

Program Name: Asniya

Affiliated Hospital: There is no *affiliated hospital*; rather those who serve Asniya are from various medical schools, including Harvard, Dartmouth, Brown, University of South Dakota,

Program Leaders: Miles Cunningham, MD, PhD; Tracy Zacher, RN; Danica Lieberman, MD

About: Asniya is an outreach program for underprivileged Native American (NA) youth that also teaches cross-cultural medicine to PGY 3 & 4 medical student 'interns'.

Asniya means *to heal* in the language of the Dakota Sioux, and its goal is to teach preventive medicine and inspire young people to pursue healthcare careers. Interns undergo orientation before and upon arriving in the community (e.g., Pine Ridge, SD). They deliver dynamic and interactive presentations to junior high and high school students for 2-4 weeks, and they serve as role models and mentors for children interested in health careers. Interns receive a stipend and course credit, and they are given the opportunity to expand their training in local clinics. While Asniya teaches diverse topics in medicine, more recently the curriculum has been supplemented by presentations designed to inform and destigmatize mental illness. Suicide is epidemic among youth across the US. It is much higher among Native Americans, however, having become a humanitarian crisis in some communities. Funded by the Sidney R. Baer Foundation, a branch of Asniya has been concentrating on early detection of mental illness and suicide prevention. Asniya continuously seeks collaborations with diverse agencies having common goals.