



August 2009 Webinar Transcript

Effective Marketing and Recruitment Strategies for Relationship Education Programs Serving Native Americans

Moderator: Sarah Schappert
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1:00 pm CT

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for standing by and welcome to The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center August Webinar. During the presentation all participants will be on a listen only mode. If at any time during the conference you need to reach an operator, please press star 0.

As a reminder this conference is being recorded Tuesday, August 18, 2009. I would now like to turn the conference over to Ms. Sarah Schappert. Please go ahead Ma'am.

Sarah Schappert: Hello everyone. My name is Sarah Schappert and I will be facilitating the Webinar today. For those of you who do not know me I am a Family Preservation Program Specialist at the Administration for Native Americans. I would like to welcome all of the ACF grantees who are participating in this Webinar today.

This Webinar is being hosted by the Administration for Native Americans and the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center. And for this Webinar, we've invited all native grantees currently funded under ACF programs that focus on family preservation activities -- including healthy relationship and marriage skills.

I'd also like to extend a special welcome to our Presenters on the call today, both of which are ANA Grantees; Tom Chee from The Shiprock Home for Women and Children, and Jenna Umiamaka from the Keiki O Ka 'Āina Family Learning Centers.

Today's Webinar was developed based on some of the recurring recruitment retention and marketing challenges faced by ACF grantees. And the objectives for the Webinar today are the following; Participants will learn effective strategies for advertising their family preservation programs; Participants will learn effective strategies for keeping enrollment strong in their programs; and Participants will also learn effective strategies for retaining program participants through the end of the course series.

Before I introduce the speakers, I would like to pass it on to (Jillian Scollan) so she can tell you how you will be able to ask questions as the Webinar is going forward.

Jillian Scollan: Thank you very much Sarah and hello everyone. I would like to direct your attention to the Demonstration Slide that's currently displayed on your screen. You should find the Question and Answers Pane designated by the letters Q&A located at the top left portion of your screen. You can either click on that portion of the Menu Bar to open the Pane, or you can Open, and then drag the pane off the Menu Bar. And it'll display as a stand-alone box.

To ask a question this afternoon, we ask that you type your question in the thin box here, and then click the Ask button. You will automatically receive a reply thanking you for your question and this lets you know that your question has been forwarded to the facilitator. This also allows other people to ask a question if they choose.

So I will turn it back over to you Sarah.

Sarah Schappert: Thank you (Jillian). First I would like to introduce Tom Chee from The Shiprock Home for Women and Children which is located in New Mexico. Tom currently is the Fatherhood Coordinator for a family preservation ANA project which started in 2006.

As the Fatherhood Coordinator, Tom provides weekly presentations to people who are interested in the developing healthier relationships. He's a certified High School teacher who has taught for 15 years and has served as the head basketball coach at a number of schools. His formal education includes a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies and Education, and he is well versed in the language and culture of the Navajo people. Tom, take it away.

Tom Chee: Good afternoon, or hello everyone across the country. I'm Tom Chee, I'm apparently the - here in Shiprock, also in Kirtland. A lot of little communities that go along the San Juan River here. We have a real multi-cultural setting here -- a large Hispanic population as well as Native American population with various tribes. So we have been very fortunate to be located right next to a four-lane highway here in Kirtland which gives us a real good visibility to the public.

And so the others - we wanted to - I wanted to talk about the marketing things that we do in regards to one of those things that we use to reach out to participants is we have a free public radio to tie in with a local radio station that's a Navajo language. I think that's really one of the strongest ways of reaching out to our folks. It has about a 100 mile radius if we get on the air. And we have the very fortunate of working with the radio station like that.

The other thing that we have really promoted in this case, and in this sense is the just being out in the public every chance we get. We're not expecting participants to come to the office -- we're out there in the midst of them. And I think that's a real good and strong ways to reach out to them.

We have weekly sessions that we do I think as part of the retention that is every Wednesday for six weeks we have these groups. A total of 11 groups have completed that. And I think that's a real good recruitment and retention tool because you see these folks every Wednesday.

And part of that -- a week, two weeks before we're done with groups -- we begin to promote the recruitment process through our participants. We ask them to identify a couple, friend or a fellow employee to consider checking out our program. So that's been a real structured approach we have taken to really encourage participants to get out there and recruit.

When they bring someone, they generally attend two or three sessions with them to really get them comfortable. And then they can leave, or again roll into the next group's sessions.

So that's where we're at with our project. Part of that is to really interweave a lot of these concepts that we got from the prep material with our own cultural values and ideas. It only validates what the finding that this

research - or the prep material only validates what has been happening with our native groups all along. So we tend to - it's pretty simple really to interweave it with the materials from prep. So that's been a real good way of putting this into the program or a lesson plan for our participants.

The other one is that we really minimize written material. I have found that our natives are more of a verbal folks - or verbal people. We're not so much into pencil and paper kind of work so we tend to work along with being strong storytellers, and how it ties into healthy relationships. So that's another area that we had.

Other great recruitment has been that couple mentoring - several of our participants that completed the program wanted to mentor other couples. So it's been a strong setting like that that has really encouraged and been part of a larger group of support groups that exists among our participant at this time.

I think one of the things that I have found is the language itself -- meaning that the Navajo language is a very group thinking processes. It's what's best for the group rather than individualistic thinking where what's best for me.

So that - our Navajo language has really played to our strength in that area when we try to help families develop a stronger relationship to say, "Historically and linguistically this is how our people promoted healthy relationships through the years." So that has been a real plus for us -- which the language plays into this.

Next Slide please. Some of our goals have been basically pretty much taken from the prep materials; is to teach marriage education, develop relationship skills.

