

SUCCESSFUL
TRIBES.
SUCCESSFUL
AMERICA.

2013 - 2014

ANNUAL REPORT
National Congress of American Indians



National
Congress of
American
Indians



*Successful Tribes.
Successful America.*

“My fellow tribal leaders, we’ve learned that together, united, we are greater than the sum of our parts. My fellow government officials, we’ve learned that together, working beyond the boundaries of party and state, we can improve countless lives and generate shared prosperity.

Together, we can build a strong partnership between all of our nations... one that will secure a brighter future for all our people.”

**-NAI President
Brian Cladoosby**
2014 State of Indian
Nations Address

Table of Contents

- 1 Timeline
- 3 Letter from the President of NCAI
- 4 NCAI Executive Board
- 5 Letter from the Executive Director

6. Securing Our Futures

- 8 2014 State of Indian Nations Address
- 10 White House Tribal Initiatives
 - Tribal Nations Summit
 - White House Council on Native American Affairs
 - My Brother's Keeper Initiative
- 12 Youth Initiatives
 - First Kids 1st: Every Child is Sacred
 - NCAI Youth Commission
 - The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program for Tribal Policy and Governance
 - NCAI Native Graduate Health Fellowship
- 17 2013 Annual Convention & Marketplace
- 19 2014 Executive Council Winter Session
- 20 Financial Education
- 21 2014 Mid Year Conference
- 22 Advocacy: A Year In Review
 - Tribal Implementation of VAWA
 - Land Restoration and the "Carciieri Fix"
 - International Advocacy
 - Trust Modernization
 - Taxation
 - Natural Resources
 - Climate Change
 - Voting Rights
- 27 Tribal Infrastructure
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Telecommunications
 - Emergency Management

- 29 Budget & Appropriations
 - Health
 - Education
 - Farm Bill
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIA Reauthorization)
 - Tribal Homeland Security
 - Immigration Reform
 - Cultural Protection
 - Support of American Indian and Alaskan Native Veteran Programs and Issues

36. Service to Community

- 37 Tribal Supreme Court Project
- 39 NCAI Policy Research Center
- 43 The Partnership for Tribal Governance

45. Public Education

- 46 Change the Mascot Campaign
- 47 Native Vote
- 48 Outreach
 - Embassy & Visits
 - Media & Press
 - Communications
 - Social Media
- 49 NCAI Membership
 - Fundraising
- 51 Partners & Supporters
- 52 NCAI Staff Directory

October 2013



70th Annual Convention & Marketplace

NCAI President and Board members of NCAI take oath office

NCAI Report: Ending the Legacy of Racism in Sports & the Era of Harmful "Indian" Sports Mascots

NCAI releases report on Tribal Transportation in partnership with the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Report¹

February 2014 (cont.)

March 2014



Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and Tulalip Tribe begin exercising Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction under VAWA 2013

NCAI releases #ProudToBe video

Executive Council Winter Session

NCAI partners with CloseUp to host weeklong program for Native youth in Washington, DC

May 2014



First Native Americans Honored with the Tewaaraton Award

Supreme Court upholds tribal sovereign immunity in *Michigan v. Bay Mills*

Senate urges National Football League commissioner to end discrimination in the NFL

NCAI & ChangeTheMascot.org announce launch of #ProudToBe photo project

June 2014 (cont.)



9th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum

NCAI applauds President Obama's historic visit to Indian Country

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office cancels the trademark of the Washington football team

Senate confirms Cherokee Citizen Keith Harper to serve as first Native Ambassador

September 2014

October 2014



NCAI PRC hosts Native Youth Data Institute in Washington, DC

Native Vote Action Week reaches over 10,000 people through almost 50 events throughout Indian Country

UN hosts World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in New York City

NCAI launches Founders Day campaign to celebrate 70 years fighting for tribal sovereignty

Nov. 2014

January 2014

February 2014



White House Tribal Nations Summit



12th Annual State of Indians Nations



NCAI releases FY2015 Indian Country Budget Request



NCAI President Cladoosby joins President Obama and world leaders at State Dinner for the President of France

April 2014



NCAI honors the 2014 NCAI Indian Country Leadership Award & Tribal Exchange winners



One year anniversary of the passage of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization



Native people honored as part of the White House "Champions of Change"



Shoni Schimmel selected in the first round of Women's National Basketball Association's draft by the Atlanta Dream²

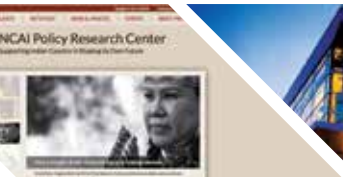
June 2014



Native American warrior Billy Frank, Jr. walks on



Diane Humetewa becomes first Native American woman to be confirmed as a federal judge



NCAI Policy Research Center launches new website



Mid Year Conference & Marketplace

July 2014



NCAI PRC co-hosts "A Spectrum of Perspectives: Native Peoples and Genetic Research" at the National Museum of the American Indian with the National Human Genome Research Institute



NCAI announces Native American taskforce for My Brother's Keeper³



Congress passes Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, H.R. 805 (WIA Reauthorization), providing support for employment and training activities for Native peoples⁴



NCAI PRC hosts Diabetes Data Institute at Association of American Indian Physicians Conference in Denver, Colorado⁵



National Congress of American Indians Timeline of Progress

2013
2014

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¹Ben Sutherland; ²Chalene Toehay/Osage News; ³CC – Reading Is Fundamental; ⁴CC – BlakeGumprecht; ⁵www.ihs.gov



Letter from the President of NCAI

Brian Cladoosby

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

On behalf of the NCAI Executive Committee, I thank you for your continued support of the National Congress of American Indians this past year. This was my first year as NCAI President, and it has truly been an honor to serve the people of Indian Country in this capacity.

The last year has been a time of progress throughout Indian Country and in NCAI's crucial work in Washington, DC. With the help of tribal leaders, our federal partners, and those working at the grassroots level in communities across the land, we are working for a better life for Native peoples. But we still have so much work to do to advance our nation-to-nation relationship.

It was a slow year for a divided Congress, and that has been frustrating, but we passed a good jobs training reauthorization and we are laying a foundation for action on taxation, trust modernization, housing, voting rights, and land restoration. We have been very successful in promoting action on the Administration side, implementing many new laws such as the Violence Against Women Act and developing new regulations and guidance on general welfare programs, trust per capita, federal recognition, rights of way, land to trust in Alaska, emergency response, and federal recognition of Native Hawaiian sovereignty.

Earlier this year, my spouse, Nina Cladoosby, and I were invited to attend a State Dinner at the White House for the President of France. We were honored and humbled to represent tribal nations at an international ceremonial and cultural event. Tribal nations are definitely making progress in our efforts to gain seats at the table among nations, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve you and all of Indian Country in this important role.

I commend all of your efforts to make NCAI a strong, successful organization. Your hard work will benefit Native peoples for generations to come. Let's keep advancing tribal sovereignty together!

Sincerely,

Brian Cladoosby, *President*
National Congress of American Indians

NCAI Executive Board

President

Brian Cladoosby – *Chairman*
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community

First Vice President

Michael Finley – *Chairman*
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

Secretary

Robert Shepherd – *Chairman*
Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate

Treasurer

Dennis Welsh – *Councilman*
Colorado River Indian Tribes

NCAI Vice Presidents

Alaska	Jerry Isaac <i>Tanana Chiefs Conference</i>
Eastern Oklahoma	S. Joe Crittenden – <i>Deputy Chief</i> <i>Cherokee Nation</i>
Great Plains	Leander McDonald – <i>Tribal Chairman</i> <i>Spirit Lake Tribe</i>
Midwest	Aaron Payment – <i>Chairperson</i> <i>Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians</i>
Northeast	Randy Noka – <i>Councilman</i> <i>Narragansett Tribe</i>
Northwest	Fawn Sharp – <i>President</i> <i>Quinalt Nation</i>
Pacific	Rosemary Morillo – <i>Tribal Chairwoman</i> <i>Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians</i>
Rocky Mountain	Ivan Posey – <i>Council Member</i> <i>Eastern Shoshone Tribe</i>
Southeast	Ron Richardson – <i>Chief</i> <i>Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe</i>
Southern Plains	Stephen Smith – <i>Committeeman</i> <i>Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma</i>
Southwest	Manuel Heart – <i>Treasurer</i> <i>Ute Mountain Ute Tribe</i>
Western	Arlan Melendez – <i>Chairman</i> <i>Reno Sparks Indian Colony</i>

Alternates

Mike Williams – <i>Tribal Council</i> <i>Akiak Native Community</i>
John Berrey – <i>Chairman</i> <i>Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma</i>
Leah Fyten – <i>Secretary</i> <i>Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe</i>
Diane Gibbs – <i>District III Rep</i> <i>Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe</i>
Lance Gumbs <i>Shinnecock Indian Nation</i>
Aaron Hines – <i>Treasurer</i> <i>Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation</i>
Mark Macarro – <i>Chairman</i> <i>Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians</i>
Darrin Old Coyote – <i>Tribal Chairman</i> <i>Crow Tribe</i>
Charles Yow, Esq. <i>United Cherokee Ani-Yun-Wiya Nation</i>
Elaine Huch – <i>Tribal Council Secretary</i> <i>Kaw Nation</i>
Joseph Naranjo – <i>Tribal Council</i> <i>Pueblo of Santa Clara</i>
Len George – <i>Tribal Chairman</i> <i>Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe</i>



Letter from the Executive Director

Jacqueline Johnson Pata

Dear NCAI Members, Friends, and Supporters,

Seventy years ago, in 1944, the founding members of NCAI gathered to create an organization that would bring the collective voice of tribal governments and Native peoples to the nation's capital. Those founders, our relatives, knew that Indian Country is strongest when united around the issues that affect tribes as a whole. The legacy our founders left us with—fighting for self-determination, tribal homelands, and a government-to-government relationship with the federal government—are the same principles that still guide our work today.

Our founders would be proud of the place that tribes hold in government today. Our voices are heard at the White House and in the halls of Congress where we continue to fight to protect our tribal homelands, to make sure our youth have access to a quality education, and to bring full respect to tribal governments.

In the pages of this Annual Report you will see the ways in which tribal citizens, governments, and leaders inspire the work of NCAI every day. You will read about how the issues that you face at home form the basis of our advocacy work on Capitol Hill, and how we continue that advocacy once legislation is passed to make sure tribes can implement those programs at home. We continue to seek ways to highlight the promise of our youth in all of our work and to create avenues for today's youth to be tomorrow's leaders.

You will read about how tribes are now implementing our past advocacy successes, such as the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, the Tribal Law and Order Act, and the Stafford Act, and how our members continue to advocate for those rights that will make tribes stronger in the future—ensuring our tribal homelands are secure with a *Carcieri* fix; bringing parity to tribal governments in tax law, and bringing the trust relationship into the 21st century through our Trust Modernization Initiative. We continue to have a strong voice at the polls through Native Vote, and our Policy Research Center continues to increase their efforts to provide the data, discussion forums, and resources that tribes need to participate in the national dialogue on all issues facing Indian Country.

Just as the NCAI founders realized that the challenges of one tribe belong to all tribes, our successes are shared by all as well. At NCAI, we are only as strong as our collective membership, partnerships, and supporters.

We thank you for your continued support, partnership, and friendship as we enter into our next 70 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline Johnson Pata".

Jacqueline Johnson Pata, *Executive Director*
National Congress of American Indians



Securing Our Futures

Securing our Futures

70th Anniversary

The 80 delegates who gathered in Denver, Colorado in 1944 could scarcely have imagined the depth and breadth of the work outlined in this annual report. As they gathered to secure the very existence of tribal nations, they launched the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) as an institution that would not only protect tribes in the present but prepare them for the future.

Today, our annual conventions welcome over 2,500 people, which means that each delegate that was present at the first convention is now represented by at least 30 current members—including tribal leaders, Native advocates, Indian Country partners, and leaders of tomorrow. At our conferences, these members have an opportunity to engage with key members of Congress and the Administration from both parties.

