

# KEMĀMACEQTAQ: WE'RE ALL MOVING

*Building and sustaining momentum in local government for healthy eating and active living environments*

## Goal

Indigenous knowledge, language, and culture offer guidance for returning to healthy ways of eating, moving, and being in the Menominee County/Nation. With an orientation to holism and interweaving Menominee language and culture, project partners at Menominee County government are taking steps to increase traditional and nutritious food offerings and opportunities for movement and engagement with nature.



## Menominee County Partnership Timeline

2019

### MENOMINEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT JOINS AS A KEY PARTNER

- Began discussions of integrated strategies of Menominee language, culture, foods, and movement to promote County employees' health
- Completed the Organizational Self-Assessment of Policies and Practices to assess needs and assets and identify priority areas
- Reviewed the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* and developed ideas for adaptation



2020

### FOCUS ON IMPROVING FOOD OFFERINGS TO EMPLOYEES

- Drafted model nutrition standards for beverages, snacks, and meeting foods, with adaptations to center Menominee and local foods
  - Added practices for increasing environmental sustainability and incorporating movement and meditation into meetings
- The "Food, Beverage, and Healthier Work Environment Policy" moved through department reviews and an employee review team and was finalized and approved in September 2020

2021

### POLICY SUPPORTS, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

- Menominee County partners worked with the *Kemāmaceqtaq* team to prepare policy supports, including purchases for environmental sustainability
  - Purchased 126 reusable water bottles for all employees, highway crews, and county board members to encourage choosing water and to promote sustainability
  - These water bottles and an ice machine for the Highway Department have replaced previously used plastic water bottles (up to 100 bottles per day!)
  - Compostable serviceware for three departments
- An employee preference survey conducted in the summer will help Menominee County restock vending machines and employee stores with healthier and Indigenous foods and beverages
  - Employees expressed interest in purchasing more nuts and trail mixes, health bars, baked chips, and fresh snacks like string cheese and carrots



## Going Forward

With increased interest and momentum for healthier, culturally-centered living, Menominee County is making additional plans for the future. This may include offering monthly eco-walks with the Land Conservation department, "flash walks" during the work day, and encouraging use of a new walking trail that will feature plant identification and Menominee language signage. This experience has supported Menominee County in creating a healthier work environment and has drawn more employees into efforts to care for oneself and for each other.

***"I fully promote healthy vending options. I would use them more with healthier food options." -Menominee County employee***

The National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) awarded the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension a grant over a 5 year time frame to work with partners to improve the health of current residents in Menominee County/Nation. This grant employs strategies grounded in Menominee cultural practices to address chronic health problems in the community. The project is named *Kemāmaceqtaq: We're All Moving* and focuses on increasing access to healthier foods and expanding access to safer locations for physical activity.

## Contact information

Cooperative agreement: Outreach Programs to Reduce the Prevalence of Obesity in High Risk Rural Areas Agreement (1809) funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Recipient: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension

Strategy focus: Nutrition standards

Story author name and email: Jennifer Gauthier - [jennifer.gauthier@wisc.edu](mailto:jennifer.gauthier@wisc.edu)