Introduction

The Alaskan Native Women’s Resource Center (AKNWRC) is a non-profit organization that brings awareness about the crisis in Alaska Native Women in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and sex trafficking.

Background

- More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women and men have experienced violence in their lifetime (84.3 percent) and more than one in three experienced violence in the past year. (Rosay, A).
- Alaska Native women are overrepresented in the domestic violence victim population by 250 percent; they comprise 19 percent of the population, but 47 percent of reported rape victims.
- Like American Indians, Alaskan Natives have suffered trauma from U.S. government actions such as extermination policies, religious persecution, forced migration to reservations, and systematic removal of Native children to boarding schools. Long-term impacts have included: widespread poverty, low educational attainment, high rates of community and interpersonal violence, high rates of alcohol-related deaths and suicide community relationships.

Research

- I collected five oral histories with leaders of the Alaskan Native anti-domestic violence movement such as Tami Jerue and Shirley Moses.
- I documented and analyzed a roundtable with experts on domestic violence in Alaskan Natives, outlining unique issues facing this community.

Looking Ahead

- I will continue pursuing this topic for my senior thesis. I hope to take the lessons I learned on the unique struggles of marginalized communities, such as Alaskan Natives, into my future work.

Questions

- How can the federal government, specifically health and Human Services, better address the needs of Alaskan Natives?
- What are the historical legacies of trauma that have resulted in this domestic violence public health crisis amongst Alaskan Natives?

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first and foremost the incredible team at the Alaska Native Women’s Resource Center. These women started a movement, put their souls into this work and opened up their expertise to me. They welcomed me onto their team, introduced me to people to interview and I learned so much from their unique perspectives. Thanks to CHW this summer funding to do this incredible research.