As we celebrate 70 years, tribal leaders meet annually with the President and several members

of his Cabinet, which means we have secured a seat at the table as we work toward a true partnership with the federal government. And tribal leaders are not just a voice on Native issues, but we also have a voice on broader national policy—from the My Brother's Keeper Initiative to immigration reform to education policy, and many more.

We have seen a great many successes and advances for Native peoples in recent years, but NCAI's work does not end here. We remain invested in a brighter tomorrow for all future tribal generations, as is demonstrated by our offering of numerous youth leadership opportunities, the development of future leaders on our staff, and our many efforts to equip young people with the skills they need to succeed.

As we move forward, we are humbled by the future that our founders secured for us, and we will work tirelessly to secure an even stronger future for generations to come.



NCAI Artist-in-residence, Bunky Echo-Hawk, interprets the key themes of the 2013 Annual Convention through his artwork.



NCAI President Brian Cladoosby answers questions from the press during his first State of Indian Nations.

2014 State of Indian Nations Address

In January 2014, NCAI President Brian Cladoosby delivered his first State of Indian Nations address to a packed audience in the Knight Studio at the Newseum in Washington, DC. The address was broadcast live on C-Span, carried on Native radio stations, and livestreamed on the internet. Throughout the country—and around the world—thousands tuned in to hear President Cladoosby’s vision for the future of tribal nations and our relationship with the United States.

The twelfth annual address—delivered the same week that the President of the United States delivered his State of the Union speech—focused on the great opportunities awaiting Indian Country. President Cladoosby urged Congress and the Administration to forge a strong partnership that will build shared prosperity and a brighter future for all Americans.

The speech celebrated recent bipartisan legislative achievements on key Indian Country policy priorities. It also included many examples of the tremendous economic impact of tribal nations and the fact that tribes are on the front lines of economic innovation, driving America’s economy.

“We already have the experience, the talent, and the drive to succeed. Now, to achieve what we know is possible, we must encourage prosperous, vibrant, and healthy communities; expand opportunities for our children and future generations; and protect the very key to achieving these goals—the inherent sovereignty of our tribal nations.”

- Brian Cladoosby, President
National Congress of
American Indians

2014 State of Indian Nations Address (continued)

President Cladoosby honored the tribal leaders of the past who built the foundation for Indian Country's success in the 21st century. He also looked forward to the need to invest in Native young people.

He called on Congress to reform outdated federal policies, from tax policy to trust reform, that are standing in the way of tribal economic success. He noted that tribes are doing their part "and we expect the federal government to do theirs."

Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), the newly elected Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, gave the Congressional response to President Cladoosby's address. He reinforced

several themes from President Cladoosby's speech, noting his personal commitment to education and underscoring the federal government's obligation to honor treaties and empower tribes to build a strong future for their respective tribal communities.

Following the address and Congressional response, President Cladoosby took questions from the studio audience, as well as questions that had been submitted over social media. The address reached hundreds of school-age students throughout the nation, but was also broadcast live to students and other visitors at the Newseum on their 40 x 22 foot mainscreen.

“The federal government must treat tribes as trusted allies and honor the contracts and treaties we agreed to. It must live up to its trust responsibilities, but then step aside and let tribes take the reins and determine your fate.”

- Senator Jon Tester



Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) delivers the Congressional response to the State of Indian Nations address.



President Obama delivers closing remarks at the 2013 White House Tribal Nations Summit.

“We have a unique legal and political relationship...and while we should be proud of what we’ve achieved together in recent years, we also should be focused on all the work that we still have to do.”

-President Barack Obama

White House Tribal Initiatives

Tribal Nations Summit

On November 13, 2013, President Obama hosted the fifth annual White House Tribal Nations Summit. The Summit was attended by over 300 tribal leaders representing the 566 federally recognized tribes, as well as 13 Cabinet officials, numerous members of Congress, and dozens of senior Administration officials.

A highlight of the morning session was the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Bobby Kennedy’s speech to NCAI. Remarks were made by both Attorney General Holder and United Tribes Technical College President David Gipp.

The afternoon session included a townhall hosted by the White House Council on Native American Affairs. The President provided closing remarks, committing to “keep our covenant strong.” As it has for each Summit, NCAI developed a Tribal Leader Briefing Book and hosted a preparatory meeting in partnership with regional intertribal organizations.



Members of the President’s Cabinet engage with tribal leaders during the townhall forum at the White House Tribal Nations Summit.

White House Council on Native Affairs

On June 26, 2013, President Obama issued an Executive Order establishing the White House Council on Native Affairs. The inaugural meeting of the Council was held on July 29, 2013 and was convened by Secretary of the Interior Jewell. The mission of the Council is for federal agencies to work more collaboratively and effectively with federally recognized tribes to advance their vital economic and social priorities.

The Council, which includes more than 30 federal departments and agencies, works across executive departments, agencies, and offices to develop policy recommendations and expand efforts to leverage federal programs and resources available to tribal communities.

The Council will meet at least three times a year and it will focus on advancing five priorities that tribal leaders have raised during previous White House Tribal Nations Summits:

1. Promoting sustainable economic development
2. Supporting greater access to and control over healthcare
3. Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of tribal justice systems
4. Expanding and improving educational opportunities for Native American youth
5. Protecting and supporting the sustainable management of Native lands, environments, and natural resources

My Brother's Keeper Initiative

The National Congress of American Indians joined with numerous Native organizations across Indian Country to launch a Native American Task Force to advance the work of the Obama Administration's My Brother's Keeper Initiative. My Brother's Keeper targets youth of color and works to ensure their equal access to resources in an overall effort to expand their opportunities and assist them in plotting out paths for higher education and good jobs.

The Task Force will provide a place where organizations and grassroots supporters can keep each other informed, serving as the central point for coordinating and sharing events, opportunities, resources, and important youth work taking place throughout Indian Country.



Members of the White House Council on Native American Affairs meet to coordinate policy to more effectively partner with tribal nations.

Youth Initiatives

First Kids 1st: Every Child Is Sacred

The health and well-being of our communities is dependent upon the health and well-being of our children. This requires a shared vision and a common understanding of children's changing circumstances and needs. This shared vision, First Kids 1st, will guide NCAI and our partners—the National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Indian Education Association, and National Indian Health Board—in our ongoing efforts to improve the well-being of our children and families.

Our areas of focus are: Healthy Lifestyles, Safe and Supportive Environments, Successful Students, and Stable Communities. We have a collective responsibility to advocate for policy change and services that facilitate these outcomes for our children. Each of us also has an individual responsibility to be a caring and supportive adult in the lives of the children we know.

This shared vision is for all children, but focuses on young adults—those youth that have struggles and those that have successes—because for us *every child is sacred*. We are making the commitment to let Native youth know they are sacred to us. As we move the initiative forward, NCAI and our partners will be sharing ways that tribes and Native citizens can get involved.

We can't do this alone. We all own this responsibility. Through First Kids 1st, NCAI and our partners will be providing tools, trainings, and materials for individuals, tribes, communities, and national organizations to make a difference for our Native youth. An example of existing work in this area is our partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America to implement the Native Youth Resiliency Project in 2013.

The Native Youth Resiliency Project sought to promote Native youth resilience through an interactive process of informational exchanges, site

visits, and trainings with Native youth providers, Native youth, adults, and Elders. The Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention also served as a partner in 2013, providing support for the training events. The trainings offered Native communities valuable skills and strategies to support the resilience of Native youth and provided opportunities for dialogue around how the content could be more pertinent to their respective local communities. Trainings and feedback discussions occurred in seven diverse Native communities: New Town, North Dakota; Sacramento, California; Oakland, California; Old Town and Sipayik, Maine; Tyonek and Fairbanks, Alaska; Reno, Nevada; Hayward, Wisconsin; and the Pueblos of Pojoaque, Santa Clara and Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico.



NCAI and our partners are launching First Kids 1st because every child is sacred.



Members of NCAI's Youth Commission meet with House Democratic Leader, Nancy Pelosi, at the Executive Council Winter Session.

NCAI Youth Commission

Established in 1997, the NCAI Youth Commission provides a voice for Native youth on a national level. The Youth Commission empowers young Native leaders to make a difference in their communities and use their experiences to advocate and highlight the priorities of Native youth. The Youth Commission presents a unique opportunity to learn from tribal leaders, develop a deeper understanding of the work of NCAI, and get to know the governance systems of tribal nations. Most importantly, the Youth Commission is a mechanism for achieving a unified voice for all American Indian and Alaska Native youth.

The Youth Commission offers opportunities ranging from mentoring and leadership training to volunteer opportunities and the chance to engage with policymakers. The Youth Commission facilitated youth tracks at the Annual Convention, Executive Council Winter Session, and Mid Year Conference. During the Annual Convention, the Youth Commission outlined goals and focused on building internal capacity and leadership development throughout the year. Additionally, the Youth Commissioners and youth attendees

“...The Youth Commission is a mechanism for achieving a unified voice for all American Indian and Alaska Native youth.”

heard from representatives from national Indian organizations, federal agencies, and the private sector. These meetings and trainings are interactive, informative, and educational. The youth especially enjoyed a training that focused on successful tribal governance. These opportunities provide hands-on information for the youth to share with their own communities and youth councils.



Tribal youth participate in a training session on tribal constitutions hosted by NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata.

NCAI Youth Commission Members

Kristen Sally Dosela – *Co-President*
Gila River Indian Community

Chad Martinez – *Co-Vice President*
Tohono O'odham Nation

Skyler Bourdon – *Member-At-Large*
Ho-Chunk Nation

W. Alex Wesaw – *Co-President*
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

David Colbert – *Treasurer*
Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Alyssa Garcia – *Member-At-Large*
Ak-Chin Indian Community

Jaymee Moore – *Co-Vice President*
Colorado River Indian Tribe

Jarred Winchester – *Secretary*
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

Jared Massey – *Member-At-Large*
White Mountain Apache

National Native Youth Cabinet

The National Native Youth Cabinet (NNYC) is made up of 19 youth between the ages of 15 and 24 from 17 different tribal nations. By providing the space for these youth to come together, NCAI aims to foster their awareness of public policy and to learn more about Native youth priorities that can inform our policy work. In addition, NCAI is working to provide the members of the NNYC with analytical, social media, and networking tools to assist them in strengthening regional Native youth leadership. Members of the NNYC convened at NCAI's Mid Year Conference in Anchorage, Alaska to learn about infographics and positive messaging around Native

youth. Later in the summer, the youth gathered at the Embassy of Tribal Nations in Washington, DC to engage with policymakers about Native youth data. Cabinet members have identified a range of topics to develop projects around, including: creating guidelines for establishing a tribal youth council; generating resources to assist youth who feel alienated, including two spirit/LGBTQ youth, those experiencing bullying, and those struggling with trauma; developing culture and language resources for Native youth; and expanding information on how to pay for higher education.

Youth Cabinet Members

Dahkota Kicking Bear Brown
Wilton Band of Miwok Indian

Jaysonha Revey
Lummi Nation

Whitney Sawney
Cherokee Nation

Cheyenne Sanders
Yurok

Kami Wright
Kenaitze Indian Tribe

Candice Yazzie
Navajo Nation

Layha Spoonhunter
Eastern Shoshone, Northern Arapaho,
and Oglala Lakota

Sapphire Carter
Chippewa Cree

Stephanie Lefthand
Taos Pueblo

Sarah Jo Schilling
Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Simon Goldenberg
Mdewakanton Dakota

Heather Curley
Navajo Nation

Alayna Eagle Shield
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Zachary Astakeesic
Upper Nicola Indian Band

Malachi Stroud
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Cierra Fields
Cherokee Nation

Aliyah Chavez
Santo Domingo Pueblo

Riley Delorme
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

Collin Church
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

Julian Juan
Tohono O'odham

Desirae Rambler
San Carlos Apache



Former Congressman Dale Kildee pauses for a photo with participants in the NCAI fellowship and internship programs.

The **Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program** for Tribal Policy and Governance

For more than a decade, NCAI’s fellowship program has provided the opportunity for bright young Native leaders to gain experience in public advocacy, applied research, program development, communications, and an array of other aspects of NCAI’s work to make a difference in Indian Country. Throughout the 11-month program young Native professionals earn skills and develop subject matter expertise in various policy and research areas that assist NCAI membership in their advocacy and policy development.

