appendix A).

The mask design was used in marketing materials such as schedules, flyers, website design, and promotional items. The promotional items included a tote, pen, notebook, mug, folders, and a water bottle. These items were mailed to participants who attended the weekly sessions in full and to the speakers for participating in or contributing to the program.

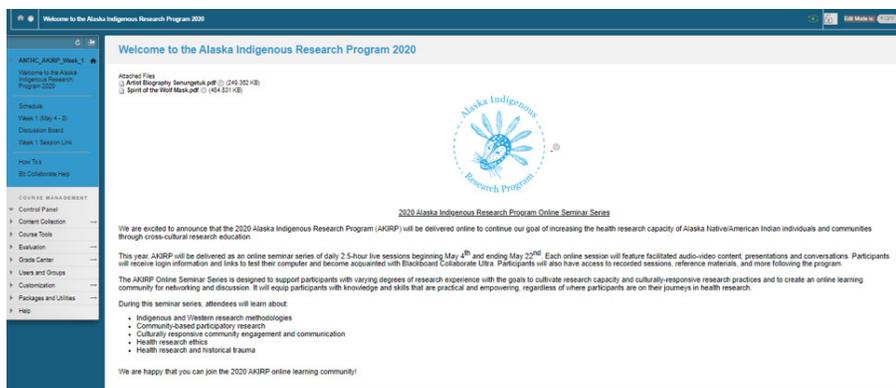


“In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.”
- Iroquois philosophy

Year 2 in Review

The second year’s theme was, “Promoting Resilience, Health and Wellness,” from May 4-22, 2020.

In light of the significant and ever-changing impact of COVID-19, the 2020 AKIRP planning team canceled the in-person research program. After shifting to an online format, the planning team delivered program materials through a series of daily segments for 2.5 hours through APU’s Blackboard Collaborate Ultra platform. See Figure 1. Blackboard course homepage for Week 1 below.



AKIRP’s Facebook Group Page

During the 2019 program, participants and speakers wished to keep in touch and stay informed of Program news. The Facebook group now has over 145 members, including past speakers, participants and those interested in the Program. As a private page, it is not currently open to the public and a request must be made to join the group. The Facebook group serves a repository of information related to Program news, in addition to sharing research opportunities, training or Indigenous-health research related topics. The Facebook group can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/akirp>.

Year 2 in Review, cont.

Each session began with a prayer or blessing from Elders Joseph and Martha Senungetuk, or Amy and Doug Modig. Karli Tyance Hassell, ANTHC Research Associate, provided a song and drumming to close sessions. The sessions featured audio-video content facilitated by speakers, presentations, and in-depth, reciprocal conversations among participants. Participants now have access to recorded sessions, reference materials, and more following the program.

The AKIRP Online Seminar Series was designed to support participants with varying degrees of research experience and equip participants with practical and empowering knowledge and skills regardless of their health research journeys.

The online sessions encouraged participant discussion and networking through a variety of interactive features such as live polling, whiteboards, breakout groups, discussion boards using the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra platform.

An important component of the program was discussing the history of intergenerational trauma and the history of mistrust between research entities and Tribal communities. The program aims to increase health researcher's cultural humility and sensitivity emphasizing the importance of Tribally-driven and culturally responsive research and building research capacity by supporting and growing Indigenous researchers and scholars.

AKIRP Online Sessions Schedule and Recordings

Week One:

Decolonizing and Indigenizing Research Methods presented by Danica Love Brown, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/375r0Xg>

Advancing Community-Centered Research presented by Anne Jensen, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/375r0Xg>

Indigenous Mentoring Network & Community Engagement in Research presented by Cheryl Barnabe, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/2ISDB8v>

Two-Eyed Seeing Workshop presented by Drs. Alexandra & Malcolm King, Sharon Jinkerson-Brass and Candice Norris
Link: <https://bit.ly/2JJY9d>

Indigenous Logic Modeling Workshop presented by Stacy Rasmus, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/375mJmX>

Indigenous Connectedness as a Framework for Relational Healing presented by Jessica Ullrich, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3pVacLq>

CBPR: A Journey of Self-Discovery presented by Jordan Lewis, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3pVacLq>

Week Two:

Calricaraq Yup'ik Wellness Model presented by Rose Domnick, Moses Ayagalria and Leona Johansson
Link: <https://bit.ly/3pVacLq>

rETHICS – Research Ethics Training for Health in Indigenous Communities presented by Cynthia Pearson, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3m3xegM>

Special Considerations: Genetics Research presented by Katrina Claw, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3mbe88k>

The Alaska Area Specimen Bank presented by Brenna Simons-Petrusa, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3mbe88k>

The Critical Role of Alaska Native Elders in Research presented by Melissa Castaneda, Rebecca Ervin and Maria Crouch, MS
Link: <https://bit.ly/3mbe88k>

IHS/AAIRB – Human Subjects Principles presented by Terry Powell
Link: <https://bit.ly/3kZO8eM>

Public Health Surveillance and the 2018 Common Rule: Ethical and Regulatory Considerations presented by Laura Youngblood, MPH
Link: <https://bit.ly/3kZO8eM>

Tribal Review of Health Research presented by Abbie Willetto, MA
Part 1 Link: <https://bit.ly/3kZO8eM>
Part 2 Link: <https://bit.ly/3fz4EL6>

Week Three:

Indigenous Ways of Knowing presented by Agatha Panigkaq John-Shields, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/375pxjZ>

Developing a Research Proposal presented by Sarah Nash, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/397yls3>

Study Design, Data and Analysis & Where to Find Data presented by Gretchen Day, MPH
Link: <https://bit.ly/397yls3>

Creating Ethical and Inclusive Spaces of Engagement for Indigenous Research presented by Larissa Crawford
Link: <https://bit.ly/35ZdTri>

Becoming a Resilient Scientist presented by Sharon Milgram, PhD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3nQOWVq>

Health Careers & Medical School: Tricks, Tips, Techniques for Applying presented by Mary Owen, MD
Link: <https://bit.ly/3nQOWVq>

Attendance & Demographics

AKIRP brought together a diverse group of roughly 135 participants and guest speakers. Quantifiable characteristics and associated information were obtained through participant application forms and demographic analysis was completed. There are a few notes to highlight about the participant data:

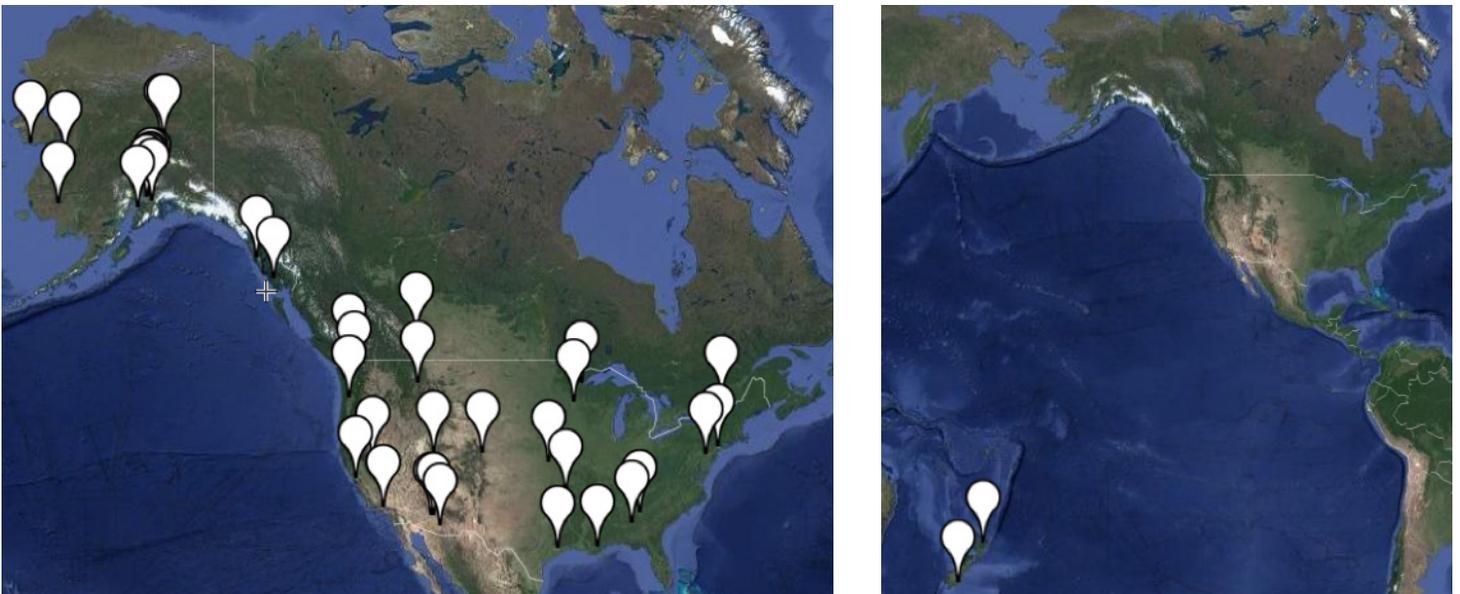
1. Participants were allowed to select more than one ethnicity or race and profession or occupation on their program application
2. Due to the cancellation of in-person programming, the planning team made exceptions for last-minute participant registration and therefore were not able to obtain some demographic information.
3. Participants who attended multiple weeks were encouraged to fill out the second part of the evaluation once. These questions included overall program feedback.