The community awareness about the value of a healthy relationship has been one of our main focuses. To get out to these community meeting houses and make presentations to the public in general to say here are the benefits of the - of healthy marriages and healthy relationships. Even though our nation -- Navajo Nation -- other native communities have a high - above average violent or substance abuse use by people, they have been very responsive or - to our presentation.

So that's really been the focus here is that I think creating a sense of hope in the midst of times when things aren't so great, that the strength lies within the family. I think it's one of our battle cry and decisions to say, "In spite of these situations or these things, there's a lot of hope in having a healthy relationship." So that's what we've been aiming at all along at this time.

Next Slide please. Here are some of the strategies that I kind of mentioned is the fliers, the radio. Telephone; we try to make a weekly follow up telephone calls to our participant. We never take the attitude that they'll - "Oh, they'll come again." We leave particularly text messages, sometimes emails and certainly by phone. I think that's really critical is to have a personal contact with our participants.

We have a Navajo Nation Newspaper that is distributed weekly basis. So we have our Paper in there.

Local broadcasts, interviews; we try to look for opportunities to get interviewed. Our local Farmington Town Newspaper did us a lot of good by getting on there and getting interview. Then of course the word of mouth.

We have a lot of partnership with various groups in our valley here -- in the San Juan Basin. We try to participate in their meetings and promote our program through that. Of course the Internet and we have that strong mentorship program and then also the local presentation.

The pictures you have here is the recent couple retreat that they had in Pagosa Springs. And they took all these all-terrain vehicles and the couples were able to get on the high mountain range here and enjoy some time together without children. And our program's able to provide babysitter fees for our moms and dads that are - getting away from these retreats.

The other one is we had a horse - Echo Basin getaway on horseback with couples being involved in that. The other one is floating down the San Juan River involving the couples. So we try to expand our activities rather than just being in the classroom or in the office setting a lot. We try to go beyond and promote that.

Next Slide please. Again, some of the ways that we have our marketing is we have - we always have brochures, fliers, radio advertisement, promotional item distribution, public events -- we've tried very hard to make ourselves presence in these public events. And so, that's where we're at in terms of our program at this point.

Next Slide please. So the retention is I think the integrating of cultural teachings and belief. To really make the effort to reconnect our young people back to their traditional beliefs, Christian belief and Native American church belief. Establishing a rapport with couples I think has been a really - an ongoing effort we make.

We try to make it a really fun friendly environment. We truly tried to have no preconceived ideas or try to really minimize our perception of couples that come in. And we have couples that come in that are Native and non-Native and it's been a real challenge to provide a multi-cultural perspective.

Then we have incentives (sic); when they complete a complete succession there's usually some type of incentive that goes with it. We try to have a cards or gift certificate from local restaurants where couples can enjoy a nice supper.

And then we also have these retreats, social gatherings, there's a day care service we have. Couples can drop off their children at their local - a day care that's not too far from our office and a lot of outdoor activities. We always try to connect with local community leaders for their support. Pay special attention to giving recognition to our participants.

The other thing that's been very helpful is we have a lot of upcoming celebrities that come through our area and we make a definite - we've made definite effort to come - have them come to our weekly meetings and

encourage people there. Often they reflect on their own personal relationship's ups and downs, and I think that's really comforting.

Then the bottom line is we have a very caring staff that's very empathetic to the condition or the work that we're doing here at our office. So that's what I have at this time.

Sarah Schappert: Tom?

Tom Chee: Yes.

Sarah Schappert: We have a couple questions that we're going to ask right now to you. And then we'll of course be able - people will be able to ask more questions as we get to the end of the presentation after Jenna.

I wanted to ask you a couple of questions right now, one of them is; "How did you decide to hold the classes on a weekday evening? Does that work better for your participants than having classes on consecutive Saturdays and Sundays or as a weekend retreat? I know you do retreats as well so...

Tom Chee: I think the mid week because everybody works mainly. People drive into town to work and so usually some of them there's quite a commute for them one way 50-60 miles one way. And then end of the evening they're headed back to their outlying community area. So we've kind of put it - let's say go to work, on your way home drop by and be part of our session. That has worked pretty well for that.

Then on weekend retreats we plan it pretty well ahead of time where folks can prepare to get away for the weekend.

Sarah Schappert: I was going to actually talk to you about the transportation issue. That I know a lot of grantees face, and in your area -- because you cover such a vast geographic area -- I was going to talk to you about that. I think that's a great way to take care of one challenge and also get more participants to come in by recognizing how far they have to commute each day and providing the classes at night while they're still in town. So that's an excellent idea.

You talked a little about your recruitment strategies that you guys do. And what do you feel are the, you know, top three successful recruitment strategies that you do?

Tom Chee: I feel one of those things is getting on the - like I said, "Our people are great listeners. They love to listen to the radio." And getting on the radio consistently to explain our program and then also to talk about how it impacts children in the home. That the healthier relationship is between the adult, research shows that children do better academically, socially, emotionally. I think that's the emphasis there.

We get grandmas and grandpas to call our office and to say we have children or grandchildren that need a lot of encouragement in getting along better. So that tends to lead to other connections and over time they themselves will come in and enroll in our weekly programs. So that seems to be the number one.

The other thing that I think really works is working with the couples that are completing their program to say, "Make every effort to identify somebody." Even though we don't need to say or give the impression that their relationship - so we've given some of the tools to how to really convince or to persuade fellow employees or friends, relatives to try out our program. I think that preparation is so critical within the existing group we have. So we've given to a lot of recruiting tool in that since.

The last one is I think that real important is just the staff we have. We make an extra effort to be real sensitized to who's coming into our program and being very approachable. Of course the language skills that are represented among our staff are a real plus. So I think those are the real top three thoughts that I have.

