



National  
Congress of  
American  
Indians

# LEGACY IN MOTION

**BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR THE  
FUTURE OF TRIBAL NATIONS**

TO PROTECT, SECURE, PROMOTE, AND IMPROVE  
THE LIVES OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE  
PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES





Watch Jefferson  
Keel's Together  
As One message

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Tribal Leaders, NCAI Members, Native Peoples, and Friends of Indian Country,

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians, welcome to NCAI's 76th Annual Convention! We come together this week to advance the hallowed charge of NCAI's founders, who assembled in Denver 75 years ago to create a single, national organization to collectively protect and strengthen tribal sovereignty for the benefit of our future tribal generations.

We gather this week to carry on our work of empowering our tribal governments, communities, and citizens, to provide them the ability and tools to create brighter futures of their own design. It takes all of us, working together, to make that happen. It takes all of us, working together, to hold the federal government accountable to its trust and treaty obligations to our tribal nations.

This past year has shown us that no matter the challenges we face as Indian Country, as nations within a nation, we are strong, we are resilient. Even in the midst of a government shutdown, tribal nations rallied together to forge historic policy achievements that enhance tribal self-determination and self-governance. We joined forces with our partners and allies to accomplish lasting victories that transcend political parties or this particular Administration and Congress. We continued to lay a firmer foundation for transformative, positive changes across our tribal lands and communities.

In serving in NCAI's leadership for more than a decade, I have come to understand and live one incontrovertible truth about this difference-making organization – its vibrancy has never risen or fallen on the shoulders of any single leader. During my terms in NCAI office, I embraced my leadership obligations with humility and respect, drawing on the wisdom and perspectives of my colleagues and the foresight and perseverance of our founding members. Through the many collective successes we have achieved – and the many serious challenges we are closing ranks to overcome – I have been reminded time and again that NCAI is, and always has been, the embodiment of a team effort. Only by working together can we strengthen and pass on the torch of sovereignty to our generations yet to come, just as NCAI's founders intended.

NCAI's future is in the capable hands of my fellow tribal leaders, whose ingenuity, drive, resilience, and passion is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. To my fellow tribal leaders, NCAI's members, and our many partners and allies, I thank you for your dedication and contributions to making NCAI the most instrumental organization ever to serve Indian Country. Let us move forward together, working as one to fully realize the vision of NCAI's founders and the promise of our tribal nations and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jefferson Keel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jefferson" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Keel".

Jefferson Keel – President  
National Congress of American Indians

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# TIMELINE OF PROGRESS

2018

2019



Juanita Ahtone, Rachel Joseph, Irene Cuch, and Veronica Murdock celebrate NCAI's 75th Annual Anniversary Convention & Marketplace.

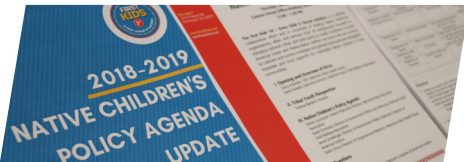


Former NCAI Presidents Brian Cladoosby and Joe Garcia link arms to demonstrate strength in solidarity at the 75th Annual Anniversary Convention & Marketplace.



NCAI President Jefferson Keel delivers the 2019 State of Indian Nations Address before a live audience and livestream viewers from across the globe.

2019



The 2018-2019 Native Children's Policy Agenda Update at the First Kids 1st Hill Briefing in January 2019.

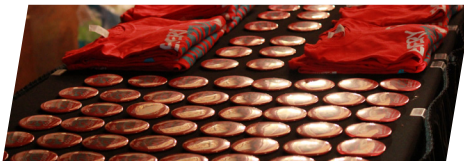


NCAI appoints its first-ever CEO. New CEO Kevin Allis gives marks at the NCAI 2019 Mid Year Conference & Marketplace.



NCAI Chief of Staff Jamie Gomez gives an update on NCAI's work on 2020 Census outreach for Indian Country during General Assembly at the 2019 Mid Year Conference & Marketplace.

2019



Native Vote at the Frank LaMere Presidential Candidate Forum



NCAI staff at the 2019 Frank LaMere Native American Presidential Forum in Sioux City, Iowa.



The 2019 Frank LaMere Native American Presidential Forum in Sioux City, Iowa.

2019



NCAI President Jefferson Keel and NCAI staff at the conclusion of the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.



Advocates and allies celebrate the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in front of the U.S. Capitol during the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.



Drummers open the 25th Anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in front of the U.S. Capitol during the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.



2019



The 2019 NCAI Leadership Award Winners



NCAI Youth Commission meet with Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Tara Sweeney at the 2019 NCAI Executive Council Winter Session



Stacy Bohlen, Executive Director of the National Indian Health Board, during the First Kids 1st Hill Briefing in January 2019

2019



NCAI Vice President of Research Yvette Roubideaux addresses the General Assembly during the Tribal Leader Scholar Forum at the 2019 NCAI Mid Year Conference & Marketplace.



Juanita Ahtone and John Echohawk (NARF) pose in front of the First Kids 1st signage at the 2019 Mid Year Conference & Marketplace.



NCAI releases Tribal Governance Innovation Spotlight case study on the Yurok Tribe and their efforts advancing food sovereignty.

2019



Senator Bernie Sanders speaks at the 2019 Frank LaMere Presidential Forum.



NCAI launches its Climate Action Task Force



NCAI staff hosting visitors at the Embassy of Tribal Nations.

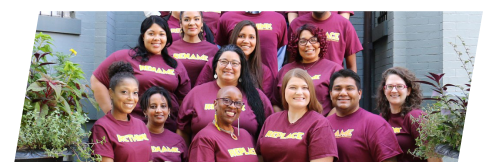
2019



Visiting from Australia, the Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity met with NCAI staff at the Embassy of Tribal Nations.



NCAI launches Ending "Indian" mascots information service.



NCAI staff supporting the "Proud to Be" change the mascot campaign on the front steps of the Embassy of Tribal Nations.



## LETTER FROM THE CEO OF NCAI

NCAI's legacy is hard to deny – after 75 years, it is a thriving, impactful organization that is continuously looking for ways and opportunities to strengthen its enactment of its founders' vision – a national congress of tribal nations forging a common purpose, speaking with a single voice, and engaging in collective action on Indian Country's behalf. To that end, you may have noticed that NCAI looks a little different these days. Over the past few months, we've reshaped our organization to build on the strong foundations of our past and present, while at the same time preparing to take on the growing body of critical work we must tackle to create the futures we seek for our communities, places, and generations yet to come.

During the first 100 days of my tenure as NCAI's first-ever Chief Executive Officer, I went to great lengths to learn how we currently serve our membership and how we collaborate with our partners and allies. It is impressive to see the sheer volume of work that NCAI's staff carries out each day to ensure that we make an impact for our members and all of Indian Country by holding the federal government accountable to its trust and treaty obligations, and educating policymakers and the general public about contemporary tribal nations and peoples and the immense contributions we make to American society. Given this daunting task and the current political environment in which we find ourselves, it is imperative that we think and work strategically to strengthen the organization's structure and capacity so that we can make the greatest difference for those who need us the most.

Alongside my plan for internal restructuring, I took a look at how we interact with Indian Country. It is so important to me to do on-the-ground outreach to tribal nations, to let them know that NCAI works on behalf of all tribal nations, and that while we are based in Washington, D.C., our work reverberates across the country. It was a privilege to visit each of NCAI's regions to sit with tribal leaders and citizens to learn about their most pressing challenges and highest aspirations. To support and stand with tribal nations on the front lines of the greatest legal and policy fights of our time, NCAI needs to keep its finger firmly on the pulse of Indian Country. Meanwhile, in visiting with our allies, I was able to identify and pursue pathways for new collaborations that will enhance NCAI's ability to advance tribal nations' top-line priorities.

