



THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE NEWS

www.atribe.com

Volume 35, No. 05

May 2025

After School Program Horseshoe Bend Grand Opening

On April 17, the Absentee Shawnee Tribe held a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house for the newly built Horseshoe Bend Afterschool Building.

The 5500 square-foot building located at 46309 Garretts Lake Road has 4 classrooms, a gym, splash pad, playground and 2 offices.

The festivities featured Tribal leaders, OKC Indian Princesses and Drum Group OtterTrail.

The After School Program Horseshoe Bend began in June 2011. AST HSB was

originally located in the community building but as the program grew there was a need for the ASP HSB to have its own permanent space. At that time, the former AST Executive Committee procured a portable building for the ASP HSB Program. These facilities were used for years until it was determined that the CCDF Program could construct a new building using CCDF and COVID-era funding.

On January 19, 2022 AST Executive Committee approved the resolution for

construction on the AST ASP Horseshoe Bend Project on the Horseshoe Bend property in the Johnson Community north of Shawnee using Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Act Funds (CRRSA) grant funds.

The voting Executive Committee members unanimously approved this resolution. Those EC at the time were Governor John Johnson, Lt. Governor Ezra DeLodge, Secretary Alicia Miller, Treasurer Joseph Blanchard and Repre-

sentative DeWayne Wilson

Construction began January 2024 and was completed January 2025. Childers Architects designed the building and Goldsby Construction was the contractor.

The ASP HSB school service area is mainly North Rock Creek and they are currently accepting applications for enrollment at Horseshoe Bend. If you are interested in enrollment, please call (405) 275-4030 or visit their website, <https://www.atribe.com/child-care>.



Photo L-R: AST 477 Executive Director Briana Ponkilla, AST Representative Anthony Johnson, AST Governor John Johnson, AST Lt. Governor Diane Ponkilla, AST Secretary Misty McGirt.

AST 477 Department Hosts Job Fair

The AST 477 Department recently held their first Job Fair. The event on April 9 was held at the AST Multi-Purpose Building. Over 40 people attended and eight vendors were on site.

The vendors included Absentee Shawnee Tribe, ASTHS, Thunderbird Casino, Shawnee Public Schools, CTSA, Blackhawk Casino, Entire and United Dynam-

ics. Thunderbird Casino set up 20 interviews, Blackhawk Casino set up 7 and Entire hired two individuals on the spot.

"We helped over 40 people and we were able to connect at least half of them to either get an interview or find employment," said AST 477 Outreach Coordinator Melinda Ferrell, "For being out first job fair, it turned out really well."

Hosting a job fair that helps align job seekers with employment coincides with 477's mission. Their goal is to help participants become economically self-sufficient. Job fairs provide in-person interactions and help the job seekers gain knowledge about their potential employers. The events are important even for employed individuals who might want to

find better or new employment.

The 477 department is planning their next career and resource fair this fall in Norman at the Well. Watch for updates on this upcoming event. And if you want more information about the 477 program, visit our website, <https://www.atribe.com/477-program>.





GOVERNOR
John Johnson



Lt. GOVERNOR
Diane Ponkilla



SECRETARY
Misty McGirt



TREASURER
Joseph Blanchard



REPRESENTATIVE
Anthony Johnson



GOVERNOR’S REPORT

John Johnson, AST Governor

Hello all,
April Showers bring in May flowers. With warmer weather around the corner I hope you prepared your gardens, now is the time to do so. Look on the website for upcoming events from the AG department. They will be handing out seeds and giving out tips for a successful garden.
The rainy cold weather did not stop us from having the annual Easter egg hunt. Even though the weather was cruddy we still had a great turnout. I hope you got to come out and your children had fun and enjoyed the company. Maybe next year the weather will cooperate.
The AST 477 Program held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new afterschool building in the Johnson community. It

was a good turnout. They are now accepting applications for the summer program for school aged children in the area. For more information please reach out to the AST Afterschool program at 405-275-4030. The Program Manager, Julia Waggoner will be happy to answer your questions. You may also email them at ASTAfterSchool@astribc.com or jrakestraw@astribc.com for more details.
The Executive Committee requested a meeting with Senator Lisa Standridge of Norman to address the concerns we had with the report she wrote in the Norman Transcript. In her report she stated the turnpike would be moved to the east side of the lake which will be running through tribal property. After meeting with her she stated there will not be any changes as of now to the turnpike location. It will remain on the west side of Lake Thunder-

bird as the original plan. Mrs. Standridge understood our concerns and is willing to work with us if changes do come. She is willing to work with us on any or all future projects. I am very pleased to have met with her and the rest of the EC.
Due to all the changes and executive orders being signed daily by the new administration, I will be watching my budget and spending. Therefore, until things truly calm down I will not be going to any conferences. I will stay updated and watch for updates as they come.
Should you have any question you may contact my office or my assistant:
John Johnson - 405-275-4030 ext. 3500 governor@astribc.com
Alvina Barnes - 405-275-4030 ext. 3501 alvinab@astribc.com
Thank you

LT. GOVERNOR’S REPORT

Diane Ponkilla, AST Lt. Governor

Hello All,
Spring has arrived and hopefully your allergies are not bad. I attended the Tribal Education Summit on Thursday, April 03, 2025 10am-4pm at the CPN’s Museum/Gift Shop. Saturday, April 05, 2025 10am-12pm I volunteered at the AST Easter Celebration at the Health Multipurpose and Afterschool building. There was a great turnout, due to the cold windy weather the egg hunt was indoors

with drawings for each category receiving bikes for male and female, door prize drawings, baby chick prizes and a hotdog meal. The Secretary’s department along with the volunteers did a magnificent job. Sunday, April 06, 2025 I flew out at 11am for the 50th Self-Governance Conference in Phoenix, Az. and returned Thursday, April 10, 2025 at 9:30pm. On Tuesday, April 15, 2025 I will be attending a photo shoot at Banner Rd./Co. Line along with Governor Johnson, Twyla Blanchard, Self-Governance/BIA Director. The Regular Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16,

2025 at 10am. Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 6pm I will be attending the Sac and Fox Senior Banquet at the Grand Casino. Friday, April 18, 2025 the AST Complex will be closed for Good Friday and I will be turning 61 years old. Twyla Blanchard, Self-Governance/BIA Director and I will be attending the Tribal Transportation Training Tuesday, April 22, 2025 to Thursday, April 24, 2025 in Guthrie, Oklahoma. And I am looking forward to seeing everyone Saturday, April 26, 2025 at the 94th General Council Meeting which will be held at the Health’s Multipurpose Bldg. in Shawnee, Oklahoma.