Having influenced more than 50 young professionals over the life of the program, the 2013-2014 Wilma Mankiller Fellowship cohort continued the long legacy of commitment, excellence, and professional achievement. This year, NCAI hosted six fellows working on various projects, teams, and legislative priorities. Together, the 2013-2014 cohort worked on legislative topics, such as workforce development, immigration, Native

“...The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program has graduated many of today’s leaders in Indian Country across the public, private, and civic sectors.”

language revitalization, and healthcare. Fellows also worked on issues ranging from financial literacy, Native Vote, and implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

In fall 2014, NCAI welcomed the new cohort of fellows with three new fellows: Mikaela Brown (Oglala Lakota), Joel Chastain (Chickasaw), and Mari Hulbutta (Chickasaw, Seminole, and Muscogee (Creek)). These fellows join two existing fellows: Cesar Alvarez (Three Affiliated Tribes) and Mark Carter (Citizen Potawatomi).

Originally founded in response to tribal leaders’ demands to build a pipeline of young professionals with extensive public policy, advocacy, and leadership skills, the Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program has graduated many of today’s leaders in Indian Country across the public, private, and civic sectors.

NCAI Native Graduate Health Fellowship

The Native Graduate Health Fellowship aims to develop American Indian and Alaska Native health professionals and prepare them for leadership roles in developing health policies that address the unique health needs of Native people.

In its third year, the fellowship is available to full-time graduate students pursuing a graduate degree in a health-related field. Through a competitive application process and review, the finalists' applications were reviewed by a selection committee that identified the 2014-15 fellow and selected candidates to be invited to a four-day policy workshop in Washington, DC.

The 2014 fellow is Michael Mudgett (Spirit Lake Dakota), who is completing a Masters of Public Health Degree from the University of North Dakota. The other finalists who attended the week long policy workshop included Ashleigh Coser (Muscogee Creek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw Tribes of Oklahoma), Rachael DeMarce (Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa

Indians and Descendant of the Blackfeet Nation), and Samantha West (Muscogee Creek Nation).

The workshop included a range of sessions, including: an introduction to tribal sovereignty; welcome and conversation with IHS Director Dr. Yvette Roubideaux; presentations by staff of the National Indian Health Board, National Council on Urban Indian Health, and the National Institutes of Health; a session on the legislative process and a visit to Capitol Hill; a session by NCAI's Policy Research Center; a visit to the American Public Health Association; and a closing session with NCAI's Executive Director, Jacqueline Pata.

The Native Graduate Health Fellowship is possible through the generous support of Robert Burnette, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and a range of other donors. NCAI deeply appreciates these donors' essential role in establishing and sustaining the endowment that supports the fellowship.



Graduate Health Fellowship workshop participants had an opportunity to meet with IHS Director Yvette Roubideaux.



■ NCAI members honor Dusten Brown as part of the General Assembly.

“...A powerful collective voice of Indian Country and Native peoples.”

-Jefferson Keel, Outgoing President, National Congress of American Indians

2013 Annual Convention and Marketplace

Securing Our Futures

At the 2013 Annual Convention & Marketplace, held in Tulsa, Oklahoma on October 13-18, outgoing President Jefferson Keel reflected on NCAI’s role as, “a powerful collective voice of Indian Country and Native peoples.”

The local tribes from the area welcomed attendees at the Tulsa Hard Rock Casino where traditional foods were served and a showcase of dancers and drummers from the area entertained guests at both the Welcome Reception and the Cultural Night. A large group of nearly 200 volunteers from tribes in the region provided a huge show of support for NCAI and helped ensure the success of the convention.

While the convention was hosted in the midst of a federal government shutdown, participants enjoyed the extra time for engagement on key issues ranging from derogatory mascots to the Indian Child Welfare Act. NCAI also hosted an engaging General

Assembly session with representatives of NCAI’s corporate partners—Google, Bank of America, Nike, and Walmart. The membership passed 70 resolutions on topics ranging from mascots and water rights to taxes and protection of sacred places.

The 70th Annual Convention in Tulsa was also an election year. Hundreds of tribes and individual Indian members elected officers to serve NCAI for the next two years. Chairman Brian Cladoosby from the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community was elected as NCAI President in a close runoff. Other successful candidates were Chairman Michael Finley from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (First Vice President), Chairman Robert Shepherd of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (Secretary), and Councilman Dennis Welsh from the Colorado River Indian Tribes (Treasurer).

Securing Our Futures (continued)

Regional Vice-Presidents elected were Jerry Isaac, Aaron Payment, Rosemary Morillo, Steven Smith, S. Joe Critenden, Randy Noka, Manuel Heart, Leander McDonald, Fawn Sharp, Ron Richardson, and Arlan Melendez.

The 70th Annual Convention & Marketplace was packed with relevant breakout sessions, including sessions about Native Vote, the Affordable Care Act, Native languages, Emergency Management Training, Development of the Children's Agenda, Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources, the Youth Commission, Governance, Tribal Lands, Tribal Economies, Affordable Housing, Renewable Energy, Native Foods, Water Rights, and much more.

Other events during the week included the Health Walk, drawing hundreds of walkers and runners to celebrate and promote Native American health. The walk ended at Council Oak Park, a site chosen because it includes the actual oak under which survivors of the Trail of Tears met.

Will Hill, a nationally known storyteller from Oklahoma, entertained participants with traditional stories at the Elder's Honoring Luncheon. The Youth Honoring Luncheon welcomed singer Crystal Shawanda. Crystal is Ojibwe from Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. She entertained the audience with some of her most popular songs.

A new feature of the 2013 convention was the presence of Bunky Echo-Hawk as our Artist in Residence. Bunky is a graduate at the Institute of American Indian Arts, a traditional singer and dancer of the Pawnee Nation, and an enrolled member of the Yakama Nation. Bunky painted live for the audiences in General Assembly and the Gala Banquet. He also participated in a meaningful youth session where he spoke about his life and career. He was a part of the Marketplace where he interpreted the themes being discussed and translated them into works of art to benefit NCAI.



Outgoing NCAI President Keel thanks NCAI members for the opportunity to serve.



NCAI Executive Board members are sworn in by Juanita Ahtone at the 2014 Executive Council Winter Session.

2014 Executive Council Winter Session

During the second week of March, NCAI welcomed tribal delegates, leaders, and attendees to Washington, DC, for Executive Council Winter Session. Throughout the three-day meeting, tribal leaders conducted meetings with leaders in Congress and the Administration to engage on the key policy issues affecting the nation-to-nation relationship. In total, the meeting was attended by 19 members of Congress and five members of President Obama's cabinet.

In his President's report, President Cladoosby reflected on his first few months as NCAI President, noting the elevated role of NCAI in national and international policy discussions. He congratulated the new Executive Committee for already moving forward on issues to strengthen NCAI. He also urged Indian Country to speak with a united voice as it advocates on a wide range of issues from economic development to VAWA, natural resources protection to Native education, and climate change to the Magnuson Stevens Act. He urged the importance of information sharing and how it is a vital part of our

“The meeting was attended by 19 members of Congress and five members of President Obama's cabinet.”

sustainability. President Cladoosby also mentioned how this Administration has engaged with tribal governments in more ways than any other in history.

At the 2014 Indian Country Leadership Awards, we celebrated the outstanding contributions of individuals and organizations to Indian Country. The awardees were acknowledged during an evening reception. The recipients of NCAI's prestigious awards were: US Senator Mike Crapo, UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya, Kevin Gover, Director of The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Special recognition awards were made to Juanita Ahtone (Kiowa) and to the late Chairman Earl Barby Sr. (Tunica-Biloxi Tribe).

The banquet also included a celebration of youth leadership as we provided awards to the winners of NCAI's Tribal Exchange stockmarket game. The first place winners (Julius Casamero, Julian Francisco, Joey Garcia, and Thorton Larry) gave touching speeches about how they never imagined coming to

2014 Executive Council Winter Session (continued)

the nation's capital and what an amazing experience it had been. The Tribal Exchange is a program for Native American students that teaches valuable financial life skills and team building, as well as assists in the formation of intertribal connections. The program is provided free to Native students in grades 4-12 and is supported by funding from the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

Financial Education

In late 2013 and into 2014, NCAI continued efforts to organize a number of different financial education efforts into a broader native financial education initiative that seeks to advance financial capability in Indian Country through advocacy, outreach, education, and partnerships. This initiative includes ongoing work with the Native Financial Education Coalition (NFEC), a focus on April as Financial Literacy Month, the Protect Native Money campaign, and the youth-focused Tribal Exchange Stock Market Game.

In addition, NCAI staff was appointed to serve on the President's Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans (PACFCYA), providing an opportunity to engage and learn from the many excellent financial capability efforts around the country. A listening session is being planned for the 71st Annual Convention for members of the PACFCYA to learn about the unique role of tribal governments in promoting financial capability for their citizens, particularly young Native individuals.

NCAI continued efforts to bring together a partnership of tribes, regional and national organizations, federal agencies, and others with the Native Financial Education Coalition. In

2014, NFEC Partner News, an e-newsletter about financial education efforts in Indian Country, was launched along with a new website, www.nfec.us. NCAI worked with other organizations and federal agencies to identify efforts to raise awareness of financial education in Indian Country during April, Financial Literacy Month.

In 2013 and into 2014, NCAI kept a focus on consumer financial protection through the Protect Native Money campaign related to the *Cobell* and *Keepseagle* settlements. Consumer alerts, public service announcements, tribal leader toolkits, and other resources along with training sessions at the tribal, regional and national conferences kept a focus on the importance of raising consumer financial awareness. The second of two *Cobell* settlement payments are expected to reach over 400,000 Native individuals in fall of 2014. NCAI also works with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to address critical consumer protection issues in Native communities.

The youth-focused Tribal Exchange Stock Market Game is in its seventh year with more than 1,700 high school students participating during that time. This initiative directly responds to tribal leaders' recognition of the importance of financial education for tribal youth. Two to five member student teams work over a semester to learn about real-life investing while enhancing basic academic skills. The winners of the competition participate in a trip to Washington, D.C. and are recognized by tribal leaders at NCAI's Executive Council Winter Session.

2014 Mid Year Conference

Claiming Our Rights and Strengthening Our Governance

Drawing an estimated 1,400 participants, the 2014 Mid Year Conference in Anchorage, Alaska was one of our most successful yet! Hosted from June 8-11, the conference covered important topics related to Native rights and tribal sovereignty. Top government officials and experts in their fields presented to the General Assembly, including Associate Attorney General Tony West; Raina Thiele from the White House; and Kevin Washburn from the Department of the Interior. Forty-one resolutions were passed during the Conference and breakout sessions covered the most pressing topics of the day, including: VAWA, tribal sovereignty, Native languages, climate change, data advocacy, transportation, youth, the Affordable Care Act, public safety, health, Native Vote, the trust relationship, international issues, and more.

Attendees were welcomed to Alaska and invited to attend Eklutna's 2014 Potlatch/Pow-Wow: Road Map to Unity Event, which featured dancing and drumming performances by Athabascan, Aleut, Tlingit/Haida, Inupiat, and Yupik Nations. There was also a rich display of Alaska Native cultures at the Cultural Night held at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, which treated attendees to traditional foods and displays of traditional arts and crafts.

Special events during the week included a widely attended Native Vote Candidates Forum and Reception, the Marketplace Tradeshow, and a Sunrise Prayer Ceremony.

Our 9th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum centered on the theme, "Moving Policy and Innovation through Research." The Forum highlighted innovative health care strategies in Alaska, new directions for diversifying economies, and considered the impact of per capita payments on child wellness. Tribal leaders then synthesized what they heard and applied it to their communities, enriching the program and policy applications

with place-based knowledge. With more than 30 presentations featured in our General Assembly, poster session, and six breakout sessions, tribal leaders and community advocates gained expert and current knowledge on key issues facing tribal nations. From crafting a jobs agenda to reviving traditional food systems, and from integrating Native languages in education systems to demonstrating health care sovereignty in action, this year's Forum was heralded by participants as one of the most poignant and timely yet.