Moving forward, we hope that you will appreciate our efforts at greater transparency – especially through NCAI's resolutions process – and our targeted approach to provide tribal leaders with the timely information and effective tools they need to educate and advocate on behalf of the tribal nations. I look forward to the journey we will take, working together.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form the name Kevin J. Allis.

Kevin J. Allis, Chief Executive Officer  
National Congress of American Indians



# ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*Kevin J. Allis*

(Forest County  
Potawatomi Community)

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## CHIEF OF STAFF

*Jamie Gomez*

(Tlingit)

## INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY EDITOR IN CHIEF

*Mark Trahant*

(Shoshone-Bannock Tribe)

## GENERAL COUNSEL

*Derrick Beetso*

(Navajo Nation)

## VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT

*Christian Weaver (Shinnecock)*

## VICE PRESIDENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

*Lycia Maddocks (Quechan)*

## VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

*Jacob Schellinger  
(Stockbridge-Munsee Band of  
Mohican Indians)*

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## VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

*Nichole Van Cliff*

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## VICE PRESIDENT OF RESEARCH

*Dr. Yvette Roubideaux  
(Rosebud Sioux)*

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## VICE PRESIDENT OF TRIBAL GOVERNANCE AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

*Dr. Ian Record*

# ***BUILDING ON THE PAST, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE***

NCAI's founders created the organization in 1944 to help tribal nations combat the threats posed by the termination, relocation, and assimilation policies of the federal government.

In the 75 years since, NCAI has diligently protected and advanced the inherent sovereign rights of tribal nations and governments from such threats, and is well positioned to continue to do so for the next 75 years and beyond.

The theme of this year's Annual Report is "Legacy in Motion – Building Momentum for the Future." This theme celebrates the progress and resilience of tribal nations that have persevered despite policies designed to dismantle our governments, erode our cultures and languages, and restrict our ability to care for our lands and natural resources. Today's tribal nations remain rooted in rich histories and cultures, while deploying innovative governance strategies that enable our communities and citizens to thrive.

## ***Strengthening Sovereignty Through Resolutions***

All of NCAI's work is guided by the resolutions process. NCAI members establish the organization's priorities on issues that affect tribal nations and peoples through resolutions introduced at NCAI's two main conferences each year and passed through a multi-step, consensus-driven process. NCAI's resolutions run the gamut in terms of the topics that they cover, and constitute the primary mechanism through which NCAI expresses Indian Country's unified voice on federal policy and regulations, Congressional legislation, and litigation of greatest concern to Indian

Country. Over the past year, the organization has undertaken several steps to strengthen the resolutions process, from providing NCAI members additional time during our conferences to review and deliberate resolutions to expanding our technical assistance to NCAI members who submit resolutions during the submission process.

Currently, NCAI's online searchable resolutions database features nearly 1,000 resolutions dating back to 2001. We are working to expand that database to eventually include all NCAI resolutions dating back to the organization's founding in 1944. For more on NCAI's Resolutions process visit the [Resolutions page](#) on our website or scan the QR Code below.



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Learn more about  
NCAI Resolution  
Process



WATCH NOW

Watch the full  
2019 State of  
Indian Nations

## ***2019 State of Indian Nations***

NCAI delivered its 17th Annual State of Indian Nations Address on February 11, 2019 in Washington, D.C., highlighting the remarkable progress of tribal nations and underscoring how tribal governments work with U.S. governments, organizational partners, and other stakeholders for the betterment of all communities.

NCAI President and Lieutenant Governor of the Chickasaw Nation Jefferson Keel addressed a packed audience at the Knight Studios in the Newseum and thousands of viewers online. This year's main theme was about the resilience and resurgence of Indian Country. For the full 2019 State of Indian Nations speech, visit NCAI's [YouTube page](#) or scan the QR Code above.



# NCAI NATIVE YOUTH INITIATIVES

## *National Diabetes Prevention Program for Native American Youth*

The Indian Health Service (IHS), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA), FirstPic, Inc., and Nike, Inc. partnered to create a program aimed at reducing the onset of diabetes among Native American youth. The program – On the T.R.A.I.L. (Together Raising Awareness for Indian Life) to Diabetes Prevention – features an innovative combination of physical, educational, and nutritional activities that promote healthy lifestyles. Since 2003, the T.R.A.I.L. program has served more than 16,600 Native youth ages 7-11 in about 90 tribal communities.

NCAI's new five-year grant award from IHS began in Fall 2017 and runs through August 2022. NCAI awarded approximately 83 Boys & Girls Club sites in Indian Country for the 2018-2019 grant year. In Each site received funding for program operations; evaluated program curriculum and evaluation, training and ongoing technical assistance; and access to the SPARK Afterschool Physical Activity Program.

▼  
The 2019 Leadership Award Winners: Heather Kendall-Miller (NARF), Robert D. Manfred, Jr. (Commissioner, Major League Baseball), Congressman Ken Calvert (CA), Eugenia Tyner-Dawson (U.S. Department of the Interior), and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community.

## *First Kids 1st Initiative*

The First Kids 1st (FK1st) initiative began in 2016 with a critically important purpose: To lift up and support Native youth and children by coordinating efforts to transform systems that have the greatest impact on Native youth and families – systems of governance, child welfare, education, and health. Over the past three years, First Kids 1st has helped tribal nations implement systems of support for Native youth to thrive.

The initiative is supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, with funding flowing through the National Congress of American Indians (for activities undertaken by NCAI), the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the National Indian Education Association, and the Native Indian Health Board.

As a result of hard work and great collaboration, FK1st has produced many effective resources including, but not limited to, the FK1st Theory of Change,



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Learn more about  
the First Kids 1st  
initiative

FK1st Evaluation Framework, FK1st Data Resource Book, FK1st National Children's Policy Agenda, FK1st Community Asset Mapping Materials, and FK1st Youth Fellowship Look Book.

For more information and to find out how to help us continue this great work, please visit: [www.FirstKids1st.org](http://www.FirstKids1st.org).

## Youth Commission

NCAI understands that in order to create sustainable Native communities, there needs to be a sincere focus on youth. NCAI ensures that Native youth thrive through several programs, one of which is its Youth Commission. During the past 23 years, the NCAI Youth Commission has made lasting positive impacts in Native communities. Led by our current Youth Commission Officers, the body of Youth Commission members has helped to shape Native communities through its work on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the Native Children's Policy Agenda, honoring and teaching about Native cultures in schools, and other important initiatives. NCAI acknowledges that in order to carry out our mission, we must look to the future and prepare our young people to become capable leaders of our tribal governments and in our tribal communities.

Three times a year, Youth Commission members come from all corners of the nation to convene at NCAI's conferences and meetings to join tribal leaders in important policy work.

The NCAI Youth Commission provides education, mentorship, networking opportunities, emotional support, scholarships, and a digital voice for young tribal leaders to achieve their dreams, help their communities thrive, and be the answers to their ancestor's prayers.

## Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program

The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program was named in honor of the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, who forged a path that simultaneously empowered and restored cultural balance to the Cherokee Nation, as well as other tribal nations. She acknowledged the struggles that Native people face and worked toward changing struggle-based narratives through grassroots community development, the expression of inherent sovereignty in practice, and the creation of many youth education initiatives.

NCAI's Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program gives emerging Native professionals the chance to expand their skills and workplace experience by contributing to various policy and research initiatives that advance NCAI's mission. The Fellows serve 11-month terms of employment at NCAI gaining experience in policy development, advocacy, communications, applied research, and other programs advancing tribal sovereignty and self-governance.





In the summer of 2019, NCAI welcomed Brittany Habbart (Caddo Nation of Oklahoma), Sandra Mitrovich (Tyme Maidu/Yahmonee Maidu), Sadie Red Eagle (Otoe-Missouria Tribe), and Sierra Watt (Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians). These four new Fellows join the ranks of more than 75 emerging Native professionals who have been a part of the fellowship program over the past decade.

