

First Kids 1st Newsletter

April 2015

Edition 1

A newsletter to share the positive work of tribes, Native families, communities, organizations, and the Administration which allow our youth to thrive and succeed. In partnership with the My Brother's Keeper, Generation Indigenous ("Gen I") and First Kids 1st Initiatives, please feel free to join our First Kids 1st community and share your stories or best practices that are creating a positive impact for Native youth.

To share your stories for future newsletters, send your information to firstkids@ncai.org.

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YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

George Washington University Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

The George Washington University signed a memorandum of understanding in February that will provide funding for Native American students who are members of federally recognized California tribes to study, live and work in Washington, D.C.

The MOU with the [Agua Caliente Band Of Cahuilla Indians](#) will establish the Richard M. Milanovich Fellowship and will support students through GW's [Native American Political Leadership Program](#). The semester-long fellowship will welcome its first cohort in spring 2016.



“This is a significant opportunity for future fellows, for the band and for the GW community,” said Gregory Lebel, director of NAPLP. “We are very excited about this new and important partnership with the Agua Caliente

Band, and we’re honored to be the home of the Richard M. Milanovich Fellowship.”

NAPLP is part of GW’s [Semester in Washington](#) program and provides full scholarships for Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students. Milanovich Fellows, in addition to taking courses at GW and participating in NAPLP activities, will secure part-time internships and take part in a one-week bonus program that includes seminars and briefings with key policymakers, issue advocates and community leaders.

“This experience at the George Washington University will allow Native American students to enhance classroom learning and gain invaluable experience in the real world,” said Jeff L. Grubbe, chairman of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. “It’s well known that college graduates have the ability to achieve at a higher level and obtain a much-needed competitive edge in today’s job market. We want students in the fellowship program to achieve this kind of success.”

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians is a federally recognized Indian Tribe located in Palm Springs, Calif., with 32,000 acres of reservation lands that spread across Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage and into the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains. The fellowship is named after Richard M. Milanovich, who served as tribe chairman for nearly 30 years prior to his death in 2012.

“Chairman Milanovich was a respected leader throughout Indian Country and Washington, D.C.,” Mr. Grubbe said. “This fellowship recognizes his legacy of service to the tribe and the relationships he cultivated.

2015 NCAI Executive Council Winter Session – Youth Track

NCAI was proud of the strong youth attendance at its Executive Council Winter Session (ECWS), held February 23rd through 26th in Washington D.C. NCAI's ECWS is an annual meeting where tribal leaders and other stakeholders discuss policy priorities for the year. This year, the Youth had the opportunity to hear from Congressional and Administration representatives on upcoming legislative and Administrative efforts that will impact tribal governments and communities, and to participate in sessions alongside tribal leaders.



NCAI values the participation and contribution of youth at all their conferences and is currently planning the youth track for the upcoming Mid-Year Conference in St. Paul, MN, from June 28-July 1st.



2014-2015 NCAI Tribal Stock Exchange Game Winners

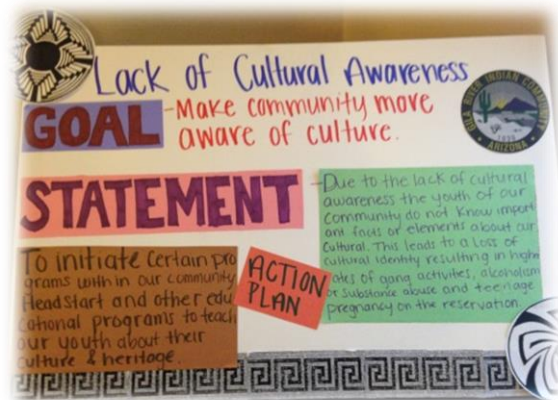
On the closing evening of the 2015 NCAI Executive Council Winter Session, NCAI hosted the 17th Annual Leadership Awards Banquet. Among the honorees recognized were the 2014-2015 Tribal Exchange Game Winners from Monument Valley High School. This year's student awardees from the school were: Tyler Bowsley and Levander Gillis, both in the 11th grade. The annual [Tribal Stock Exchange Game](#) is played by Native students across the country. This year's winners raised the most money in the exchange to win a trip to Washington, D.C.