Perhaps one of the most compelling moments was when a Native man came forward and shared his troubles and triumphs: he could speak his Native language, he had been sober for 16 years, but he could not navigate the health system, and he needed dental care that he could not afford. In an unforgettable moment, the President of the Southcentral Foundation immediately informed the man that they would provide the care to him for free. This is precisely what our forums seek to achieve: the empowerment of our leaders in gleaning the best knowledge, policies, and practices, and translating them into action.



Katherine Gottlieb of the Southcentral Foundation presents a gift to President Cladoosby.



NCAI Northeast Area Vice President, Randy Noka, provides remarks at the Tribal Unity Impact Week event.

Advocacy: A Year In Review

NCAI was formed in 1944 when tribal representatives decided to bring their collective voices to Washington, DC to fight for tribal sovereignty. Today, NCAI's advocacy efforts remain focused on bringing the collective voices of tribal governments and individuals to the policymakers in Congress and the Administration.

In many ways, the relationship between tribal governments and the federal government has never been stronger. In the Administration, the President held the fifth annual White House Tribal Nations Summit in 2013 and created the White House Council on Native American Affairs to ensure that all federal agencies are focused on tribal priorities, such as securing tribal homelands, creation of economic opportunities, and access to quality healthcare. And in Congress, we secured passage of the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act - a major victory on tax policy, tribal provisions were included in the Farm Bill and the Workforce Investment Act, and bills were introduced to protect Native languages, to fully fund contract support costs, to increase energy development on tribal lands, and to ensure that the protections afforded in the Violence Against Women

“In many ways, the relationship between tribal governments and the federal government has never been stronger.”

Act are available to all Native women, regardless of where they reside.

NCAI's efforts are not exhausted when legislation is passed. Once legislation is enacted, it is just as important to make sure that any legislation that impacts tribes is implemented successfully. For example, NCAI has had a key role in facilitating the implementation of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, through the Intertribal Technical-Assistance Working Group, a group that consists of tribes and tribal representatives who conduct regular meetings to collaborate on VAWA's tribal provisions so that tribes are prepared to implement the law's key protections for tribal women.

Some of the issues for which NCAI continues to advocate are: restoring tribal homelands through a *Carcieri* fix; reauthorization of the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act; bringing tax parity to tribal governments; and ensuring Native participation in voting through a Voting Rights Amendment.

Advocacy: A Year In Review (continued)

NCAI has created a Trust Modernization Task Force to look at how existing laws and programs can be updated to bring the trust relationship into the 21st century. A Climate Change Task Force has also been created to ensure that tribes are part of the ongoing dialogue about protection of tribal natural resources in a changing environment.

In the pages that follow, you will read about many of the ongoing advocacy efforts that NCAI members and staff are honored to carry out every day. With each success, we know that more needs to be done to ensure that our members' voices are heard and considered at every stage of the policymaking process. We are honored to be your voice in Washington, DC and know that together we can continue to have a positive impact on the lives of tribal members and communities.

Tribal Implementation of VAWA

A tribal court's exercise of jurisdiction is one of the most visible aspects of sovereignty. At the core of NCAI's work is the protection and enhancement of the sovereign rights of tribes and their ability to protect their tribal members.

Following passage of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA), NCAI began working with the Administration to implement key tribal provisions of the new law. In February of 2014, three tribes—the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and the Tulalip Tribes—became the first to implement the Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction (SDVCJ) provisions of VAWA (on an accelerated basis), which restore tribal criminal jurisdiction over all persons who commit crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, or violations of protection orders in Indian country. As of September 2014, all three pilot tribes have arrested at least one non-Indian offender for domestic violence crimes under the new law.

As part of ensuring the successful implementation of VAWA, NCAI and the Tribal Law & Policy Institute have played a key role in facilitating the work of the Intertribal Technical-Assistance Working Group (ITWG). The ITWG is a voluntary group of 39 participating tribes and their designated tribal representatives who exchange views, information, and advice—peer-to-peer—about how tribes may best implement SDVCJ, combat domestic violence, recognize victims' rights and safety needs, and safeguard defendants' rights. NCAI supports the ITWG by organizing the in-person meetings, soliciting input on sessions from ITWG tribes, scheduling training webinars, and connecting tribes with other technical-assistance resources. The intertribal collaboration has proved to be an invaluable tool for many tribes as they evaluate plans to implement the tribal provisions of VAWA.

While the passage of VAWA 2013 was historic, its strength and legacy will lie in the implementation of the tribal provisions—and ultimately, safer tribal communities. NCAI will continue its role as a facilitator by connecting tribes with resources and bringing tribes together to collaborate on implementation issues as we enter 2015, at which time additional tribes will become eligible to implement the SDVCJ provisions of VAWA.

Furthermore, NCAI's work advocating for the safety of all Native women is not finished. NCAI continues to work with partners such as the Alaska Federation of Natives, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and tribes impacted by restrictive settlement acts to advocate for the safety of all Native women, their families, and their communities.

Land Restoration and the “Carcieri Fix”

It has been over five years since February of 2009 when the Supreme Court issued its decision in *Carcieri v. Salazar*, limiting the Secretary of the Interior's ability to acquire land into trust under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) to only those Indian tribes who were “under federal jurisdiction” in 1934.

The Supreme Court did not answer the question of what it means for an Indian tribe to be “under federal jurisdiction,” causing harmful related litigation about existing trust lands. In *Patchak v. Salazar* in 2012, the Supreme Court found that prior acquisitions of trust land are not protected by the Quiet Title Act. Most recently in *California v. Big Lagoon*, the 9th Circuit found that the Big Lagoon Rancheria was not under federal jurisdiction in 1934, because no tribal members were living on trust land in 1934. The negative impacts of the litigation that has followed *Carciari* make finding a solution a priority for all tribes.

NCAI President Brian Cladoosby testified at a May 2014 Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing and stated NCAI’s firm belief that a “clean fix” is by far the best and fairest solution for Indian Country. President Cladoosby noted that while land restoration under the IRA has nothing to do with gaming, much of the resulting litigation and legislative opposition is focused on gaming. President Cladoosby urged that land restoration and gaming should be considered separately. NCAI encourages all members and tribal leaders to continue our efforts on this critical legislation.

International Advocacy

NCAI’s international work has focused recently on providing technical assistance and education for tribal governments interested in engaging in international Indigenous discussions within the United Nations (UN). This work has largely centered on the high-level plenary meeting known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) held on September 22-23, 2014, where members of the UN convened to discuss outcome recommendations on how to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In late May, NCAI, along with more than 70 Indian tribes, as well as a broad representation of Indigenous organizations, submitted a joint

statement to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues which recommended four items:

1. That a new monitoring body be incorporated within the UN to help guide implementation of the Declaration by member states of the UN;
2. That the UN take action to address the issue of violence against Indigenous women, including convening a high-level conference to discuss this matter, ensuring any monitoring mechanism of the Declaration pay particular attention to Article 22, and tasking a Special Rapporteur to focus specifically on violence against Indigenous women and children; and
3. That action be taken to give constitutional and customary governments of Indigenous Peoples a dignified, permanent status within the UN which acknowledges their sovereign rights as self-governing nations; and
4. That action be taken to protect Native sacred sites.

Each of these recommendations remains the driving force behind NCAI’s advocacy efforts on the international front. Specifically, with regards to the third item listed above, tribal governments need and deserve a clear and effective voice in all UN processes and/or discussions that potentially affect their peoples and homelands.

In addition to our advocacy around the WCIP, NCAI participated in the review of the United States by two UN treaty bodies in 2014. NCAI co-submitted “shadow reports” on violence against Indigenous women and religious freedom for Native prisoners for both the periodic review of U.S. compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention to Eliminate Racial Discrimination (CERD). For the CERD review, NCAI also joined a shadow report submitted by the National Indian Child Welfare Association raising concerns about the removal of Indian children from their families.

Trust Modernization

The earliest federal statutes authorizing the leasing of Indian lands for the benefit of tribal and individual Indian landowners date back to the 1890s. Over the course of the next 40 years, Congress enacted further legislation for the management of Indian trust lands—laws that varied slightly in specific effect—but those enactments followed the same basic model: the Secretary reviews and approves a lease of land to a third party (usually a non-Indian farmer or mineral producer); the lessee pays rentals or royalties to the Secretary; and the Secretary distributes the rental/royalty income to the beneficial owners.

To this day, in the early 21st Century, the management of Indian trust lands follows this 124 year-old model.

However, in recent years tribal leaders and advocates have come to recognize that this model, however well it may have served Indian Country in the late 19th Century, will not create or sustain vibrant economies in our nation’s tribal communities at present. They have been calling for changes to the traditional model of trust resource management laws. Congress has responded with legislation like the Helping Expedite And Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership Act (HEARTH Act).

NCAI has been at the forefront of the trust modernization movement in Indian Country by advocating for the HEARTH Act and similar bills that provide tribes with new options for developing tribal lands while at the same time upholding the trust responsibility. Most recently, in early 2014, NCAI created a Trust Modernization Task Force to reach out to Indian Country and receive input on how the trust resource management system can be updated to better serve Indian people.

Taxation

NCAI’s efforts on tax issues have expanded significantly, in partnership with many tribes and tribal organizations.

Principles of Tax Parity for Tribal Governments

1. Tribal governments must be treated with parity in all areas of tax policy.
2. The Constitution recognizes tribal governments; and imposes federal treaty and trust obligations.
3. Tribes operate a broad range of governmental services: education, health, public safety, and transportation.
4. Like states and local governments, tribal revenues are not taxable but are governmental revenues of a distinct sovereign.
5. Tribal governments need respect for authority:
 - to raise tax revenue free from overlapping state taxation
 - to create incentives for business and jobs
 - to access to government financing tools
 - to make decisions regarding citizens’ needs
 - to promote certainty of jurisdiction, certainty to the capital markets, and certainty in tax policy to sustain economic growth.

NCAI has made significant contributions to the effort to address the Internal Revenue Service overreach on General Welfare programs. The IRS has issued its Final Guidance on the General Welfare Exclusion for tribal government programs, and it provides a broad range of “safe harbors” for tribal programs for education, elders, housing, religious and cultural, and many other programs provided to tribal members. NCAI continues to support

Taxation (continued)

legislation on this subject as well. In March, the IRS issued a long-awaited guidance on the tax treatment of per capita distribution of tribal trust revenue. Under the Notice, the IRS reversed its earlier stance and agreed that per capita distributions from trust resources are not includible in the gross income of recipients. NCAI was deeply involved in pushing this effort forward, and it is a significant tax victory for tribes.

NCAI is also promoting the “Tribal Tax & Investment Reform Act of 2013,” which would create tax parity for tribal government bonds, pension plans, tribal foundations and charities, tribal child support enforcement agencies and tribal access to Clean Renewable Energy Bonds. We are also promoting tribal amendments to the Marketplace Fairness Act, the Adoption Tax Credit Tribal Parity Act, the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act, and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. We are working with both House and Senate versions of “tax extender” legislation that would extend tax incentives for Indian Country, particularly the Indian Employment Tax Credit; Accelerated Depreciation for Business Property on Indian Reservations; and Credit for the Production of Indian Coal.

Natural Resources

American Indians and Alaska Natives, as first stewards of this land, have nurtured, lived, and thrived off it since time immemorial. Native peoples continue to rely on their natural resources to sustain themselves as key elements of their culture. Tribes’ cultures, traditions, lifestyles, communities, foods, and economies all depend upon many natural resources and they are disappearing faster than we can restore them.

Tribes, as proven effective managers of their own resources, must be included in federal programs and funding opportunities available to state and

local governments for protecting and utilizing our natural resources in rational, sustainable ways. Tribal natural resources include abundant conventional and renewable energy resources held in trust by the United States for tribes and individual Indians. During the past year, NCAI advocated for tribal management of energy and natural resources before Members of Congress, as well as the Administration and the multiple federal agencies responsible for holding Indian Country’s resources in trust. Working with our tribal partners (e.g., the Our Natural Resources group), NCAI is committed to ensuring tribal control, management, protection, and development of all of our natural resources.