Through this program, NCAI invests in the next generation of tribal leadership and it has graduated professionals from the program who have moved on to build impactful careers in service to Indian Country. During their tenure, Fellows work directly with tribal leaders, national and regional partners, educators, policymakers, and Native youth as they grow their understanding of federal Indian policy, law and tribal governance.

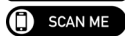
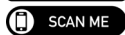
Fellows are selected through a competitive application and interview process. NCAI is actively seeking

qualified candidates for the 2019-2020 cohort and will open its fellowship application process on November 1, 2019. Applications are due by March 15 of each year and can be accessed through NCAI's website.

### ***NCAI EVENTS — FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS, FACILITATING TOUCHPOINTS, AND DRIVING REVENUE***

NCAI's conferences, meetings, and events provide tribal leaders and key decision-makers with key opportunities to come together to form and advance Indian Country's common priorities for federal laws and policies that will strengthen tribal sovereignty and self-governance. The NCAI Conferences, Events, and Sponsorship teams oversee the planning and logistics of NCAI's convenings in order to create meaningful in-person experiences for tribal leaders, our members, prospective members, allies, partner organizations, funders, and federal officials and representatives.

▲ The 2019 NCAI Wilma Mankiller Fellows: Brittany Habbart, Sandra Mitrovich, Sierra Watt, and Sadie Red Eagle.



## 2018 Annual Convention

Over the last seven decades, NCAI has built a family of advocates and invited all those who have aided in further supporting the mission and the work of the organization. In November 1944, nearly 80 delegates representing 50 tribal nations and associations from across the United States came together in Denver Colorado to establish the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). Seventy-five years later, NCAI returned to the city where the first convention was held to host its historic 75th Annual Convention & Marketplace, titled, "Honoring the Past, Shaping the Future."

More than 1,200 attendees gathered to peruse the Marketplace, attend breakout sessions, and mingle with tribal leaders over the course of the activity-filled week.

To view President Jefferson Keel's "Together as One" speech, please visit NCAI's YouTube page.

For a full recap of October 21-22, 2018 events, please scan the QR Code in the sidebar or [click here](#).

For a full recap of October 23-24, 2018 events, please scan the QR Code in the sidebar or [click here](#).

## 2019 Executive Council Winter Session plus Leadership Awards

Directly following the State of Indian Nations, the 2019 Executive Council Winter Session kicked off on Monday, February 11, 2019. Held at the Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C., the conference provided attendees the opportunity to hear directly from key leaders of Congress and the Administration, as well as participate in sessions tackling key issues facing tribal communities.

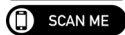
For a full list of speakers and highlights, scan here or visit [here](#).

## 2019 NCAI Mid Year Conference & Marketplace and Unity Impact Days

The 2019 NCAI Mid Year Conference & Marketplace held June 24 – 27, 2019 at the Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, Nevada produced more than 700 attendees. The activity-filled week included eight NCAI task force meetings, several regional and issue-based tribal caucuses, a new member orientation, 15 breakout sessions and consultations covering topics such as healthcare, national parks, research, and energy development, and passed more than 32 resolutions.

The marquee event was the 14th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum (TSLF). The purpose of the annual TSLF is to provide an opportunity

▼  
Wells Fargo presents \$500,000 to NCAI at the 2019 Executive Council Winter Session





for researchers, practitioners, community members, and other to present their findings to tribal leaders, policymakers, and tribal members during the NCAI Mid Year Conference. This year's theme, Data and Research: Tribes Taking Action, explored how tribal nations are taking action with data and research to help strategically impact the future of their communities.

TLSF produced three General Assembly presentations, six concurrent breakout sessions, and two poster sessions over the course of the conference.

For the full Wrap-Up Report of the Mid Year Conference, scan the QR Code in the sidebar.

## Unity Impact Days 2019

On Tuesday, September 10, 2019, tribal leaders from across Indian Country convened on Capitol Hill to hear from members of Congress regarding the work they are doing for tribal priorities during the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.

The schedule was jam-packed with a total of 19 speakers which included Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Chairman Senator John Hoeven and Vice-Chairman Senator Tom Udall, U.S. Department of the Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary Mark Cruz, and Indian Health Service Principal Deputy Director Michael D. Weahkee, among others.

Main topics of discussion included:

- Honoring Trust and Treaty Obligations
- Advance Appropriations
- Infrastructure
- Violence Against Women Act
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
- Special Diabetes Program for Indians
- Tribal Broadband
- Tribal Economic Development

Tribal Unity Impact Days continued on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 as NCAI conducted Hill visits on key priority issues.

For a full recap of the Tribal Leader Briefing and other Tribal Leader Impact Days events scan or scan the QR Code in the sidebar or [click here](#).



▲ NCAI First Vice President Aaron Payment addresses the general assembly at the 2019 Mid Year Conference & Marketplace



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Learn more about the Mid-Year Conference & Marketplace



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Learn more about the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days

▼ NCAI President Jefferson Keel and NCAI staff at the conclusion of the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.





▲ Drummers open the 25th Anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in front of the U.S. Capitol during the 2019 Tribal Unity Impact Days.

## ***NCAI'S EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY***

NCAI is honored to be a strong and consistent voice in Washington, D.C. for tribal nations. As the unified voice of Indian Country, NCAI fights to preserve the treaty and sovereign rights of tribal nations, advance the government-to-government relationship between tribal nations and the federal government, and remove historic structural impediments to tribal self-determination.

A significant portion of NCAI's work is educating policymakers and members of the public. The U.S. education system does not adequately tell the story of the resilience and contributions of tribal nations, and thus, most Americans don't possess an informed understanding of who tribal nations and peoples are today, or the inherent rights of self-determination and self-governance they possess. NCAI works to address this lack of understanding by teaching visiting groups at the NCAI Embassy of Tribal Nations, conducting Indian Country 101 briefings, speaking about Indian Country's priorities at various events and conferences, and producing materials for Native and non-Native audiences.

NCAI also works extensively to advance tribal nations' priorities with Congress and the Administration. NCAI's advocacy work focuses on



issues brought forward by tribal members through our resolutions process. Tribal nations, as sovereign governments, strive to build strong economies and ensure the health and wellbeing of their citizens and all those who reside in their communities. Accordingly, NCAI educates Congress on issues such as providing quality, accessible healthcare; restoring tribal homelands; trust modernization; climate change, tribal infrastructure; public safety; preserving Native languages and cultures; providing quality, culturally appropriate education; and economic development; among others. Once legislation is enacted, NCAI's advocacy efforts turn to ensuring that laws are implemented consistent with the federal government's treaty and trust obligations. NCAI has worked with tribal nations and the Administration to ensure that tribal nations are active participants in creating and implementing federal initiatives, policies, and regulations.

Meanwhile, where tribal nations are leading with innovative and forward-looking solutions, NCAI shares those best practices with other tribal nations, Congress, and the Administration. Examples include climate change mitigation and resilience, food sovereignty, workforce development, alternative judicial practices rooted in tribal cultures, healthcare focused on prevention and traditional practices; education that reflects the priorities of tribal nations; and natural resource stewardship.



Banner for the NCAI Climate Action Task Force.