More information can be found on [NCAI's website](#) with further information on joining this upcoming year's game made available later this year. The dates for the next session will be announced in September.



Close-Up Poster Session

In addition, to the youth track during NCAI's Executive Council Winter Session, NCAI also hosted a Native Close-Up Poster session, bringing together students from around the country to share solutions about issues of concern to them in their communities. The Close-Up participants presented their initiatives to tribal leaders and provided ideas for how to make positive impacts in areas such as education, prevention of substance abuse, and creating youth councils.



NCAI Youth Commission

Established in 1997, the [NCAI Youth Commission](#) provides a unique perspective on issues relevant to tribal youth. The Youth Commission is a space for college and high school students to come together and discuss solutions to the unique challenges they face within their communities.

The Youth Commission serves as an important resource to NCAI and Tribal Leaders and provides an opportunity to acquire knowledge from NCAI and Tribal Leaders about the organizational processes of NCAI and structure of Tribal Politics. Most importantly the NCAI Youth Commission is a mechanism for achieving a unified voice for ALL Native American and Alaskan Native youth.

The following Commissioners were elected at NCAI's Annual meeting and will serve for the 2014-2016

Term:

- **Tyler Owens, Co-President (Gila River Indian Community)**
- **Jared Massey, Co-President (White Mountain Apache & Navajo)**
- **Cassandra Church, Co-Vice President (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi)**
- **Brian Weeden, Co-Vice President (Mashpee Wampanoag)**
- **David Colbert, Treasurer (Muscogee (Creek) Nation)**
- **Brian Barlow, Secretary (Cherokee Nation)**
- **Mary Guenther, Member-At-Large (Aleut)**
- **Michaela Custodio, Member-At-Large (Ho-Chunk Nation)**
- **Skyler Daisy, Member-At-Large (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi)**
- **Collin Church, Member-At-Large (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi)**

NCAI National Native Youth Cabinet

The [National Native Youth Cabinet](#) is the executive and policy training component of NCAI's National Native Youth Training Collaborative, which also engages youth affiliated with the [National Congress of American Indians Youth Commission](#), the [Native Boys & Girls Clubs of America](#), and the U.S. Department of Justice's [2012 National Intertribal Youth Summit](#).

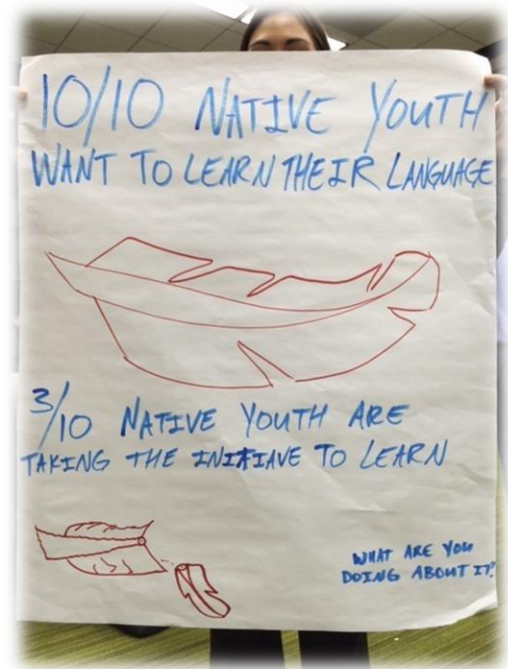
The National Native Youth Cabinet provides a virtual space for Native youth to meet; share insights based on their local experiences; and engage with federal policy that has importance to them and their communities. Fifteen Cabinet Members, ages 17-24, were competitively selected based on applications and tribal recommendations for outstanding leadership and demonstrated commitment to issues affecting Native youth. Cabinet members represent issues of significance in their tribe and region, and help move a national strategy related to Native youth leadership.