TREASURER’S REPORT

Joseph Blanchard, AST Treasurer

Hello Absentee Shawnee Tribal Members, Family, and Friends:
Wow! Can you believe school is almost over? As I begin this month, let me be one of the first to say “Congratulations!” to all our students, as they finish up the academic year. Enjoy your time off for summer, vacation, softball tourneys or whatever it is that you do. And for our Class of 2025 Graduates, “Good Luck!” in all your future endeavors. Spread your wings to begin your flight to new heights.
This past month, I was able to attend the 50th Annual Self Governance Conference. During and after the sessions, I was able to meet new leaders from other Tribes; hear about some of the things others are doing to improve their systems; and receive the latest updates related to Finance and Procurement. I didn’t get an exact count but heard there were over 300+ Tribal Nations, which means there were at least 1000 in attendance. Our

Health System presented over the Medication Reimbursement Program and other topics related to our success these last several years.
During the Conference, I was able to provide comments to the current “Acting” Directors of both the Indian Health Service (IHS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) over topics specific and important to the Absentee Shawnee Tribe and our Health System. I reminded the leaders the Administration in DC is hampering operations with the Executive Orders, the budget is already severely underfunded, and Indian Country needs more qualified and skilled staff. I also emphasized Tribes have a unique relationship with the U.S. and shouldn’t be asking or requesting for what is rightfully ours.
As of the date of this writing, several of the concerns we had here in-state have either worked out to our benefit or never made it to the floor for a vote, dying in committee. One of these topics was the Tag issues and the State trying to dictate they could get this data from OLETS, the

Oklahoma Law Enforcement Tag System. Some of our AST elected officials have had direct contact with the various legislators or other State Department heads to express our discontent or non-agreement with their proposals. Still others are allowing the Tribes to finalize negotiations with the State and not trying to interfere with the process and avoid dealing in bad faith.
If you missed the 94th Semi-Annual General Council, there is still time to request a copy of the Booklet, which has all the Department and Program updates. Should you want a copy, submit a request to the Secretary’s office for the latest edition. At your earliest convenience, please submit your choice for the new Tag design and submit the confidential survey.
As I conclude this month’s edition, as usual, I want to say “Thank you!” to our supporters, those who provide advice and encouragement, and to the Ladies of the House, “Happy Mother’s Day!”
Neyiwa!
Joseph H. Blanchard

REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Anthony Johnson, AST Representative

Hello Tribal Members,
It was good to see everyone in attendance at our 94th Semi-Annual General Council meeting on April 26. I hope everyone is doing well. I attended the, “2025 Tribal Self-Governance Conference”, April 7 –10, in Chandler, AZ. On May 12, I will attend the annual TVA Tribal Consultation meeting along with our Cultural Preservation department, in OKC. Attending these conferences and consultations helps our tribe remain diligent and proactive to the recent changes in federal policies that affect tribal sovereignty, ensuring we have a voice at the tables where our people have interest and opportunity for tribal economic development. On April 4th, the AST Diabetes Department, in partnership with OKTEP (Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners), recently implemented the Eagle Adventure program at Little Axe Elementary school, led by AST tribal member and community educator, Jayden Watson. This

program teaches 1st through 3rd grade students about Type II Diabetes prevention through encouraging students to eat more fruits and vegetables and increase their physical activity. Additionally, this program highlights tribal cultural values by incorporating AST language. To celebrate students completing the Eagle Adventure program, Mr. Eagle visited Little Axe Elementary for a program wrap up. Each student who participated in the program received a gold medal for their hard work as well as a chance to meet Mr. Eagle. (Pictured: Jayden Watson-Community Educator, Sarah Lawerance-AST TERO Director and Wade Daugherty-Elementary Principal). Lastly, my office is preparing to welcome a summer youth worker this year through the 477 program. Thank you to the 477 staff for inviting all of our tribal departments, programs and enterprises to participate in this program that will help us prepare our tribal youth for the workforce. We are looking forward to working with them this summer. Should you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact my office by phone



or email.
Phone: (405) 531-3512
Email: adjohnson@astribc.com
Sincerely,
Anthony “Tadpole” Johnson
Tribal Representative

The AST Executive Committee recently met with Senator Lisa Standridge to discuss the negative impacts of her proposed Senate Bill 493. The bill brought forth new turnpike routes that would have impacted the tribe. Subsequently, Senator Standridge has altered the route.



Photo L-R: AST Representative Anthony Johnson; AST Lt. Governor Diane Ponkilla; AST Governor John Johnson; Senator Lisa Standridge; AST Secretary Misty McGirt; AST Treasurer Joseph Blanchard.

AST Veterans Association



AST Veterans Association was asked to Carry the Colors in for “Ms. Oklahoma Senior America Pageant” Held at Mustang Performing Arts Center in Mustang Ok on Saturday April 5,2025. It was a Honor and Privilege to be asked and Represent the Absentee Shawnee Tribe at this Event, the winner would Represent the State of Oklahoma at National in Florida.



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE

POLICE RECOGNITION WEEK

MAY 11 - 17, 2025



Join the celebration!

Public events during the week to include:

- Wear Blue Day - show your support and appreciation by wearing Blue.
- Public Safety Club Meet & Greet at Camp Nikoti After School Program, Brendle Corner

Follow the Tribe’s social media sites and check the Tribe’s website for dates and times for the week’s events.