Sarah Schappert: I know that many on the call might not know the work that you do but you guys have been doing some excellent work in New Mexico and I want to thank you for all that you guys have done. There'll probably be more questions for you towards the end, but I want to make sure we give Jenna time to do her presentation so I'll introduce her at this time.

Right now I'd like to introduce Jenna Umiamaka from Keiki O Ka 'Āina Family Learning Centers which is located in Hawaii. It's really early there so we thank you for joining us today Jenna. She's currently serving as the Project Director for the ANA Family Preservation project which started in 2007.

She works with married couples as well as families providing healthy relationship education utilizing the Loving Couples Loving Children curriculum. And also conducts trainings at a women's community correctional center. And as the first college graduate in her family, Jenna joined Keiki in 2002. So welcome Jenna and you can start your presentation.

Jenna Umiamaka: Aloha everyone. Thanks for tuning in I guess. We're going to talk about marketing strategies, recruitment strategies and retention strategies that we use within our own program here.

So some of our marketing strategies that we often use and that are a huge impact in our agency is program fliers. Using the program fliers, radio and television and of course knowing your audience - targeting your specific audience group.

Some of the marketing strategies like I said is our program flier. It's one of the most important pieces of getting the word out there. A visual piece so we try and put, you know, our main information on it like; our program name, contact phone number, our local and any other information that you think will grab your audience.

And just looking should at all our flier; we have our Health Marriages name that stands out and of course for

more information please call and our phone number. That usually grabs the attention of a lot of people who might be interested. The smaller wording should be informational and straight to the point.

And we chose to put the class topics to provide a little bit more informational. And it helped because when we pass out a flier to somebody who might be interested they look at the class topics. They can automatically identify with a topic and you know can say, "This is what we need; we need intimacy after kids," or "We need to learn how to compromise," or "We need to get the dad involved." So that grabs a lot of the attention of the people who we might be recruiting from.

Also, you know, as a side note; it's a good idea to use no more than two styles of font. I think if you use a little bit more than that often it looks a little bit too busy. So that might be a side note for you.

Our radio and television spots; we were lucky enough to write that into our grant so we got money for it. But when we do radio spots, we like to target specific stations with high native following -- stations that play a lot of Hawaiian music where a lot of our Native people will definitely tune into. We talk with a representative, sometimes they will provide free advertising or do a money match -- say we spend \$5000 on advertisement and they'll match us.

So we get the double - the recruitment efforts on radio and we can use it towards in-kind match -- which is a plus. And of course make the commercials enticing and straight to the point so people can, you know, hear what they need to hear and get the information.

Television spots, we are also doing. We again target popular stations as well as those with high native followings. And we try and target our commercials for early morning; or evening spots work best. Those are the times that most parents are watching TV.

Knowing your audience; so know who you are talking to and what they like. If you're talking to a man and trying to promote the program then -- with a man -- talk about the food you might be serving. Talk about how the relationship will get better and the woman will be more romantic.

If you're speaking to a woman and recruiting to a woman, you know, talk about the romance that they might be getting. Or you know the one-on-one contact with their spouse. Or you know, how you might offer child care. You know, how your - their husbands or other halves might have better communication skills. Or you know you might provide a date night. Whatever it is, target your audience. It'll be a little bit more effective that way. You know sell to your man and sell to your woman.

Some recruitment strategies that we do are; finding the right location to recruit at, contact the person, bring your necessary supplies, and of course word of mouth is always key.

As far as location, we try and target communities with high Native populations of course. On the island Oahu

we have about 800,000 people...

((Crosstalk))

Jenna Umiamaka: ...living here. And maybe 200,000 or so are Native Hawaiians. So we have certain populations or cities that have a high Native Hawaiian group so that's where we try and recruit from. We also go to schools, churches, malls, community centers, libraries, Laundromats or try community fairs and events.

Newspapers often have upcoming community events for families. Look in the Newspaper, call and ask if you could have an informational booth. You know getting your name out there, being present in the community is huge you know, so people can recognize you and trust that you might be an agency that is there to stand -- that is there to help their community.

Contact; face to face contact is key. Like I said before, "When people can see the enthusiasm that you have for the program, people will be interested." You know, you're the best seller of your own program. The people who work for you are the best sellers of your own program. You know what it entails; you know how it helps impact people's lives. Face to face contact is key.

Invite community leaders and you know those in churches, schools, businesses. In our case we invite Kupuna, our Grandparents, to come to just see what we do, to talk to our participants -- to let them know how they might have, you know, gone through 40 years of marriage and stuck with it. So having them come and visit your site is a great way for them to support you and what you do. And of course, you know, send people your way.

Once contact has been made, explain to them the program's mission and invite them to come and speak, like I said before. Talking to them about your mission and what your program is about is important because they get a real good sense of what your agency is doing. Ask the contact if you could leave fliers or business cards for them to hand out, or put on a bulletin board.

Most times, you know if you sell your program, most people want to improve the community. And you know, letting them know that if - you know to raise happy children in this community you have to have a happy relationship and healthy relationship. So that is very important as well. Ask the contact if they will be having any community events, if you can have an informational booth like I said.

Supplies; when you go out there, you know you have to look prepared, you have to look professional. So when you're doing personal visits bring; business cards; fliers; pictures of what you might be doing -- of the participants and some of the activities they might be doing.

Thumbtacks, tape, staplers -- to put up a flier on a wall. You know last thing you want to do is bother the agency that might be helping you to borrow their tape or stapler. I know it sounds kind of small, but you know

sometimes it's a big thing when you come prepared.

For informational recruitment table at fairs, get a big poster or display board with your program information -- include pictures. You know some people are visual people. They want to see, you know if the people who are in this program look like them. You know what to expect, where they're going to be, you know, what they're going to be doing. Of course always your logo, that's a great way for people to identify your agency or your program.

