Center of American Indian and Minority Health:

A Legislative Special

from the Board of Regents, University of Minnesota
to the Minnesota Legislature, 1987 Session

School of Medicine
University of Minnesota, Duluth
May 22, 1986

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The health status of American Indians and other minorities of color in the United States is abysmal compared to that of other Americans. "The age specific death rate for American Indians ans Alaska Natives (1980-1982) was approximately 2 times the U.S. All Races rate (1981) for age groups 15 through 44," (Indian Health Service statistics).

"By around the year 2000, one out of three Americans will be a member of a racial minority," and the need for educational institutions throughout the Nation to increase the presence of minorities in the professions and to improve the relevance of education so as to better address minority concerns is an urgent imperative (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy). This is glaringly evident with regard to the American Indian in that there is a marked dearth of American Indian physicians and research scientists.

At the same time that the Nation's academic institutions are confronted with this challenge, federal support of minority initiatives is dwindling.

The School of Medicine at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, is proposing to respond to these issues with the development of a Center of American Indian and Minority Health. The Center will address the critical need for improved health care within American Indian populations and will provide instruction to all medical students in the health and healthcare problems of minorities. The development of the Center will be to insure ongoing support for current programs (the funding for which is in jeopardy) and will enable new directions in the quest to better meet the educational, research and service challenges confronting the American Indian and higher education. The Center will provide a home for scholars concerned with the health and education of American Indians and Other minority populations. It will bring together School of Medicine faculty, particularly those in the Clinical and Behavioral Sciences, and it will attract faculty outside the School of Medicine. A unique approach to these major health challenges, the proposed Center has the promise of becoming a major innovative advancement within the UMD School of Medicine.

Because the American Indian has a unique relationship with the State Legislature as well as with the University, the Center will focus, but not exclusively, on the specific challenges of American Indian healthcare delivery and research needs; the Center will address the needs of other minority groups as well. Also, duplication of services is not an issue. The proposed Center will operate in synchrony with existing undergraduate and graduate programs for American Indians located outside the UMD School of Medicine. However, its focal point will be healthcare and related issues, which the other existing American Indian programs are not adequately equipped to address.

The Center will have the following missions:

1. To formulate American Indian and minority educational experiences for (a) American Indian medical students, (b) all other medical students with a primary focus on family practice, (c) graduate students in the biomedical sciences, and (d) American Indian undergraduate and high school students with interests in health related careers.

2. To conduct ongoing quality research and scholarly activity in health problems peculiar to minority populations.

3. To provide services to the School of Medicine, to the University, and to regional communities regarding American Indian and Other minority health concerns.

(See Appendices 1, 2 and 3 for elaborations of the educational, research and
The UMD School of Medicine has an impressive history, beginning in 1973, of fostering American Indian programs. Since that time, a total of 442 high school, undergraduate and graduate level American Indian and other minority students have participated in educational and research training opportunities. (See Appendix 4.) Despite the enormous success of the American Indian Programs in the UMD School of Medicine, federal retrenchments are occurring. This hampers program stability, impedes effective long-term planning, and adds to the tremendous challenges we face in addressing American Indian health and educational concerns.

Justification

1. The establishment of the Center would be the first in the Nation and would bring to the School of Medicine further recognition of its leadership in the field of medical education. The uniqueness of the mission of the Center will serve to visibly enhance the status of the School of Medicine among its peers, the Legislature and policy makers by the demonstrated commitment to provide access to cross-cultural education in the training of medical students for family practice.

2. The proposed Center would provide new opportunities for financial support for American Indian programs with associated opportunities for the faculty and the School of Medicine.

3. As a Center, the subject area of American Indian and Minority Health integrates disciplines within the School of Medicine, building particularly upon the strengths of the Departments of Clinical Science and Behavioral Science. Outside of the UMD School of Medicine, there are potentials for collaboration with the other American Indian programs at UMD, with the School of Public Health on the Minneapolis campus, and with a wide array of other interested faculty from academic institutions throughout the State.

4. The American Indian and minority focus of the Center promises exceptional research opportunities to enhance understanding of the inter-relationships between cultural uniqueness, genetic differences, environmental factors, and health.

