

TRIBAL C'RONA COMIX

Art by Henry Payer and Bob Hall
Story by Judi gaiashkibos, Bob Hall, Judy Diamond

In spring 2020 our team received funding from the Rapid Response Research program of the National Science Foundation to develop comics for youth that would help them understand the COVID-19 pandemic. In collaboration with virologists and artists, we developed these comic stories about the impact of the pandemic on Tribal communities. Our Pandemics Comics are available on worldofviruses.unl.edu



The Tribal C'Rona Comix is included in this comic book from the University of Nebraska Press.
www.nebraskapress.unl.edu

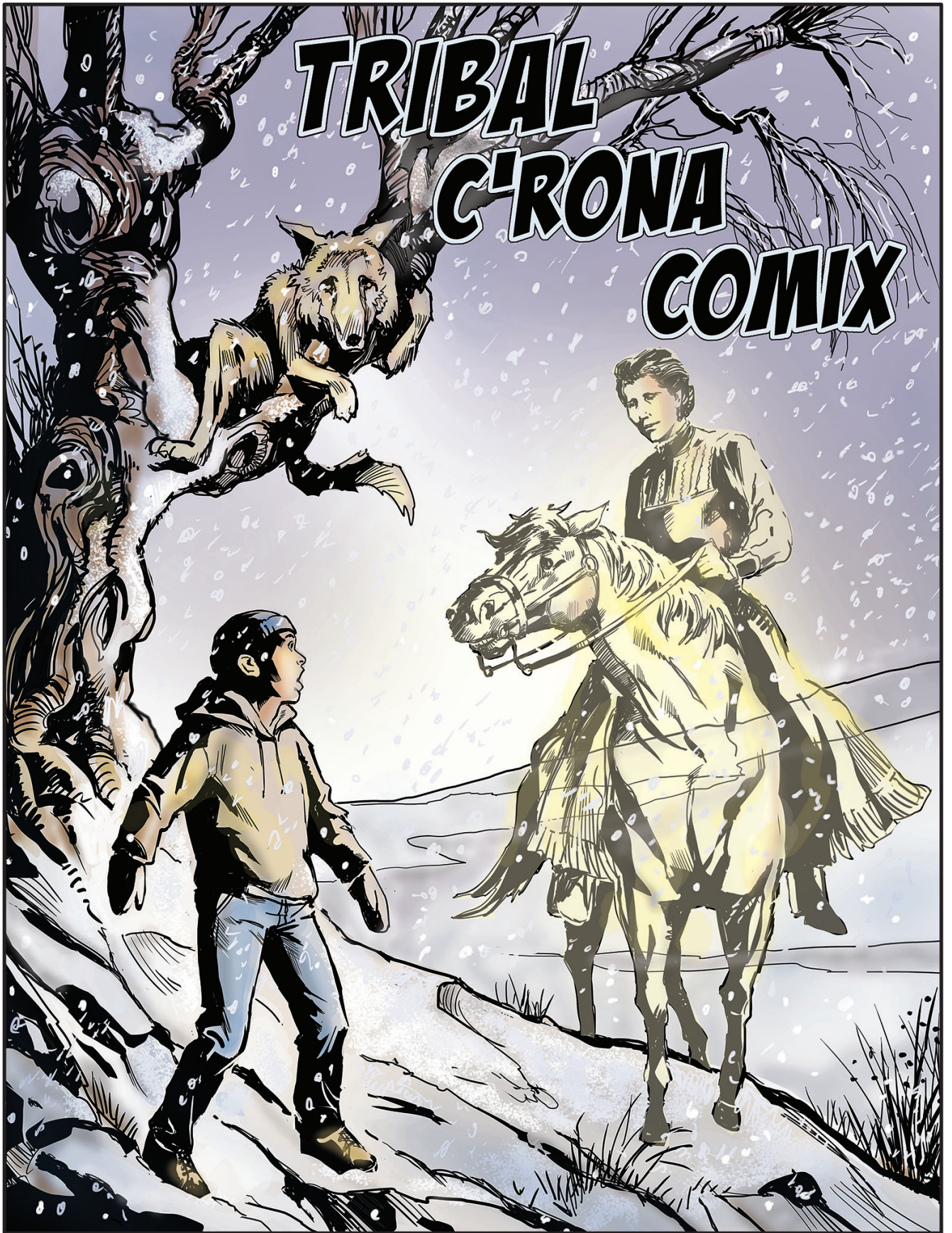


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Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Henry Payer is a Ho Chunk artist whose work can be seen at www.instagram.com/hochunkhenry