SPONSORED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE TRIBAL YOUTH PROGRAM

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
BLAKE GOODMAN
SHAY FIXICO
405.275.4030 EXT. 3534, 3535
BGOODMAN@ASTRIBE.COM
SFIXICO@ASTRIBE.COM



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE AG DEPT.

4TH ANNUAL

Starter Plant

DISTRIBUTION

MAY 15TH & 16TH

THURSDAY & FRIDAY 9AM-3

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

43406 BENSON PARK RD

SHAWNEE, OK 74801

For Questions contact
405-827-6545



From The Election Commission

PLEASE fill out EACH BLANK completely and return by the Deadline.

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST

I, _____, hereby certify that I am or will be an Eligible
(Print Name)
Voter of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe on or before June 21, 2025. I cannot physically be present to cast my vote at the **June 21, 2025 Annual Election**; therefore, I am requesting an Absentee Ballot be mailed to me at the following address:

Name (please print): _____
(first) (middle) (maiden) (last)
Address: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____
CDIB#: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

All **REQUESTS** must be returned to the Election Commission by the deadline date of **June 1, 2025**

Mail to:
Absentee Shawnee Election Commission
P.O. Box 741
Tecumseh, OK 74873

Fax to:
Fax # (405) 273-1337 (Do not fax to any other fax #)
Phone: (405) 275-4030 ext. 3537
Toll free number 1-800-256-3341 ext. 3537

Email to:
election.commission@astribe.com

Deliver in Person to:
Election Commission Office
located in Building 2, Shawnee Campus

All eligible voters are entitled to vote either at the Polls or by Absentee Ballot. This form may be duplicated for your convenience.

ELECTION COMMISSION USE ONLY

Received: _____ Approved: _____ Disapproved: _____
If Disapproved (reason): _____
Denial Letter Mailed: _____ Ballot Mailed: _____
Election Commission/Representative



MO KE
TI YA HE



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE | VISION ZERO | SAFER STREETS SAVE LIVES

COMMUNITY

INPUT

SURVEY



SCAN THE QR CODE TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY OR VISIT
[HTTPS://ARC6.IS/G5D8E](https://arcg.is/G5D8E)

BACKGROUND:

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe was awarded a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) planning grant from the United States Department of Transportation for the creation of a Safety Action Plan (SAP). The goal of the SAP is to reduce and eliminate serious injuries and fatal crashes on roadways in the Absentee Shawnee Tribe SAP study area by identifying roadway safety problems and roadway locations with the most significant safety risks.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT! YOUR FEEDBACK WILL:

- Help identify unsafe roadways.
- Help create safer roadways.
- Help achieve the eventual goal of zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries.



MO KE
TI YA HE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AST SAP INITIATIVE, VISIT:
[ARC6.IS/G5D8E](https://arcg.is/G5D8E)

May is recognized nationwide as Foster Care Appreciation Month, a time dedicated to honoring foster families, social workers, and community members who support children in the foster care system. In Indian Country, this month carries additional significance as tribal communities work tirelessly to ensure Native children remain connected to their culture, traditions, and families.

Native foster families play a critical role in providing stability, love, and cultural continuity for children who have been removed from their homes. Tribal foster parents not only provide essential care, but they also serve as cultural guides, ensuring children maintain strong ties to their heritage. During May, tribal nations, foster care programs, and advocacy organizations recognize the dedication of these families with special events, gatherings, and ceremonies.

Despite ongoing efforts, Native American children are disproportionately represented in the foster care system. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), enacted in 1978, was designed to protect Native families by prioritizing the placement of Native children with relatives, tribal members, or Native foster families. However, many tribes continue to face challenges in recruiting and retaining Native foster families, often due to systemic barriers, limited resources, and jurisdictional complexities.

Tribal nations and organizations are working to improve outcomes for Native children in foster care. Programs such as the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) provide resources, training, and advocacy to strengthen tribal child welfare systems. Many tribes are also implementing culturally based foster care training programs to prepare foster families to meet the unique needs of Native children.

Additionally, some tribes have established their own foster care systems, allowing them to oversee the welfare of their children and implement culturally appropriate practices. Partnerships between tribes, state agencies, and advocacy groups are crucial in ensuring Native children receive the care and support they need while remaining connected to their communities.

Foster Care Appreciation Month is an opportunity for community members to learn more about how they can support Native children in foster care. Whether by becoming a foster parent, mentoring a child, or supporting tribal foster care programs through donations and advocacy, there are many ways to make a difference. Raising awareness about the importance of cultural identity in foster care is also essential to ensuring Native children grow up with a strong sense of who they are and where they come from.

As Indian Country continues to advocate for its children, Foster Care Appreciation Month serves as a reminder of the resilience, commitment, and dedication of those who work to ensure Native youth have a bright future, firmly rooted in their traditions and culture.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month Ribbon Decorating

Shawnee HR

Primary Care Pod

PRC Little Axe

LA Physical Therapy

Domestic Violence

NAAV - Norman

Grants

This project was produced by Tribal Victim Services under ISPOVC-24-GG-0124-TVAG, awarded to the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this project are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month Sidewalk Chalk

LA Primary Care Pod

Domestic Violence

Procurement

Grants

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Sexual Assault Awareness Month Teal Day 2025

Education

Domestic Violence

Patient Advocate

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LEGAL NOTICE

FILED in the Office
of the Court Clerk

MAR 27 2025
Absentee Shawnee Tribal Court
Court Clerk

**IN THE TRIAL COURT OF
THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA
SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA 74801**

In the matter of)	
L.M.)	Case No. CIV-2025-04
)	
)	
)	

AFFIDAVIT TO OBTAIN SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF INDIANS)
SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA) \$.

Lenora Miller
being duly sworn upon oath states:

That she/he is the Plaintiff Lenora Miller above-named, and that on the 27 day of March, 2025, said Plaintiff filed in this Court a Petition for a name change; and this is one of the class of cases prescribed by the Statutes of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, and that with and after the exercise of due diligence, said Plaintiff is giving publication that, Lenora Miller, within the jurisdiction of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe, and that Plaintiff wishes to obtain service by publication as provided by law. (AST CODE OF LAWS, Section 205, Section 206 and Section 209)

Lenora Miller
PLAINTIFF

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27 day of March, 2025.