Climate Change

NCAI is continuing its support of climate change initiatives through the passing of resolutions dealing specifically with the effects that climate change has on tribes, whether it be relocation of villages, subsistence living, or supporting a traditional way of life through close work with our climate change partners. Working with the tribal leaders appointed to the White House Climate Task Force on Preparedness and Resilience, NCAI facilitated an increased response to the request for tribal input on the impacts of climate change to tribal communities for the Task Force’s policy recommendations. The Task Force report is due out later in 2014 and will include tribal-specific concerns and recommendations. In dealing with the devastating effects of climate change, tribes urge the federal government to step up its efforts to ensure federal cooperation, participation, and adequate financing to tribes that rely on natural resources for their livelihood and traditional way of life. To guide NCAI’s work on climate change policy, we are creating a Tribal Climate Change Task Force as directed by our membership to further develop our approach to these issues at the Congressional and Administrative level. This new task force will be launched in the fall of 2014.

Voting Rights

NCAI seeks to provide tribes with additional tools to protect the rights of their citizens to vote—including empowering them to monitor and engage in local decisions about election administration. Related to this objective, NCAI has participated with a broad coalition of civil rights organizations in the national conversation about how policymakers can best respond to the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision. Recognizing that Native voters, particularly those living in tribal communities, are uniquely situated as a matter of law, we have also

convened interested tribal stakeholders to develop tribal-specific policy proposals. We have identified a series of recommendations that would give tribal governments a larger role in election administration decisions at the local level, and we have been working with federal policymakers to advance legislation that aligns with our recommendations. As a result of these efforts S. 2399, the Native Voting Right Act, was introduced, and the Department of Justice has initiated consultation with Indian tribes on additional proposals.

Tribal Infrastructure

Housing

Housing is a core necessity for tribal communities. While tribes have made great strides toward improving housing conditions in their communities through the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), the need for adequate, affordable housing for low income Indian people persists. Native Americans still face some of the worst housing and living conditions in the United States. According to the American Community Survey 2006-2010 data, Indian homes frequently lack utilities and infrastructure, with approximately 8.6% lacking complete plumbing facilities; 7.5% lacking kitchen facilities; and 18.9% lacking telephone service.

The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 2008 (NAHASDA) authorizes and administers Indian housing programs within the Department of Housing and Urban Development for American Indian and Alaskan Natives to provide safe and decent housing. The current authorization of NAHASDA expired on September 30, 2013. NCAI and the NCAI Task Force on the NAHASDA Reauthorization have been working jointly with the National American Indian

Housing Council (NAIHC) to bring together tribal leaders and tribal housing entities to develop tribal housing provisions to be included in the upcoming reauthorization of NAHASDA. The chairs of the task force include Joe Garcia, Head Councilman of Ohkay Owingeh, and David Sanborn, NAIHC Executive Director. NCAI will continue to work with tribes on the NAHASDA reauthorization and other NAHASDA-related implementation, such as the negotiated rulemaking. The substandard housing conditions that have become the norm in tribal communities are unacceptable, and NCAI will continue its advocacy efforts to improve housing for all Native peoples.



Though housing barriers persist in Indian Country, NCAI is working to empower tribes to develop quality, safe, and affordable housing for their citizens. Photo credit: Department of Housing and Urban Development

Transportation

Surface transportation in Indian Country involves thousands of miles of roads, bridges, and highways. According to the latest National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory (NTTFI), there are approximately 159,000 miles of roads and trails in Indian Country owned and maintained by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), tribes, states, and counties. Of those, Indian tribes own and maintain 13,650 miles of roads and trails, of which only 1,000 (or 7.3%) are paved; 12,650 miles are gravel, earth, or primitive. Of the 27,500 miles owned and maintained by the BIA in Indian Country, only 7,100 miles are paved and 20,400 miles are gravel, earth, or primitive. These roadways are among the most underdeveloped and unsafe road networks in the nation, even though they are the primary means of access to and from American Indian and Alaska Native communities by tribal and non-tribal citizens alike.

In August 2014, the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-159) was enacted. This legislation extends the transportation authorization for the Department of Transportation until May 2015. Earlier this year, NCAI resumed the work of the Tribal Transportation Task Force with a memorandum of understanding with the Intertribal Transportation Association (ITA), to form the NCAI-ITA Joint Tribal Transportation Task Force. NCAI has been working with tribes on the implementation of the new authorization by providing regulatory notices and information related to the Tribal Transportation Program and the Tribal Transit Program. In addition, NCAI has been collaborating with the Tribal Transportation Unity Caucus and developing national tribal transportation priorities that will be shared with Congress in the upcoming reauthorization.

Telecommunications

New policy initiatives to spur robust high-speed broadband services throughout the country have attempted to keep pace with constantly evolving technologies. Funding and regulatory mechanisms have shifted priority to support deployment of fiber optics and high-speed wireless services and applications. Policy focused on new high-speed tertiary and wireless broadband services provides renewed opportunities for tribes to obtain these vital services and products. Fiber and mobile wireless solutions offer new access to technologies supporting education, healthcare, law enforcement, and tribal governance.

NCAI, in partnership with tribal organizations and tribal telecommunications service providers, provided critical input for President Obama's 2013 ConnectED initiative. Through combined efforts over the past year, we were able to obtain key regulatory changes to provide consultation, training, and outreach regarding the E-rate program—a Universal Service Fund (USF) program that supports first-time connections and technology upgrades for schools and libraries. Additionally, among these recommendations that were adopted was one put forth by NCAI and our partners for the creation of an E-rate Tribal Liaison at the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), an independent corporation that manages the USF. This was a major victory, as tribes and tribal entities have advocated for over a decade to increase awareness regarding USF tribal-specific issues.



Emergency Management

Following last year's breakthrough amendments to the Stafford Act authorizing tribal governments to directly seek federal disaster declarations, seven tribes have utilized the procedure. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently drafting Stafford Act regulations to implement tribal provisions regarding damage assessment threshold criteria, cost-share, and other considerations applicable to tribal governments and tribal communities. FEMA conducted a listening session on this matter at the NCAI Mid Year

Conference in Anchorage. NCAI plans to submit comments on the matter.

Last year, FEMA released the Draft FEMA Tribal Consultation Policy to "establish a process to guide FEMA officials on how to engage Indian tribes and Tribal Officials in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration on actions that have tribal implications." NCAI submitted comments on the Draft Policy and will continue to monitor it through the adoption and implementation phases.

Budget & Appropriations

In the federal budget process, NCAI works with Congress, tribes, and the Administration in advocating for the honorable fulfillment of the federal trust responsibility to Indian Country. Throughout the budget cycle, NCAI provides analysis of budget and appropriations activity relevant to tribes, educates Congress on the priorities of tribes, assists in tribal consultations and budget formulation, offers technical assistance for the Tribal Interior Budget Council, coordinates strategy development and messaging with tribal leaders and Native organizations, and fosters and maintains alliances with partner organizations. In 2014, NCAI testified in person before many authorizing and appropriations committees, provided briefings to Congressional staff, submitted written testimony to all pertinent appropriations subcommittees that provide assistance to tribes, and continued supporting Indian Affairs agency budget formulation improvements.

NCAI's goal in these efforts is to ensure that Congressional funding decisions support self-determination and honor the nation's agreements with tribes. Numerous treaties and laws have created a fundamental contract between tribal nations and the United States: tribes ceded millions

of acres of land that made the United States what it is today and, in return, tribes have the right of continued self-government and to exist as distinct peoples on their own lands. Part of this trust responsibility includes basic governmental services in Indian Country, funding for which is appropriated in the discretionary portion of the federal budget. As governments, tribes must deliver a wide range of critical services, such as education, workforce development, and first-responder and public safety services to their citizens. The federal budget for tribal governmental services reflects the extent



Members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs receive testimony from tribal leaders at a Senate hearing on budget issues facing Indian Country.

Budget & Appropriations (continued)

to which the United States honors its promises to Indian people.

Congress and the Administration have expressed strong support for Indian self-determination and honoring the trust responsibility. Indeed many tribes have made tremendous gains in the social and economic wellbeing of their communities when Congress has respected the responsibility of tribes as governments and invested in self-determination. Tribes across the United States are making economic contributions to their regions, drawing on a mix of intergovernmental transfers, fees, enterprises, sales, and leases that make up their governmental revenue.

In the FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill, for the first time, Congress allowed full funding of Contract Support Costs (CSC). Obligations of this nature are usually addressed through mandatory spending, but because Contract Support Costs fall under discretionary spending, they could impact all other programs funded under the Interior and Environment Appropriations. Congress directed the Departments of the Interior and Health and Human

Services to consult with tribes and work with the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Committees on Appropriations to formulate long-term accounting, budget, and legislative strategies to address the situation. NCAI continues to work towards seeking solutions on this issue, which includes supporting legislation to enact a permanent, indefinite appropriation for CSC in substantive law to finally address the longstanding problems arising from the federal government’s past treatment of CSC funding as discretionary.

Moreover, shrinking resources due to sequestration and the 2011 Budget Control Act have adversely affected tribes’ ability to meet the needs of their communities. NCAI has called for an honorable budget for Indian Country, which will empower tribes so they can provide their people with good health care, quality education, decent and adequate housing, and public safety. These services—the basic services to which all Americans are entitled—meet the needs of Native peoples, benefit residents of surrounding communities, and—if adequately funded by Congress—fulfill longstanding obligations to tribal nations.



NCAI released our FY2015 budget document, "An Honorable Budget for Indian Country," in January 2014.

Health

NCAI continues its strong advocacy efforts to ensure that all Indian people have access to affordable and quality healthcare.

Affordable Care Act

After years of advocating for reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, that Act was permanently reauthorized in 2010 as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). NCAI has continued to work with tribes and the Administration to ensure that implementation of the ACA is successful for tribes and tribal members. NCAI has worked with the Administration and the Indian Health Service to implement the National Indian Health Outreach and Education (NIHOE) initiative. The NIHOE initiative was created to conduct outreach and education to tribes, tribal members and tribal employers on the American Indian and Alaska Native benefits and protections under the ACA, and the requirements and opportunities available to tribal employers. To further this goal, NCAI has conducted 18 ACA trainings and six webinars in the past year.

Special Diabetes Program for Indians

NCAI continues to advocate for five-year reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest occurrence of diabetes at a rate of 2.3 times higher than the national average with diabetes-related deaths occurring at more than 1.6 times the national average.

The grant programs contained in the SDPI have provided grants to 404 tribal programs in 35 states. These programs have had a significant effect on education and prevention efforts in Indian Country by allowing tribal communities to design and implement programs that address their locally identified needs and priorities. Such programs address increased testing for diabetes and increased promotion of healthy lifestyle behaviors.



A patient receives care at the Cherokee Nation tribal healthcare facility. Photo credit: Cherokee Nation

Dental Health Aide Therapist Initiative

To advance oral health in Indian Country, NCAI leads a program—funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation—to raise tribal awareness about the Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) model, provide information on DHAT, and identify and support tribes interested in the DHAT model. A DHAT is a mid-level provider, similar to a Physician’s Assistant, who is formally trained to provide routine and preventative dental care services under the general supervision of a licensed dentist offsite. The DHAT model has been used worldwide for more than 90 years and is permitted by state law in Alaska, Maine, and Minnesota. The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium adopted the model in 2003. The DHAT model builds community capacity and creates jobs by training community members to become DHATs. The model can be replicated in other areas and is a viable solution to addressing the oral health needs of AI/AN. The Indian Health Care Improvement Act requires that DHAT services, or mid-level dental health provider services, must be permitted under state law. The states of California, Kansas, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, and Washington have introduced legislation without success. Tribes in these states, and others, are encouraged to work with NCAI on supporting efforts on the state level.

Education

Tribal nations have a tremendous stake in an improved education system. Education prepares Native children not only for active and equal participation in the global market, but also to be positive, involved members of their communities. Equally significant, an investment in education equips the future leaders of tribal governments. There is no more vital resource to the continued existence and integrity of tribal nations than Native children.

NCAI and its Native education partners, including the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, worked together to develop and advocate Indian Country's priorities on an array of educational topics, including Native language revitalization, the proposed Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) reforms, and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). It is vitally important to ensure that tribal priorities identified by tribal leaders, Native education stakeholders, and tribal community members are honored by the federal government through its maintenance of the sacred trust responsibility to tribal nations and members.