5. The establishment of the Center would clearly indicate to the American Indian and minority communities a continuing and expanding commitment to work toward improving the health care status of their peoples.

6. The establishment of the Center would provide much needed administrative and operating stability, which is necessary to be able to develop courses, programs, services and do research to meet the challenges of unmet American Indian and minority health needs.

Administrative Structure of the Center

The Center of American Indian and Minority Health will incorporate and expand upon the American Indian Programs presently conducted with federal support. The Center will be under the direct administrative purview of the Dean of the UMD School of Medicine, and it will have collaborative liaisons with all the Departments within the School of Medicine as
well as with faculty having expertise in American Indian health, welfare and education outside the School of Medicine. It will maintain outgoing cooperative liaisons with the other American Indian programs at UMD. This collaboration has been particularly helpful in the recruitment and retention of American Indian students.

Internally, the Center will include the following faculty and staff:

The Director (to be appointed) will administratively oversee all activities of the Center, as well as teach and conduct Indian related research. The Director will have a faculty appointment in one of the Departments within the School of Medicine (to be determined by that person's academic field). A principal criterion for selection will be academic knowledge and experience in American Indian health. An additional faculty person (to be appointed) will also teach and conduct Indian content research. An effort will be made to recruit faculty from diverse fields so as to have a wide array of expertise within the Center.

Funding for one full-time equivalent (1 FTE) will be available to attract faculty expertise from outside the UMD School of Medicine. It is anticipated that, at any one time, as many as six additional faculty could be on release-time contracts to teach and/or participate in Center sponsored research programs.

Two community program specialists (Ruth Myers and A. M. Guimaraes, currently with American Indian Programs) will serve as liaisons with the Indian communities, recruit American Indian students, provide retention and other supportive services, as well as collect and maintain archives of American Indian content bibliographies, texts, journal articles and media resources.

Principal Secretary (Sally Herstad, currently with American Indian Programs).
Center of American Indian and Minority Health, with the endorsed cooperation of the basic science departments within the School of Medicine, will advance the following long-term educational goals for non-Indian as well as American Indian students:

1. Provide non-Indian, as well as American Indian, medical students and other graduate students with the basic information on the social, psychological, cultural and epidemiological aspects of health in American Indian and other minority communities;

2. Provide medical students and other graduate students with basic information on the culture, heritage, values and behavioral norms of American Indian and other minority communities;

3. Provide medical students with an appreciation of the holistic approach to health as it has been traditionally practiced in American Indian communities;

4. Provide medical students with the orientation, skills and knowledge to function effectively as health care providers in American Indian and minority communities; and

5. Provide medical students and graduate students with basic information on the social problems affecting the health status of American Indian and minority communities.

6. Provide American Indian undergraduate and high school students opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and interest to pursue careers in biomedical related careers.

7. Provide American Indian undergraduate and high school students opportunities to obtain instruction in scientific research methods and also, first hand experience doing biomedical research.

The following are examples of curricular emphases which the Center will advance in collaboration with all departments in the UMD School of Medicine. The Center will cooperate with Departments to create elective courses having American Indian foci. In addition, the Center will serve as a resource to facilitate the inclusion of American Indian content within the present offerings.
Revised Budget (6/9/86)

Center of American Indian and Minority Health
UMD School of Medicine

The request outlined below is minimal for the operation of the Center. The Director and one FTE are essential to fulfill the administrative, educational, and research demands of the Center. The retained FTE will be used to bring faculty to the Center on a release time basis, thus maintaining the Center concept. The second FTE of the original budget is omitted on the expectation that, once the Center is in place, new sources of support can be attracted to fund this position. The Community Program Specialist is needed to develop and maintain the multi-faceted linkages necessary for positive ongoing trust relationships with the American Indian communities in Minnesota.

It is expected that the current federally funded programs will be phased out in the next few years due to changes in government policy. With the Center in place, we would be in a competitive position to seek new funds from public and private sources.

