



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Diné College presents SREP

Next meeting is Aug. 4

TSAILE, Ariz. — Students with Diné College's Summer Research Enhancement Program partnered June 16 with about a couple dozen more students and administrators from area universities in a series of presentations about public health and disease prevention.

The nearly three-hour seminar-style affair took place at Diné College and under the direction of Mark Bauer, a member of Diné College's science faculty.

The presentations featured timed talks about youth obesity, diabetes, mental wellness, adolescent sexual health and post-partum well-being.

Bauer has run SREP for the past 18 years and holds a doctoral degree from Northwestern University in Illinois. Friday's presentations pertained to class assignments given to students to assess community health needs in Chinle, Piñon, Window Rock and Shiprock — each a sizeable community on the Navajo Nation.

"This (SREP) is a collaboration between (Diné College) and the colleges of public health at the University of Arizona and the University of Colorado and Northern Arizona University," Bauer said "This program teaches students about the importance of individual and community resilience in health and how that resilience can be assessed in

research contexts."

Kalvina Belin, 29, a student at NAU studying public health, was part of a three-person presentation on adolescent sexual health in Shiprock, N.M. Belin is from Piñon, Ariz. She said she won't receive course credit at NAU for attending Friday's seminar, but the exchange of information is beyond worthwhile.

"It's just information that you need to know if you're in the health field," Belin said. "All of this has benefits later on for everybody who is here."

Belin, Amber Laughing and Breanna Lameman gave results from an assignment about Shiprock sexual behavioral patterns, relationships and HIV facts. They said there were 65.8 percent of middle school students who understood HIV's big picture in 1997, compared to 28 percent in 2011. The three said their research revealed that teen pregnancies are on the rise not only in Shiprock, but around the Navajo Nation.

"(Shiprock) kids don't receive the proper information on prevention and awareness," Belin said. "It's important that adolescents recognize the bigger circumstance when it comes to things like HIV, teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections."

Bauer said the presentation groups — which totaled a little more than a dozen — will meet again at Diné College on Aug. 4 and individual presentations will be given at that time.