Native Language

Native language revitalization has played a prominent role this year with the introduction of several pieces of legislation that would expand language immersion programs in schools across Indian Country. Additionally, the Native Language Workgroup—an interagency collaborative effort comprised of the Department of the Interior, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Education—convened their first annual Native Languages Summit earlier this summer.

BIE Reform

BIE reform efforts and consultation have been underway for most of this year with a series of announcements made by the Administration during the President's trip to Indian Country. NCAI and NIEA offered joint comments on the reform efforts and will continue to consult with the Administration and tribes to ensure Native students receive a high-quality education.

ESEA Reauthorization

NCAI will also continue to advocate Indian Country's priorities in the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In acknowledging that tribal nations are best suited to determine how their own youth are educated, NCAI and its education partners will continue to advocate for the increase of tribal control over ESEA programs and expanded funding and opportunities for all Native students.

NCAI has advocated in all of these realms and will continue to ensure Native languages and culture play a central role in affording a high-quality, holistic education to all Native students.



Story time at a Native language immersion school.
Photo credit: Indian Country Today Media Network

Farm Bill

In February 2014, President Obama signed H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 (“the Farm Bill”) into law ending over two years of work on the Farm Bill reauthorization. The final bill represents a bipartisan agreement on a majority of agriculture and nutrition policies and makes a number of changes to existing programs, while creating many new opportunities for tribal governments. First, it adds tribal eligibility in Soil and Water Conservation Act programs. By explicitly including tribes in existing state and local government programs, it creates parity for tribal governments and tribal economies and supports the surrounding economies. It also enhances cooperation among all governments managing rural lands and results in a more streamlined approach to using federal resources, which further enhances economic development and create jobs. Next, the Farm Bill creates a new demonstration project with technical assistance and tribal consultation to allow the inclusion of traditional and locally grown foods from Native farmers, ranchers, and producers in the

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. Additionally, federal food service programs such as residential child care facilities, child nutrition programs, hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and senior meal programs can now accept donated traditional foods.

Now, the focus has shifted from enactment of the Farm Bill to implementation of the new programs at USDA. NCAI has already begun working with the Office of Tribal Relations (now a permanent USDA office) to ensure that Indian Country is well represented during the rulemaking phase and that tribal consultation, where applicable, is performed in accordance with Congress’s intent and in a manner that benefits tribes and Native farmers, ranchers, and producers. With the vast number of programs and opportunities, NCAI is committed to ensuring that tribes are included in the promulgation and implementation process to help ensure the resources in these areas are fully utilized to advance the priorities of tribal nations and Native peoples.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIA Reauthorization)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014 and reauthorizes the Workforce Investment Act that expired in 2003. WIA includes a Native American program which provides support for training and employment to unemployed, under-employed, and under-skilled American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

WIA authorizes the Division of Indian and Native American Programs (DINAP) within the U.S. Department of Labor. This program has allowed tribes to directly target the high unemployment rates that affect Native communities, and it provides essential opportunities for Native workers to become self-sufficient through skill building for

job entry, reentry, and advancement. The Native American Program is vital to tribal economies, and in order to combat high unemployment, tribal nations must have proper resources to develop a strong and sustainable workforce.

WIA was the result of efforts from bipartisan negotiations within both chambers of Congress. NCAI was very engaged throughout the process, working with Congressional offices and coordinating input from tribes and stakeholders to help secure and preserve the important Native American Program provisions. NCAI will continue to work with tribes and other stakeholders as the Obama Administration implements this important law.

Tribal Homeland Security

NCAI continues to facilitate dialogue on tribal homeland security/emergency management issues at its conferences. These forums provide tribal government officials with the opportunity to meet with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) representatives to discuss border crossing related to customs, tribal IDs, telecommunications interoperability, tribal homeland security grants, and border security. During a speech at the 2014 NCAI Executive Council Winter Session, incoming DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson pledged to tribal leaders that he would: 1) ensure tribal liaison positions were present in all DHS components and 2) fill vacancies.

NCAI has continued to work with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) to ensure that tribal concerns are addressed in the upcoming deployment of this national public safety broadband network. Two years ago, NCAI secured tribal appointments on two key committees to ensure that in developing public safety communications priorities and technical assistance, tribal communications disparities and needs are included

in the conversation. NCAI continues to maintain its strong representation on the DHS SAFECOM Committee and the FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC).

Currently, NCAI is working with FirstNet to create a new Tribal Working Group, comprised of tribal technical experts in the fields of communications and public safety operations. This new working group will advise the FirstNet Board and staff on tribal consultation and outreach to Indian Country, and it will raise any tribal concerns related to FirstNet deployment. NCAI continues to work on building partnerships and raising awareness regarding the issues of interoperability and the general lack of communications infrastructure on tribal lands.

To foster continuing dialogue on these important matters, NCAI staff attended the 2014 First Annual National Joint Tribal Emergency Management Council. Among the many emergency management issues discussed, NCAI highlighted key tribal concerns related to deployment of FirstNet.

Immigration Reform

While recent bipartisan efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform have not materialized, NCAI worked closely with members of Congress to ensure tribal priorities were included. This resulted in key priorities being included in the Senate-passed bill. Key issues that NCAI has focused on for tribal governments include efforts to secure US international borders—with special emphasis on securing the southwest border—and funding dedicated to southwest border security for the next 10 years. Another key element that

could have a significant impact on tribal nations is an employment verification system in which all employers will eventually be required to participate. Employers will have to accept only DHS-approved documentation, such as enhanced driver's licenses or tribal IDs, to verify the work-authorization status of employee applicants.

NCAI will continue to work with the Administration and Congress to advocate for tribal inclusion in any comprehensive immigration reform package.

Cultural Protection

The protection of Native cultures spans across complex statutory and regulatory aspects of the federal government. Success in navigating these complex structures has resulted in the repatriation of cultural items, guidance regarding tribal member possession of eagle feathers, and increased access to sacred places for religious and spiritual practices. NCAI continues to prioritize its advocacy and education efforts to protect the religious and cultural freedoms of Native peoples.

In October 2013, NCAI's membership adopted a resolution authorizing a joint initiative for the protection of sacred places with the Native American Rights Fund and the Morning Star Institute. Under this initiative, NCAI and our partners have coordinated outreach and advocacy

efforts regarding the protection and preservation of sacred places. Throughout the year, NCAI has also engaged with federal agencies participating in the Memorandum of Understanding for the protection of Indian "sacred sites."

Additionally, NCAI has been working with tribes regarding recent developments on the extension of eagle "take" permits by the Department of the Interior, absent tribal consultation. NCAI is in the process of increasing awareness on this issue and developing partnerships with other tribes, tribal organizations, and non-Native entities to protect eagle nests, migratory patterns, and hunting areas from infringement.

Support of American Indian and Alaska Native Veteran Programs and Issues

NCAI joins with Indian Country and all Americans in honoring the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces protecting our homelands in every war. It is estimated that over 150,000 veterans identify as American Indian and Alaska Native, with over 24,000 active duty Native service members currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. NCAI takes great pride in honoring and preserving the warrior tradition of Indian Country by expressing the deepest gratitude to our nation's veterans and to their families. Equally, NCAI proudly seeks fair and dignified treatment of all veterans while advocating for federal support and funding for Native veteran programs and services that are greatly needed and deserved.

One such example of NCAI's successful advocacy for Native veterans was passage of the Native American Veterans' Memorial Amendments Act of 2013, which removed technical barriers hindering completion of the memorial with regard to location and fundraising. NCAI will continue working with

the National Museum of the American Indian on the development of the memorial.

Additionally, NCAI worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Tribal Government Relations on issues like the VA-IHS memorandum of understanding for health care, which involves reimbursement agreements, homelessness of Native veterans, taxation issues, veterans courts, and access to veteran benefits. This year, NCAI has passed resolutions that address a range of veterans issues, including: raising the Veterans Administration (VA) Travel Allowance for disabled veterans to the federal mileage rate, expanding the HUD-VASH program to tribal lands to provide housing assistance for homeless Native veterans, and urging the VA to reimburse tribal health facilities for services provided to veterans under the Affordable Care Act.



Service To Community



The Tribal Supreme Court Project works to protect tribal rights by coordinating litigation strategy. Photo credit: CC Mark Fischer

“...The Supreme Court of the United States issued its opinion... reaffirming the vitality of the doctrine of tribal sovereign immunity.”

Tribal Supreme Court Project

The Tribal Supreme Court Project is staffed by the National Congress of American Indians and the Native American Rights Fund to promote greater coordination and strategy on litigation that may affect the rights of tribes.

On May 27, 2014, in a victory for Indian tribes, the Supreme Court of the United States issued its opinion in *Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community*, reaffirming the vitality of the doctrine of tribal sovereign immunity. The lawsuit had its origin in a dispute between the State of Michigan and the Bay Mills Indian Community over whether certain lands constituted “Indian lands” eligible for gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), but had turned into a much larger legal battle over the rights of all tribes across the country. In a 5-to-4 decision, Justice Kagan affirmed the 6th Circuit, which held that the State’s claims against the Bay Mills Indian Community are barred by the doctrine of tribal sovereign immunity. NCAI authored a significant amicus brief in the case.



John Echohawk provides the Tribal Supreme Court Project update at the 2013 Annual Convention.

Tribal Supreme Court Project (continued)

NCAI has also filed three important legal briefs in cases involving the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and efforts to organize unions of tribal governmental workers. All other governments are exempted from the NLRA, but in 2004 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) reversed longstanding precedent and asserted for the first time that a tribal government engaged in “commercial” activity was subject to the National Labor Relations Act and required to permit unions. The DC Circuit sustained the Board’s decision in *San Manuel v. NLRB* in 2007. Three new cases on the subject are now in other federal courts of appeals. In *Chickasaw Nation v. NLRB*, *Little River Band v. NLRB*, and *Saginaw Chippewa v. NLRB*, tribes have argued that *San Manuel’s* distinction between “governmental” and “commercial” activities is wrong and unworkable, and that application of the NLRA would severely impair tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. NCAI has filed amicus briefs supporting all three tribes.

These are just a few of the most important cases that the Project addressed this year as we expanded our efforts. In addition, *California v. Big Lagoon* is an important case regarding the ability of the Secretary of the Interior to acquire land in trust for tribes, and NCAI strongly supported the successful push for rehearing in the 9th Circuit. We are also assisting on several cases that address reservation diminishment, and we are working to protect tribal legislative wins under the Violence Against Women Act. As always, we encourage tribes to consult with the Project at any stage of litigation, particularly at the certiorari stage in the Supreme Court, and we thank our many legal friends for their assistance and support. We greatly appreciate the contributions from tribes that make this work possible.





Tribal leaders and researchers applied data to the pressing issues facing Indian Country as part of the 9th annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum.

“The NCAI Policy Research Center was established 10 years ago to support Indian Country in shaping its own future...”

NCAI Policy Research Center

Successful Together: Supporting Indian Country in Shaping Its Own Future

When so much policy has had the impact of dividing our tribal communities over time and history, our collective success lies in linking arms and working together to sustain our cultures and life ways. The NCAI Policy Research Center was established 10 years ago to support Indian Country in shaping its own future by providing tribal leaders with the best available knowledge to inform their decision-making within a framework of Native wisdom to ensure the best futures for our peoples. We aim to add value to the work of NCAI by highlighting the strengths of Native cultures, leveraging our successes to assist those in need, and making sure research has a positive impact in tribal communities. As such, our 2014 Strategic Priorities are to:

1. Ensure that data is collected from Native people in a way that protects and benefits tribal sovereignty;
2. Develop strategic partnerships to improve data quality;
3. Share successes among tribes to build capacity and advance policy research;
4. Disseminate new data, best practices, and technical assistance across Indian Country; and
5. Foster regional support for tribal research.

In what follows, the staff of the NCAI Policy Research Center describe our efforts to contribute to the mission of NCAI over the past year and to exemplify the brilliance of Native peoples working together to shape our futures.