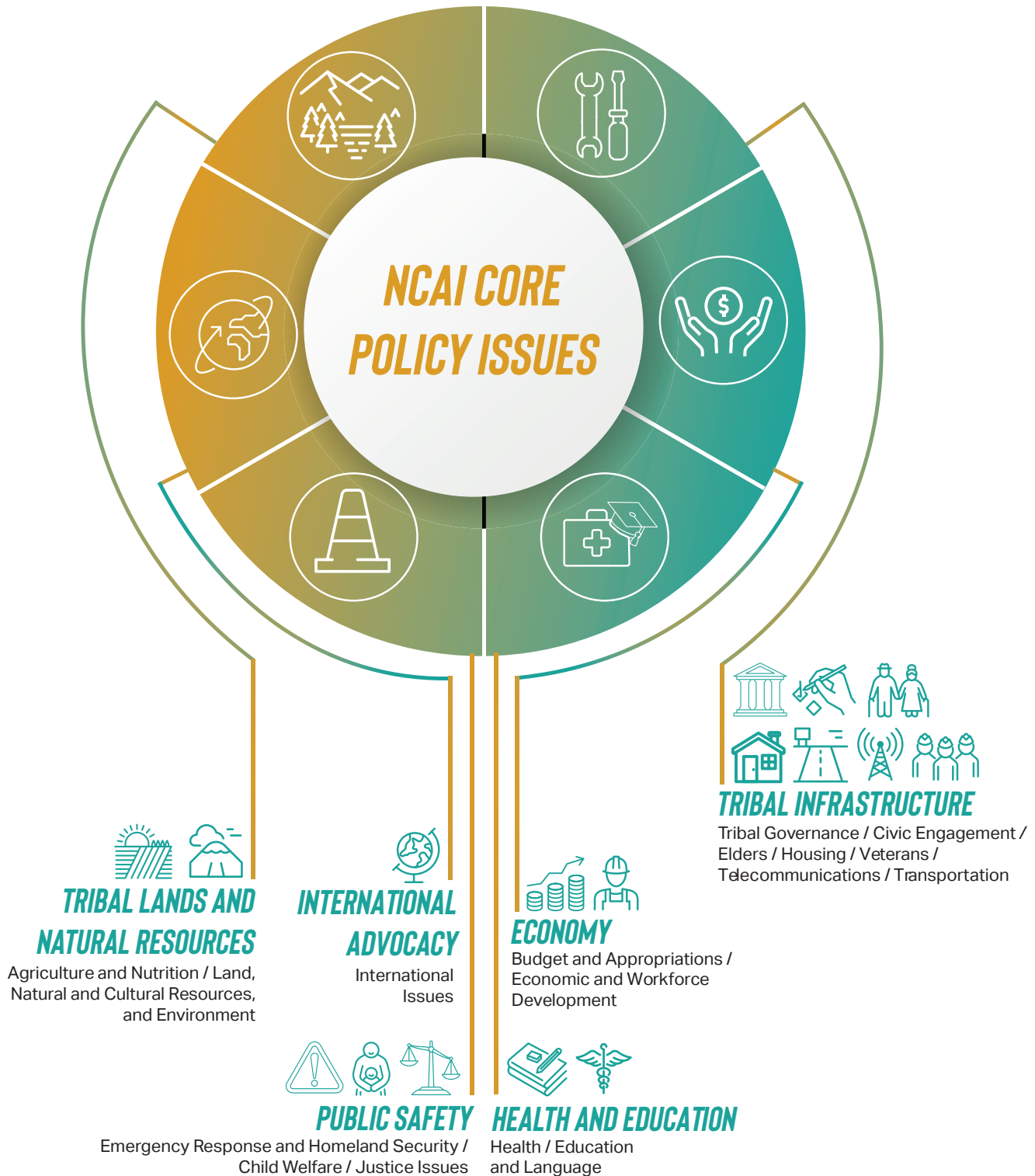
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Learn more about our commitment to supporting tribal climate action.

All of NCAI's advocacy work is grounded in strengthening tribal self-governance and advancing tribal sovereignty for all tribal nations. Since time immemorial, tribal nations have demonstrated that they possess the values, knowledge, skills, and expertise to sustain thriving societies – a message we share every single day with Congress, the Administration, and anyone else who will listen. NCAI will continue to advocate for legislation, policies, regulations, and programs that uphold and strengthen tribal self-determination.



# NCAI'S EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY





# TRIBAL INFRASTRUCTURE



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## TRIBAL GOVERNANCE

Tribal nations are sovereign governments whose existence and authority predate the formation of the United States. Consistent with the government-to-government relationship, the United States must recognize the inherent authority of tribal nations to protect public safety and regulate all activity on tribal lands. NCAI works to advance federal policies that support and expand tribal self-determination and self-governance, as well as provide tribal nations the same direct access to federal funding and programs as states.



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## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (VOTING RIGHTS AND CENSUS)

The Census is a powerful information source that will significantly impact political representation and federal policy and funding over the next decade. Census data plays a key role in the allocation of more than \$800 billion in federal funding for programs that serve Indian Country. NCAI educates tribal nations, the federal government, and partners about the importance of (and strategies for ensuring) an accurate count for Indian Country, and provides tribal leaders and representatives with resources and technical assistance to ensure a complete count of tribal citizens. Native people were the last to obtain the right to vote in the U.S., and Native voters continue to face persistent barriers in exercising that right. NCAI has participated in the Native American Voting Rights Coalition since 2015 and also stewards the Native Vote initiative that encourages voter participation across Indian Country and protects the voting rights of Native people.



SCAN ME



## ELDERS

Elders are the keepers of wisdom and traditional knowledge in our communities, and play a vital role in ensuring the ongoing vitality of our cultures. They embody the collective wisdom of our ancestors. Our elders deserve our utmost respect and care. NCAI supports federal policies that promote high-quality, culturally appropriate services that allow our elders to remain in our communities, nurture our youth, and fulfill the important task of linking our past to the future.



SCAN ME



## HOUSING

Access to affordable housing is a fundamental necessity that promotes economic development and prosperity in tribal communities. According to a 2017 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report, approximately 68,000 new and/or replacement homes are necessary to address housing needs in Indian Country. Additionally, the growing population of American Indians and Alaska Natives means that access to affordable housing will remain an important issue for Indian Country. NCAI's advocacy efforts for housing remain focused on reauthorizing and increasing funding for the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act, which expired in 2013. NCAI continues to work with the National American Indian Housing Council to bring together tribal leaders and tribal housing entities to advocate for passage of critical housing legislation for Indian Country.



SCAN ME



## VETERANS

American Indians and Alaska Natives have bravely fought to protect the legacy of Native peoples through serving as members of the armed forces. They have shown exceptional valor and heroism on battlefields from the American Revolution to Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite their distinguished service, Native veterans have lower incomes, lower educational attainment, and higher unemployment than veterans of other groups. NCAI is committed to supporting the wellbeing of our Native veterans and ensuring all benefits provided to military veterans reach American Indian and Alaska Native veterans, whether they live on remote reservation lands or in major urban centers.



SCAN ME



## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications technology and high-speed internet access are necessities in today's modern world, but unfortunately, many tribal communities are disproportionately lacking broadband access. Access to high-speed broadband service supports economic development, tribal governance, healthcare, education, and public safety. NCAI's advocacy is intended to raise awareness of the digital divide that impacts tribal communities nationally and seeks to increase access to resources and funding that will lead to deployment of telecommunications infrastructure on tribal lands while protecting tribal rights and interests on- and off-reservation.



SCAN ME



## TRANSPORTATION

Well-maintained and adequately developed transportation infrastructure throughout Indian Country advances education, public safety, medical services, and commerce for tribal and surrounding communities. Without safe and well-maintained roads, bridges, ferries, trails, and air transit, tribal governments face challenges in providing essential services to their citizens that promote societal wellbeing and economic growth and development. NCAI is working to ensure the promises of improved road systems and road safety are addressed through the federal budget process. It is also working through the NCAI-Intertribal Transportation Association's Transportation Task Force to ensure the next surface transportation bill includes strong provisions for Indian Country.