Week Number	Number of Participants
Week 1	77
Week 2	83
Week 3	35
Total Participants	101*

*The total participant number is 101 because some participants could have been registered for more than one week.

Geographic Reach

Figure 2. Geographic reach of the program participants.



Memorable Quotes from Participants

“I applied to be a mentor based on one of the speaker’s presentations. I’m considering a PhD program, so exposure to more current research is inspiring and helps organize my own thoughts.”

“So many great ideas and methods to fit with my world view.”

“Being aware of the importance of CBPR and decolonizing my research is something I will carry forward.”

Demographics

A total of 101 unique participants participated with many attending more than one week. Approximately 45% of AKIRP participants identified as Indigenous which includes Alaska Native, American Indian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Maori, Mexican Indigenous, 37% identified as white, 2% identified as Hispanic-Latino, 4% identified as Asian, 4% identified as Black/African American and 8% were listed as unknown because the information was not provided or explicitly stated. Participant's education level for all three weeks reported 7% with high school degrees, 1% Associates degree, 40% with bachelor degrees, 27% with Graduate degrees, 14% PhDs and 11% reported Other.

Figure 3. Participant Race/Ethnicity

Figure 4. Participant Gender

AKIRP PARTICIPANT RACE/ETHNICITY*

AKIRP PARTICIPANT GENDER

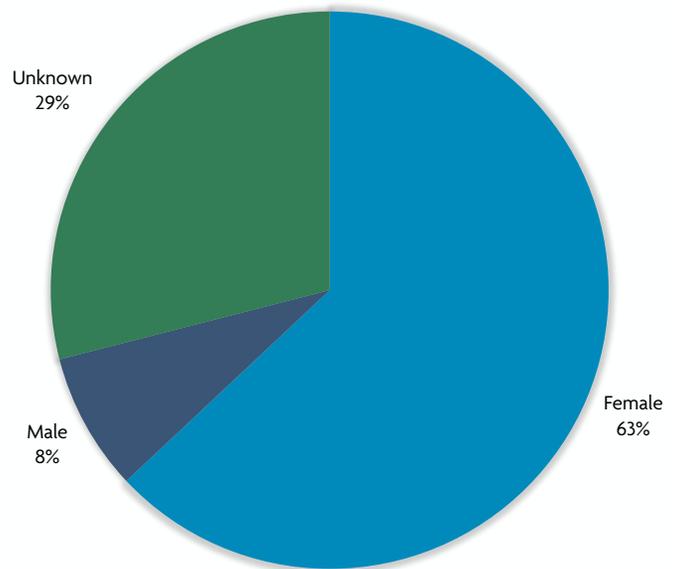
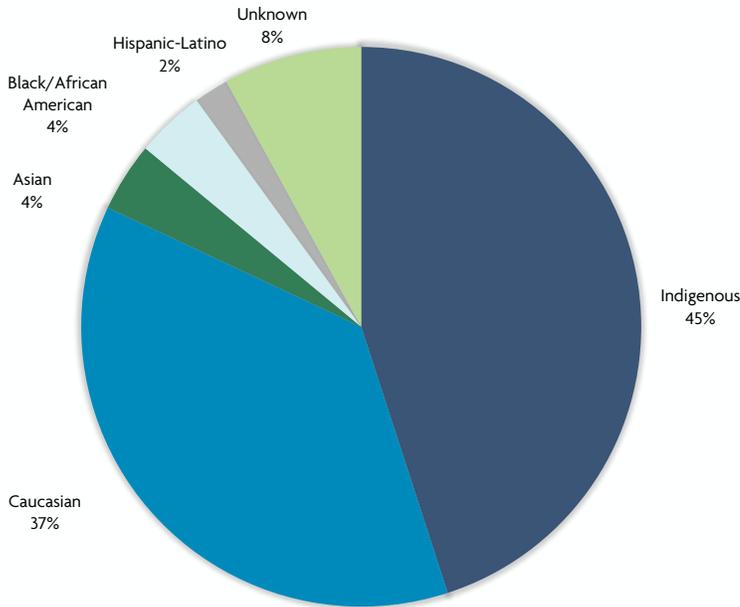
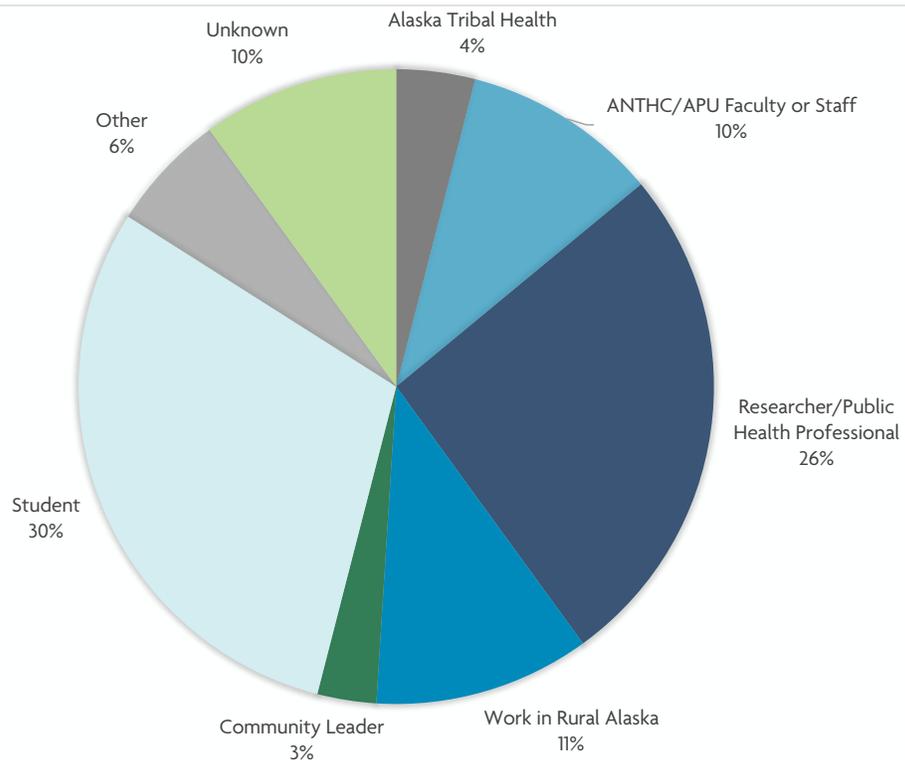


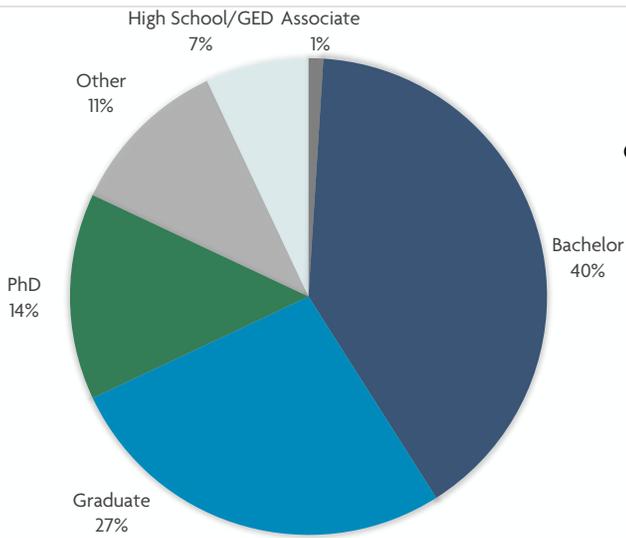
Figure 5. Participant Occupation & Area of Work