The NCAI National Native Youth Cabinet Members are:

- **Sapphire Carter (Chippewa Cree)**
- **Julian Juan (Tohono O'odham)**
- **Whitney Sawney (Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma)**
- **Alayna Eagle Shield (Standing Rock Sioux Nation)**
- **Candice Yazzie (Navajo Nation)**

- Sarah Schilling (Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians)
- Heather Curley (Navajo Nation)
- Malachi (Kai) Stroud (Choctaw Nation, Oklahoma)
- Layha Spoonhunter (Eastern Shoshone/Northern Arapaho/Oglala Lakota)
- Cierra Fields (Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma)
- Jaysonha Revey (Lummi Nation)
- Simon Goldenberg (Mdewakanton Dakota)
- Dakhota Kicking Bear Brown (Wilton Miwok)
- Collin Church (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi)
- Stephanie Lefthand (Taos Pueblo)

Members of the National Native Youth Cabinet participate in training designed to prepare them with political knowledge and skills to further their abilities as national and tribal leaders. The training takes place primarily in virtual space and includes financial literacy, resiliency, community wellness, and policy identification and development. In June 2014, NCAI worked with federal partners and other organizations to plan a series of Data Institutes to bring stakeholders together around federal data on American Indian and Alaska Native youth to discuss data quality, data use, and policy development. Native youth participants emphasized how important language and culture are in telling the story about Native youth in federal policy – see the infographic they created (Right).



- [PowerPoint](#) for the Youth Data Institute at the 2014 Mid-Year Conference in Anchorage, Alaska
- [Agenda](#) for the Youth Data Institute hosted at the Embassy of Tribal Nations in Washington, D.C.

National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) Updates

NICWA has published new resource materials for tribal leaders and tribal child and youth advocates. The first is a guide to effective leadership and governance in tribal child welfare entitled, “[Effective Leadership for Tribal Child Welfare](#).” This document discusses tribal child welfare services and the role of tribal leadership.

The second is a comprehensive guide to Indian Child Welfare Act compliance entitled, “[A Guide to Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act](#).” This document provides a framework for assessing and increasing compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act that protect tribal children and youth in state child welfare systems.

On March 20th, NICWA provided a webinar with over 800 participants that discussed the [new Indian Child Welfare Act \(ICWA\) guidelines](#) for state and private child welfare agencies and state courts. The webinar provided insight into the new federal guidelines and strategies for using the guidelines successfully. Following the release of the new guidelines in February, the Bureau of Indian Affairs followed up the guidelines with the release of proposed federal regulations (March 20) that take many of the new guidelines and strengthen them through regulations.

NICWA continues to draw upon a variety of partners to increase advocacy and support for tribal youth nationally. In February, NICWA came together with leaders from nine different national, mainstream child advocacy organizations to ask for their increased support of tribal children and youth. Groups like the Children’s Defense Fund, Child Welfare League of America, and Generations United discussed ideas on how to strengthen their advocacy for tribal youth and partner more effectively with NICWA and others within Indian Country. As proposals to address reforms in child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health move forward on the national level, NICWA intends to enlist the help of these organizations to ensure that policymakers include tribal children and youth in their proposals.

NICWA understands the needs of tribal children and youth are not always part of the conversations that occur during the federal budget process. At the Department of Health and Human Services Tribal Budget Consultation NICWA provided comprehensive testimony on federal programs within DHHS that have the potential to support improved services for tribal children and youth in the areas of child welfare and mental health. The testimony was delivered by NICWA President Gil Vigil which outlined several important programs that are either underfunded or present barriers to tribal access, as well as recommendations on funding levels for DHHS as they develop their budget for next year.

Center for Native American Youth: 2015 Champions for Change

Earlier this year, the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY) announced their third class of [Champions for Change](#). The new class will join the 2014 Champions on [CNAY’s Youth Advisory Board](#) to build and inform the center’s work at a national level.