Your fliers and testimony from past participants -- and you know their word is strong sometimes. If somebody who went through it before has positive things to say about the program, that is huge. And anything that would help make it attractive to those passing by. So you know, make it big. Make it colorful if you need to so people passing by will stop and, you know, notice your booth. Again, fliers and business cards to hand out.

A recruitment sheet; have something there that people can physically sign in on -- leave their basic information so you can call them back later. Put out samples of curriculum to view. And of course, sometimes free giveaways, that will attract people to the table -- like balloons or stickers or a simple child coloring activity.

And when you have these, sometimes you know tying a balloon to a child's hand will give you the opportunity to speak to the parents while the kids are happily occupied. If the child is coloring a simple sheet of paper, you know it's a great way for you to start talking about your program and what you're about. So having those things at your table is a lot of help.

Another recruitment strategy we do is of course word of mouth. You know past participants are probably our biggest promoters of our program. We've found this to be an effective way of getting the word out. If they had a great experience in the program, they will be likely to encourage their family and friends to enroll.

Ask for referral before the end of the class and give the participants business cards to hand out. Or a registration form, so they can pass it on to the person that they might know who might need the class or might be perfect for the class.

Send them emails; send your past participant emails of when the class sessions are starting up. And attach a flier to let their friends or family know. It's a great way that they can forward the email out to friends or family.

Of course colleagues or partnerships that you might have made in the past. You know call up those you partner with or have worked with in the past. Ask them to help send out email blasts to all of their partners. Or encourage their friends or family to join. So you know keeping that relationship ongoing is very helpful in helping to get the word out to people that you work with and the community.

Another side note is the Internet. You know, keep up with what's hot. Facebook; if you have a Facebook Page post something that know when your next session is coming up or how you had a great class session with

your participants. You know use MySpace and Twitter. They're great ways to help spread the word about what your program is doing and when to sign up. So use the Internet if possible.

Some retention strategies that we use are of course convenience. We try and set the mood, we set expectations. We let our participants know about the benefits, incentives they might be receiving. And of course we always throughout our program serve them with Aloha and 'Ohana -- you know Love, and we treat them like Family.

As far as convenience, go location, location, location. Hold classes in a central place where almost everyone will be able to drive to easily. Make sure there's ample parking. Nobody wants to fight with parking.

We have our programs on Wednesday nights generally as well and you know after a long days work, nobody wants to fight for parking. So having someplace with ample parking, big rooms, and clean friendly facilities and of course good lighting -- especially if they'll be bringing their children for childcare that evening. You know, they want to make sure the area is safe for them to walk around and their children.

Time is key as well. We hold sessions in the evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 as most participants are working parents and they are more likely to attend. The first hour we do dinner and the last two hours are the class session. So you know the time and the convenience for parents to come is huge. And that keeps them coming is - so that's a really good one to do.

And we try and set the mood within our own agency. Of course from the very first contact -- whether it's on phone or in person -- we try and treat our participants like family, with respect and Aloha.

Always be positive and enthusiastic. Offer supportive comments and encouraging words. You know sometimes we get couples coming and we have the wives grumbling about their husbands, you know. So we try and avoid telling them what they're doing wrong, rather tell them what they can do differently and how the program might help.

Listen attentively and reassure participants that the offered program can only help them in their relationship. You know if they're having a really bumpy ride in the relationship, you know what they're doing now is not working so you know, tell them that the classes that you provide will only help them.

And remind the participant that your class is a place to lift your partner up rather than criticize or blame them. It will be a safe place to air concerns in a non-threatening way. We like to set that mood straight from the first class. You know, we're not here to put yourself down. We're here to start from today, clean the slate and new - learn new tools to improve the relationship. And one way is respecting your spouse, especially in the other - in the presence of other participants.

Try and set ground rules and expectations in each class. And during class set norms that all will agree on --

like no swearing, turn off the telephones, no side conversations when somebody is speaking.

We also have our participants sign a commitment that are - this can help couples make a signed promise one another to attend class on a regular basis and commit to working on strengthening their relationship. And if there's a signed agreement, most likely the couples will agree to it and stick with it no matter how difficult it might get.

Expectations; Let couples know what to expect. From orientation we provide the couples with all the information; what to expect; the ground rules; rules for childcare; our program mission; who our funders are; what our curriculum - how it will help them; who our curriculum is from; class expectations; benefits; et cetera — everything.

This will give them the chance to either continue with the program or back out once they know what's expected. This will also allow you to fill that cant spot should someone decide this may be a little bit too much for us at this time.

We kick off each and every one of our programs -- our sessions -- with a retreat weekend. All of our sessions start off with a three day retreat weekend. We call it a Day Retreat, so they come Friday evenings all day Saturday and late afternoon on Sundays. Over that weekend we do four classes and several connection activities.

We've found that this is a great way for participating couples to really get comfortable with other couples who might be in their class. They get comfortable and get to know their class facilitators and the surroundings. This will create a bond and a fellowship with the participants and they want to return. If they only have weekly visits, you're most likely to lose them during the week. So kicking the retreat weekend off in the beginning, and creating that bond and creating that closeness, and you know the couples will hold each other accountable.

Also — this is key — we do not provide childcare over this weekend because we really want the couples to concentrate on each other. This is a time that they have to devote to each other over the three days and to just work towards relearning, re-loving, and you know just working on each other.

After the retreat weekend we will have weekly classes. We follow the retreat with eight weekly Wednesday night classes and a graduation night. Participants are most likely to return because of the experience they had over the weekend.

So we do a total of 12 classes over a 9 week span because 4 of those classes we do over the retreat weekend — and this has made a huge impact. Whereas starting one week at a time, it's hard to get them to come back because it's still kind of in an uneasy environment. So the retreat weekends really, really help.