Ashley Hudson
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:
June 23, 2028



Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Building Blocks C.D.C.
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Dr.
Shawnee, Ok. 74801
(405)878-0633 FAX(405)878-0156



BUILDING BLOCKS
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
AN ABSENTEE SHAWNEE ENTERPRISE



Building Blocks Staff attended Child Abuse Training on April 11th. Also, those staff needing recertification in First Aid/CPR attended training on April 26th. We strive to keep our staff certified and trained in Child Development related topics and ready to care for and teach our precious children.

We are currently hiring staff, if you are interested in applying visit <https://www.astribecom.com/employment> for applications and to see what positions are available.

Building Blocks is accepting waiting list applications for all of our ages; 6 weeks through Pre-K/4 Year Olds. If you are interested in getting your child on our waiting list please call and we can email you a waiting list application or you may stop by to fill one out.

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 5th-May 9th. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of our awesome teachers and staff!

Building Blocks will be celebrating our children’s Mothers on Friday, May 9th at 3:00p.m. with ‘Muffins with Mom’s.’ Happy Mother’s Day on Sunday, May 11th! Have a Magnificent May!





BUILDING BLOCKS III

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

MAY 2025

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

This month the center is learning about animals of the world. What do they eat? Where do they live? Why do they have fur, feather, or spots? Do you have a favorite animal? What sound do they make?

Racetrack Physics
After building race tracks in the halls for a week last month, each student was able to test a race car of their choice from home or school. Using some basic concepts of physics, the students modified tracks to make their cars go faster.

Our Staff
The center is working on our National Early Childhood Program Accreditation to maintain our 5 star status. We will also be rejoining the food program this year, and encouraging healthy habits at home and school.

REMINDERS

Picture Day is Tuesday, May 20th at drop off – come camera ready.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Field Trips to OKC Zoo
May 6th and 7th for all ages

“Making Memories with Mom”
Friday, May 9th @ 3pm

“Dad’s Rock”
Friday, June 13th @ 3pm

Contact Info

Building Blocks III C.D.C.
16051 Little Axe Drive
Norman, OK 73026
405-360-2710
BB3Admin@astribecom.com



Education Department: Tribal Youth Programs

Camp Nikoti Afterschool program is still rolling along strong. We are averaging 10-12 students each day. We have been reading with our youth each day, keeping up with their homework, and using our workbooks to help them improve in their core subjects. They have also been playing games and enjoying their time playing outside. Our afterschool youth also spent an afternoon baking cookies for themselves and the Little Axe High School Indian Club students. The Indian club was very thankful and appreciative of them for their hard work and kindness.

We attended three different schools Indian club meetings over the past month. We went to Mustang High School and brought them food and snacks, and did a beading activity with them. The students really enjoyed their time making a beaded corn. We went to Little Axe High Schools Indian Club meeting and brought them pizza and the cookies our Afterschool youth made. Lastly, we went to Tecumseh’s Indian club meeting and brought them donuts. We are continuing to work with Little Axe and Tecumseh to attend their final meetings of the school year.

Camp Melokami started on March 17th and went through March 21st. We had a total of 19 youth sign up for our spring break camp, which is the highest total we have had for this particular camp. We had several guest come out and do activities with our youth including: Cultural Preservation, who did an archeology activity with the youth; Language from 477, they did a paint and sip with lemonade activity; Domestic Violence Dept, they did a Pictionary game activity with the youth; TOR, they did a vaping and fentanyl awareness presentation; the ASTPD, they showed the youth their drones and talked about how they use them; Diabetes and Wellness, Jayden with OKTEP came over and played games with the youth and talked about healthy eating. We would like to thank everyone that came out to present and do activities with our youth. We also used our youth to help us set up and start our youth garden. They planted all of the plants we had, and also put our potatoes and onions in the ground. We covered several prevention topics throughout the week and played several games. We made terrariums, painted pots, and also planted plants in their own pots. On the last day of the camp, we took the kids bowling and to the movies.






Happy Birthday Joanna!
Love,
Mom, Dad, and Eli




Happy Birthday!



Happy 17th birthday Joplin. You make me so proud. Stay the way you are. Momma loves you.

Happy 17th birthday to my sweet nephew. Auntie loves you very much. Aunt B


Joplin – You grew up on us. Hope your 17th is as amazing as you are. We love you brother. Love Jil & Justin



HAPPY 13TH BIRTHDAY TO JACOB FOREMAN!




The Absentee Shawnee Tribe will be closed Monday, May 26th - Memorial Day




No Matter Where You're Going AllNations Bank Will Be There!

Whether you're heading to college or another career, AllNations Bank will be there for you.



2023 Gordon Cooper Dr.
Shawnee, OK 74801
(405) 273-0202
www.anbok.bank



Me ni ke s'fwa
(mee nah ke s'thweh)
Berry Month
May

For Shawnees May is berry month, usually this is when berries begin to ripen.


Me ni – berry (mee nah)	Hi ne qi – squirrel (hah nee qah)
Ke mo wi ne – rain (kee moh wah nee)	Qi s'ki mi wa pa – play ball (qah s'kah mah weh peh)
Ma n'ya la wa – dance (meh n'yeh leh weh)	Ho m'so me – clan (hoh m'soh mee)
Ne ko gi ya – I will try (nee koh chah yeh)	Po ne ka ko – you bet (poh nee keh koh)
Mi wi s'ki wa – meeting (mah wah s'kah weh)	Ma ne ta ha ko – have a good time (meh nee teh heh koh)
Ni ni he lo – get ready (nah nah hee loh)	Te ka na ki fe – don't be late (tee keh neh kah thee)
Mi ne to la fi ke – bugs (mah nee toh leh thah kee)	Pi s'ke ma – mosquito (pah s'kee meh)
Ho se qi – tick (hoh see qah)	Ho ga – fly (hoh cheh)

Don't forget to watch the pre-recorded lesson on the AST Website, tribal member login page.