# TRIBAL LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES



SCAN ME



## AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION

Agriculture plays a major role in tribal economies, tribal workforces, and nutrition in tribal communities, and it has long been a priority of NCAI to increase tribal access to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. In 2018, NCAI worked with the Native Farm Bill Coalition and tribal nations to enact a strong Farm Bill for Indian Country. This successful effort included achieving a long-term objective – expanding Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act contracting authority to USDA. NCAI's focus is now on implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, as well as work supporting tribal nations and Native producers through the NCAI Tribal Food Sovereignty Advancement Initiative.



SCAN ME



## LAND, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND ENVIRONMENT

American Indians and Alaska Natives are place-based peoples with a direct connection to their surrounding environments, which includes traditional homelands, natural resources, and wildlife. Tribal nations' cultures, economies, and wellbeing all depend upon natural resources, many of which are disappearing faster than they can be restored. The United States must ensure full tribal participation in developing policies and making decisions that impact tribal lands and resources. There also must be strong support for tribal management of land and natural resources through traditional and culturally appropriate means. NCAI actively seeks to advance tribal priorities involving tribal lands and resources by educating federal policymakers and facilitating discussions amongst tribal leaders through its Lands Working Group. NCAI also recently formed the NCAI Climate Action Task Force to document, inform, and support the climate action efforts of tribal nations and Native organizations, and identify and advocate for policies and funding designed to empower their ability to engage in effective, sustainable climate action.



# PUBLIC SAFETY



SCAN ME



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND HOMELAND SECURITY

Without the full participation of tribal governments, a national homeland security strategy is incomplete. Tribal nations bear a solemn responsibility for surveillance, law enforcement, and emergency response in protecting vast tracts of land, international borders, numerous sensitive facilities, power transmission lines, dams, oil and natural gas pipelines, highway and rail systems, sensitive military sites, and the millions of people who reside within their jurisdictions. NCAI advocates to ensure that tribal nations have access to the same resources for fulfilling these important responsibilities as their state, local, and territorial counterparts.



SCAN ME



## CHILD WELFARE

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) has been hailed as the "gold standard" by child welfare experts, and it prevents Native children from suffering the trauma of unnecessary removal from their families and tribal communities. Over the last several years, we have seen a small number of interest groups organize legal attacks to strike down or limit ICWA, the result of which would be to separate American Indian and Alaska Native children from their families and tribal nations. In response to the constant legal attacks on ICWA, NCAI and three other Native organizations formed the Protect ICWA Campaign – a collaborative effort to inform policy, legal, and communications strategies with the mission of protecting our Native children through upholding ICWA for generations to come.



SCAN ME



## JUSTICE ISSUES

The crime rate on reservations is an urgent public safety issue that is the result of decades of gross underfunding of tribal criminal justice systems, a uniquely complex jurisdictional scheme that keeps tribal governments from being able to fully police their lands, and a centuries-old failure by the federal government to fulfill its public safety obligations on tribal lands. NCAI advocates for tribal governments and tribal justice systems to have the resources and authority they need to ensure safety and justice in their communities.





# HEALTH & EDUCATION



SCAN ME



## HEALTH

The United States has treaty and trust obligations to provide health care to American Indian and Alaska Native people in perpetuity. Despite these obligations, American Indian and Alaska Native people have long experienced significant health disparities when compared to other Americans. NCAI works to ensure the federal government upholds its obligations to support tribal and federal program initiatives to fight critical threats to the health and wellbeing of American Indians and Alaska Natives across Indian Country. In addition to general healthcare issues, NCAI educates the federal government on the need to include tribal priorities in national initiatives, like efforts to address the opioid epidemic.

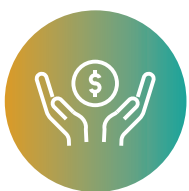


SCAN ME



## EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE

Access to high-quality, culturally appropriate education is critical for American Indian and Alaska Native children to have the future they deserve. Federal policy must support productive learning environments for our students that draw on culturally relevant curricula, as well as sufficient funding and resources for quality school facilities and the recruitment and retention of excellent teachers. In addition to working with Congress and the Administration to ensure the federal government meets its obligations to provide quality education to American Indians and Alaska Natives, NCAI conducted a landscape analysis of state efforts to bring high quality educational content about Native peoples and communities into all kindergarten to 12th-grade classrooms across the United States. Positive, accurate cultural representation will increase educational outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native students and produce a better understanding of tribal nations among the general public.



# ECONOMY



SCAN ME



## BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Funding decisions made by the federal government are an expression of the United States' policy priorities and its commitment to honoring its obligations to American Indian and Alaska Native people. NCAI has long worked to ensure that the federal government adequately funds its sacred obligations to tribal nations by producing an Indian Country Budget Request to educate Congress and the Administration on tribal funding priorities. Additionally, NCAI has prioritized working to alleviate the negative impacts on tribal nations caused by impasses in the federal budget process by seeking advance appropriations for programs administered through the Indian Health Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs.



SCAN ME



## ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Strong tribal economies are key to improving the quality of life in and around tribal communities. In order to stimulate economic growth across Indian Country, the United States must support tribal nations' ability to use the same legal and policy authorities available to other governments, including the ability to levy taxes without external interference, the issuance of tax-exempt bond financing, and the regulation of all commercial activities on tribal lands. Adequate federal funding, coupled with reduced regulatory burdens, can advance tribal nations' efforts to access capital resources and workforce training programs. NCAI supports a comprehensive approach to increasing economic opportunities in Indian Country by advocating for resources and incentives that will grow tribal economies, facilitating discussions through task forces and work groups to identify and address the economic barriers tribal nations face, and coordinating with tribal nations to strengthen workforce development approaches and expand job opportunities.



# INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY



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## INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

NCAI and our member tribal nations recognize the importance of participating in international policy discussions that impact the rights of Indigenous peoples. In recent years, NCAI has prioritized negotiations at the United Nations and the Organization of American States that have been creating the structural framework for the advancement of Indigenous rights, including the negotiation and adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007 and the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP) in 2016, and their subsequent implementation. In addition to this foundational work, NCAI has engaged in a number of substantive policy discussions of particular concern to Indigenous peoples, including climate change and the protection of Indigenous traditional knowledge and genetic resources.

# EMPOWERING NATIVE COMMUNITIES SUMMARY

In 2015, Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, declared, "Cultural Sovereignty is ancient, and predates the arrival of non-Indians. It is a kind of sovereignty that we can only lose if we choose to give it up...Cultural Sovereignty is our inherent right to use our values, traditions, and spirituality to protect our future."

Across Indian Country, tribal nations are exercising their cultural sovereignty, strengthening their governance systems and developing their human capacity to tackle their most urgent challenges and achieve self-determined visions of prosperity for their communities, lifeways, and those generations yet to come.

Since its inception 75 years ago, NCAI has worked to support tribal nations and leaders as they work to protect and grow their ability to govern their own affairs and forge brighter futures of their own design. Today, that work takes many critical forms, from NCAI's effort to support tribal nations in the building of their research and data capacity to its various initiatives providing them with the tools, informational resources, and tribally created best practices they need to design governance solutions to address their challenges and advance their priorities.

In this section, you will learn how NCAI has fulfilled this commitment to tribal nations over the past year, and how it will do so moving forward

## NCAI POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

### *Research and Data to Inform Policy*

The NCAI Policy Research Center was established in 2003 and its mission is to provide tribal leaders with the best available knowledge to make strategically proactive policy decisions in a framework of Native wisdom that positively impact the future of Native peoples.