Some of the benefits that we, you know, retain our families with; in each class session, every class has a male

and a female facilitator. We let our participants know we're not counselors we're here to facilitate the group. Those way men will — and women will feel equally represented. This has helped in bringing the men back consistently. They don't feel picked on.

So having that representative is huge — you know a male to advocate for the males, a woman to advocate for the women. And really the group or the participants learn from each other. They realize they're not the only one going through their struggles. They sometimes realize, "Hey, maybe we aren't so bad. You know, let's stop picking on the small stuff," so you know having a group session like that is huge.

We start off each session with a candle-lit gourmet dinner including — included during every meeting. We set up candle-lit gourmet dinner in a buffet style so they're - you know it's like they're in a fine dining restaurant. We use flowers, ceramic plates, silverware, glassware -- and this is an uninterrupted date-like meal. And it's hard to come by once they have children.

So you know we catch them in that first hour and we allow them to have that adult meaningful conversation/ interaction with each other and other adults. Our participants really value this time, they feel pampered. It's also a good idea to try and get volunteers to help in this.

Childcare; childcare provided while couples have dinner and are at the class sessions. So we take the children, we put them in a separate room. And the children are also fed separately by childcare providers so the participants can be rest assured knowing that their children are in good hands and they can just concentrate on their relationship.

Children are kept busy with age-appropriate activities in separate age groups. If their children are happy with their providers, parents are more likely to keep coming to the class. If, you know, parents pick up their children and they just had a horrible time, they most likely don't want to return. So you know, making the childcare facilities fun and inviting and busy for the children helps in allowing the parents to work on their own relationship.

Some of the incentives that we often work with is at the end of the retreat weekend we give each participant a kalo plant -- or taro plant. The kalo plant we provide our participants, this plant symbolizes many things in the Hawaiian culture, mainly family. We ask our participants to take them home, nurture and care for it; bring it back on graduation night. This time is a metaphor for their marriage, their family and the effort it takes to nurture it and for it to blossom.

Couples appreciate learning about their culture and have a tangible item that represents their family unit. And they look at this plant and they realize how much attention it requires. And we just tell them, "You see the same attention your kalo plant requires, is the same attention your relationship requires. So it's not something that'll just grow and blossom on its own, you have to feed it, you have to love it, you have to water it to help it to grow."

In each of our classes we also have a Hawaiian Collateral Component curriculum where we touch upon an important value in each class that goes along with the actual curriculum that we teach. So you know our participants relearning these values and remembering them as they are in the class and out of the class is big. You know its basic things like showing respect, showing love, being trustworthy -- things like that.

After each individual class session our participants are given an incentive item that will help them to continue practicing what was learned during class. With these gifts participants feel like we genuinely care for them individually, their marriage and their family unit.

Just to give you an example, one of our class sessions are - is called The Involved Dad. So we go through that and then at the end we give them a deck of Uno cards and we tell them, "Take these cards home and play with your kids. You know it can be just one way to bond with your children even if it's a short 15 minute game. For children who might be under three years old, you can teach those colors, you can teach those numbers." So we just try and open their eyes on how to bond with their children a little bit more.

And finally, Aloha and 'Ohana; this is what a lot of us in Hawaii live by. And that's what we serve by. And it's important in retaining our people and in making them feel comfortable. Aloha means love, affection, compassion, mercy, sympathy, pity, kindness, sentiment, grace, charity -- this is a core value in our culture.

We shower the meaning of Aloha on our participants in every way. When they feel it from us, they want and look for its returning. We cannot fake this, it's something that comes from within us, so you know we shower it on them and they feel it and they want to come back and they feel like family.

'Ohana means family, relative, kin-group. We treat our participants like part of our own family — with respect and encouragement. We treat everyone equally. Participants always return doing sessions and volunteer in the next sessions to give back for all that they have received. And they want to help other couples. So you know living by these two values, is how we keep our people here. Keep our participants wanting more and returning. So that is really good.

And also as a side note I wanted to say, you know getting volunteers is big. What we do to help our - get our volunteers to come and help us implement this program is huge. We have seven to eight volunteers a night coming to help - and childcare help, setup the kitchen.

And one way to target volunteers to come and help is to go to your local native schools. Sometimes kids get scholarships and they have - they're required to put 50 hours of community service, so you know contact that person. So volunteers are key for our program.

I think that's about it. That's what we do here at Keiki O Ka 'Āina and hopefully when you guys come down here you guys can visit us. Thank you.

Sarah Schappert: We can't wait to come down and visit you in Hawaii and see your beautiful location. Just as a little bit of a funny side note, when you were talking about the plant? I recently have just killed the second plant my mother-in-law has given me in the past month...

Jenna Umiamaka: Oh no.

Sarah Schappert: ...and I think you might need to come here and teach me how to continue to keep my plants alive. I'm - I think it's important that I pay much more attention to them. But I spend most of my time paying attention to my husband only so that could be why.

Jenna Umiamaka: That's a good reason why.

Sarah Schappert: We're quite busy people. But there are a couple of questions that have come up so I thought I'd ask you a couple of them Jenna. And then we're going to open it up for everyone to ask questions to both of the presenters. If you remember what Jillian said earlier, you can type your questions in. And as I'm asking these two questions to Jenna, feel free to type additional questions in and we will get responses from both of them as we go along.

Jenna one of the questions that have come up is; how did you come up with the idea to provide a candle-lit dinner to all of your participants as a way of providing them with quality time as a couple? And then; for other programs that might not have the ability to provide an extensive dinner such as yours -- either due to budget constraints or time -- what other ideas would you offer them that may be similar?