<https://www.atribe.com/tmo-login>

Si li no ke ka no la p'wi! Ne yi wa!






A B S E N T E E S H A W N E E
HOUSING AUTHORITY



107 N. KIMBERLY AVE. SHAWNEE, OK 74801 PHONE: (405) 273-1050 FAX: (405) 275-0678 WWW.ASHOUSINGAUTHORITY.COM

About Us

Our duty and mission are to provide quality and affordable housing to Low Income Indian Families in our communities. Our entity establishes goals for the program annually that serve the housing needs of the Indian people.




OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY- FRIDAY
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



2025 Programs

- Low Rent
- Lease to Own
- Safe Shelter
- College Housing Rental Assistance
- Tiny Home Lease Purchase
- Over-Income Lease to Own
- Market Rate Rental
- Home Rehab Assistance Enrolled AST Only
- Down Payment Assistance Enrolled AST Only
- Homeless Prevention Assistance




SCAN QR CODE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE SERVICES

PROGRAMS ARE DEPENDENT ON FINDING AVAILABILITY

Comment Card

Absentee Shawnee Housing Authority strives to provide you with the best possible service, so please share any great experiences you encountered with our program, or if this has not been the case and we did not handle something to your satisfaction, let us know.



SCAN QR CODE TO SHARE YOUR COMMENTS

ALL PERSONAL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL

NOTICE

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR STORY

Please give us a call at (405) 598-1279 or send an email to media@atribe.com

All articles for the next month's issue are **DUE** by the **15th of the current month.**

Unfortunately we can only accept **ONE PICTURE PER BIRTHDAY PERSON**, not per birthday wish.

2025

Class of

CONGRATS!
GRADUATES!



Erika Blanchard
Bethel High School



Mark Sweeney Jackson III
South Central Prep High School



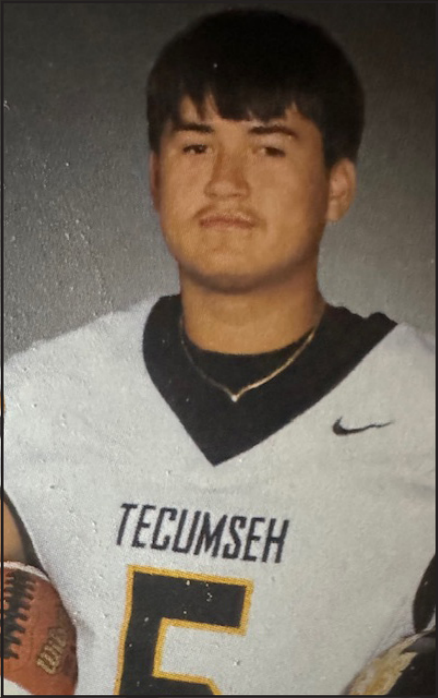
Jai'Nasha Camille Norton
Hightower High School



Kiara Stallin
Tecumseh High School



Gage Jaydn Mitchell
East Central High School



Hollin Kade Barnes
Tecumseh High School



Stormy A. Little
Bethel High School



Serenity James Casteel
Shawnee High School



Camdyn Rae McMahan
Norman High School



Lindsey Mayo
Apollo High School



Micco David Little
University of Arkansas
Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology



Lorrie Ann Thorpe
Mid-America Christian University
Bachelor of Science in
Management and Ethics

Congratulations 2025 AST Graduates

Ke ho wa se li we
(kee hoh weh see lah wee)

AST Annual Easter Egg Hunt - April 5, 2025





ASTHS May 2025 Monthly Update

Hashimoto’s Disease – Also called Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis

Thyroiditis is when your thyroid gland becomes irritated or inflamed. Hashimoto thyroiditis is the most common type of this health problem. It may also be called chronic autoimmune thyroiditis. This thyroiditis is an autoimmune disease. It occurs when your body makes antibodies that attack the cells in your thyroid. The thyroid gland becomes overrun with white blood cells and becomes scarred. This makes the gland feel firm and rubbery. The thyroid then can’t make enough of the thyroid hormone.

Many people with this problem have an underactive thyroid gland or hypothyroidism. They have to take medicine to keep their thyroid hormone levels normal.

While research on the prevalence of Hashimoto's thyroiditis (a common cause of hypothyroidism) in Native American populations is limited, studies suggest that it is not uncommon and may be associated with other health conditions like diabetes, potentially warranting further investigation.

What causes Hashimoto thyroiditis?

Hashimoto thyroiditis is an autoimmune disorder. Normally, your immune system protects your body by attacking bacteria and viruses. But with this disease, your immune system attacks your thyroid gland by mistake. Your thyroid then can’t make enough thyroid hormone, so your body can’t work as well.

Who is at risk for Hashimoto thyroiditis?

Things that may make it more likely for to get Hashimoto thyroiditis are:

- Being a woman. Women are more likely to have the disease. Hashimoto thyroiditis sometimes begins during pregnancy. The condition may get better in some women during pregnancy. But then it may return after delivery.
- Being middle age. Most cases happen between ages 30 and 60. But it has been seen in younger people.
- Having a family member with the disease (heredity). The disease tends to run in families. But no gene has been found that carries it.
- Having other autoimmune diseases. These health problems raise a person's risk. Some examples are rheumatoid arthritis, Addison disease, and type 1 diabetes. Having Hashimoto thyroiditis also increases your risk for other autoimmune illnesses.

Signs and symptoms of Hashimoto thyroiditis:

Hypothyroidism in Hashimoto thyroiditis is usually insidious in onset, with subtle signs and symptoms that may progress to more advanced or even florid signs and symptoms over months to years. The presentation of patients with hypothyroidism may also be subclinical, diagnosed based on routine screening of thyroid function. Such patients may have nonspecific symptoms that are difficult to attribute to thyroid dysfunction. They frequently do not improve with thyroid hormone supplementation.

