



225 S. BLUFF ST.  
P.O. BOX O  
WINNEBAGO, NE 68071  
(402) 878-2294

Emilee Longuski  
Communications Manager  
Winnebago Public Health Department  
Emilee.Longuski@WinnebagoTribe.com  
C: (615) 486-1767

*For Immediate Release – November 10th, 2021*

### **Winnebago Public Health Department Receives \$25,000 Grant for Native Connections Project**

Winnebago, NE – The Winnebago Public Health Department (WPHD), an entity of the Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System, has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the First Nations Development Institute of Longmont, Colorado. This award will support the efforts of the WPHD’s Native Connections Program, which began in 2016 and serves approximately 550 native youth every year.

The Native Connections Program supports Winnebago youth from ages 14 to 24. The program works to prevent suicide ideation, suicide, substance abuse, and help deal with historical trauma through exploring traditional cultural practices. By providing workshops in regalia, instruments, and tool making the goal is for the program to become an outlet for native youth empowerment. Additionally, a Ho-Chunk language component will be introduced to support ownership in traditional ways. WPHD Mental Health Therapists will also be involved in our classes to promote familiarity and trust in counseling as a tool to further support healthy choices in native youth.

“The WPHD is excited to continue to enhance our work with the Native Connections Program by working toward suicide intervention and prevention through creating culturally appropriate and youth centered activities,” said Mona Zuffante, WPHD Public Health Administrator.

The Native Connections grant period will run from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Funds will be used to support the program’s staff and promote cultural awareness amongst the native youth in Winnebago.

###

*About the Winnebago Public Health Department: WPHD is a division of the Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System operated by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. The organization strives to create and maintain a health community by providing a wide range of total health and wellness programs. These programs include physical, mental, safety, and social services that benefit the Winnebago community.*

*A division of the Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System.*