

HOSTED BY



Utah Department of  
**Health & Human Services**  
American Indian/Alaska Native Health & Family Services

# Utah Conference on Traditional Tobacco

Honoring traditional tobacco and its cultural significance with leading Utah tribal experts. This gathering is open to all health organizations, tribal leaders, elders, and youth to deepen our understanding of the health impact of commercial tobacco use. Weaving unified and culturally grounded approaches toward commercial tobacco cessation and wellness for all.



**Wednesday,  
February 25, 2026**



The views, opinions, and content expressed at the Utah Conference on Traditional Tobacco do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policy of the Utah Department of Health and Human Services.

## CONFERENCE AGENDA OVERVIEW:

VENDOR SET-UP ..... 8 - 8:30 AM

CHECK-IN & BREAKFAST ..... 8 - 9 AM  
PROVIDED BY NAT-SU HEALTHCARE

MORNING SESSION..... 9 - 10:45AM  
OPENING KEYNOTE: WILLOW ABRAHMSON

BREAKOUT SESSION 1 ..... 11 - 11:45 AM

LUNCH ..... 12 - 1 PM  
PROVIDED BY SACRED CIRCLE HEALTHCARE

BREAKOUT SESSION 2 ..... 1 - 1:45 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 3..... 2 - 2:45 PM

SNACK BREAK..... 2:45 - 3 PM  
PROVIDED BY URBAN INDIAN CENTER OF SALT LAKE

AFTERNOON SESSION ..... 3 - 5 PM  
CLOSING KEYNOTE: CLINTON ISHAM,  
HERSCHEL CLARK, & DELEGATE CARL SLATER

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Health Division of CTGR



# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## MORNING SESSION

9-10:45AM

**9 AM - Opening Blessing** led by Larry Cesspooch (Ute Indian Tribe)

**Introductions** led by Ozzy Escarate (IHFS Director)

**Welcome Address** by Stephanie Bever,  
Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) Assistant Director

**9:15 AM - Opening Keynote, 30-mins:** "Movement is Medicine - Honoring tobacco, dance, and healing" led by Willow Abrahamson, MSW, LCSW, CCTP

**9:50 AM - Cultural Experts - Panel Discussion, 40-mins**

Tribal representatives from across Utah share their cultural knowledge on tobacco

- **Farley Ketchum Sr.** - Ute Mountain Ute, Sundance Leader
- **Larry Cesspooch** - Ute Indian Tribe, knowledge keeper
- **Rios Pacheco** - Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, knowledge keeper
- **Frank Dayish Jr.** - Navajo Nation, former Navajo Nation Vice President & former President of the Native American Church of North America
- **Ernest Harry Begay**, Navajo Nation, UNHS Traditional Healer

**10:45-11 AM - Break & Exhibitor Stroll, 15-mins**

## BREAKOUT SESSION ONE

11-11:45 AM

Split Mountain Room 1

- **Lessons from the traditional tobacco garden** - Sacred Circle Healthcare - Nino, Leah, Secadio

Split Mountain Room 2

- **Health provider track: Connect patients to free tobacco and nicotine quit services** - Tyrone Whitehorse (TPCP)

Split Mountain Room 3

- **What is the data telling about our youth: the Utah SHARP Survey 2025 AI/AN Trends, Insights, and Discussion** - Mary Johnstun

Split Mountain Room 4

- **Ways to create tribal policies and environments** - Clinton Isham

Main Ballroom

- **YOUTH TRACK: E-Cigarette/Vaping Prevention Training** - Kassie John & Hilary Makris

## KEY SPEAKER



### Willow Abrahamson

LCSW, CCTP, MSW  
Clinician consultant  
and cultural advocate

## LUNCH

12-1 PM PROVIDED BY SACRED CIRCLE HEALTHCARE

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## BREAKOUT SESSION TWO

1 - 1:45 PM

Split Mountain Room 1

- **Part One - What is the traditional role of tobacco with ceremony** - Frank Dayish & Ernest Harry Begay

Split Mountain Room 2

- **Health provider track: Integrating traditional healing and holistic wellness into healthcare** - Willow Abrahamson, LCSW, CCTP, MSW

Split Mountain Room 3

- **How commercial tobacco impacts diabetes** - UICSL Penelope Pinnecoose

Split Mountain Room 4

- **Emotional Health and The Medicine Wheel** - Tyler Goddard, Four Points Health Director

Main Ballroom

- **YOUTH TRACK - Lessons from the garden and ways traditional tobacco is used** - Sacred Circle Healthcare - Leah & Nino

**1:45 - 2 PM - Break & Exhibitor Stroll, 15-mins**

## BREAKOUT SESSION THREE

2- 2:45 PM

Split Mountain Room 1

- **Part Two - What is the traditional role of tobacco with ceremony** - Larry Cesspooch & Farley Ketchum Sr.

Split Mountain Room 2

- **Health provider track - Nat-Su Healthcare: What is Good Medicine: Creating Good Medicine = Balance** - Jerad Todacheenie

Split Mountain Room 3

- **What is the data telling about our youth: the Utah SHARP Survey 2025 AI/AN Trends, Insights, and Discussion** - Mary Johnstun

Split Mountain Room 4

- **Screening of PBS documentary: "Reclaiming Sacred Tobacco in Minnesota's Indigenous Communities"** and discussion with Emmy Award-winning documentary producer - Leya Hale

Main Ballroom

- **YOUTH TRACK - Ways you can lead smoke free lives** - Students Working Against Tobacco & Tri-County Local Health Department

**2:45 - 3 PM - SNACK Break & Exhibitor Stroll, 15-mins**

**PROVIDED BY URBAN INDIAN CENTER OF SALT LAKE**

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## AFTERNOON SESSION

### 3 PM - 5 PM

**3 PM - Closing Keynote, 45-mins:** Tribal legislative strategies on tobacco cessation policies

- Reclaim Sacred Tobacco, Clinton Isham
- Navajo Air is Life, Herschel Clark
- Navajo Nation Council, Delegate Carl Slater

**Break, 10-mins**

**4 PM - Impact of commercial tobacco use on American Indian/Alaska Native Health, 15-mins**

Data overview of AI/AN rates with commercial tobacco products and review of health impact utilizing findings from the 2025 AI/AN Health Status Report led by Alex Merrill (IHFS Epidemiologist)

**4:15 PM - Commercial Tobacco's impact with AI/AN health & wellness - Panel Discussion, 30-mins**

Tribal healthcare representatives from across Utah

- **Secadio Sanchez** - Sacred Circle Healthcare
- **Penelope Pinnecoose** - Urban Indian Center of Salt Lake
- **Jerad Todacheenie** - Nat-Su Health
- **Tyler Goddard** - Four Points Health

**4:45 PM - Connecting tribal communities to AI/AN Quit Services** led by Tyrone Whitehorse (TPCP) and Kassie John (IHFS)

**4:50 PM - Closing Address** led by Ozzy Escarate (IHFS Director)  
**Closing Blessing** led by Frank Dayish (Navajo Nation)



**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!**

**SCAN QR CODE FOR  
CONFERENCE SURVEY**

## KEY SPEAKERS



### Clinton Isham

Leader in tribal public health and smoke free policy.



### Herschel Clark

Navajo Nation, Clark has worked in public health for 12 years as a public health researcher, advocate, and advisor.



### Delegate Carl Slater

Representative from the 25th Navajo Nation Council and tribal health advocate.