Early nonspecific symptoms may include the following:

- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Dry skin
- Weight gain
- Hair loss

More advanced/florid symptoms may include the following:

- Cold intolerance
- Voice hoarseness and pressure symptoms in the neck from thyroid enlargement
- Slowed movement and loss of energy
- Decreased sweating
- Mild nerve deafness
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Galactorrhea
- Depression, dementia, and other psychiatric disturbances
- Memory loss
- Joint pains and muscle cramps
- Menstrual irregularities
- Sleep apnea and daytime somnolence

Diagnosis of Hashimoto thyroiditis:

The diagnosis of Hashimoto thyroiditis is based on the presence of clinical symptoms, anti-thyroid antibodies, and certain histologic features.

The diagnosis of Hashimoto’s thyroiditis may be made when:

- You have symptoms of hypothyroidism, and a blood test shows an underactive thyroid gland [an elevated Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) level with or without a low thyroid hormone (free T4

or total T4) level].

- You have enlargement of your thyroid gland (goiter).
- You have elevated thyroid antibody levels, if measured.

Testing:

Hashimoto’s thyroiditis can be diagnosed even though you have no symptoms. Your thyroid antibody levels are high, but your thyroid hormone levels are normal. Repeating and monitoring your thyroid antibody levels is not needed. However, you do need to monitor your TSH blood level. Over time, you may develop low thyroid hormone levels.

Imaging tests:

An ultrasound/sonogram may or may not be needed. However, if done, it can show signs of inflammation; even in early stages when thyroid hormone levels are still normal.

Chest radiography and echocardiography are not usually performed and are not necessary in routine diagnosis or evaluation of patients with hypothyroidism.

Procedures:

Hashimoto thyroiditis is a histologic diagnosis. Therefore, perform fine-needle aspiration of any dominant or suspicious thyroid nodules to exclude malignancy or the presence of a thyroid lymphoma in fast-growing goiters.

Treatment:

The primary treatment for Hashimoto's thyroiditis is thyroid hormone replacement therapy with levothyroxine. This medication helps to restore thyroid hormone levels to normal.

In some cases, other treatments may be necessary, such as:

- Surgery to remove the thyroid gland (thyroidectomy)
- Medications to suppress the immune system

Prognosis:

Hashimoto's thyroiditis is a chronic condition, but it can be managed effectively with treatment. Most people with Hashimoto's thyroiditis live long and healthy lives.

Additional Information:

- Hashimoto's thyroiditis is more common in women than in men.
- The risk of developing Hashimoto's thyroiditis increases with age.
- Hashimoto's thyroiditis is often associated with other autoimmune conditions, such as Graves' disease and type 1 diabetes.

Contacting your primary care provider:

If you think you have thyroiditis or any other autoimmune disease, please make an appointment with your primary care provider. Signs and symptoms of Hashimoto's disease vary widely and are not specific to the disorder. Because these symptoms could result from any number of disorders, it's important to see your health care provider as soon as possible for a timely and accurate diagnosis. Call and make an appointment with your provider at the Little Axe Clinic, 405-447-0300 or your provider in the Shawnee Clinic, 405-878-5850.

References:

American Thyroid Association. 2025. Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis (Chronic Lymphocytic Thyroiditis or Autoimmune Thyroiditis). <https://www.thyroid.org/hashimotos-thyroiditis/>

John Hopkins Medicine, 2025. Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis. <https://www.hopkins-medicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/hashimotos-thyroiditis>

MedScape. 2024. Hashimoto Thyroiditis. https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/120937-overview?form=fpf&icd=login_success_email_match_norm

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Shawnee Health Center

NEW SHAWNEE HEALTH CLINIC!

39665 Benson Park Road, Shawnee, OK 74801 (adjacent to Tecumseh Lake)

Groundbreaking held Mar 19, 2025 (Anticipate completion in late 2026)


April 2025 Health Employee Awards of the Month

Employee of the Month: Elisheba Weaver, Patient Registration Clerk

Team of the Month: AAAHC Team Leads

Special Leadership Award: Dasha Johnson, MSN, RN, Director of Quality/ Infection Control

Chris A. Larkin, MBA, FACHE, CHC
Executive Director



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL
HEALTH SYSTEM
Prevention. Progress. Pride.




Scheduled Closures


All AST Health facilities, including PlusCare, will observe the following hours on:

Wednesday, May 7th:
CLOSED from 12PM- 5PM
Only PlusCare and LA/Shawnee Pharmacies will reopen after 5PM


and Monday May 26th in observance of Memorial Day.

Follow us on Facebook or visit asthealth.org for closure information and updates!





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Know Your Numbers with Jared Scott PHARMD - Hypertension Management


NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

Managing Your Blood Pressure is Important. If you have concerns about high blood pressure (hypertension), we encourage you to speak with your AST Health primary care provider. They can assess your needs and provide a referral to Jared Scott PHARMD to help you stay on track with your health.

📍 15951 Little Axe Drive Norman, OK 73026 📞 405-447-7162
2029 S Gordon Cooper Dr. Shawnee, OK 74801 ✉ MScott@astribe.com


Normal blood pressure is

120/80



People with **high blood pressure** have an **increased risk of having a heart attack or stroke.**

Up to **50%** of heart attacks and strokes may be prevented with proper blood pressure control.



86%


Patients at goal with hypertension management.

Average days to hypertension goal:

53

Jared's Key Strategies:

- Lifestyle modifications
- Proper medication adherence
- Routine monitoring



Average systolic (top number) reduction:

19

Average diastolic (bottom number) reduction:

12

SPRING INTO PREVENTION WALK

ALL WELCOME



SCAVENGER HUNT ✦ REFRESHMENTS ✦ PRIZES ✦ RESOURCES

QUESTIONS?
405-701-7059
TOR@astribe.com

REGISTER ONLINE




Co-hosts:



THURSDAY, MAY 15th
6P – 8P

AST RESOURCE CENTER
1970 156th AVE NE
Norman OK 73026

MAY 11th-17th
NATIONAL PREVENTION WEEK
A CELEBRATION OF PROSPERITY



Honoring Our Incredible Nurses During Nursing Appreciation Month

Complete Care Home Health – May 2025 Newsletter

At Complete Care Home Health, May holds a special place in our hearts. It's National Nursing Appreciation Month—a time to recognize and celebrate the incredible nurses who are the backbone of our care team and the heart of our mission.

