ABSTRACT

This project takes an interdisciplinary and experiential-education approach to enhancing dietary quality through a community-based food intervention that provides fresh produce and nutrition education for participants of the Federal Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR; also known as the Commodity Foods Program) on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The effectiveness of the intervention will be evaluated on the basis of behavioral / psycho-social, dietary, and health outcomes. We will provide research training to undergraduate students and our staff at Salish and Kootenai College (SKC) on research methods including conducting surveys and analyzing data. SKC staff, SKC students, and one MSU project manager will conduct the food intervention through the FDPIR on the Flathead Reservation with the following research objectives: (1) Determine behavioral barriers and psycho-social factors from participants through focus groups and surveys, (2) Collect dietary quality and nutrient profiles of participants’ diets through dietary recalls, surveys, and phytonutrient analysis, (3) Evaluate the impact of study on participant health indicators through blood pressure and BMI, (4) Apply findings to design a future intervention that can be adopted in several community programs on the basis of healthy foods and food environments, improved dietary quality, and food security. The ultimate translational goal of this project is to design future dietary programs and other interventions for disease mitigation. Specifically, it is expected that research findings will allow us to design programs to increase consumption of healthy and local foods of low-income FDPIR participants by offering easier access to healthy foods and nutrition education.