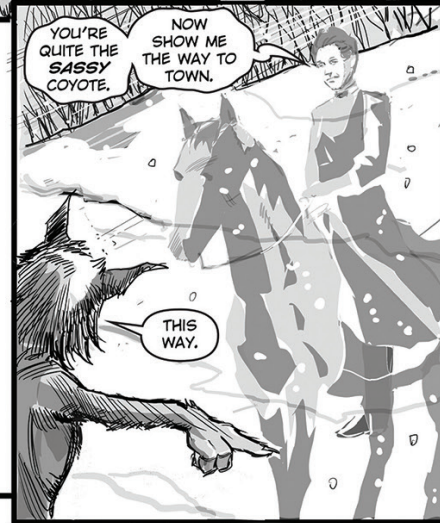
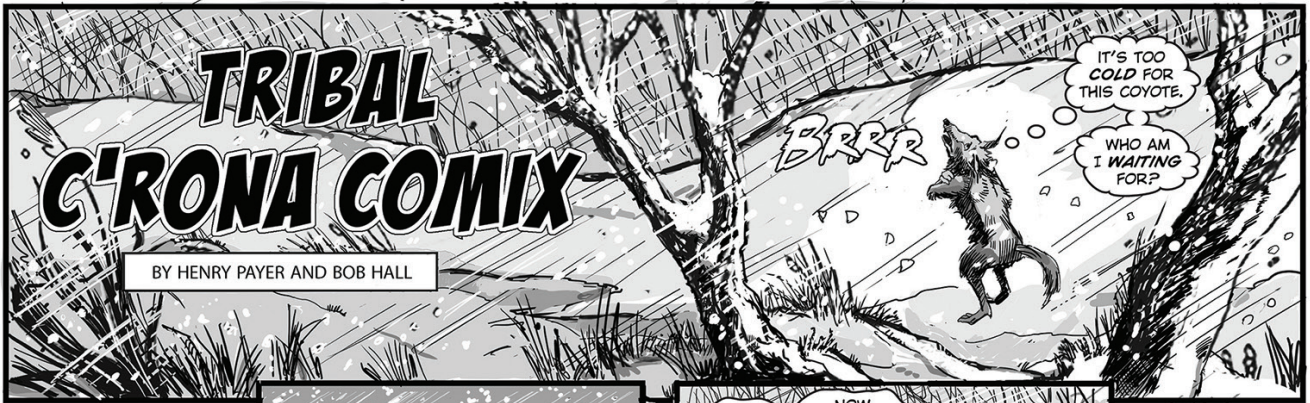
Bob Hall, Lincoln, Nebraska. See his work at bobhall.com.

