ABSTRACT
Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine has a long history of recruiting and training American Indian youth through pathway programs (Native Explorers, Native Doctors) and numerous outreach events. The NASOM created the Native American Pre-Admission (NAPA) Workshop, which focuses on recruiting American Indians into primary care careers serving rural and tribal communities. Collectively, OSU-COM programs are increasing the number of American Indians entering the OSU-COM. The number of AI first-year medical students enrolled in all COM schools for 2013-2020 was 107 of 1674, or 6.3% of all enrollees. At the Cherokee Nation campus, 33.8% identify as AI and 15.2% at the Tulsa campus. Partnering with the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) would help to expand NASOM to all colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs).

Objective 1: Similarities between osteopathic principles and traditional knowledge.

Objective 2: Recognize the impact a more geographically robust American Indian medical student organization, one with strong ties to their communities and osteopathic principles, will have in recruiting the next generation of American Indian osteopathic physicians.

Outreach: Targeting Native American and Rural Communities

Operation Orange: Medical students present a day in the life of a medical student for URI students (grades 8-12). The event includes suturing, CPR, Native American songs and dances, and lessons from admissions. This event has inspired several Native youth to apply to medical school (e.g., guest speaker Student Doctor Rylee Dunlap).

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Representation at Tulsa’s Native American Day Parade, building ties in the community, and inspiring Native youth.

Strong Ties and Sense of Community Through Social and Community Activities

Social and community activities provide opportunities for Native students to feel connected to their culture and community.

The inaugural class at OSU-COM CN, the only tribally affiliated medical school in US, had 100% match rate in 2024 and an AI enrollment 22.2%. Since NASOMs conception the CN class of 2027 AI enrollment has increased to 34.8%.

Cherokee Elder and National Treasure, Gina Burnett, teaches NASOM members how to make traditional woven baskets - a practice that is both practical and culturally significant.

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Native American Primary Care Center of Excellence
Center for Rural Health

REFERENCES
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