AKIRP PARTICIPANT AREA OF OCCUPATION/WORK

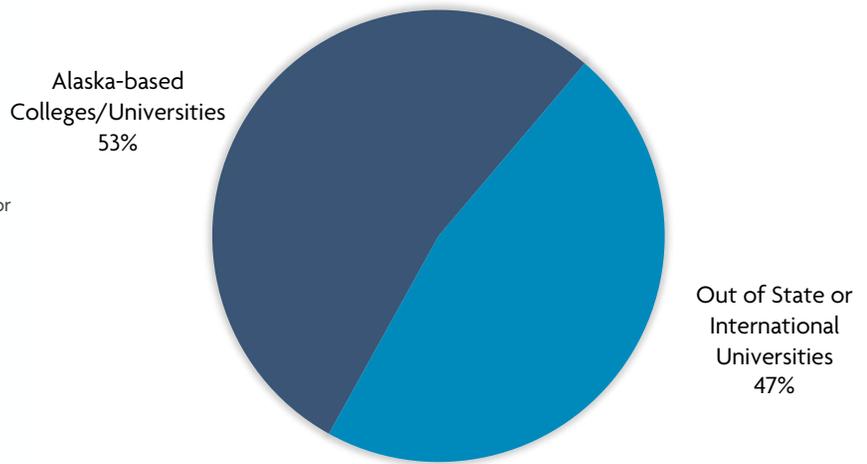


Figures 6 and 7. Educational Background

AKIRP PARTICIPANT LEVEL OF EDUCATION



AKIRP PARTICIPANTS: UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE STUDENTS



Undergraduate Credits

Due to COVID-19 and the cancellation of in-person programming, we were not able to offer any credits for this year.

Interns

Due to COVID-19 and work-from-home guidelines administered by ANTHC and the APU campus closure, we were not able to offer internships. We received 11 internship applications total, with 6 applicants for the undergraduate-level internship and 5 applicants for the graduate-level internship positions. Many of the applicants were highly qualified and encouraged to apply next year.

Favorite Presentations

Participants were asked to vote for their favorite presentation of the day and provide any comments (Table 3).

Table 3. Favorite presentations

	<i>Presented by</i>	<i>Presentation Title</i>
Week 1	Danica Love Brown, PhD	Decolonizing and Indigenizing Research Methods
Week 2	Rose Domnick, Leona Johansson, and Moses Ayagalria	Calricaraq
Week 3	Larissa Crawford	Creating Ethical and Inclusive Spaces of Engagement for Indigenous Research

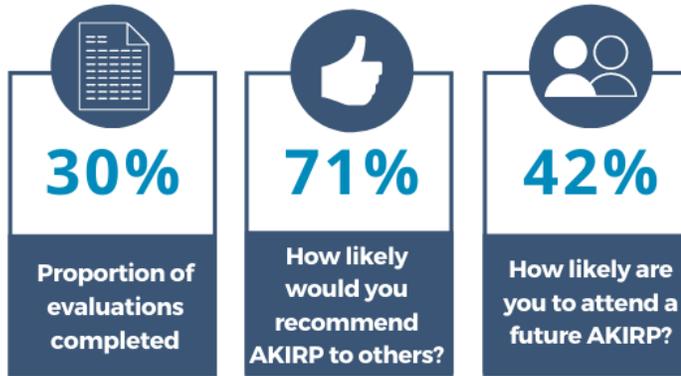
Program Evaluation

Participants were asked to submit weekly, anonymous evaluations to provide participant feedback on expertise, presentations, online support and general program improvement recommendations.



PROGRAM EVALUATION

WEEK 1

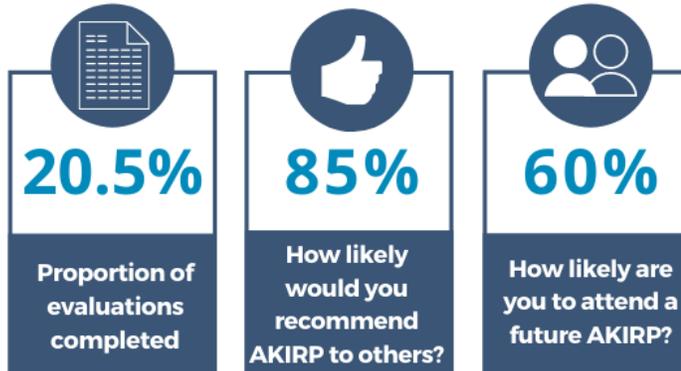


Week 1 Participant Quotes:

“Really fabulous presenters. I took 16 pages of notes!”