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Epidemiology of Illness in Community/Reservation Populations

This curricular focus will provide students with an overview of the morbidity and mortality rates of diseases which are prevalent in American Indian urban and reservation populations, with a discussion of their etiology and their impact on health care delivery. Specific topics include, but are not limited to diabetes, hypertension, obesity, microbial diseases, alcoholism, suicide, violence and accidental death. (A 1 credit course, Health Problems in American Indian Communities, is currently being offered through the Department of Behavioral Sciences by Joyce Kramer, Ph.D., an Omaha-Pawnee, who is an Associate Professor in the UMD College of Education and Human Service Professions. This offering provides a very simple example of the manner in which faculty resources from throughout the University community can be mobilized.)

Psycho-Biology and Minority Health

Students will study the effects of psychological factors on physiological functioning. Study of the placebo effect, the production of endorphins, enkephalins and other natural pain suppressors in normal physiological functioning, and the effects of fright and other stressors on the body will be included. Students will be encouraged to look at alternative healing techniques, including those of traditional practitioners, in terms of their stimulation of natural healing mechanisms.

Medical Anthropology

This curricular focus will teach students the skills to evaluate various approaches to healing. In addition, it will address the cultural understanding of health and illness of various Indian tribes and other minority groups. Students will also be introduced to the role of healers and shamans. They will learn about the effects of social disadvantage, unemployment and inadequate education on the health and self-esteem of minority populations. The students will also be provided the opportunity to actively observe clinical practice in a reservation/rural setting. This content will rely upon contributions and participation from American Indian healers, physicians and community leaders.

High School and Undergraduate Education of American Indian Students

The Center will continue the established precedent of offering programs (such as the NAM, AIMS, IRC MBRS and Howard-Rockefeller programs described above) which advance the training of American Indian high school and undergraduate students for careers in the biomedical sciences and other health related professions. Because Indian students are often not optimally prepared for higher education in biomedicine, we anticipate offering an introductory course in Biomedical Research Methods. This course will be designed to provide undergraduate students a basic understanding of scientific methodology and how it is adapted to address research questions in such diverse fields as microbiology and epidemiology. Students will learn to develop scientific research designs on issues of interest to them and to access the literature so as to support their hypotheses. To the extent possible, the research issues addressed will be in areas particularly pertinent to American Indian health concerns. An appreciation for the scientific advancements made by traditional American Indian health providers will be fostered.

The Center's educational mission is in accord with the Mission and Policy Statement for the University of Minnesota, adopted by the Regents, July 1975 (see Attachment A below), and with the UMD Administration in 1978 (see Attachment B below).
Appendix 2

The Research Mission

Faculty in the Center of American Indian and Minority Health will be expected to engage in scholarly activity and research in their own areas of expertise and interests. Examples of potential research include the following:

1. Ways of improving the development, organization and administration of the health care delivery system in rural/reservation communities;

2. Types of medical practice available in rural and reservation communities and ways to make them more effective;

3. Epidemiology of diseases prevalent in rural and reservation populations and their impact on the health care delivery system;

4. Ways of working with traditional healers in rural and reservation communities in order to improve the health of the people without denying either the value of some traditional approaches or the contributions of western allopathic methods;

5. Study of medicinal and clinically important plants in Minnesota and Wisconsin with emphasis on ways to incorporate traditional usage of plants and herbs with allopathic treatment methods to improve both the physical and psycho-social health of patients;

6. The role of various psychological and social forces prevalent in rural and reservation communities in the etiology and continuation of certain disease states resulting in high morbidity and mortality rates. Topics for research include, but are not limited to, alcoholism, suicide, and accidental deaths;

7. Ways of utilizing various educational approaches to ensure that American Indian students receive a medical education with as little social and cultural disruption as possible, while maintaining the high standards of the School of Medicine.

Other topics of research will be developed by Center members as part of an on-going effort to find solutions to the health needs of the American Indian and minority communities. Because the majority of health care needs of the community are not based strictly on physical agents and causations, the Center will place high priority on research into the psycho-social and economic bases of the health care problems. Researchers will be encouraged to work in the community to begin to implement the changes which will be needed to bring about long-term solutions to the health care needs of the people. The involvement of faculty and students in research in rural and reservation communities will further the goal of increasing awareness of medicine, biomedical research, and other health professions as potential careers for American Indian students.