The NCAI Policy Research Center enabled data and research to inform policy through the following objectives and activities over the past year:

### *Provide Research And Data To Tribes On NCAI Policy Priorities*

- Released The State of Tribal Data Capacity in Indian Country: Key Findings from the Survey of Tribal Data Practices at the 2018 NCAI Annual Convention, which summarized the results of the tribal data capacity survey administered at the 2016 Spokane NCAI Mid Year Conference



- Released a research policy update on Climate Change: Definitions, Impacts, Data at the 2018 NCAI Annual Convention
- Released the First Kids 1st Data Resource Book in June 2019 that helps tribal nations understand through data how to implement systems of support for Native youth to thrive
- Partnered with the Center for Diabetes Translation at Washington University at St. Louis to provide technical assistance to researchers working with tribal nations on diabetes translation research

### ***Help Tribal Nations Use Data in Strategic, Forward Focused Manner***

- Held the 14th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum at the 2019 NCAI Mid Year Conference that featured an interactive plenary session, breakout sessions, and two poster sessions on topics such as the 2020 Census, genetic research, tribal research governance, climate change data, crime data, and community data. The theme was Data and Research: Tribes Taking Action
- Facilitated a think tank discussion that provided input to develop the NCAI Tribal Leaders Toolkit: Education Choice for Indian Country along with a data checklist with resources to monitor schools

▲ NCAI Mid Year Conference participants playing the Tribal Research Future Game.



## ***Help Tribal Nations Exert More Effective Sovereignty Over Data/Research***

- Conducted seven regional trainings and three conference sessions using the new Holding Space: A Toolkit for Partners in Tribal Research and the Tribal Research Future Game with our University of Nevada-Reno partner to help strengthen tribal-academic research partnerships
- Developed a series of seven research policy updates on how tribal nations can implement the recent revisions to the National Institutes of Health Common Rule that regulates research with human subjects
- Worked with the National Institutes of Health to encourage them to initiate a tribal consultation on the All of Us Research Program and submitted comments
- Worked with the U.S. Census Bureau to encourage the initiation of a tribal consultation on new privacy protections that may limit public availability of AI/AN data, assembled an expert workgroup of demographers and statisticians to generate comments, webinars, and a research policy update for tribal leaders
- Collaborated with Sanford Research's Collaborative Research Center for American Indian Health to provide technical assistance to their partner tribal nations

## ***Disseminate Research and Data to Tribal Nations***

- Conducted six NCAI Policy Research Center webinars on critical topics and partnered with PRIM&R on a national webinar on our work on strengthening tribal-academic research partnerships
- Produced NCAI Policy Research Center Research Updates for each NCAI conference with current project updates, selected research publications, conferences, and funding opportunities
- Held exhibits at major conferences to disseminate NCAI Policy Research Center resources
- Sent regular updates to the NCAI Policy Research Center email listserv and on the @ncaiprc Twitter feed
- Worked with the NCAI Civic Engagement team to update Native Vote infographic data
- Developed several research policy updates as mentioned above
- Analyzed and developed reports on resources for victims of crime



# ***NCAI PARTNERSHIP FOR TRIBAL GOVERNANCE***

In 2009, NCAI established the Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) to create, coordinate, and share the knowledge, tools, and resources that tribal nations need to grow their governance systems and more fully and effectively exercise their sovereignty in critical areas. Over the past year, PTG has advanced several key tribal governance-based initiatives, including:

## ***NCAI's Climate Action Resource Center***

In late 2018, NCAI launched the Climate Action Resource Center, an online hub where tribal leaders, natural resource managers, climate scientists, and other interested stakeholders can access the latest information, data, and other key resources on climate change, its particular impacts on Indian Country, and how tribal nations are taking action to combat it. To check out the Climate Action Resource Center, visit: [www.ncai.org/ptg/climate](http://www.ncai.org/ptg/climate).

## ***Strategic Planning for Workforce Development Pilot Project***

Since early 2019, PTG has partnered with two tribal nations – the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa and the Meskwaki Nation – in a pilot project to assist them in developing tribal strategic plans for workforce development using NCAI's Tribal Workforce Development Decision-Framing Toolkit. PTG plans to integrate its learnings from the pilot project into a technical assistance program for other tribal nations.

▲ NCAI CEO Kevin Allis and NCAI's W.K.Kellogg Racial Equity Anchor partners discuss how the Anchors are working together to ensure a complete count of people of color in Census 2020 and how cross-community collaboration can empower pro-equity policies at the 2019 NCAI Mid Year Conference & Marketplace.

## ***Tribal Food Sovereignty Advancement Initiative***

In fall of 2019, NCAI launched its Tribal Food Sovereignty Advancement Initiative (TFSAI), which supports the development and strengthening of tribal nations' efforts to rebuild the Indigenous food systems that have long sustained their communities and cultures through policy advocacy and the documentation and sharing of tribal best practices.

As part of TFSAI's launch, NCAI released an in-depth case study of the Yurok Tribe. Facing a looming new threat to the already endangered salmon upon which its culture, society, and economy depend, the Tribe passed its Genetically Engineered Organism Ordinance, the first tribal law of its kind in the country. Enacted as a "preventative measure against future harm," the ordinance is a necessary step to protect Yurok's food sovereignty and ensure the spiritual, cultural, and physical health of its people.

## ***Racial Equity***

For the past several years, NCAI has worked closely with a coalition of national civil rights and racial justice organizations to collectively advance racial and economic equity for communities of color. The coalition – known as the Racial Equity Anchors and supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation – is currently engaged in a joint project to protect and increase civic participation by people of color in federal, state and local elections and ensure that they are fully counted in the 2020 Census. The Anchors also regularly join forces to speak with one voice about critical policy issues of the day, from the Administration's policy of separating immigrant children from their parents to school discipline policies that discriminate against and disproportionately harm children of color.

To highlight their joint work, NCAI and its fellow Racial Equity Anchors participated in a panel discussion at NCAI's 2019 Mid Year Conference in Reno, Nevada. During the panel, leaders of the nine organizations – which include the NAACP, National Urban League, UnidosUS, and the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum – shared how cross-community collaboration can empower each community of color's ability to educate the general public and policymakers about the wisdom and need for pro-equity policies.

## ***Mascots***

NCAI has waged a formal campaign to eradicate negative, harmful stereotypes of Native peoples in popular culture and the media for more than five decades. This campaign works intensively to eliminate offensive "Indian" mascots, names, and logos from sports at the high school, college, and professional levels, with many successes to report for its efforts. Over the past year, NCAI has broadened its multi-pronged initiative to educate schools, sports teams, the media, the corporate world, and the general public about the many documented harms these dehumanizing mascots cause Native people, especially youth. Two recent developments warrant particular mention:



Learn more about  
eliminating harmful  
mascots



## School Tracking Database for Educational Outreach

Over the past several months, NCAI has developed a comprehensive database that tracks the more than 2,000 K-12 schools that still possess “Indian” mascots. It has enabled NCAI to identify and educate school communities that are actively engaged in conversations about changing their mascots; several schools have done so in part because of NCAI’s outreach.



Ending “Indian” mascots banner

## “Ending ‘Indian’ Mascots” Information Service

In July 2019, NCAI launched “Ending ‘Indian’ Mascots,” an email-based information service that educates thousands of tribal advocates, media members, philanthropic and corporate leaders, and school board members and principals about the latest developments in the growing movement to end “Indian” mascots. Among other updates, it showcases and celebrates those schools, leagues, and teams that choose to stand on the right side of history by discarding the harmful “Indian” mascots they have long used.

## TRIBAL SUPREME COURT PROJECT

The Tribal Supreme Court Project (Project) is part of the Tribal Sovereignty Protection Initiative and is staffed by the National Congress of American Indians Fund (NCAI Fund) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF). The Project was formed in 2001 in response to a series of U.S. Supreme Court cases that negatively affected tribal sovereignty. The purpose of the Project is to promote greater coordination and to improve strategy on litigation that may affect the rights of all tribal nations. We encourage tribal nations and their attorneys to contact the Project in our effort to coordinate resources, develop strategy, and prepare briefs, especially when considering a petition for a writ of certiorari, prior to the Supreme Court accepting a case for review. You can find copies of briefs and opinions on the major cases we track on the NARF website here: <http://sct.narf.org>.