“I have already incorporated some of the practices and knowledge into my graduate work from earlier this week. Hearing and seeing and learning from strong Indigenous people is always inspiring and helps with burn out. These presentations are always reassuring and inspiring.”

WEEK 2



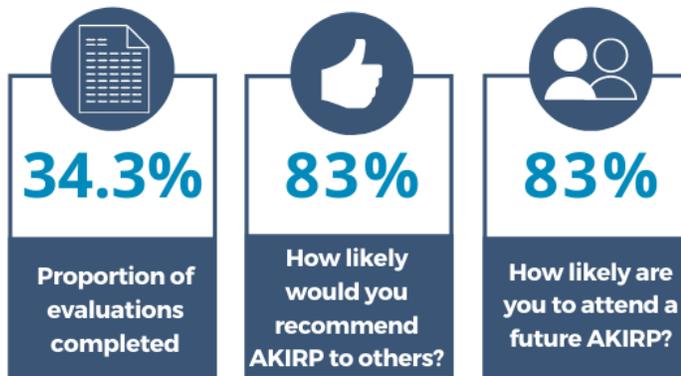
Week 2 Participant Quotes:

“Every day brought something new and engaging. I really enjoyed everyone’s participation and work they put in for this to happen during these challenging times.”

“I learned so much not only about Indigenous knowledge and research methods, but also about myself. Thank you.”

“Again, too many ways to list, but I am very grateful and honored to have had this wonderful learning experience early in my research career so that I may build upon it throughout my life.”

WEEK 3



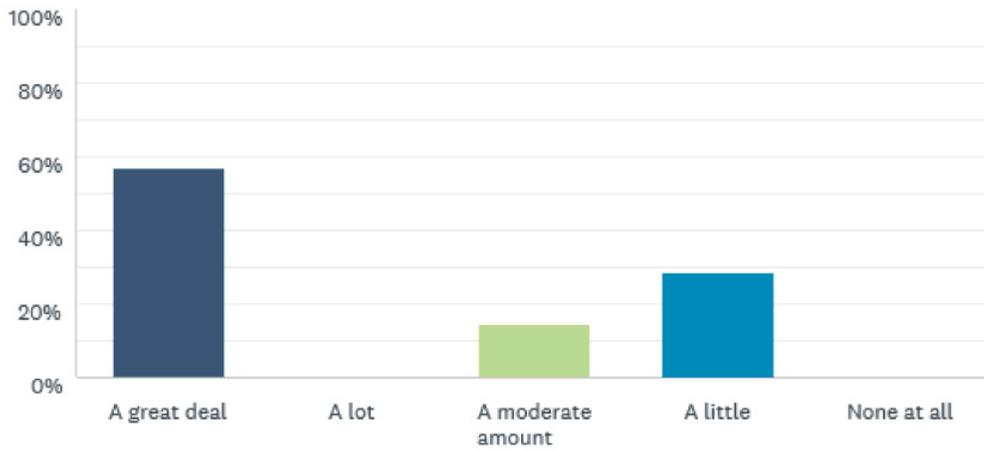
Week 3 Participant Quotes:

“Every presenter had a great sense of Identity and knowledge that translated well in their presentations.”

“Before this program, I carried with myself the knowledge of my experiences being an Indigenous person in higher education, but this program built upon that and expanded my knowledge relating to research methods. This program has strengthened my education holistically as an Indigenous learner.”