Jenna Umiamaka: Well we came up with the candle-lit dinner idea because, you know we're all in relationships and we all have children. And you know we found that what is lacking in a relationship sometimes is that quality time together and that date night out. You know, prior to children, it happened all the time I'm sure.

After children, it - you know the conversation is not there anymore. Anything that happens is around what your children want. So we came up with this idea is to spoil the parents and to - for them to remember, you know, "This is why I fell in love with this guy," "This is why, you know, I fell in love with this woman." You know and having the beautiful ambiance kind of sets the mood for romance too. And that's why we decided to do it. And believe me it works.

For those who might not have the luxury of being able to do this. You know, you can get takeout, put it on a nice plate and, you know, just have a flower. You know, it can be something that you can pick from around - well in our case around our property. You know something beautiful. Just kind of - it doesn't have to cost anything. You know even if it's on a nice paper plate that you're serving the food.

But as long as they have that one-on-one time, you know if you can put a space between each couple or have

four - you know two couples per table. You know just kind of creating or setting a mood. And it doesn't have to be expensive at all.

Does that answer the question?

Sarah Schappert: Yes it does. Thank you.

Another question is; what advise do you have for programs that may not have male and female facilitators for each class? And if they don't have a male facilitator, how do you think they would be able to keep men engaged in the activities?

Jenna Umiamaka: That's kind of a difficult question. You know, having a male and female facilitator is huge because, you know if you - if you're constantly with a woman, you know sometimes men are tired of hearing their woman already. And if there's another woman in the room facilitating the group sometimes men might not want it.

But if - you know if you could possibly bring a Native man in. You know if you have six sessions, you know bring him in for one of the sessions as a guest speaker, or you know to talk about the importance of having a man in the relationship or whatever it is.

I don't know. It's a difficult question. You know that's the only thing I can think of at this point is to have a guest come in, if you guys can identify one. Kind of a role model that's in the community, something - some you know man that your native people can look up to. And will respect.

You know and bringing him into the classroom, even if it's for half an hour to speak on how they have, you know, strengthened their own relationship, how they have kept it going and how you know it has impacted their children -- or whatever it is. So that might be one way that you can get that male symbol in there for the men in your group.

Sarah Schappert: You had a great suggestion there with the guest speakers because you can - in a lot of these communities you can bring in elders that may not be trained in the curricula that you're working on but still has - is a role model in the community. And can either do some story telling about their life and their family and their marriage and what - why they feel being, you know, attentive to your wife or your spouse or your partner is important. Or why it's important to be a father.

So I think there are a variety of ways that you can bring in males that can speak in the class even if they are not facilitators. And you can get them to come in as volunteers in a lot of communities as well. So I think that's a great suggestion.

I also like the way that you said it, "that one of the reasons not to have two female facilitators is if men do come

in they might be tired of already hearing women speak all the time.” And I think that’s important for people to think about when they’re conducting these classes and recognizing the perspective of their participants in the project. So thank you for that.

((Crosstalk))

Sarah Schappert: I wanted to clarify a comment that was previously brought up with Tom’s presentation. A person had asked, “How you count a person as completed if they’re non-native.” And I wanted to provide clarification that for the ANA projects that are out there, we provide these activities to native people but if a native person is married or in a relationship with a non-native, they are allowed to bring those partners into the activities and they’re counted as part of the completion — the numbers for the workshops.

And for example if there is a person that is non-native but they are raising a native child, they’re also allowed to partake in the project activities. So as long as they have a relationship with the native community and are either in a relationship or parenting a native child, then they are able to participate in the activities and can be counted as a number of - for the participant numbers. I just wanted to provide clarification on that for an earlier comment.

I’m going to ask this question to both of you. And if Tom would like to answer first and then Jenna, but you both talked about cultural activities and how you include those and I know Jenna touched on it a little bit in her presentation as well. But what would be some of the cultural activities that you do that you feel not only bring in additional participants, but helps you retain those participants as well?

Tom Chee: I think if we look at this from a historical perspective — historically of where and how native communities and particularly families, have experienced certain things. I think it’s really critical to look at that from a historical perspective. And I think a lot of awareness can be promoted that. Things that were done in native cultures are just as valid as any culture that promotes marriage or a healthy relationship.

And I think that’s one of the things that we go back to particularly in our culture — as Navajo People — that skills and knowledge of relationship were a necessity years back. And uncles - paternal uncles had the duty of looking and identifying a potential mate. And I always joke about the eHarmony match-making setup. And I always tell them that it’s always been practiced by our natives years ago and that the whole purpose is to match what’s best, not for the couple, but what’s best for the community.

How does individual - this marriage, how will this relationship benefit the community? Does it create hope? Does it create continuity? Does it - those were the ways that our elders had dealt with and this matchmaking setup in the community. And so we tie in - and I think perception is so critical here that you do not want to promote the stereotypical view of what’s romance.

But culturally it’s colored by values that our elders promoted. And clarifying that sometimes you don’t feel like

you're being married. And that marriage and relationship is not based on feelings, it's based on commitment and discipline to make our communities a better place to live. And so a lot of that can be interwoven into those particular setups.

((Crosstalk))

Sarah Schappert: Jenna do you have anything to add?

Jenna Umiamaka: Yes. What we do in addition to touching upon the values that we try and promote our participants to live by be participating in cultural activities.

You know, we'll bring out simple games that our native people played -- you know, prior to contact -- that they can do at home with just things around the house. You know how to make native food. You know and we promote it as a family affair. Where you know, families can do it and it's time for the family to be together.

We encourage them to go fishing, you know like our native people did. You know just be out there and looking towards each other for that entertainment and that you know emotional sustenance. You know where they can really rely on each other and look towards each other -- you know their spouses, their children -- for that happiness that they might need.

And sometimes, you know because of all the hustle and bustle that goes on in a normal household is — you know how husbands will look to their friends for happiness, wives will look toward their friends for happiness.

