

**American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) UsCC
Educational PSAs Project
FY 18-19 CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The DMH American Indian / Alaska Native PSAs Project consisted of the development and production of five digital video PSAs under the guidance of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) subcommittee,. The goal of the project was to produce videos that authentically presented viewpoints of the American Indian / Alaska Native community of Los Angeles County on issues related to mental health as well as highlighting related Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health resources.

PROJECT RESULTS

Three of the PSAs were narrative format (short scripted stories) productions and two of the PSAs were explainer format productions. The video ranges were all under two minutes in length allowing for easy engagement on the internet via social media and the DMH website. The narrative PSAs focus on youth mental health, cultural competency in mental health services, and cultural and community engagement as an important aspect of mental health. The specific stories of the narrative PSAs came directly from members of the DMH AI/AN UsCC subcommittee through a series of brainstorming and writing sessions. The explainer format PSAs focused on promoting the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health American Indian Counseling Center and the DMH AI/AN UsCC subcommittee.

LESSONS LEARNED

The collaborative method used was effective in engaging the DHM AI/AN UsCC subcommittee members in the preproduction process of brainstorming and writing the PSAs. With that in mind, it can be challenging to schedule meetings for a group based in different locations throughout Los Angeles County and this resulted in a longer pre-production period. Despite this process, there were concerns over the lack of inclusion of two-spirit members of the American Indian / Alaska Native community. In the future, this inclusion should be made at the outset as ideas are being developed and scripts are written.

Additionally, one of the narrative PSAs was produced in an animated format. The decision was made due to scene requirements of the script and resulting costs in doing a live production

exceeding the budget constraints. However, the resulting length in time needed to complete the animation was excessive and should potentially be avoided given the constraints of the overall project and the nature of animation production being a time consuming process. It was hoped that recent developments in animation software (Character Animator by Adobe) would make a larger difference in production time, but that turned out to not be the case.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A collaborative creation process for future media productions is strongly recommended. The American Indian / Alaska Native community is composed of over one hundred tribes representing an equal number of different cultures. Given that, it is difficult to capture the 'voice' of such a community without an extensive collaborative process, even for members of that community.

The PSAs, given their short nature, are not able to fully explore the issues that they touch upon. A secondary project could be to further explore those issues and provide access to resources materials/information on those topics as developed by culturally competent mental health professionals. Short video is an excellent engaging format for the internet, however, for complex nuanced issues, it can also be very helpful to provide more in depth resources for people to explore.