We are proud to honor our amazing nursing staff, whose compassion, expertise, and unwavering dedication make all the difference in the lives of our patients and families. Serving a wide 60-mile radius from Shawnee, Oklahoma, our nurses go above and beyond every day—bringing professional care and a personal touch into homes across our region.

Our outstanding nursing team is led by **Stephanie**, our Director of Nursing, whose leadership, organization, and heart keep our clinical operations running smoothly. Alongside her are our two exceptional RNs, **Chanda** and **Kelta**, who provide skilled nursing care with clinical excellence and kindness. Supporting them are our devoted LPNs, **Jeanie** and **Ashley**, whose energy, reliability, and compassion brighten every patient interaction.

Whether it's managing complex care plans, responding to urgent needs, or simply being a source of comfort and support, our nurses do it all. Their work is not just a job—it's a calling, and it's at the very core of what we do.


Why Home Health Matters

Home health care offers a unique opportunity for patients to recover, heal, and thrive in the comfort of their own homes. At Complete Care Home Health, we provide more than just skilled nursing—we offer a full range of therapy services to support independence, mobility, and quality of life. This includes:


- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy

These services are vital for those recovering from illness, injury, or surgery, and can make a lasting difference in overall health outcomes.


If you or someone you know could benefit from home health services, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at **405.701.7085**. We are here to help bring care home.



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL
HEALTH SYSTEM
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Look Out For Medicare Phone Scammers!



HOW TO DEAL WITH PHONE SCAMMERS:

1. DO NOT give your personal information out to anyone from an unrecognized number.
2. If you do end up speaking to someone, hang up immediately and block their number.
3. Visit www.donotcall.gov to add your name and number to the **DO NOT CALL** list. Let us know if you need assistance.






If You Have Medicare Questions We Can Help!

You have an insider with 15+ years of experience in Medicare right here at AST Health! Al Triggs takes care of hundreds of our elders and is standing by to take care of any of your Medicare-related needs.

Al Triggs
Contracted Benefits Advisor
Legacy Tribal Services
(918) 853-1211
Proudly Serving AST Citizens






SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 7TH, 2025

"Celebrate Community"




AST TRIBAL OPIOID RESPONSE
405.701.7059 ✦ TOR@ASTRIBE.COM



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

FLIP THE SCRIPT ON AGING: MAY 2025



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
			1 TAMALE SPANISH RICE SALSA/CHIPS MANDARIN ORANGES	2 HAM BISCUIT FRUIT
5 KRAUT & WEINERS GREEN BEANS BREAD MIXED FRUIT	6 GOULASH SQUASH BREAD COOKIE	7 CHICKEN BROCCOLI & RICE CASSEROLE PEACHES	8 BEEF TIPS & NOODLES VEGGIES JELL-O	9 SCRAMBLED EGGS SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT
12 BBQ PORK SANDWICH ONIONS, PICKLES CHIPS ICE CREAM	13 CHICKEN POT PIE VEGGIES BISCUIT CAKE	14 SALMON PATTY COLESLAW MAC & CHEZ PEARS	15 BAKED POTATO HAM,CHEZ,ONIONS BROCC & CHEZ PUDDING	16 FRENCH TOAST BACON FRUIT
19 CHICKEN STRIPS MASHED POT/GRAVY CAULIFLOWER	20 SPAGHETTI W MEATSAUCE GARLIC BREAD *TOSSED SALAD	21 CHEF SALAD W/ HAM CRACKERS FLUFF	22 BEANS STEAKFRIES CORNBREAD	23 SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT FRUIT
26 MEMORIAL DAY	27 COLD CUT SANDWICH LTOP CUTIE	28 BAKED CHICKEN WILD RICE TOSSED SALAD* APRICOTS	29 ENCHILADA CASSEROLE MEXI-CORN PINEAPPLES	30 CEREAL TOAST SAUSAGE PATTIES

MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE*

LUNCH IS SERVED FROM 11 AM TO 1PM
BREAKFAST IS SERVED FROM 9AM TO 11AM

SERVING AT THE SHAWNEE SITE AND LITTLE AXE RESOURCE CENTER

2025

HEALTH BUZZzz!!

HELLO EVERYONE!! If April showers bring May flowers what a joy to the world! 

The month of May brings gardening, outdoor walks, and reminiscing with music or photos. All these activities stimulate the memory and engagement for someone with dementia. Additionally, consider activities like puzzles, board games and art projects to keep minds active and engage in social interaction! Ceremonial gatherings, wild onion dinners, powwows, and more...

I have probably stated this many times previously, but I will reiterate it once again! The number of adults in the United States living with dementia and related disorders is estimated to surpass 6.5 million and continues to grow (Alzheimer’s Association, 2022). The Native American population is part of this huge number! Oklahoma’s ranking in Native America population is second (19.6%) according to the Census Bureau, and we all know that the Native American population is undercounted in the U.S. Census. So we know what that means!

In 2025, Oklahoma is estimated to have around 76,000 people living with Alzheimer’s disease. This number has surged by 13% in just five years. Research has indicated the following, and I think it is worthwhile to mention once again:

- ◆ We (Native Americans), experience higher rates of cognitive impairment and dementia compared to other groups.
 - ◆ We often face barriers to healthcare access and may be less likely to be diagnosed with dementia, leading to delayed care.
 - ◆ Alzheimer’s disease is a significant concern, with a projected four-fold increase in the number of our people living with dementia between 2020 and 2060.
 - ◆ We often have higher rates of chronic conditions like diabetes and cardiovascular disease which can contribute to dementia risk.
 - ◆ Vascular brain injury is a leading cause of cognitive impairment and dementia among our population.
 - ◆ Stigma and lack of awareness surrounding dementia can further complicate care and support.
 - ◆ Historical trauma can also impact mental health and increase vulnerability to dementia and other health issues.
- Our AST health system is working to combat many of the issues! We strive to do this by:
- providing dementia services and caregiver support;
 - providing initiatives focused on risk reduction;
 - early detection, and
 - providing support to help improve safety and quality of care.