And we try and promote them the togetherness of the family, going out and fishing, sitting around the table — around the dinner table and talking about stories of when the parents were young or when their grandparents were young. And just promoting you know that oral language that our people have talked about over the years. You know and just looking towards each other once again instead of looking outwards of their family to make themselves happy. You know use that time to concentrate on each other.

You know through food making, through - you know in our culture eating is huge and talking story around the dinner table. You know, spending quality time. Like I said, "Fishing." You know creating a garden in your yard if you have one. So just those things, quality family time is what we try and do. And in our native cultures, family was key. You know family is basically like the root of a kalo plant and people will grow out of that.

Sarah Schappert: Another question that I would like to ask of both of you is; one grantee is asking that they have in their community a lot of single parents and how do you accommodate single parents in your project activities? Tom if you'd like to, go first.

Tom Chee: ...think it's a - our approach has been to really promote that single parenting is not a stigma and that there's a lot of strength to being a single parent. And they're included in the regular setup of our couples

sessions. And we're always encourage them to think in terms of getting more information that will make them a better partner in the — and may possibly in a future relationship consider a blended family, merging two families. Those are some of the things we've talked about.

As well as if they're interest is not to that level then we also encourage them to say, "Here is what some of the research bares out. And if you can learn these things information it's a good teaching tool for your relatives, for your children, even in-laws — daughter in-law, son in-law — grandchildren. You could always be a resource to your immediate family as a single parent.

And so that particularly — we don't treat them like they should be in a separate group. They're included in the regular setup and reach out to them as such. And I think they really enjoy that kind of recognition and accepts the — acceptance by the — even by the couples that do come to our group.

Jenna Umiamaka: In our case serving singles, we use the same curriculum, we just kind of aim it towards of course just the single parent. But we try and encourage them to — you know since they're single at this time and you know as Hawaiians we really believe you are your kukuna, you are your grandparents and before them — that everything in your parents' life, and in your upbringing, and your past is who you are today -- whether positive or negative.

So within the single lives we try and promote that. You know to be able to be happy with yourself. Heal from any kind of hurts that you might have had in your past relationship. Learn from any mistakes that you might have done in your past relationship. And when getting into a new relationship if that's what they choose, make sure it's starting from as clean of slate as possible. So you can learn to love more — learn to understand more, learn to communicate more — in your future relationships.

And of course we also you know tell our single parents that this is the same kind of tools that you can use with your children. There are a lot of hurts that your children might be experiencing because you know there's an absent father or an absent mother. So, you know promoting that within the family unit as far as responsible relationships go, is what we try to do in our singles program.

So you know it really helps, they really feel like you know, "I can relate, I don't - you know since I don't have a husband or I don't have a wife, you know I can make my relationship work. I can be happy within my own family unit." And if you're happy within your own family unit and within yourself, you can learn to love another person when that time is right for you.

Sara Schappert: The follow up to that — since the romantic dinner I'm assuming is for the couples only — you provide other sessions as well for single parents and single individuals, is that correct?

Jenna Umiamaka: We do, we target communities. So I go into our local women's prison here. We have people that will be working with teenagers who are pregnant who are single moms. So we target in a different

way because there isn't a couple — you know male/female interaction — you know so we go in and target schools with teens, or homes that have single moms. And we look at it in a different way and kind of not only empowering themselves, empowering their children.

And you know allowing them to choose a different way of being in a relationship. Because often times in the women's prison or with single teens, you know, the relationship that they thought was important turned out in most cases to be, you know something that they almost regret. So we target our single parents in a different way, so we don't do candle-lit dinners. We bring a snack and we kind of set up a talk story — so to speak — session.

You know although we do our normal class with our normal curriculum, it's still a good way for them to learn about themselves, learn about how they're parenting. Learn about, you know relationships and, you know red flags to look for or positive things to look for. And that way they can make a healthy choice in the future. So yeah, we do target our singles in a different way.

Sarah Schappert: This question is actually for Tom and related to the Shiprock Project. Do children of the participants take part in the classes at any point during the six week period, or is it just the individuals or parents?

Tom Chee: We generally have more of - the last class session we generally encourage children to come and to be part of the group session. But at - there are times that teenagers, or pre-teens, they come with their parents as well. And we also are sensitive to that. We try not to totally just encourage the couples to come. I think that one of the strong points that our participants have acknowledged is the impact it has on their children — particularly teenagers.

And so here's what they really say, "You know in the privacy of our home, this is what our children are exposed to; hurtful words, a lot of disrespect. And then when we go out into the public area — into our public life we act like nothing's going on and we're even cordial to each other."

"But our children — particularly teenagers — witness the two sides of us and that's what..." and they said that "what angers our teenagers - we've come to recognize what anger our teenagers are some of the things or some ways that we pressure them to cover up for us. To say that, "This is a facade my parents are displaying but I have to promote or create a situation where I'm covering up for them."

And I think that kind of awareness has really truly reflected in the growth of - and we encourage teenagers that do come to say to them, "Forgive your parents." Meaning that they have done the best they could, they're not perfect. But here's a point where you say, "Mom and Dad I'm reaching an age where I need to be responsible for myself. And I forgive you for some of these facade and hurtful things you've done to each other or to us as a family."

And so we really kind of just go with the flow but the structure is still - the thrust of the message is still aimed at the couple. But if other children — particularly pre-teens and teenagers, or young adults in that family — come we really don't try to discourage them. But for really young children, really at a pre-school age level, we have a - we encourage them to take them to day care just up the road from us.

Sarah Schappert: I'm going to ask one or two more questions. And this question is for both of you and you both touched on it during your presentations. But I wanted to ask you to elaborate on it because I think it's really important for grantees. How did you obtain initial buy-in from the community leaders for your project? Jenna do you want to start first?