The Center of American Indian and Minority Health will sponsor regular conferences on American Indian health and related issues. These conferences will address issues such as the problem of attracting qualified physicians to practice on the reservations, the problem of alcoholism and its physical, social and economic effects in the community, ways of empowering the community to find their own solutions to problems they identify.
themselves, and other related issues. Topics of the conferences will not be limited to health care issues, but will generally be focused on issues affecting American Indian well-being.

APPENDIX 3

The Service Mission

The Center will provide a strong service function to the University, region and the State. Service goals could include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Develop and maintain, through mutual trust, a working relationship with tribal officials and American Indian community leaders;
2. Serve as a focus for the study of American Indian health;
3. Assist in the training of allied health professionals;
4. Assist public schools in developing educational programs for American Indian students that would better prepare them for a career in medicine and research;
5. Assist colleges in improving academic advising to American Indian students;
6. Develop study-support groups for American Indian students;
7. Develop financial aid programs for American Indian students;
8. Take what is learned about American Indian and minority health back to the communities.

The Center of American Indian and Minority Health will serve as an informational resource. Students, faculty and members of the service communities will be able to rely on the Center for aid in accessing books, periodicals, media and resource persons, as needed, in the pursuit of American Indian health related educational, research and service goals. In addition to this referral function, Center faculty and staff will be available as guest lecturers and as technical consultants.
APPENDIX 4

**American Indian Presence at UMD**

UMD is geographically situated within close proximity to a number of American Indian communities and has an impressive array of American Indian programs. In addition to American Indian Programs in the School of Medicine, UMD supports American Indian Studies in the College of Letters and Arts and American Indian Projects in the College of Education and Human Service Professions. In addition, supportive services are being developed in a new campus-wide American Indian Learning Resource Center. (See Attachment C below for further information regarding these American Indian programs.)

The record is generally impressive within the UMD School of Medicine given the absence of state monies to support its American Indian Programs (see Attachment D below).

The oldest program is the Native Americans into Medicine (NAM), funded continuously since 1973 by the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), United States Department of Health and Welfare. The primary emphasis of UMD's NAM Program is to provide training to American Indian students which will prepare them for application and entry into medical school or other related fields. Of the 297 students who have participated in NAM, 27 have entered medical school, 1 entered podiatry school, 1 entered a school of pharmacy, and 1 entered nursing.

The next program is the Indians into Research Careers (IRC), funded continuously since 1978 by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, National Institutes of Health. Its principal function is to advance American Indian students toward Ph.D.'s and research focused M.D.'s. Of the 33 students who have participated in IRC, 15 have graduated from college while others are still actively pursuing their degrees.

Because American Indian high school students are often ill-prepared for science and health related professional training, monies were sought and obtained from the Howard University and Rockefeller Foundation to provide summer health sciences enrichment programs for American Indian high school students. A total of 61 students have participated in the Howard-Rockefeller Program since its inception in 1979. Funding has been continuous since then.

American Indians into Marine Science (AIMS) was first funded in 1980 by a Sea Grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Continuously funded since that time, AIMS supports four American Indian students per year for careers in the Marine Sciences. Of the 13 students who have participated over the years, 5 have graduated with degrees in related fields.

More recently, the UMD School of Medicine in collaboration with the Fond du Lac Reservation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe became the recipient of a Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) grant from the National Institutes of Health. The program, administered by the Fond du Lac Reservation but located within the School of Medicine, is named Ni Shou Gabawag (translated "Side by Side"). It has been funded continuously since 1983. A total of 20 American Indian trainees have been supported by the Program, most of whom have been in their freshman or sophomore years. Students advance from the Ni Shou Gabawag Program into the IRC Program (described above) so as to provide continuity in their educations toward the bachelor's degree.
This year, the UMD School of Medicine, in collaboration with the Duluth Family Practice Residency Program, Department of Family Practice, University of Minnesota, is offering an elective course for second and third-year residents at the Indian Health Service facilities at Cass Lake. (See attachment C.) This course provides an introduction to the practice of medicine in the family and tribal context of an American Indian community. While addressing a wide variety of medical problems, the resident obtains a unique exposure to Ojibwe health practice. Effective methods of evaluation and treatment are learned while working at the interface of traditional and western medicine. The course is being offered by Kathleen Annette, M.D., an Ojibwe from the White Earth Reservation, who participated in UMD's NAM Program (described above) in 1973 and then proceeded to study medicine at UMD and the University of Minnesota Medical School in Minneapolis. Although funded fully by the United States Indian Health Service, this course provides a concrete example of how the Center's educational goals can be advanced through collaborative initiatives.
POLICY STATEMENT: INDIAN EDUCATION