The following are the 2015 Champions:

- **Jazmyn Espinoza, 18 (Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican)**
- **Hamilton Seymour, 15 (Nooksack Indian Tribe)**
- **Rory Taylor, 18 (Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma)**
- **Tatiana Ticknor, 16 (Yup’ik, Tlingit, Dena’ina)**
- **Carina Young, 22 (Native Hawaiian)**

WHITE HOUSE & ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVES

Generation Indigenous (“Gen I”)

During the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference, President Obama announced the launching of the administration-wide **Generation Indigenous (“Gen I”) Initiative**. The Gen I Initiative is a Native youth initiative focused on removing the barriers that stand between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed. This initiative will take a comprehensive, culturally appropriate approach to help improve the lives and opportunities for Native youth and will include:

- **Gen-I Native Youth Challenge**
- **Gen-I Tribal Leaders Challenge**
- **Gen-I Youth Ambassadors**

- National Tribal Youth Network
- President’s Cabinet Native Youth Listening Tour
- FY 2016 Budget Request
- White House Native Youth Report
- 2015 White House Tribal Youth Gathering
- Native Youth Community Grant Project

Gen-I Native Youth Challenge

Youth 14-24, Indian tribes, non-profits, and educational institutions are invited to join the National Native Youth Network by accepting the [Gen-I Challenge](#).

Organizations, colleges, universities, and TCUs can take the Gen-I Challenge too by committing to help their youth and students complete the Gen-I Challenge! Just follow [this link](#) to get signed up!

The following organizations have already committed to take the Gen-I Challenge:

- American Indian College Fund
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium
- Boys and Girls Club of America
- Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute
- National American Indian Education Association
- National Congress of American Indians
- National Indian Child Welfare Association
- National Indian Health Board
- United National Indian Tribal Youth

Gen-I Tribal Leaders Challenge

During NCAI’s 2015 Executive Council Winter Session, the administration announced the latest installment of the Gen-I Initiative with the [Gen-I Tribal Leaders Challenge](#). The White House is inviting tribal leaders to take concrete steps to engage with Native youth in their communities including: working with or creating a youth council; hosting a joint meeting between youth and tribal leaders; or partnering with youth to plan a program to support positive change in their community.

The following tribes have already accepted the Gen-I Tribal Leaders Challenge:

- Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Gila River Indian Community
- Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
- Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
- Three Affiliated Tribes
- Native Village of Afognak
- Crow Tribe

- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Mashpee Wampanoag
- Nez Perce Tribe
- Lummi Nation
- Tsimshian/Pawnee
- Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin

For more information such as the Gen-I toolkit, latest news, and other resources visit www.genindigenous.com.

White House “Gen-I” Ambassadors Announced at 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference

On December 3rd, President Obama hosted the 6th annual White House Tribal Nations Conference where, for the first time, 37 high-school aged “Gen-I” Native Youth Ambassadors were invited to participate in the White House Conference alongside tribal leaders from the 566 federally-recognized Native nations. The 2014 Youth Ambassadors came from across the country, from Alaska to North Carolina, and are an inspiring group with big plans for making a positive impact in their communities. The Youth Ambassadors had the opportunity to engage with the President, Vice President, and Cabinet Officials representing the White House Council on Native American Affairs on key issues facing tribes. The Gen I Initiative built on the President’s visit to the Standing Rock



Sioux Indian Reservation in June, during which he and First Lady Michelle Obama met with a group of Lakota youth and learned about the obstacles and problems they had experienced which prevent them from reaching their goals.



Ambassadors were featured in a new MTV video “[Meet Generation Indigenous](#)” that followed two of the youth on their inspiring journey from their home communities to Washington, D.C.

National Tribal Youth Network

A new [National Tribal Youth Network](#) has been established in partnership between the administration and the Center for Native American Youth as part of the broader “Generation Indigenous” (“Gen I”) initiative launched by the administration. The Youth Network will support leadership development, provide peer support through an interactive online portal that links resources and tools, and empowers youth to become leaders within their communities.

President’s Cabinet Native Youth Listening Tour

On February 10th, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell kicked off the administration’s [President’s Cabinet Native Youth Listening Tour](#). Secretary Jewell visited with youth in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa and Gila River Indian Communities in Arizona. Click here for a [video](#) released by the Department of the Interior on February 20th featuring highlights from her visit.