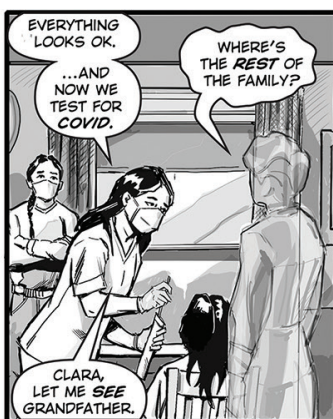
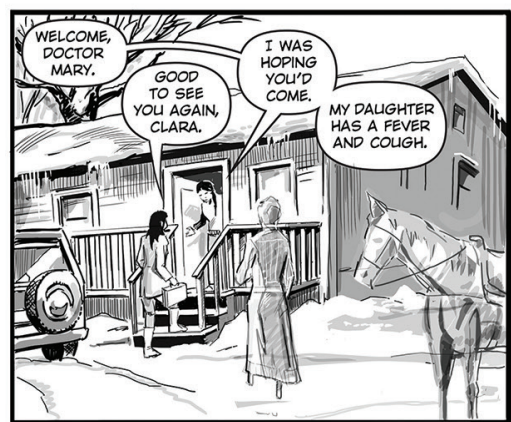
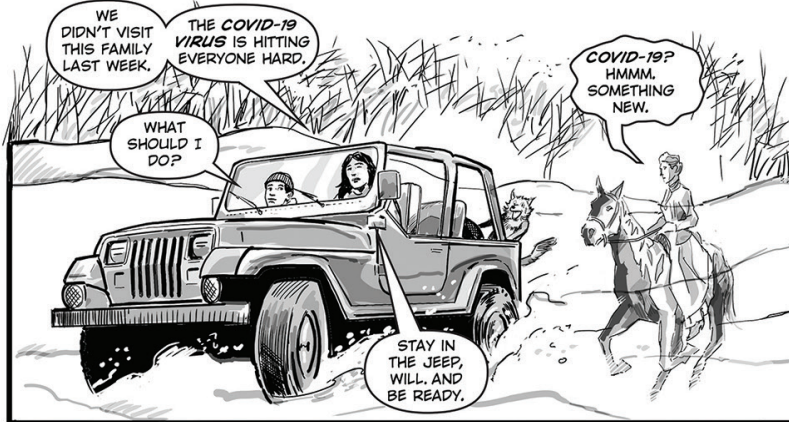
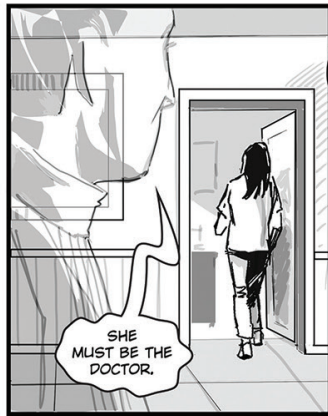
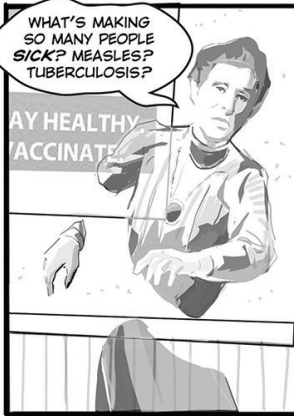
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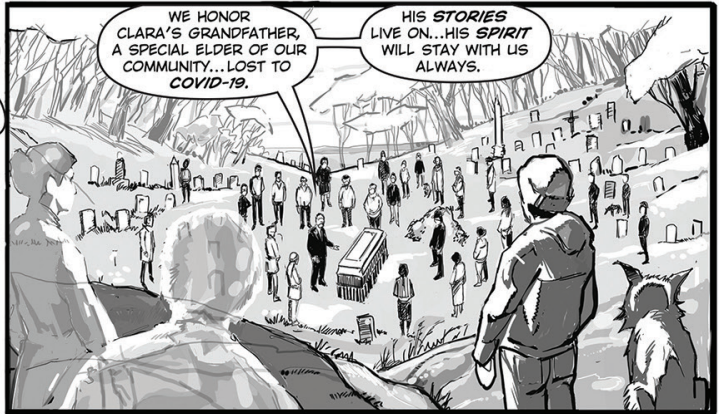


