



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 26, 2020

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**COPE to Advance Programs to Improve Health Outcomes for Navajo Women and Children**

**Gallup, New Mexico** –Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE), a Native non-profit, is advancing program work that has been associated with improved health outcomes among Navajo women and children supported by a \$200,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

“Indigenous communities have long been at the forefront of food security innovation,” said COPE Executive Director Nitumigaabow Champagne. “While federal policies aimed at destroying traditional food systems and community connections have precipitated a dependency on highly-processed, high-fat, and salted foods, COPE’s food sovereignty model has achieved greater access to healthy food and an increase in healthy behaviors among Navajo families.”

This project will support the following activities: creating a Food Sovereignty Toolkit designed for scale and impact; using the Toolkit to expand the Food Sovereignty Model to new Navajo communities; and conducting an evaluation of the expansion effort with community input. The Food Sovereignty model engages local growers, small stores, clinics, and schools in providing a holistic, community-led pathway to improving diet-related health outcomes. If replication of the model in the new communities are proven to be successful, the model could be deployed to address diet-related chronic conditions across Indian Country.

By supporting the expansion of the COPE Food Sovereignty Model, and the evaluation of these efforts, the Kellogg Foundation is playing an important role in overturning health disparities in American Indian communities.

For press inquiries and scheduled interviews, please contact: Aditi Sethi at [aditi@copeprogram.org](mailto:aditi@copeprogram.org)

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The COPE Program is a Native-led 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Gallup, NM that works closely with a variety of partners on Navajo Nation and beyond, focusing on improving health outcomes among American Indian/Alaska native communities. Founded in 2009, COPE provides technical assistance to health providers, help to build effective health care delivery systems, and increases access to healthy food in Navajo communities. To learn more, visit

[www.copeprogram.org](http://www.copeprogram.org).

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal innovator and entrepreneur Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special attention is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).