FY 2016 Budget Request

As part of President Obama’s FY 2016 Budget Request submitted annually to Congress, the Gen I Initiative was a key focus throughout the budget that includes funding requests across multiple agencies. Some highlights of the Gen I FY 2016 Budget Request include:

- **\$34.2 million at the Department of the Interior (DOI)** to extend broadband internet and computer access to all BIE-funded schools and dormitories
- **\$10 million at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and \$8 million at DOI** to address teacher housing needs
- **\$50 million at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** to provide youth-focused behavioral, mental health, and substance abuse services
- **\$53 million at the Department of Education (ED)** for the Native Youth Community Projects that will support comprehensive strategies to improve college and career-readiness of Native youth

More information on the Gen I Initiative within the FY 2016 Budget Request can be found in [NCAI’s FY 2016 Budget Request Analysis](#).

White House Native Youth Report

During the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference last December, the administration released the [2014 White House Native Youth Report](#). The report acknowledges the past failures of federal policy on the education of Native students, explores the breadth of the challenges facing Native children (educational disparities, socioeconomic disparities in childhood and adulthood, and health disparities), and makes recommendations for a path forward.

My Brother's Keeper Initiative

As part of the White House's "[My Brother's Keeper](#)" Initiative announced early last year, NCAI launched the [Native American My Brother's Keeper Task Force](#), headed by NCAI President Brian Cladoosby and joined by partner organizations: the Center for Native American Youth, the Native American Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the National Indian Education Association, American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and UNITY, Inc. The task force will coordinate and serve as the central point for sharing important work, opportunities, and resources for Native youth in tribal communities across Indian Country. So far dozens of tribal communities have joined the challenge to address the unique needs facing Native youth in their communities. Please let us know of any tribal or community efforts surrounding this initiative at firstkids@ncai.org.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NCAI & the National Financial Education Coalition Launches "NAT\$VE in the BANK" Campaign!

April is Financial Literacy Month! Be on the lookout for events in your communities touting the importance of financial education and offering training, tips and tools to help you increase your financial knowledge – and take advantage of these opportunities! Check with your local Native Community Development Financial Institution, Boys & Girls Club, other youth programs, and area banks and credit unions to see what they are doing and how you can participate.

Meanwhile, the National Congress of American Indians and the Native Financial Education Coalition has launched the "NAT\$VE in the BANK" campaign for Native youth and young adults ages 13 to 25! Open a bank account, increase your financial knowledge, and win some exciting prizes! To learn more, go to: <http://nfec.us/>

NCAI Internship & Fellowship Program

NCAI offers internships and fellowships to provide an opportunity for young leaders from throughout Indian Country to serve on the front lines of legislative action and policy development. All interns and fellows are selected through an application and interview process.

NCAI Internships:

Students enrolled in institutions of higher learning are invited to apply for semester or summer-long internships (for which most institutions will offer college credit), with one to two applicants selected for each term. NCAI interns work with various staff on the issues they are most interested in pursuing.

NCAI is currently accepting applications for fall internships!

Young Native leaders are invited to apply for fall internships. The application can be downloaded for [initial review here](#) and completed [online here](#). The deadline to apply for the fall internship is **June 22nd** with decisions made no later than July 20th.

2015 White House Native Youth Gathering

As part of the administration's "Gen-I" Initiative announced at the 2014 White House Tribal Nations Conference, the White House is planning to host its first-ever White House Tribal Youth Gathering in Washington, D.C. this upcoming summer. The Gathering will engage hundreds of Native youth in a day-long convening. This gathering will build on the November 2014 Native Youth Conference hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the tribal youth visit with President Obama. Native youth are encouraged to participate and complete their [Gen-I Native Youth Challenge](#) for an opportunity to be invited to apply for this upcoming Gathering.

More details on this upcoming Gathering will be announced in the coming weeks ahead.

