

## **<h2>Native American Representation and Diversity Initiatives within Orthopaedic Surgery: An Update and Road Map to Success</h2>**

Zachary Jodoin<sup>1</sup>, Tyler Kade Williamson, Selina Poon, Sekinat Kassim McCormick<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UTHSCSA, <sup>2</sup>University of Texas Health Science Center At San Antonio

### **INTRODUCTION:**

It is well known that orthopaedic surgery lags behind all other surgical subspecialties and medicine as a whole in terms of diversity. Unfortunately, this lack of representation is especially evident within the Native American population. According to the US Census Bureau, Native American/Alaskan Natives represent approximately 2.9% of the overall US population. Despite this, Native American representations is disproportionately deficient across the entire spectrum of orthopaedic surgical practice, including residency, academics, and private practice. A comprehensive analysis of orthopaedic providers within the United States shows that Native Americans represent a mere 0.4% of the total provider base.

### **METHODS:**

A literature review was completed with the key words, "Native American, Indigenous, Diversity, Inclusion, Orthopedics," to identify programs and Native American representation within orthopedics. National orthopedic and diversity organizations, local tribal resources, and residency program resources were also reviewed to evaluate for programs available to Native Americans. These programs and resources were recorded and organized to serve as a guide for Native American students, residents, and faculty.

### **RESULTS:**

No Native American specific orthopedic inclusion program exists. A multitude of programs exist to recruit Native American applicants into healthcare as a whole, however. These include pipeline programs and scholarships from the Indian Health Service (IHS), mentorship programs from a multitude of Native American medical societies, and IHS recruitment programs targeted at Native American preferential hiring. Dozens of grants and national diversification programs, including many within the AAOS, are available, but not specified for, Native Americans. These include objectively successful programs such as the AAOS IDEA Grant, Nth Dimensions, and The Perry Initiative.

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:**

This review highlights the paucity of Native American representation within orthopedics, but also identifies current programs and resources for Native Americans. This article can serve as a real-time guide for Native Americans pursuing a career in orthopedic surgery, as well as inspire future programs directed at increasing Native American representation.