Learn more about  
the Tribal Supreme  
Court Project

On October 1, 2019, the justices returned for the opening conference of the October 2019 Term, sometimes called the “long conference.” There, the Court will consider approximately 2,000 petitions that were either pending when it recessed in June or have been filed since then. One petition involving Tribal parties is scheduled for that conference: *Oglala Sioux Tribe v. Fleming* (18-1245) (Younger abstention), which is summarized below.

Looking ahead to the October 2019 Term, the Court already has granted 41 petitions – close to half of the cases it will hear. With several significant cases already on the Court’s docket involving the Second Amendment, employment discrimination, religious freedom, and immigration, many Court observers expect this to be an exciting term. At this time, the Court has not granted any new Indian law petitions, but one case argued during the previous term will be re-argued: *Carpenter v. Murphy* (171107) (reservation disestablishment). Besides Murphy and Fleming, there are only four other petitions in Indian law or Indian law-related cases pending: *Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas v. State of Texas* (19403) (IGRA); *California Trout v. Hoopa Valley Tribe* (19-257) (Clean Water Act); *Knighton v. Cedarville Rancheria of Northern Paiute Indians* (19-131) (tribal court jurisdiction); and *Buchwald Capital Advisors LLC v. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians* (18-1218) (tribal sovereign immunity).

To view the full update, scan the QR Code in the sidebar

## ***Native Vote and Voting Rights***

NCAI has led the Native Vote initiative and actively engaged in Indian Country voting efforts since the organization’s inception in 1944. Native Vote is a non-partisan, four-pronged initiative to mobilize Native communities to participate in civic engagement activities. The four pillars of Native Vote are:

1. Voter Registration and Get-Out-The-Native-Vote (GOTNV)
2. Election Protection
3. Education
4. Data Collection

Through these avenues, the Native Vote initiative assists tribal communities with resources and tools to enhance their voter registration efforts, help voters understand their rights at the polls, educate voters on candidates and ballot measures, and collect voter data to help understand the impact of Native Vote and shape future strategic outreach efforts. These endeavors all serve to reinforce our belief that “Every Native Vote Counts.”

By leveraging resources from the Agua Fund, NCAI continues to make progress by building rapport with Native people, the general public, and the media to and position ourselves as subject matter experts within Indian Country and beyond within the voting space. Through the creation and delivery of key educational resources, informational sessions, and engaging events, NCAI is continuously building an audience of educated Native voters and allies.



As NCAI celebrated its 75th Anniversary at our Annual Convention in Denver, Colorado, Native Vote was on the agenda, sharing presentations with hundreds of tribal leaders and allies from across the country. In our General Assembly, Native Vote was included in President Keel's opening remarks and also in the Motivating Citizen Engagement portion of the agenda with an empowering speech from Angela Salazar-Willeford, Intergovernmental Relations Project Manager at the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community. NCAI's Whitney Sawney also gave an important update to the General Assembly sharing data that demonstrates how the Native vote can and is making a difference. The purpose of these presentations was to Get Out the Vote as the mid-term elections were just days away. During the Annual Convention there was also an Every Native Vote Counts: Protect the Vote and Prepare for the Census 2020 breakout session.

NCAI also held a Post Elections Webinar for more than 80 attendees (including tribal leaders and partners from across the country) recapping Native turnout in the mid-term elections and how Native voters proved to be the swing vote in several key states and elections across the country.

▲ Congresswoman Deb Haaland speaks at the 2019 Frank LaMere Presidential Forum.



## *Voting Rights*

In the past year, NCAI has worked in partnership with the Native American Voting Rights Coalition to document challenges facing Native voters and advocate for policy reforms that would remove barriers to make it more difficult for Native voters to cast their ballot.

NCAI has a long history of protecting Indian voting rights. At NCAI's first annual convention in 1944, one of the four resolutions adopted addressed the rights of Native voters. NCAI played a role in the litigation in Arizona and New Mexico in the 1940's that first ensured Native voting rights, and we continue that work today participating in election monitoring throughout Indian country, educating Native voters about their rights, and advocating before Congress and the courts to ensure those rights are upheld.

With support from our funders, Wilma Mankiller Legal Fellow Rani Williams represented NCAI at a Listening Session on Voting Rights in North Dakota. Williams also represented tribal peoples at the Voting Rights Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, expressing the needs of Indian Country and educating the audience on key voting rights issues on a national stage.

## *Voter Education*

NCAI furthered our voter education efforts with a presentation on July 23, 2019 by NCAI General Counsel Derrick Beetso to the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, a cooperative of 21 Arizona tribal nations. During the presentation, Beetso discussed NCAI's work on voting rights and educated the group about Tribal IDs and their validity as proper ID at polling locations.

From a media perspective, NCAI fields dozens of inquiries monthly on voting rights, policies regarding Native voters, and our contributions to recommendations for the 2020 Presidential Election platforms on Indian Country's most pressing issues within this arena.

NCAI receives additional funding for civic engagement work, specifically for the "We Vote. We Count." initiative. The Racial Equity Anchors Collaborative (W.K. Kellogg Anchors) have joined together to launch *WeVoteWeCount.org* to provide a digital platform for voters to share their stories of interference with their voting rights at the polls, difficulties registering to vote, and other barriers to voting. Together we will amplify the voter stories submitted to produce a report on these voters' experiences in the hopes of sparking action that guarantees full voter protection.

Indian Country is becoming more engaged in federal, state, and local elections, with newly elected Congresswomen Deb Haaland

and Sharice Davids among the many positive results of a more heavily engaged Native voter base.

In the coming year, NCAI understands it is imperative to do as much outreach as possible to activate tribal communities to take part in their local, state, and federal elections for the 2020 cycle. Native Vote 2020 has already picked up steam due to the recent presidential candidate forum (see below) and NCAI will continue building the momentum throughout the election year and beyond to ensure that Native people know that “We vote, We count” – and act on that understanding.

## ***2019 Frank LaMere Native American Presidential Candidate Forum***

The Frank LaMere Native American Presidential Candidate Forum held August 19-20, 2019 in Sioux City, Iowa, was a historic occasion for Indian Country. For the first time ever, Native voters got a comprehensive, firsthand account of where U.S. presidential candidates stand on today's pressing issues, specifically those facing Indian Country. The presidential hopefuls themselves were able to engage with tribal leaders and other key Indian Country stakeholders, hear their concerns, and learn that Native issues are not partisan; they are America's issues.

The forum, hosted by Four Directions, was a non-partisan event and featured a jam-packed schedule of 2020 presidential hopefuls. All major candidates vying for President of the United States in 2020 were invited to answer questions about important issues facing millions of Native people across the country.

In all, eleven presidential candidates accepted the invitation and answered questions from a panel comprised of tribal leaders, citizens, and youth in front of a live audience at Sioux City's Orpheum Theater, which also was broadcast to thousands of online viewers at [www.nativevote2020.com](http://www.nativevote2020.com). Indian Country Today Editor Mark Trahant (Shoshone-Bannock) served as moderator for the event.

Monday's lineup featured Marianne Williamson, Elizabeth Warren, Amy Klobuchar, and Steve Bullock. Tuesday saw even more candidates and featured Joe Sestak, Mark Charles, John Delaney, Kamala Harris, Julian Castro, Bill de Blasio, and Bernie Sanders.

Candidates fielded questions and addressed a number of hot-button issues ranging from voting rights, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), climate change, healthcare, housing, tribal consultation, land into trust, law and order, drug and alcohol issues, social and economic issues, and tribal treaties and sovereignty.



▲ Senator Bernie Sanders speaks at the 2019 Frank LaMere Presidential Forum.

The Frank LaMere Native American Presidential Candidate Forum may have been the first of its kind, but the dedicated efforts of tribal nations, tribal organizations, and tribal citizens, will ensure that it is not the last. It is up to Native peoples to stay engaged and show elected officials that Indian Country's concerns and priorities matter. Our strength is in our voice and come Election Day, Indian Country can show the world that every Native Vote counts.

