

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
AI-AN Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC)
Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
May 6th, 2026, from 2:00pm - 4:00pm**

Present: <i>Olin Bishop, Farrah Ferris, Jessica Mosher, Nancy Steward, Rae Lopes, Roberta Javier (#2503), Scott Black, Adrian Uliasz, Blanca Watson, Hector Ramirez, Javier Garcia, Jessica Watson, Kai Antonio Alvarado, Sandy Ramirez, Tencha Chavez, Wendy Hernandez, Anna Yaralyan, Carla Jaramillo, Chiyah Lawrence, Jenny Chang, Jessica Wiechec, Maryan Mozafarinezhad, Mirtala Parada Ward, Patricia Kusaba, Soledad Vergara, Suyapa Umanzor, Sylvia Gonzalez-Youngblood, Yailin Noriega</i> CART Captioner: Beatriz DMH Admin: Carla Jaramillo	
Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
Welcome, Intros, & Opening Prayer	Welcome by Chair, Jessica Mosher Ice breaker: <i>What's an activity you do that helps elevate your mental health?</i> Opening Prayer – Nancy Steward provided an opening prayer.
Land Acknowledgment	Sylvia Gonzalez-Youngblood provided a Land Acknowledgement.
DMH Community Agreements	Dr. Jaramillo shared screen and summarized the DMH Community Agreements.
Review of Meeting Minutes	The meeting minutes of April 2026 were approved. Motion by Nancy Steward to approve minutes and seconded by Roberta Javier .
Indigenous Mindfulness Exercise	Tencha Chavez – Workforce Development Moved on – wait for Tencha to join the meeting.
Report Outs & Community Updates	Jessica Wiechec: - Reminded group about May Take Action events. - Encouraged everyone to participate. Events throughout the County. - Upcoming Behavioral Health Commission meeting. - If anyone has feedback/suggestions regarding bylaws – send them via email. BHC will be reviewing and updating the bylaws. Hector Ramirez: Wants to attend the next BHC meeting. - Heard that DMH has one billion dollars of unspent money. Wants to ask what the money will be used for since there are community needs. Where will the meeting be? Do accommodations need to be requested or are there any additional needs to be prepared? Jessica Wiechec: The meeting will be May 14th, 2026, from 11am – 1:30pm. The meeting will be held at Headquarters. You can email the Commission for accommodations. Believes that ASL Interpretation,

	Spanish/Korean translation, and CART services are always provided. Carla Jaramillo: Sent an email about the Quarterly Stakeholder Newsletter. Shared screen to show the steps on how to access published Stakeholder Newsletters. If you are not part of our distribution list, please add your email to the chat to be added or email AIANUsCC@dmh.lacounty.gov to be included.
Presentation - Tencha Chavez Rene Williams	AI/AN & Indigenous Services – Workforce Development Moved on – wait for Tencha/Rene to join the meeting.
Co-Chair Election Nominations	Carla Jaramillo: We have Co-Chair election month this month and next month for all eligible AI/AN stakeholder members. - Those who have attended at least 5 out of the past 9 meetings are eligible members. - Jessica has accepted and will continue her role. We need one more nominee. - If you are interested feel free to email. - We will continue to hold and seek a second Co-Chair for the position. - Dr. Jaramillo will send a formal nomination for Jessica to continue her role. - It is a two-year term. - There is a \$300 stipend per month. - There are meetings that will be required for you to attend. - You can self-nominate or nominate another eligible member. - Each subcommittee has two votes at meetings – AI/AN group has one vote (one vote per co-chair). Nancy Steward: Do you have to attend the meetings in person or are they online? Carla Jaramillo: There is only one in person meeting which is held right after the Community Planning Team (CPT) meetings, the rest of them are either online or have an online option. You are required to attend at least 75% of meetings. Nancy Steward: Where are they located? Carla Jaramillo: Most meetings are currently being held at Headquarters (510 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020) in Koreatown. On occasion, we might have a meeting off site. Jessica Mosher: - We prefer that you are a member of the Native American community with lived experience. - The AI/AN community has a lot of unique stories to tell. - You will need to help with planning the agenda, attend an agenda setting meeting with DMH staff, coordinate and schedule presenters, etc. - It's a good way to bring community together and share unique experiences. - Jessica enjoys the planning process. Nancy Steward: Is there any training? Jessica Mosher: Yes, all the leaders come together, and they do a training/orientation. Nancy Steward: How long is the training for?