So, what are some of the modifiable risk factors that we should focus on?

- cardiovascular health,
- maintain a healthy weight,
- control blood pressure,
- manage diabetes, and
- promote physical activity

These are only a few of the primary modifiable risk factors. Following is a chart that I have previously shared, but thought it would be worthwhile to share once again! Summer is around the corner and it is never too late to work on one, two or all of these modifiable risks. Wishing everyone a fun and safe summer!



Did you know that there are known risks for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias ?

not enough aerobic physical activity

cigarette smoking

excessive alcohol use

obesity

hypertension

diabetes

depression

hearing loss

Keep your brain healthy!

 Talk to your health care provider about things you can do to reduce your risk

MMWR

If you or someone you know would benefit from the **Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country** or **Music & Memory** programs, contact adpi@atribe.com, or call **405-561-7893**.

Check out our web-page on the **Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System’s** website, asthealth.org, click on **“Programs and Preventions”** and then click on **“Seeking Hope”**. You can sign up on line also!

Atheda Fletcher
Grant Director & Project PI



Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System

SEEKING HOPE

Dementia Caregiver Support & Services



VISCERAL FAT AND YOUR HEALTH

VISCERAL FAT IS LOCATED AROUND ORGANS IN YOUR ABDOMEN SUCH AS YOUR STOMACH, LIVER AND INTESTINES. THIS FAT HELPS PROTECT YOUR ORGANS, BUT TOO MUCH IS ONE FACTOR THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH CHRONIC DISEASES SUCH AS HEART DISEASE, FATTY LIVER DISEASE AND OTHER RISK FACTORS SUCH AS INSULIN RESISTANCE, RISK OF LOW GOOD CHOLESTEROL, HIGH TOTAL CHOLESTEROL, HIGH TRIGLYCERIDES AND ELEVATED BLOOD PRESSURE.

A healthy diet can lower your visceral fat. This includes foods like low fat proteins, low fat dairy, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. This also means reducing foods with refined sugars, trans-fat, and other processed foods

Physical activity is a powerful way to lower your visceral fat. Even if you are not eating less calories than you burn, physical activity has the potential to reduce visceral fat. This should be aerobic based of at least moderate intensity. This could include brisk walking, jogging, pickleball, riding a bike, swimming, push mowing, active gardening, dancing and more.

COME GET YOUR
VISCERAL FAT CHECKED
AT THE DIABETES AND
WELLNESS
DEPARTMENT IN THE
AST LITTLE AXE HEALTH
CLINIC.

HTTPS://MY.CLEVELANDCLINIC.ORG/HEALTH/DISEASES/24147-VISCERAL-FAT
HTTPS://DIABETESJOURNALS.ORG/CARE/ARTICLE/26/5/1413/24457/VISCERAL-ADIPOSE-TISSUE-CUTOFFS-ASSOCIATED-WITH
HTTPS://BMCPUBLICHEALTH.BIOMEDCENTRAL.COM/ARTICLES/10.1186/S12889-024-19358-0
HTTPS://PUBMED.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/28481662/
HTTPS://PMC.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/ARTICLES/PMC11013274/#SEC6-NUTRIENTS-16-01015
HTTPS://PMC.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/ARTICLES/PMC3568069/

1-Pan Salsa Verde Shrimp & Rice

4 servings ⌚ Prep time 15 min, total time 40 min 🍴 cal/serv: 163


Use your favorite jarred salsa verde to make this extremely easy and flavorful dish. Everything cooks in the same pot for a mess free and, most importantly, quick weeknight dinner. It's about to be one of your new favorites.


Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 poblano pepper, seeds removed
- & chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup long grain white rice
- 2 cups low-sodium veggie broth
- 1/2 cup salsa verde, store-bought or homemade
- Kosher salt, and ground black pepper
- 1 lb shrimp, cleaned and tails removed
- 1 ½ tsp cumin
- ¼ cup freshly chopped cilantro
- juice of 1 lime, + more wedges for serving


Step-by-step instructions

1. In a large deep skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and pepper and cook until soft. Add garlic & cook until fragrant, 1 minute more.
2. Add rice & toss to toast for 1 minute. Add broth, salsa, & salt & pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Cook, covered until rice is almost cooked through & with just a slight bite to it, about 12 minutes, stirring occasionally to make sure rice isn't sticking to bottom of pan.
3. In a medium bowl, add shrimp & season with cumin, salt, & pepper. Add shrimp to skillet & stir into rice. Cover & continue cooking until rice is completely tender & shrimp is pink, about 5 minutes.
4. Add cilantro & lime juice & season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with lime wedges.





Know Your Native Options



2025 Medical & Dental Open Enrollment: May 1, - June 13, 2025

➤ **Opt Out:** AI/AN members are not required to enroll in SoonerSelect. It is optional. No action is necessary unless you want to join a SoonerSelect health or dental plan. If you do not opt in to SoonerSelect, you will remain on SoonerCare and nothing will change. You will not lose SoonerCare coverage.




➤ **Opt In:** AI/AN members are eligible to opt in to SoonerSelect. You can enroll in a SoonerSelect health plan, dental plan, or both. Please note that the opt-in for health and dental plans are separate processes. AI/AN members may receive services that have not been traditionally covered under SoonerCare. These extra benefits vary by health and dental plan.

Note: Non-Native SoonerCare family members must select a medical and dental plan before open enrollment closes or the member will be auto-enrolled.

Two Ways to Enroll:

- 1) Contact an **OHCA Choice Counselor** via the SoonerCare Helpline At **1.800.987.7767, Option #5.**
- 2) Visit **mysooner.org** to view, compare, and pick a plan that's right for you.

Please be advised, Patient Benefit Advocates cannot enroll members in SoonerSelect Plans but can help navigate the process.



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Contact a Patient Benefit Advocate

Little Axe Health Center 405.447.0300

Shawnee Clinic 405.878.5850

www.asthealth.org