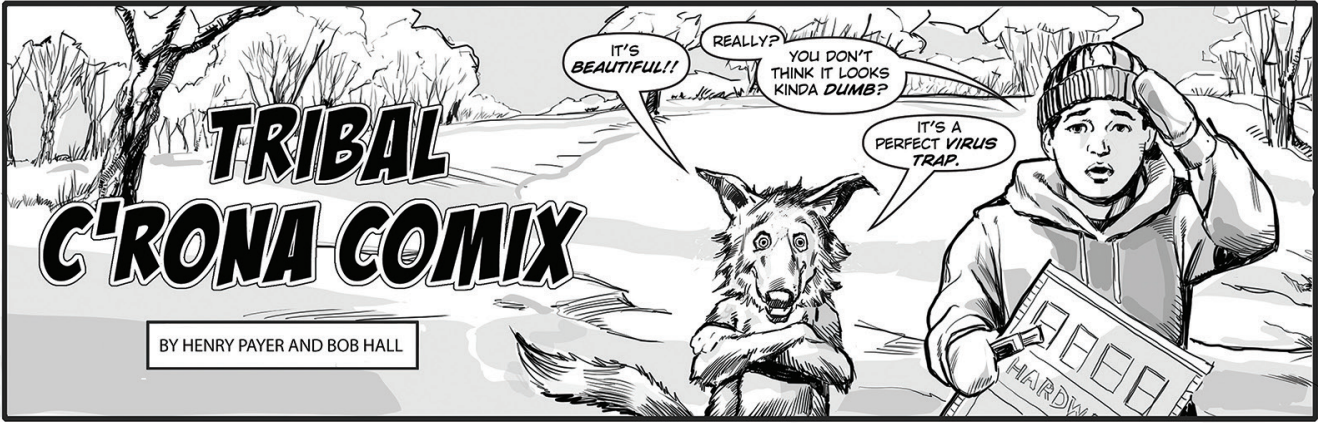
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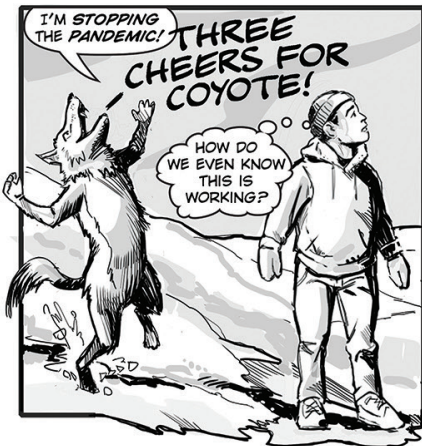
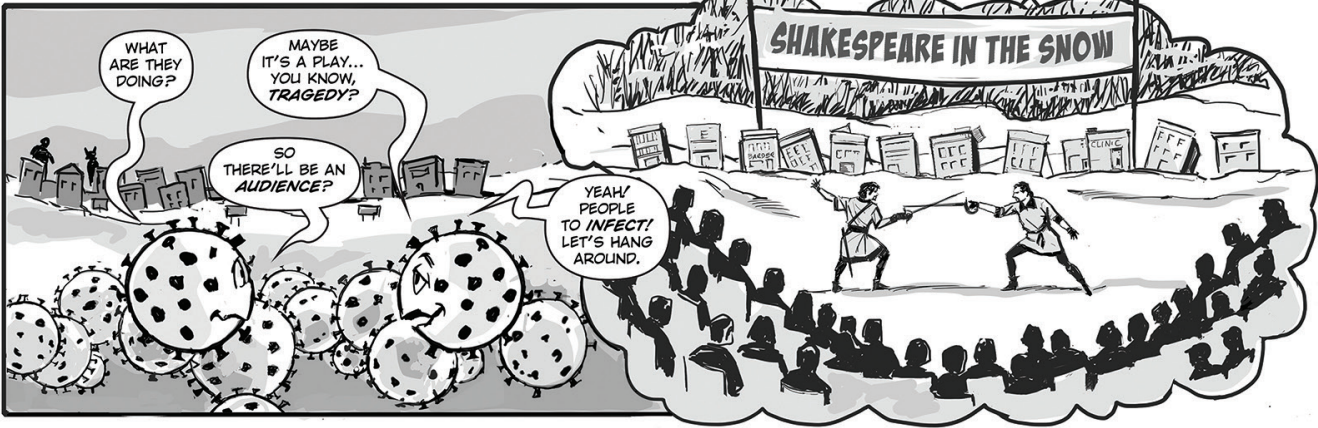


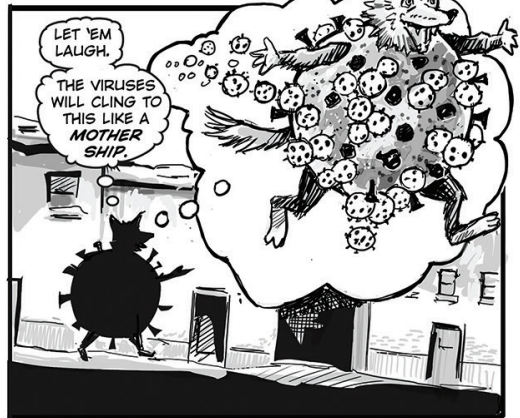
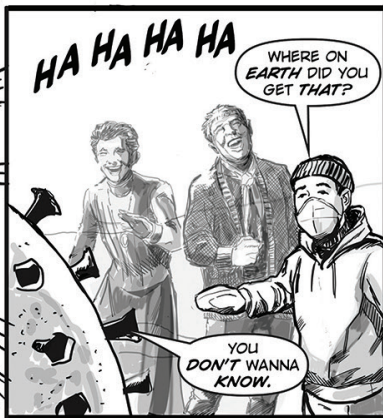






BY HENRY PAYER AND BOB HALL





Tribes and the Pandemic

by Judi gaiashkibos

“Dear St. Nicholas: I am a little Indian girl twelve years old. I go to school at the Omaha Agency. I study geography, history, grammar, arithmetic, and spelling.”