	Jessica Mosher: For about two hours. Nancy Steward: That's it... and you'll be ready? Jessica Mosher: Well, it's the County... they give you the rules and your role expectations. They provide you with a handbook basically which is where most of the information needed comes from. They'll answer questions that you have about the position. More seasoned leaders are there too so if you have questions about best practices or what not they're also available to you. Dr. Lawrence: Introduced herself. Wanted to share that in terms of training, one of the available meetings is a joint Outreach and Engagement Teams meeting which is for all co-chairs across the County. The meetings are held every month and the goal/purpose for those meetings is on-going training for co-chairs and leaders. Hector Ramirez: Happy to see Dr. Lawrence's Teams Background with the Autism Acceptance symbol. Tencha has joined the meeting – going back to the Indigenous Mindfulness Exercise and Presentation.
Indigenous Mindfulness Exercise	Tencha Chavez – Workforce Development Tencha read the Elders Meditation of the Day. <i>"We must remember that the heart of our religion is alive and that each person has the ability within to awaken and walk in a sacred manner."</i> — Thomas Yellowtail (The Crow Nation)
Presentation - Tencha Chavez Rene Williams	AI/AN & Indigenous Services – Workforce Development Tencha volunteers with a group within Los Angeles County that provides AI/AN services. They are a Workforce Development Organization partnered with Sacred Path Indigenous Wellness Center. Sacred Path has locations in Long Beach and Anaheim. Tencha shared screen to show their post card that summarizes who they are and what they do. They offer services to anyone within Los Angeles County that identifies as part of the AI/AN or Indigenous community. (No tribal card/ID required).

They offer workshops that cover social media, professional development, resume building, interview skills, financial literacy, etc.

Now offering Workforce Development related services for LA County's Native American & Indigenous Community!

Services Include:

- Resume Building & Job Search Assistance
- Individual Case Management
- Career-related workshops
- Supportive Services (transportation, work attire, and more!)

Eligibility:

- Must identify as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
- Los Angeles County Resident
- Income at or below the 80% Area Median Income

For more information, please visit our website:
aianservices.com or info@aianservices.com

To sign up for services online, scan the QR code above or visit:
aianservices.com/apply/

In partnership with:
 **Sacred Path**
Indigenous Wellness Center

Scanning the QR code will direct you to the application.

Jessica Mosher: Do you have any testimonials that you can share of individuals that have participated in the program?

Tencha Chavez: One of their first clients signed up for services and within a month she got a job. She's currently in the works to joining the military. She's working with one of the case managers and preparing to join the US Army. Another client had started off with school and moved to the Palmdale area and decided to change their trajectory and started looking for a job. They recently found a job with the conservancy in the San Fernando Valley.

Jessica Mosher: What about your other services?

Tencha Chavez: Tencha herself is a testimony for the workshops offered. Improved her credit after taking the financial literacy workshop – taught her children what she learned, and they have a high credit score. Building generational wealth.

Sylvia Gonzalez-Youngblood: Will speak on behalf of Tencha and her work. Knows that if Tencha is doing the work for the people, her heart and soul are in it. When Tencha was working for another organization, she was working in workforce – she signed both of Sylvia's boys up. One of Sylvia's boys finished his studies in Japan. He improved his Japanese speaking skills and graduated from a University in Japan. The work that Tencha did to get her boys connected was vital in their journey. If Tencha is a part of this, then her heart and soul are in it and its good work.

Hector Ramirez: Has seen the work and congratulated Tencha. Invited Tencha to their Access for All UsCC. Now that there is funding for substance use disorders – wants community to know that SUD's are a