Ensure that Data Collected from Native Peoples Both Protects and Benefits Tribal Sovereignty

Hosted Symposium Featuring Community Perspectives on Genetics Research and Ethics. In June, at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, the NCAI Policy Research Center and the NIH National Human Genome Research Institute hosted a symposium titled, “A Spectrum of Perspectives: Native Peoples & Genetics Research.” We discussed research ethics, science policy, cultural research protocols, data collection of bio-specimens, and efforts to protect and benefit tribal communities. A video recording of the full-day symposium is available on the NCAI Policy Research Center website for communities to use as part of their own discussions on genetics research and ethics. Further, as part of our continued commitment to providing information to tribes, we will receive funding from NIH through a partnership with the University of Washington to share information about Native peoples’ perspectives on bio-banking in the coming year.

Contributed to Model Resources for Evaluation in Tribal Child Welfare Contexts. The NCAI Policy Research Center participated in a Tribal Evaluation Workgroup convened by the ACF Children’s Bureau to create a guide for scientifically and culturally rigorous evaluation in the context of tribal child welfare. The guide was published as “A Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities” in report and video form. Over 10 presentations of the Roadmap have been made since it was released, and several tribes and training programs are using the Roadmap as a model for reframing evaluation initiatives. As an extension of this work, the NCAI Policy Research Center is planning to develop guidelines for researchers working in tribal youth contexts in the coming year.

Submitted Comments on Draft NIH Genomic Data Sharing Policy. The NCAI Policy Research Center submitted comments as part of the federal process to solicit input on genomic data sharing policy. We also encouraged tribal nations and those working in tribal contexts to submit comments. The NIH has indicated that the tribal comments were used to inform amendments and new language as part of this policy that will be released toward the latter half of the year.

Develop Strategic Partnerships to Improve Data Quality

Submitted National Science Foundation Proposal. One of the persistent challenges facing tribes is the lack of quality data available at a tribal level to inform decision-making. Although the Department of the Interior was able to release the statutorily required American Indian Population & Labor Force Report in 2014, it relies heavily on Census data that is reported at an individual level and aggregated for tribes. These data are not comprehensive for all tribes, and there remain serious concerns about inaccurate counts. Recognizing these challenges, NCAI worked with tribal and academic partners to submit a proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) to improve the collection and quality of tribal-level demographic data by partnering with tribes who already collect their own demographic data and developing tools for all tribes. In September 2014, we received notice that NCAI was awarded this grant which will enable us to improve tribal data quality and potentially inform the development of a supplement to the Census.



Hosted Two Data Institutes for Native Youth. In June 2014, the NCAI Policy Research Center hosted a training for Native youth attending NCAI's Mid Year Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, using "The Futures Game – The Rez" to engage youth in conversations about the impact of tribal council decision-making on reservation economies. In addition, we presented information on infographics and the power of messaging about Native youth realities. Youth developed their own infographics that emphasized their commitment to Native language and culture. In July 2014, we hosted a training for the National Native Youth Cabinet in Washington, DC, to share information about how data is used to inform funding decisions and public policy in education, health research, and Indian Affairs. These trainings enabled us to engage key partners in strategic conversations about the quality of Native youth data.

Share Successes among Tribes to Build Capacity and Advance Policy Research

Developed Database Featuring Tribal Public Health Codes. The NCAI Policy Research Center is finalizing a tribal public health law database that will provide access to publicly-available tribal public health laws to support the work of tribal leaders in strengthening health and coordinating effective practices across tribes. Currently, we have identified over 500 tribal codes from over 90 tribal nations for inclusion in the database. We are working to secure tribal approval to include these codes as part of the database and to complete a set of materials providing information on common categories of codes and highlights from at least one tribe in each of the 12 NCAI regions. In June 2014, the NCAI Policy Research Center published a policy brief featuring this work entitled, "Investing in Healthy Tribal Communities: Strengthening Solid Waste Management through Tribal Public Health Law." This brief highlights tribal initiatives to clean up open dumps, promote recycling, and expand infrastructure. The database is scheduled to be launched at NCAI's 71st Annual Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, in October 2014.

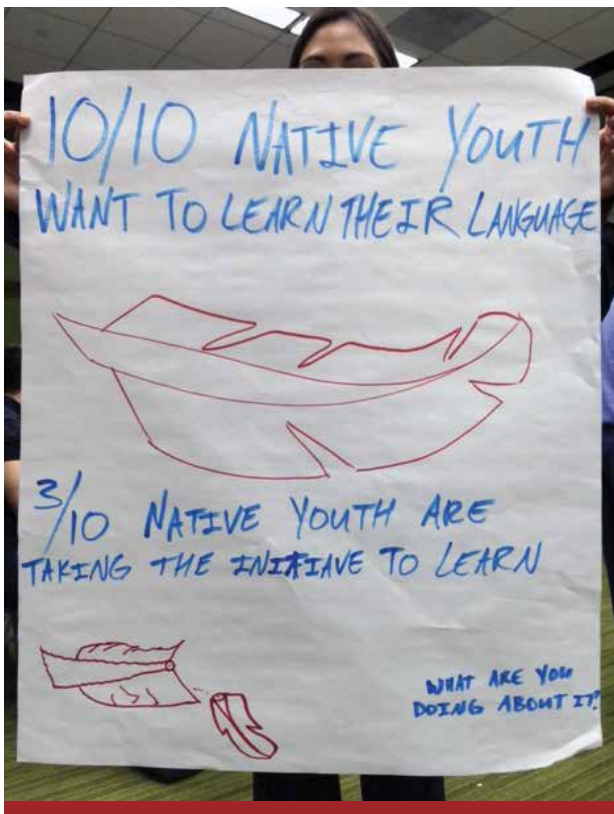
Hosted 9th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum. In June 2014, the NCAI Policy Research Center coordinated a General Assembly panel, six breakout sessions, a poster session featuring emerging researchers, and a pre-conference at NCAI's Mid Year Conference in Anchorage, Alaska. We featured tribal leaders and scholars discussing how strategic tribal investments contribute to community wellness and sustainability. We had well over 500 participants in the General Assembly session and rousing engagement as part of the tribal leader discussion that followed. Staff compiled conference proceedings, which have been shared through NCAI's broadcast and the NCAI Policy Research Center E-Update.

Disseminate New Data, Best Practices, and Technical Assistance across Indian Country

Published Backgrounders and One-Pagers. As part of our work to celebrate the successes of Indian Country, the NCAI Policy Research Center has developed a range of products to disseminate information across our networks. These include Backgrounders that provide an overview of important context on policy and research issues of significance; One-Pagers designed to offer a snapshot of key data and program information for policymakers; and Policy & Tribal Insight Briefs that highlight positive data trends and tribal initiatives on various topics. This year, we published products featuring information on efforts to support Native boys and young men as part of President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Initiative; Native language immersion and revitalization efforts to inform the work of NCAI's Native Languages Task Force; and the link between diabetes prevention and oral care to inform our Dental Health Aide Therapy work.

Released Research Updates and E-Updates. In addition, the NCAI Policy Research Center released three Research Updates—one at NCAI’s Annual Convention, Executive Council Winter Session, and Mid Year Conference—to share policy research updates with our members and disseminate best practices and resources to assist their work. We also released two E-Updates during the months between NCAI conferences to keep our networks abreast of research information and resources that could inform their work. We have grown our listserv to over 2,500 members that span tribal nations in the United States, New Zealand, and Australia, as well as a wide range of federal partners and non-profit organizations.

Hosted a Diabetes Data Institute to Foster Translation and Dissemination of Research. As effective policy increasingly relies on research evidence, the NCAI Policy Research Center has invested in working with Native researchers and partners at Washington University in St. Louis to



An infographic prepared by Native youth as part of the data institute hosted at the 2014 Mid Year Conference.



Abigail Echo-Hawk shares perspectives on Native peoples and research as part of the forum at the National Museum of the American Indians, co-hosted by the PRC.

improve the translation of diabetes research in Native communities and in policy. We hosted a Data Institute at the Association of American Indian Physicians Annual Conference in Denver in July in order to foster more research using data collected from Native communities. We had some important conversations about the role of secondary data analysis, existing data sets, and priority research questions. At least two participants indicated an interest in developing additional research on diabetes in Native communities.

Foster Regional Support for Tribal Research

Developed Template for Regional Data Profiles.

In response to a priority set by the NCAI Executive Board for more regional resources, the NCAI Policy Research Center set out to create a template for providing data by NCAI regions. We completed a template for the Northwest Region and are in the process of compiling data for three additional regions over the next quarter. Information compiled includes population demographics, regional employment trends, education indicators, and health data.



The Partnership for Tribal Governance supports the work of NCAI to engage tribal leaders, including strategy sessions like this one at the 2013 Annual Convention.

“During 2013-2014, the PTG increased its impact on NCAI’s mission in a number of areas.”

The Partnership for Tribal Governance

The Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) is a multi-year initiative that seeks to identify, increase, organize, enhance, and make accessible the resources necessary to support tribes’ efforts to strengthen their governance. Through partnerships with tribes, tribal intergovernmental and national Native organizations, academic and policy centers, practitioners, policymakers, and other resources, the PTG:

- Makes investments in self-determined tribal efforts to strengthen governance
- Supports increased education, training, and technical assistance for tribes
- Enhances communication, coordination, and collaboration among groups working to support tribes’ efforts
- Supports the development and sharing of new knowledge
- Develops and promotes a policy research agenda to strengthen tribal governance

- Advocates policies to enhance and strengthen tribal governments
- Encourages increased public and media education about tribal governments
- Supports the internal capacity building of NCAI as an institution

The PTG serves as the organizational focal point within NCAI to assist tribes with their efforts to strengthen governance, and at the same time support the institutional development of NCAI as a critical anchor institution for Indian Country. Much of the work of the PTG is possible only through integration and coordination with all programs and activities of NCAI, not as a stand-alone program.

During 2013-2014, the PTG increased its impact on NCAI’s mission in a number of areas.

Investing in Self-Determined Tribal Efforts to Strengthen Governance. In late 2013, the PTG made investments in 11 self-determined tribal efforts to strengthen governance. The \$500,000 one-time investment funds are part of a PTG grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The PTG investment initiative focused its efforts on projects that will result in models that can be shared with other tribes. In particular, investments were made in tribal projects in government reform, leadership development, citizen engagement, and public/media education. The 11 investments represent tribes in nine states across the nation and focus on a number of key strategies including constitution reform, education, youth engagement, child welfare, natural resource management, and implementation of the Stafford Act Amendments and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. The funded efforts range from six-month to two-year implementation strategies and will be documented to provide useful lessons and promising practices to other tribes.

Addressing Issues Critical to Tribal Leaders. The PTG continued the Protect Native Money campaign to raise the visibility of financial education and consumer protection in Indian Country and to provide critical information and resources to tribal leaders and their citizens. With the settlement of the *Cobell* and *Keepseagle* class action lawsuits, Native individuals began receiving significant financial resources starting in August 2012. Additional *Cobell* settlement payments were expected in late 2013, however, these have been delayed until the fall of 2014. PTG staff provides support for the Native Financial Education Coalition (NFEC) and, in 2014, Partner News, an e-newsletter about financial capability efforts and resources in Indian Country, was launched alongside a new website, www.nfec.us. PTG staff serves on the President's Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans (PACFCYA) through which they seek to elevate the promising practices and unique role of tribal governments in promoting and providing financial capability resources to their young citizens. At the 71st Annual Conference in Atlanta, PTG will convene a financial capability summit and



The Partnership for Tribal Governance provides technical assistance to equip and support tribal leaders as they shape policy for the next generation.

listening session with participation by members of the PACFCYA.

Promoting Tribally-Driven Policy. The PTG supported efforts to engage tribal leaders in diverse policy discussions through special and interactive sessions at the NCAI Mid Year Conference and Annual Convention. At the 71st Annual Convention, NCAI will promote strengthening tribal governance with special sessions on building leadership, financial education, constitution reform, trust modernization, youth engagement, consumer protection, and ethics in government. In addition, NCAI is hosting the 2014 Honoring Nations Awards Program.