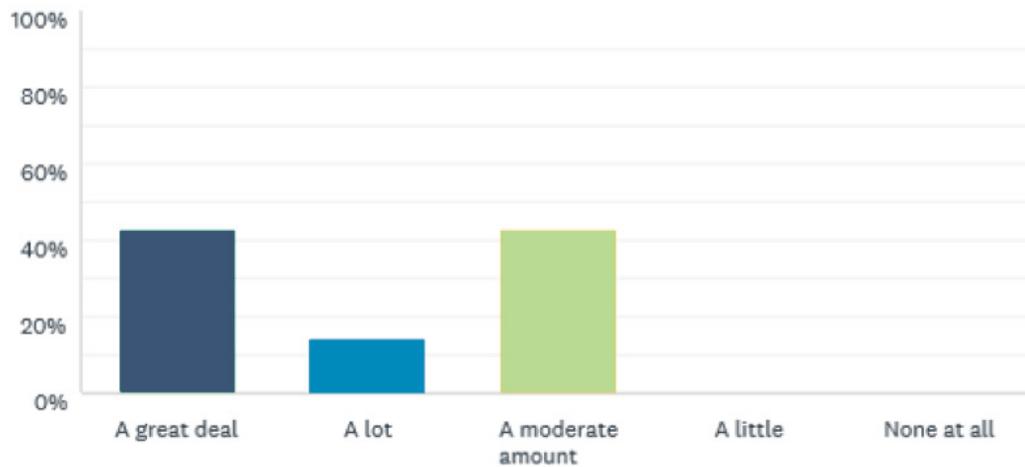
Week 1 Feedback:

After AKIRP, how much has your knowledge about Indigenous knowledge and research methods improved?



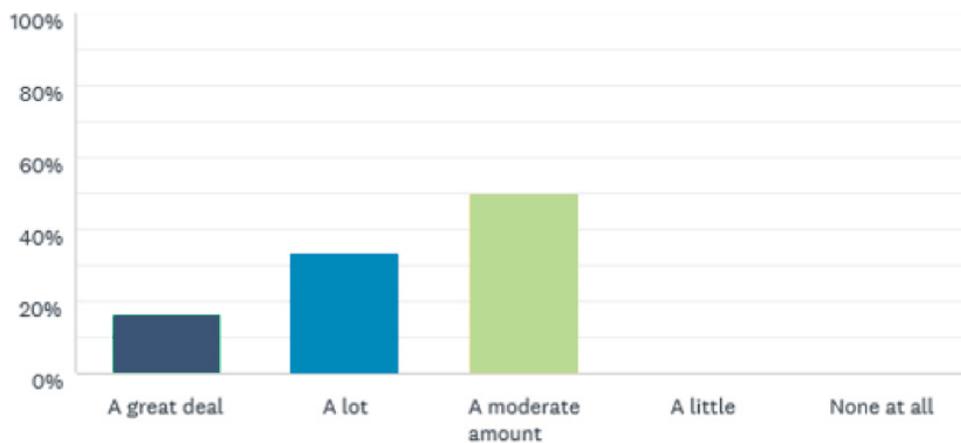
Week 2 Feedback:

After AKIRP, how much has your knowledge about Indigenous knowledge and research methods improved?



Week 3 Feedback:

After AKIRP, how much has your knowledge about Indigenous knowledge and research methods improved?



2020 Alaska Indigenous Research Program in Review

During the first week, Karli Tyance Hassell asked participants to draw words of encouragement and any negative feelings or emotions they wished to give up or offer to the Creator. She sang the Love Hymn and ended Week 1 and 3 with this Blackboard whiteboard exercise:

Table 4. Listing of some negative feelings or emotions

- Shame
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Stress
- False understandings
- Inadequateness
- High blood pressure
- Isolation
- Scared
- Politics
- Hecticness
- Sickness

Table 5. Listing of some words of encouragement

- Love
- Self-care
- Indigenous rising
- Path making
- We are not alone
- You are loved
- You are enough
- You are capable
- Respect Elders
- Believe in yourself
- Think positive, be positive
- Caring
- Trust
- Community
- Gratitude
- Patience
- Health
- Family
- Grace and mercy
- Radical creativity

Interactive live poll during Dr. Stacy Rasmus' presentation on Logic Modeling:

Logic Models: What's The Use?

- Describes an unc...
- getting to outcor...
- Also can describe...
- knowledge and p...
- Often required ir...
- (SAMHSA, IHS, H...

Have you ever used or designed a logic model?

No Response	15
Yes	18
No	19

Show Responses

Dr. Ullrich starts her presentation on Indigenous Connectedness with a beautiful quote:

“May we raise our babies with our indigenous love, rather than with our colonial pain”

For more information, please contact:

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