### *Embassy Visits*

The Embassy of Tribal Nations, which serves as the headquarters of NCAI in Washington, D.C., is a powerful symbol of the place of tribal nations in the American family of governments, and a potent reminder of our nation-to-nation relationship with the United States. The Embassy opened its doors in 2009, and from that first day has experienced a constant flow of visitors and information exchange. Through general education on tribal nations, policy and legal briefings, issue area updates, and international affairs, NCAI draws an increasing stream of guests eager to collaborate and learn more about Indian Country.

In the past year, NCAI hosted more than 15 groups and 460 official visitors at the Embassy of Tribal Nations. NCAI's visitors included student groups from high schools, universities, and continuing education programs from across the United States and around the world.





# NCAI IN THE NEWS

Over the past year, NCAI staff worked hard for Indian Country to ensure that Native voices are well-represented in the media with the most up-to-date data and facts, as well as statements and press releases that reflect the views of tribal nations across the country.

## KEY INSIGHTS

*There is an overall increase of mentions about NCAI from the previous year.*

*There is an increased diversity mentions on more platforms, outlets, and by new authors.*

*NCAI continues to be the preeminent organization for national issues impacting Indian Country.*

## MEDIA AND PRESS / SOCIAL MEDIA



**242,807**

Total Mentions of NCAI  
October 1, 2018 –  
September 30, 2019



**124,558**

Total Authors writing about  
NCAI October 1, 2018 –  
September 30, 2019

**306**

Online News Outlets  
Mentioned NCAI in  
the Past Year



**125,000**

Violence Against  
Women Act Top  
Mentioned  
NCAI Policy Issue



NCAI gained 10,139  
Facebook followers this  
year, an increase of 17%  
from 2018.



NCAI tweets generated  
52 million + impressions,  
and saw a 12.8% increase  
in followers, with a net  
gain of 5,570 followers.

**86%**

News mentions of NCAI increased  
by 86% making online news  
outlets the second highest  
generating NCAI mention content  
following Twitter.

# NCAI PUBLICATIONS

NCAI is a diverse and expanding source of information on Indian Country. As the leader in generating tribal consensus around a vision for strong and thriving tribal nations, NCAI communicates abundantly on tribal priorities. These resources create exceptional value and leverage for our members.

In the past 12 months, NCAI has crafted the following materials to give voice to the priority issues driven by the unified voice of our membership.

## ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS

NCAI 2018-2019 Annual Report

FY 2020 Indian Country Budget Request

## FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

First Kids First Data Resource Book

Native Children's Policy Agenda

Sentinel Winter Edition

Sentinel Spring Edition

## LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY:

Executive Council Winter Session  
Briefing Packets

Tribal Unity Impact Days Briefing Packets

Policy Updates in Spring, Summer, and Fall

## PARTNERSHIP FOR TRIBAL GOVERNANCE

Innovation Spotlight Case Study (Food Sovereignty):  
Yurok Tribe

## LEGAL

Juvenile Justice Report

## POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

2020 Census and AI/AN Data

Overview of Human Subject Research

Research Update Mid Year

Tribal Data Capacity Survey

*For a full list of NCAI Publications, please scan the QR Code below.*



Learn more  
about the NCAI  
Publications

## WHY NCAI?

Help NCAI continue its difference making work by becoming a new member, or renewing your membership!

Seventy-five years ago, when NCAI was founded, the new organization brought together tribal leaders and tribal citizens to speak with one voice to protect tribal sovereignty. NCAI has been successful in this mission because of the membership of and partnerships with tribal nations, villages, individuals and organizations. Our membership enriches our unified national voice, enhances our engagement in educational outreach, and enables legal, legislative, and administrative activism.

NCAI's membership is representative of the strength and resilience of Indian Country. NCAI strives to ensure that all tribal communities and people are well-informed about all issues affecting the welfare of tribal nations. Collectively, we work to strengthen tribal sovereignty for the prosperity of tribal communities and nations.

NCAI's voting membership is comprised of tribes and individuals who have met the eligibility criteria and paid dues as outlined in Article III of the NCAI Bylaws. Members are determined to be in good standing upon having fulfilled the requirements of the Credentials Committee.

Joining is Easy! It's Fast! Visit the Membership portal on our website or call us today!

## MEMBERSHIP

### BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

#### 1. Tribal Membership:

Ability to submit and sponsor a resolution

Have a weighed vote based on tribal enrollment numbers

Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to two (2) emails.

Open to any recognized tribe or other identifiable group of American Indians by the Department of the Interior, Court of Claims, the Indian Claims Commission or a State. Please visit the NCAI website page on Membership for the full terms of eligibility.

#### 2. Indian Individual Membership:

Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to one (1) email

Reduced conference and Convention rates for the Membership Year

One (1) Vote during elections.

Any person of Indian and/or Alaska Native ancestry in the United States or a Native of Alaska is eligible for individual membership. For the purpose of membership an Indian is a person recognized as a member by an Indian tribe, or combination of tribes and bands recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Indian Claims Commission, Court of Claims, or a State.

#### 3. Individual Associate Membership:

Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to one (1) email

Reduced conference rates for the Membership Year.

Non-Indian applicants may be admitted to non-voting associate membership upon the payment of annual dues as fixed by the Bylaws.

#### 4. Organization Associate Membership:

Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to two (2) emails

Reduced conference rates for two (2) people for the Membership Year

Organizations may be admitted to non-voting associate membership upon the payment of annual dues as fixed by the By-Laws.

For further membership information, visit <http://bit.ly/NCAIMembership>. For questions, contact Keona Royal, NCAI Membership Coordinator, at [kroyal@ncai.org](mailto:kroyal@ncai.org) or (202) 466-7767.



Member Info



Member Portal



# NCAI PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Every day NCAI is doing work that positively impacts Indian Country, this work is not possible without the generosity and vision of tribal leaders, tribal nations, foundations, businesses, Native citizens, and our allies. Shaped by the consensus of its tribal members, NCAI remains on the forefront of national policy and legal strategy. Investing in NCAI returns countless benefits.

We are deeply grateful for the investment in NCAI of the following partners:

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

Agua Fund

AMERIND Risk

Annie E. Casey Foundation

AT&T

Bank of America

Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti

BNSF Railway Company

Bureau of Land Management  
Oregon/Washington

Bush Foundation

Cherokee Nation

Chickasaw Nation

David Nathan Meyerson  
Foundation

Delaware Nation

Dentons

Denver Museum of Nature &  
Science

Downstream Casino Resort

Forest County Potawatomi  
Community

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation

Founding Fathers Memorial In  
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Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of  
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Knight Foundation

LaPlaca Cohen Advertising Inc.

Marty and Dorothy Silverman  
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Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

N7 (In-Kind)

National Center for Victims of  
Crime

Native Nations Institute and  
Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy  
Program, University of Arizona

New Venture Fund

Northwest Area Foundation

Office of Hawaiian Affairs

OMDUSA, LLC

Pechanga Band of Luiseño  
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Powers Pyles Sutter & Verville  
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Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation

Redding Rancheria

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony

Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian  
Community

San Manuel Band of Mission  
Indians

Sanford Research

Santa Clara Pueblo

SC Group

Seventh Day Adventist Church -  
Native Ministries

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux  
Community

Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians

Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse,  
Endreson, & Perry, LLP

Spiral Sun Ventures

Tohono O'odham Nation

U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services

U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of the Interior

UnidosUS

University of Tulsa

Walmart

Walton Family Foundation

Wells Fargo

William & Flora Hewlett  
Foundation

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

**Partners listed have contributed  
\$5,000 or more to NCAI.**

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LEGACY IN MOTION: BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR THE FUTURE



National  
Congress of  
American  
Indians