—Written by Susan La Flesche in 1877

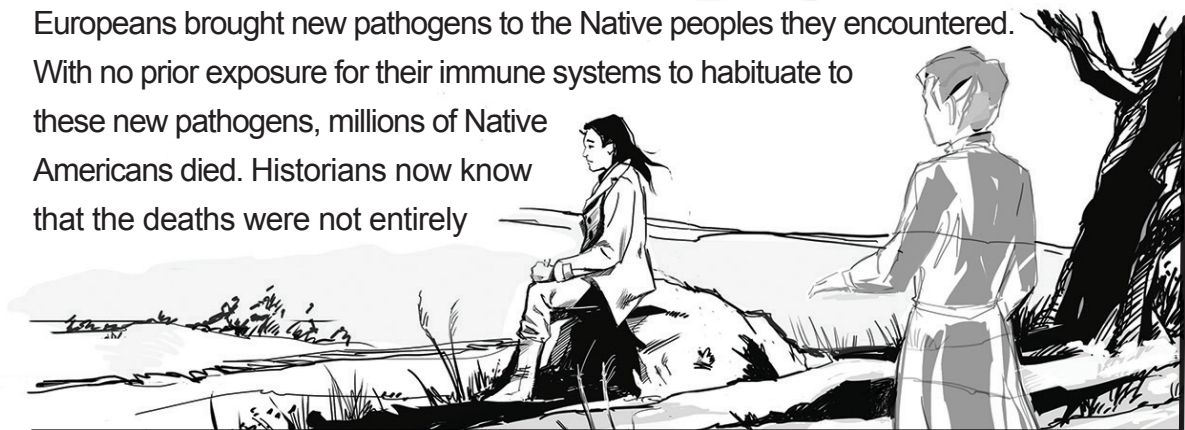


The young girl Susan La Flesche eventually went on to study medicine and became America’s first Native American doctor. She was a tireless and caring physician who never stopped helping those in need. Susan passed on her legacy to generations of young doctors who work to heal people in the communities where they live.

In 2020 a new virus that struck the United States resulted in sickness for tens of millions of people and death for over three hundred thousand. The COVID-19 virus impacts communities of all kinds, filling hospitals and challenging health systems. But nowhere is the virus more deadly than in American Indian communities.

Across the United States today, Native Americans live in cities and towns, on reservations, and in rural lands. Five hundred years ago, when European settlers first arrived to North America, Native American communities were spread across the land. The growth of the United States resulted in the devastation of Tribal communities, sometimes forcing entire peoples to move from their homelands to distant regions.

It has been said that disease has never been “just disease” for Native Americans. Europeans brought new pathogens to the Native peoples they encountered. With no prior exposure for their immune systems to habituate to these new pathogens, millions of Native Americans died. Historians now know that the deaths were not entirely

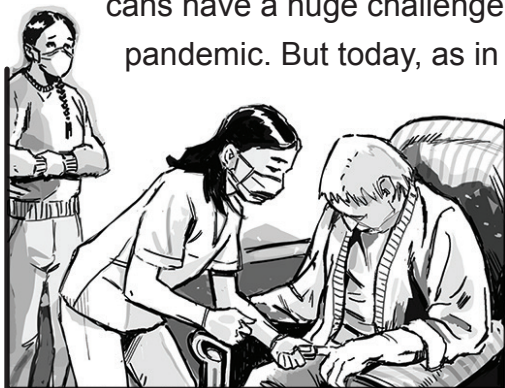


accidental. The U.S. Army actively tried to sicken many Indians. Army troops gave family members blankets that intentionally exposed them to smallpox. Again and again pandemics have ravaged Native American communities. And still they have survived.



Is this the worst pandemic that Native peoples have had to face? It certainly is not. This pandemic is, however, terrifying and destructive. Native Americans, Black Americans, and Hispanic Americans are more likely than other people to die from COVID-19. Many Native communities lack adequate resources to fight the pandemic. Some families live in remote areas where water is scarce, so they don't have the opportunity to wash their hands many times each day. Despite such hardships, Native communities have joined forces to protect their well-being. Tribal communities have restricted travel from outsiders onto their lands, and they have set up active testing stations to screen people for the virus. Tribal medical professionals visit families living in remote areas to test and determine who might have the virus, and they get medical treatment to those who need it.

Today many young Native Americans are pursuing careers in medicine, law, engineering, and education. They are becoming active and influential professionals who will use their expertise to build strong communities. Native Americans have a huge challenge in the face of this most deadly COVID-19 pandemic. But today, as in the past, Native peoples gain strength from



the memories of their ancestors. And the memory of the young girl Susan, who grew up to become the extraordinary doctor and leader Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte, gives us all pride to know that the challenges of today can be met and can lead us forward.