	disability/medical condition and welcomes Tencha to that space. Share the work that Tencha is doing. Tencha Chavez: All the work that she is doing all her research/projects are for uplifting the AI/AN community. Wants to shed light and bring forth solutions to all policies being implemented or brought to the table aimed at harming the AI/AN community. As far as substance use and mental health goes – Tencha has also implemented them to her research and projects. Recently did a project focused on substance use disorders, mental health, and homelessness and the stigma / how providers and the outside world treat those with those disabilities (treat them as choices). Nancy Steward: Do you have a group or meeting with individuals that have gone through substance abuse and what brought them into that state of mind where they do substance abuse and harm their bodies. Are they aware of what they do to their body? Tencha Chavez: A part of two groups. One is Wellbriety which is open to everyone who wants to get clean and sober. It is geared towards Native American teachings – from the Wellbriety book. Walking the Red Road. Is also part of Narcotics Anonymous. Jessica Mosher: How would you compare getting services from Natives helping Natives? How does it elevate and encourage your experience? Tencha Chavez: It's definitely a game changer – only because (speaking for herself) sometimes others don't understand struggles or don't know how to approach certain things especially when it's culturally sensitive. When she went to organizations centered around Native American teachings, they understood what she needed. Even though everyone comes from different tribes and nations, they all have a commonality when it comes to Mother Earth. Jessica Mosher: Do you have any activities centered on tradition? Tencha Chavez: No, currently we do not have any at AI/AN Services. Focus on their workshops and try to be culturally sensitive when it comes to looking for employment. Jessica Mosher: How long have you been in existence? Tell us about your organization's history. Tencha Chavez: Tencha started at the organization last year – believes the workforce launched at the end of 2024. Jessica Mosher: Do you have any youth stories you can share? Is it a majority of youth that the organization services or is it a mix? Tencha Chavez: It's a mix. The two stories that are shared are about youth participants – they are both 21 years old. Majority of clients are between 21 – mid 40s. We welcome the community to come to our workshops – they are on our social medias and our website. Different organizations are tagged on the posts. Jessica Mosher: Do you do warm handoffs or just provide flyers? Tencha Chavez: We do the workshops and there are two case managers that work with the community. Tencha is more part of the outreach aspect. Nancy Steward: When you have the meetings – do the participants hide or cover up their life issues and that's why they turn to substance use?
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	Tencha Chavez: The department that she works with refers clients when/if they are told that they are in need of help with substance use issues. Personally, when Tencha does the Wellbriety meetings, it's a 12-step program. They discuss with each other how they can support each other in staying clean and sober. Jessica Mosher: Did you want to share the organization's origin story? Tencha Chavez: Does not have the story. Only knows that their director is Rene Williams and she partnered with Sacred Path. She has an eye for detail when it comes to workforce development programs and services. They are following a program that they implemented in the past and it has become very successful.
Capacity Building Projects Presentation	Olina Bishop – Urban Native 4-1-1 On the last stages of the project. The project consisted of five work groups meetings. In those meetings – they got together with community leaders to develop and create what the resource guide will consist of. Met every week to figure out what the resource guide needed to consist of. From there they did focus groups. Four of which were virtual and one in person. In person focus group was in Pico Rivera. Gathered with community members to review what was put into the resource guide and created space. Ate, prayed, and listened to music as a group. From there they gathered all of the information from both the work and focus groups and compiled the manual. A draft has been sent to DMH. Now, everything will be sent over to DMH. From there, DMH will be responsible for updating the manual. Any updates requested from the community can be requested with a link that will be provided. One of the biggest categories that community gave feedback on is allowing a vendor category. The vendor information was provided to DMH – it is to their discretion on whether or not the category is added to the manual. Olina does not know how often the manual will be updated – it is up to DMH. The groundwork and the base have been created and submitted. Dr. Jaramillo shared screen to share the resource guide draft. Hector Ramirez: This is amazing. They have been hearing about the project. Will the guide also be submitted to 211 and 311 so that they can update their databases? Olina Bishop: This is where we are with the project right now. The last portion was to make sure that the resources were good according to County standards and being able to disseminate the guide to community outside of digital form. She can totally send the guide to 211 and there will also be a guide at UAI. This is meant to be a growing project – information in the guide will change. The online version will most likely be the best version. We do not want to keep an outdated printed version. Will make sure 211 gets a digital version to have access to the updates as the guide continues to grow. Nancy Steward: Is this also for Urban Housing? Olina Bishop: Yes, there is a housing section. The Urban Housing information should be there. Olina shared the link in the chat (Lovable App) – if there are any organizations that have not been added to the guide, please

	submit the information – the request will be sent to DMH. Resources/information provided via Google (Google Drive, Google Forms, Google Sheets, etc.) cannot be accessed by DMH. Jessica Mosher: About how many organizations were you able to collect information for? Do you have an estimate? Olina Bishop: That's a good question. The guide is 64 pages with roughly about 7 resources per page – almost 500 resources across the different categories. Mind you – some of the organizations have multiple resources so they will be listed for each category / duplicates. Olina shared screen to show how to request an update. There's a button titled "Submit Resource" – that will be for requesting an organization to be added or updated/removed. Shared link to a video (Urban Native 4-1-1 Resource Guide Video) that was recorded by Rae Lopes during the in person focus group. Responded to Sylvia's question in the chat – yes, the picture is meant to be the Healing Plants of California. They wanted to add to the basket that was used for the Native Excellence project implemented last FY. Gave background/origin of the basket and covers used for the guide. Rae Lopes' idea to have the basket weave on the side and quote (Made by Natives for Natives). The format was having Native resources first and non-Native resources after. Nancy Steward: When you join the Urban Native group, do you have to unjoin any other group you're with? Olina Bishop: Not understanding the question. Nancy Steward: To be able to get the assistance that the organizations listed provide, do you have to belong to their organization and no other organization? Olina Bishop: Going to clarify to make sure she's understanding correctly – The Urban Native resource guide is a guide that provides resources to LA County community members. It is not a group – it is an accessible resource for community members that are looking for services. When looking for a resource – it tells you the eligibility requirements. Each resource has its own eligibility. Wait for DMH to approve and give the green light to start sharing the resource.
DMH Updates/Follow-Ups	Capacity Building Project Updates Roberta Javier – - Project is still in progress. - Final workgroup this Saturday in Arcadia. - A lot of work going on – in the midst of a lot of work. - Closing the project out in mid – end of June. - Continue to recruit youth members to attend the workgroup. - Traditional meals, snacks, and drinks are provided at each workgroup. - Participants get a stipend.
Community Announcements/Resources/Comments	Nancy Steward: Can you do CAF and Co-Chair at the same time? Carla Jaramillo: Yes. You can email me and we can discuss it via email. Hector Ramirez: Wanted to elevate what they added in the chat - Supervisor Horvath was joined by Pukku Cultural Community Services to advocate for her motion creating "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Day in LA County. MMIP".

Closing Prayer	Nancy Steward provided a closing prayer.
Upcoming Meeting: Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026 (2:00pm - 4:00pm) For more information about the AI-AN UsCC, please see its website: https://dmh.lacounty.gov/about/mhsa/uscc/american-indian-alaska-native-ai-an-uscc/	