Jenna Umiamaka: Sure. Initial buy-in from our community is — it's face-to-face. We go out and we promote it. You know if we think it's a really good program and we portray that when we're talking to our community leaders, you know usually we peak their interest.

And then we invite them, you know just, "Come by. Stop by and see what we do." You know usually it's telling them, you know, what the couples have learned in the end. What the couples are learning throughout the program and how we've done a significant change from the beginning t the end.

Initially yes it was hard. We have the - we're lucky to have an agency that our Healthy Marriages Group is under so, you know, having that community contact has kind of been established. And going in you know Keiki O Ka 'Āina is normally known as a early education program in that we realize that you know, parents can't be there emotionally sometimes for their children if their own relationship is at a difficult point. So you know when we wrote for this grant, you know we had that in mind.

So when we speak to our community leaders, we show them and we — you known and testimony from our past participants. We tell them ourselves how we've seen an impact. How this has affected the couple as well as their children.

So you know just promoting it face to face, you know, so they can see your enthusiasm, see how much you're involved in the program. Ask for that time, you know, for them to meet with you if they have 10 minutes of their time so you can go in. If you have to do it over the phone, you know let them hear it in your voice.

But establishing that from the beginning and keeping the contact with these people. And letting them know what's happening and what's going on was really huge for us.

Sarah Schappert: ...have anything to add?

Tom Chee: I think for our program to identify — I think there's a difference between being an elected official that has a position versus a person in the community that has power and influence to make decisions for groups of...

((Crosstalk))

Tom Chee: And I think sometimes we run or we bark up the wrong tree. And so when we talk about community leaders, we try to separate power and also from - particularly in the dominant society we attach position with power. A lot of native communities — the practitioner, the traditional spiritual leader, maybe a minister, and an elder — have the influence, the power and the persuasion to give blessing or to give endorsement to a particular program.

So I think it's real critical and crucial to know who are the real power players in each community. And I think taking the time to know them and identifying them and promoting your program with these particular individuals is critical. As well as going to our officials that are particularly elected and then the political structure in our community.

Sarah Schappert: I'm going to ask one final question before we go to some pole questions that we will also be asking. How do you both select your trainers and facilitators for your projects? Jenna you want to start?

Jenna Umiamaka: Sure. The facilitators and trainers that we chose; you know we looked at their background and how they've helped people in the community. If they've established good relationship in whatever work they might have been doing outside of our agency. And years of service, you know if - and we meet them. Interview is huge.

You know if you can - in our case, if we can meet them, have an interview with them and if we can feel, you know their Aloha or their interest or their passion for what they're applying for, we're most likely to bring them on our team. So it's all about the face to face contact and knowing - you know, looking at their history as — and their work and their dedication to their work. And knowing what kind of outside activities they might be doing and you know and how they are in their own family.

And you know looking at all of those things and deciding, "Okay this might be somebody that will be an asset to our community." If it's a strong native man who might be helping the class, you know "is this somebody that our participants can look up to — can respect? Do they show respect in return?" You know we ask around for people to refer people to our agency but we've been lucky enough to have the same team that we started off from the very beginning.

You know, I am one of the facilitators and I have a male counterpart. And there's another group as well — another female and another male facilitator. And within our two groups, you know the relationship is really strong. We get along great. We respect each other and if within our group if our participants can see that the relationship that we have — as far as teaching the group — is solid and respectful, they will be most likely to give that same respect to us. And of course us to them.

So you know just meeting the person face to face and of course looking at their history. Some of our

participants might have a college education. Others might have the great experience of facilitating a group or working with families. So you know us, just kind of look at an overall of what these people can bring to us.

Tom Chee: For our part I think the characteristics are pretty much the same; commitment, desire, more importantly having the character that reflects the spirit of the program you're trying to promote.

Knowing the community; I think that people that facilitate in our sessions some do it from a totally Navajo perspective — traditional views and values — as well as others that have experience, so other cultures and multi-perspective that they can bring to talking about relationships so...

But the main thing I think is character, and then desire and commitment to families. And making better communities where we have females and males that help with — throughout the course of our session.

Sarah Schappert: I — We're going to put up some pole questions that we would like you all to respond to, but before I ask those questions out loud I want to thank Tom and Jenna for their presentations, and all the input that they provided today. I would especially like to thank them for all the work they do in their communities. They're doing an amazing job. And I know that their communities are greatly benefitting from their work so thank you both.

At this time I'm going to ask you to answer a couple of questions that are showing up on your screen. The first statement is, "I have a better idea of effective strategies to advertise my family preservation program." And then you can either click Strongly Agree, Agree, Unsure, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. Again I'm going to ask the - state the statement again, which is, "I have a better idea of effective strategies to advertise my family preservation program."

And then if we can go on to the next poll statement; "I better understand how to keep enrollment strong in my program." If you can click there as well. And it's, "I better understand how to keep enrollment strong in my program."

We can go on to the next Slide. "I better understand how to effectively retain program participants through the end of the course." And if you could respond. Again it's, "I better understand how to effectively retain program participants through the end of the course."

And I believe there's one more; "I found today's Webinar to be informative and useful." If you can respond to that. "I found today's Webinar to be informative and useful."

And I believe those are all the poll statement questions. I'd like to thank all of you for participating in our Webinar today. The audio and PowerPoint will be uploaded onto the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center's Web site in the next few weeks. And you can see the Web site up on your computer at this time. It is www.healthymarriageinfo.org or you can also go to www.twoofus.org. And I thank you all for participating today

and have a wonderful day.

Tom Chee: Thank you.

Jenna Umiamaka: Thank you.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, that does conclude the conference call for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your line.

END