**Little Earth of United Tribes**

**Summer Indian Health Research Internship Program Description**

**Urban Indian Community Description:**

Little Earth of United Tribes is the only American Indian preference HUD affordable housing community in the United States. Located on 9.5 square blocks in South Minneapolis, Minnesota, Little Earth is home to 800 residents, 99 % of whom self-identify as American Indian. Half of Little Earth residents are children under the age of 18, with about 200 being 5 years of age or younger. The average household income is $8,640, with many residents having no income. The Little Earth Urban Farm is a vibrant part of the focus on health, and one of Little Earth’s most important assets for renewing residents’ relationship with the Mother Earth, and learning about food and indigenous medicines.

**Health Conditions:**

Little Earth residents experience many chronic physical health issues, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and kidney disease and asthma. Throughout the community, there are high rates of obesity at all ages. Residents also experience challenges associated with the many manifestations of historical trauma. A year ago, Little Earth decided to confront these health issues and challenges by creating the Little Earth Community Health Initiative, a long-term effort to build on existing adult, family and youth programs and positive resident health experiences to create the conditions for residents to step into their own personalized journey to wellness. Little Earth holds a holistic vision of well-being, and is engaging residents in what works for them and their families.

**Internship Research and Learning Opportunities:**

Little Earth welcomes one or more interns to become a part of the community fabric this summer. There will be abundant opportunities to experience and contribute meaningfully to community-based participatory research (CBPR) throughout the summer of 2014. An intern(s) would be: 1) part of the staff team to create the process infrastructure to launch two research studies, 2)

Little Earth will be launching two significant research projects in partnership with the University of Minnesota’s Program in Health Disparities Research: 1) An Adult Health Survey for approximately 300 residents 18 years old and above to gather current baseline health data and perceptions in a manner that reflects residents’ native culture and worldview, and 2) Little Earth STRONG, a fitness and nutrition-based intervention for Little Earth residents of any age. The Adult Health Survey will be planned and implemented throughout June and July, with the data analysis phase beginning in August. Many aspects of Little Earth STRONG will designed and put into place May through August, including creating a nutrition curriculum and implementing monthly Progress Pow-Wows that highlight youth dancers, community feasts created with a native chef and residents, and monthly measurements of height, weight and blood sugar.

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community will be bringing their mobile health clinic to Little Earth to conduct Well Child Check-ups for 2 days each in July and August. An intern(s) would interface with the Shakopee Health Service providers and Little Earth community members and their children who want to participate.