Building Capacity in Governance. The PTG provided capacity building sessions for tribal leaders at a variety of venues focusing on topics of critical importance to strengthening tribal governance. In its first full year of operation as a training and technical assistance provider for tribally designated housing entities, the PTG conducted 14 trainings for more than 500 participants in a variety of topic areas and also provided one-on-one technical assistance to seven tribes. The PTG is working to provide information resources and opportunities for tribal leaders to learn about new and effective models such as the Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) model. The DHAT model uses mid-level dental providers and has been shown to be effective in Alaska Native communities over the past 10 years. These efforts will continue throughout 2014 and beyond.



Public Education



Tribal leaders are joined by members of Congress, civil rights leaders, and religious leaders, for a press conference calling on the Washington football team to “change the mascot.”

Change the Mascot Campaign

In 1968, NCAI initiated a campaign to end negative and harmful stereotypes of Native peoples in the media and popular culture. A primary focus of this campaign has centered on the use of “Indian” themed mascots, logos, and names, which have dehumanized and devalued the diverse heritages of Native peoples. Most of these mascots were chosen between the 1920s and 1950s—an era during which many members of the general public viewed Native peoples through a “vanishing people” mentality.

While these sustained educational efforts have existed as an aspect of NCAI’s work over the years, the “Indian” themed mascot issue has recently gained considerable national media attention. Due to social media and the grassroots activism of Native and non-Native individuals across the country, this issue has reached an ever-increasing visibility and discussion in the national spotlight. Witnessing the growing chorus of support to retire “Indian” mascots, logos, and names, the Oneida Indian Nation of New York created the Change the Mascot initiative in the

“The Change the Mascot campaign has gained immense support from hundreds of tribes, tribal organizations, and the civil rights community...”

beginning of 2013. Shortly thereafter, NCAI entered into an official partnership with the Oneida Indian Nation to educate the general public about these harmful stereotypes of Native peoples.

Since then, the Change the Mascot campaign has gained immense support from hundreds of tribes, tribal organizations, and the civil rights community to change the name and mascot of the Washington Redsk*ns NFL team. President Obama, members of Congress, state and local politicians, civil rights and religious leaders, and current and former NFL athletes have all called upon the league to change the Washington, DC NFL team name. National, state, and local news outlets have also boycotted usage of the name in their sports reporting and broadcasting.

Alongside our partners, NCAI will continue to advocate for the end of these derogatory names and mascots, while continuing educational efforts about the true cultural heritage of Native peoples.

EVERY NATIVE VOTE COUNTS



Native Vote

At NCAI's inaugural annual convention in 1944, one of the first resolutions passed addressed the rights of Native voters. The Native Vote campaign was founded as a nonpartisan initiative to revitalize civic engagement among Native peoples. The project seeks to educate Indian Country—and America—about the role of tribes as America's first governments.

The emphasis of Native Vote in 2013-14 was to prepare for the 2014 election and build sustainable infrastructure that would ensure equal access to the polls for Native voters in 2016 and beyond. The overall vision of Native Vote is to empower local Native Vote coordinators, engage Native youth, educate Native and non-Native candidates, and provide tools to more effectively measure civic engagement in Indian Country.

Key highlights of the 2014 Native Vote effort included:

- Our first Google+ Hangout on Air to launch the “Native Vote Summer of Action.” The live video conference, broadcast throughout Indian Country. The event reached over 500 people and was co-hosted by NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Pata and NCAI Area Vice President Aaron Payment. It included presentations from Courtney Ruark (Cherokee Nation), Aurora Lehr (Alaska Federation of Natives), and Corey Still (National Indian Education Association).

- A successful candidate forum at the 2014 NCAI Mid Year Conference in Alaska that included three forums covering the Alaska Senate race, the Alaska Governor race, and a more general forum open to candidates interested in engaging with Native voters.
- Our renewed partnerships with Rock the Vote, State Voices, and other national partners that offer tools to Native Vote campaigns.
- The re-launch of the “Teach for the Native Vote Effort” in partnership with the National Indian Education Association to provide curriculum and resources to hundreds of Native classrooms.



Mark Trahant moderates the Native Vote Alaska Senate candidate forum along with a panel of Alaska Native leaders at the 2013 Mid Year Conference.

Outreach

Embassy & Visits

Over the past five years, the Embassy of Tribal Nations has become the embodiment of the vision of NCAI's founders to not only protect and advance tribal rights, but to educate the American public. The Embassy is an important symbol of our nation-to-nation relationship with the United States and stands as a key institution to inform America—and the world—about the importance of tribes and Native peoples to our nation's past, present, and future.

The Embassy has hosted tribal leaders, senior Cabinet officials, international Indigenous leaders, senior UN personnel, foreign ambassadors, ministers from foreign governments, and school children from throughout the nation.

The newly equipped conference room has enabled NCAI to extend the impact of its work and advance its mission of advocacy and education across Indian Country and beyond.

This year, over 300 people in 31 groups formally visited the Embassy from tribal nations, states throughout the nation, and more than 15 different countries. Sessions included educational presentations, discussions, planning sessions, and Embassy tours. The groups included international visitors from Armenia, Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Jordan, Mexico, New Zealand, Namibia, Nicaragua, among others.

Media & Press

NCAI partners with tribes and Native organizations to send a clear message to the media – and the general public – that successful tribal nations are critical to a successful America. Our efforts in 2013-14 included leadership on issues with significant national attention, from “Baby Veronica” to Native mascots; capacity building to expand the number of tribal leaders who are equipped to effectively engage with the media; and education efforts to engage reporters

and ensure ongoing coverage of issues that matter to tribal nations. In addition to the “high profile” issues noted above, NCAI was an effective voice on the national stage regarding tribal sovereignty, voting rights, and a host of other subjects.

NCAI serves as a trusted source and educator for the media on breaking news and developments. NCAI has increased its capability to reach members not only by using traditional forms of media, but through broadening new media, such as web development, digital media, and social media. We also provide a range of materials to be used in reporting, including audio, video, and photography.

Communications

NCAI.org has almost 20,000 hits a month. Our website drives more viewers to our social media than Google. This year we also launched The Policy Research Center and Tribal VAWA microsites. These microsites, in conjunction with NCAI.org, are spaces for educating the public. They provide users with critical and timely materials, best practices, and information on how to get more involved.

NCAI sends out weekly broadcasts of news, updates, and events to our membership, tribal leaders, youth, and national Native organizations. Action alerts and press releases are sent out as events occur. NCAI has deepened our engagement with national and local media to continued to raise the profile of Native issues in local and national news. During the past year, in particular, we have provided public comment, background information, and critical data information on tribal sovereignty, the mascot issue, violence against women, Native vote, and many other issues.

NCAI also continues to coordinate DC Native Public Relations Roundtable, a communications network of Native organizations, federal partners, and others that work toward a unified message in Washington, DC. The group meets monthly to discuss national issues and organize plans for educating the public with a particular focus on Native American Heritage Month.

Social Media

Social media has been an increasingly important avenue for NCAI to enhance connections across Indian Country and bring important issues to a national audience. During Super Bowl weekend 2014, #NotYourMascot was amongst the top five trending topics on Twitter. We also love the recent conversations occurring on Facebook and Instagram. Followers share photos of what is going on in their respective communities—from how Native youth spent their summers and how they got ready for the school year to tribal leaders at key events such as the White House Tribal Nations Summit. Posts on our Facebook page have reached over 430,000 views. Social media has also made it easier for members to access NCAI publications as soon as they are released, as well as find out about NCAI events.

Thanks to the Proud To Be video—which has now collected over 3 million views—the traffic on our YouTube channel has drastically increased. NCAI’s channel is populated with video’s on Native Vote, webinars, past State of Indian Nations addresses, conference speeches, and other overviews of our work.

NCAI Social Media Breakdown

Facebook:

Highest reach over 430,000

Top 10 Cities on our page:

Albuquerque, NM	371
Seattle, WA	333
Washington, DC	324
Phoenix, AZ	319
New York, NY	265
Los Angeles, CA	263
Portland, OR	261
Anchorage, AK	246
Chicago, IL	196
Denver, CO	191

35-44 years of age is our largest audience

45-54 years of age is our next largest audience

Twitter

- Average about 500 new followers each month
- Over 14,000 followers
- Most clicked link this year was for the livestream of the President’s speech at the Cannon Ball Flag Day Celebration on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.
- Added new twitter accounts and maintained old ones:

@NativeVote | @TribalHltCare | @ncaiYouth

NCAI Membership

NCAI is supported primarily through membership dues and contributions. There are four membership categories identified in the NCAI constitution:

1. Tribal Membership

Any Tribe, band or identifiable group of American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts shall be eligible for tribal membership provided it shall fulfill all of the following requirements:

- a. A substantial number of its members reside upon the same reservation, or (in the absence of a reservation) in the same general locality;
- b. It maintains a Tribal organization, with regular officers and the means of transacting business and arriving at a reasonably accurate count of its membership;
- c. It is not a mere offshoot or fraction of an organized Tribe itself eligible for membership; and
- d. It is recognized as a Tribe, or other identifiable group of American Indians by the Department of the Interior, Court of Claims, the Indian Claims Commission, or a State. An Indian or Alaska Native organization incorporated/chartered under state law is not eligible for tribal membership.

NCAI Membership (continued)

2. Indian Individual and Lifetime Membership

Any person of Indian and/or Alaska Native ancestry in the United States or a native of Alaska is eligible for individual and lifetime membership. For the purpose recognized as a member by an Indian Tribe, or band, 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 and Lifetime Membership

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

4. Associate Organization Membership

Organizations may be admitted to non-voting associate membership upon the payment of annual dues as fixed by the Bylaws. No individual or organization with known subversive activities or affiliation shall be admitted to membership, nor shall their contributions be accepted.

Fundraising

This year is a landmark year for the organization. NCAI is celebrating 70 years! In acknowledgment of this significant milestone, NCAI has been increasing fundraising efforts and has created an internal fundraising team. “For the 7th Generation” is a campaign that was created to highlight the accomplishments and work of NCAI over the past 70 years and focus our attention on building a strong future for the next 70 years. With this campaign, NCAI created materials on the valuable work of NCAI and how to contribute to a successful future.



Join hundreds of tribes, thousands of Native people, and other partners as we build a strong future for Indian Country. Become a member today!

Annual Membership Dues

Individual Indian [Voting]	\$40.00
Individual Associate [Non-Voting]	\$40.00
Associate Organization [Non-Voting]	\$500.00
Individual Indian Lifetime [Voting]	\$1000.00
Individual Associate Lifetime [Non-Voting]	\$1000.00

Our recently launched “Founders Day Campaign” is an effort to increase individual donations by streamlining the online giving process. We have also used other tools to make giving easy like the Combined Federal Campaign and Amazon Smile. More information is available at sevengenerations.ncai.org.

Partners & Supporters

In November 1944, tribal leaders faced the terrible threat of the federal termination policy, but they responded by making a tremendous sacrifice that would change the history of Indian Country. In spite of the cost, they traveled to Denver, Colorado to gather with other tribal leaders and establish the National Congress of American Indians. They invested in the future and, today, our communities are still reaping the benefits of that investment.

The success of NCAI's work since that time is built on the generosity and ingenuity of tribal leaders, tribal nations, foundations, businesses, Native citizens, and non-Native allies. We are deeply grateful for the investments of the following NCAI partners:

Tribal Investors

- Afognak Native Corporation
- Central Council Tlingit & Haida Tribes of Alaska
- Cherokee Nation
- Chickasaw Nation
- Chugach Alaska Corporation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Forest County Potawatomi Community
- Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
- Kaw Nation
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina
- Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
- Muscogee Creek – River Spirit Casino
- Osage Nation
- Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians
- Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians
- Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation
- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Southcentral Foundation Swinomish Tribe
- Tohono O'odham Nation

Native Organization Partners

- AMERIND Risk Management Corporation
- Native American Contractors Association
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs
- USET

Foundation Partners

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Northwest Area Foundation
- Nathan Cummings Foundation
- Agua Fund

Federal Government Partners

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Defense
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Justice
- National Science Foundation

Business Allies

- Bank of America
- Google
- Wal-Mart
- Key Bank
- Roche Diagnostics Corporation
- BlueCross BlueShield of OK
- BNSF Railway
- Dentons
- Google
- Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker, LLP
- North Star Group
- GCI
- Strategies 360
- Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Miller & Munson LLP
- 7th Day Adventist Church

NCAI Staff Directory

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