The State Board of Education hereby recognizes the obligation of
the State of Minnesota to respond to the strong expression of the
Indian people for self-determination by assuring maximum Indian par-
ticipation in the field of education for Indian Tribes and communities
so as to render services more responsive to their educational needs
and desires.

The State Board of Education does further recognize the distinct
and unique Tribal Governments within the State of Minnesota and their
special relationship with the Federal Government. The State Board of
Education urges the legislature to acknowledge this relationship.

The State Board of Education declares its commitment to the Indian
people through the establishment of this Indian Education Policy. This
policy shall provide for more effective and meaningful participation by
the Indian people in the planning, implementation and administration of
educational services.

The State Board of Education directs the Commissioner and the
Department of Education to take a leadership role in meeting the educa-
tional needs of American Indian people. The State Board of Education
strongly recommends LEA's exercise initiative in implementing educa-
tional programs and curriculum to meet the needs of American Indian
people.

The State Board of Education declares and supports the concept
of self-determination for American Indian people. It is hereby stated
that the State Board of Education supports and encourages: (1) programs
and services to meet the unique educational needs of Indian youth and
adults; (2) the involvement of tribes, communities, youth and parents
in the total educational program; (3) the incorporation of American
Indian language, literature and heritage into the general curricula;
(4) the concept of equal educational opportunity; and (5) viable programs
which will permit Indian people to compete and excel in life areas of their
choice.

Adopted:

Indian Education Task Force of the State Board of Education

January 25, 1982, Minneapolis

Adopted:

State Board of Education

February 9, 1982, St. Paul

State Board of Education
Capitol Square Bldg., 7th Floor
550 Cedar
St. Paul, MN 55101
A Mission Statement on American Indian Education

University of Minnesota, Duluth

The University of Minnesota, Duluth recognized that American Indians possess a unique status in American society -- one that combines Indian legal rights and privileges with the rights and privileges of all other citizens -- and reaffirms its commitment to the Indian community to make the resources of UMD responsive to the educational needs of Indian students and the community. A primary charge of the University is to provide a quality education to all people of the State, and UMD recognizes that Indian involvement in the University-wide program is essential to fulfilling the primary charge as it relates to Indian people and the policy of Indian self-determination. This mission will be accomplished within the general guidelines and policies of the University.

In terms of American Indian Education, UMD has the same general goals and objectives that other units of the University have and consider important. In addition, UMD also considers the goals listed here as being of special significance to American Indian education.

1. To bring about closer cooperation/coordination among the existing Indian programs and future programs.
2. To develop an Indian student recruitment and retention plan.
3. To develop an Indian faculty and staff recruitment and development plan to insure program continuity with adequate space and support.
4. To examine areas for program growth and development with special focus on the training priority needs of Indian communities.
5. To develop a systematic and coordinated community outreach program for UMD, but not limited to the existing Indian programs on campus.
6. To provide the funding needs of existing Indian programs and establish priorities for future programs.
7. To prepare Indian students for careers in the social sciences, humanities, the fine arts and the sciences.
8. To prepare Indian students for careers in selected professional fields (e.g., medicine, dental hygiene, social work, business administration).
9. To provide continuing education courses and programs for Indian adults.
10. To support and encourage an active program in basic and applied research.

11. To provide cultural leadership for the community through University-sponsored lectures and performances in the social sciences, humanities, the fine arts and the sciences.

12. To serve as a center for the dissemination of new ideas.

Approved: UMD American Indian Advisory Board, 1/11/78
UMD Administration, 1/13/78