George Washington University Semester in Washington Program – Presidential Campaign Boot Camp

GWs' Semester in Washington Politics' [Presidential Campaign Boot Camp](#) lifts the curtain on the presidential nomination process and puts you right in the thick of Campaign 2016. Here you will gain important tools, connections, and insight into the process of Presidential politics from start to finish, including:

- **Courses:** Earn academic credit in our joint program with the Bipartisan Policy Center and Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH. Our virtual link to exclusive seminars and panel discussions with key players in the campaigns will connect you to all the major players working on the ground in New Hampshire, from official campaign staff, local and national media and grassroots activists to campaign consultants and state and national party officials.
- **DC Internships:** With your DC-based internship, you will learn how the political world of Washington works—plus gain a valuable resume boost.
- **New Hampshire:** Spend a week in New Hampshire with the campaign of your choice during the run up to the nation's first primary. There you'll put what you have learned directly into action and personally engage in the Presidential Campaign process.

Native American Political Leadership Program scholarships will be available for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students for the purpose of attending the Boot Camp program.

Don't just sit on the sidelines for 2016. Apply today and become part of history in the making with Semester in Washington Politics' Presidential Campaign Boot Camp!

The priority application deadline is **April 15th**, and the final deadline is **June 1st**. Boot Camp will run from August 31- December 11, 2015, and you can apply at <http://semesterinwashington.gwu.edu/>. If you have any questions, please contact us at siwp@gwu.edu or 202-994-3284.

2015-2016 Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BoFAML) MBA Diversity Fellowship Program

The BoFAML MBA Diversity Fellowship Program will award merit-based fellowships to Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, military veterans, LGBT, students with disabilities and women entering business school in fall 2015.

Successful candidates will receive:

- \$40,000 of total tuition and fees towards the first year of their MBA program
- A paid summer internship within the Global Banking and Markets (GBAM) businesses including: Investment Banking, Public Finance or Research
- The opportunity to receive a further \$40,000 of total tuition and fees for the second year of their MBA program upon successful completion of the GBAM Summer Associate Program and acceptance of a 2017 full-time offer

[The application for the program can be found here.](#)

The deadline for this program is **Sunday, April 26th**.

Summer Leadership Summit: Native Youth in Agriculture

The University of Arkansas School of Law – The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative is accepting applications for their second annual Summer Leadership Summit for Native Youth in Food & Agriculture. The program is looking for student applicants from American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian youth between the ages of 13 and 18 who are passionate about food and agricultural production and have the courage to lead their tribes and communities into the future.

If you're a college-aged student, you are encouraged to apply to be a Student Leader, and if you're back for a second year as a student, please fill out an application to be a Summit Fellow.

Dates: July 19 – July 28, 2015 (including travel dates)

Location: University of Arkansas School of Law, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Hosts: Indigenous Food & Agriculture Initiative, University of Arkansas School of Law; Farm Credit; Intertribal Agriculture Council; National FFA Organization

Supporters: First Nations Development Institute

Cost to Attend: All food, lodging, instructional materials, and field trip costs will be provided. Depending on the number of students, some travel scholarships will also be provided. However, students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to plan for travel needs.

Deadline: June 1, 2015

Applications:

1st Time Attendees: [Student Application](#)

2nd Time Attendees: [Summit Fellow Application](#)

College-Aged: [Student Leader Application](#)

Contact: Rebecca – ras017@uark.edu

More Scholarship, Internship, and Fellowship Opportunities!

Please visit our partner organizations' websites to learn of more upcoming opportunities:

- [National Indian Education Association](#)
- [American Indian College Fund](#)
- [Center for Native American Youth](#)

CALL FOR FUTURE CONTENT

We'd Like To Hear From You!

If you have any content that you or your organization/tribe want to submit to share please send to firstkids@ncai.org and we'll be sure to include it in in the next issue! Pictures and external links are welcome!

You have been added to our subscriber list because of your prior involvement with NCAI and/or Native youth issues. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please email firstkids@ncai.org to be removed from the list.



National
Congress of
American
Indians



NATIONAL
INDIAN
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION
Advancing Excellence for All Native Students

National Indian
Health Board



The Red Feather Of Hope And Healing



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting our children • Preserving our culture