The NCAI Policy Research Center serves the goal of “supporting Indian Country in shaping its own future” through the following mission: “To provide tribal leaders with the best available knowledge to make strategically proactive policy decisions in a framework of Native wisdom that positively impact the future of Native peoples.” Toward meeting this goal and mission, we provide the following summary of key data and research updates to inform the strategic planning and decision-making of tribal leaders.

**New Reports Released**

There have been a number of reports released recently with data and policy information relevant to tribal nations. These include:

- The 2013 American Indian Population and Labor Force Report;
- The Indian Law & Order Commission Report;
- The White House Council on Women and Girls' Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call to Action Report; and
- Additionally, the Child Welfare Outcomes Report has been updated to provide the latest 2009-2012 statistics from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS).

**Emerging Diabetes Research**

As discussed in the January 18, 2014, *New York Times*’ article, “What Happens When the Poor Receive a Stipend?” research led by Professor Jane Costello of Duke University Medical School explores the impact of a per-capita distribution (from gaming profits from a casino that opened in 1996) on family outcomes for members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina. With one of very few longitudinal data sets that includes a large number of Native participants, Costello has followed 1,420 rural youth – including 350 Cherokee youth – since 1992. Over time, her research has indicated that these financial supplements contribute to an increase in on-time high school graduation, a decline in minor crimes committed, lower prevalence of substance abuse and mental health problems in adulthood for the youngest children. Emerging analysis from Native Hawaiian economist, Professor Randall Akee of the University of California, Los Angeles, further suggests that these future savings surpass the initial costs of the per-capita payments. There are some other results that bear further study related to youth weight gain in families receiving supplements and increases in accidental deaths in the months payments were released. This research has some implications about the impact of poverty and economic development on tribal community health.
The Center for Diabetes Translation Research (http://cdtr.wustl.edu) that NCAI is a part of recently hosted a scholar seminar at Washington University in St. Louis. Five Native researchers participated and developed plans to submit research to an upcoming special issue of the Preventing Chronic Disease journal.

- Dr. Tennille Marley (White Mountain Apache; Arizona State University) is exploring structural factors like overcrowding in housing and mobility as risk factors for obesity and diabetes among Native youth.
- Dr. Ka‘imi Sinclair (Cherokee; University of Washington) is exploring lessons learned from programs like the Special Diabetes Program for Indians that have adapted the original Diabetes Prevention Program.
- Dr. Michelle Johnson-Jennings (Choctaw; University of Minnesota – Duluth) is exploring how interventions that focus on income and education inequality might reduce diabetes risk.
- Dr. Eddie Brown (Pascua Yaqui/Tohono O’odham) is exploring the consequences of food commodity policies on diabetes in Native communities.
- Dr. Malia Villegas (Alutiiq/Sugpiaq; NCAI) is exploring how online and off-line health communications reach adult men to reduce disparities in obesity and diabetes.

**Tools & Initiatives of the NCAI Policy Research Center**

**NCAI Policy Research Center's 2014 Strategic Priorities.** The 2014 areas of priority include: 1) fostering regional supports for tribal research; 2) improving data related to Native people and lands in an appropriate way; 3) sharing tribal successes to advance policy research; and 4) advancing dissemination efforts.

**9th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum.** On June 10, 2014, in Anchorage, Alaska, at NCAI’s Mid Year Conference, the NCAI Policy Research Center will host the Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum, which provides a space for tribal leaders and citizens, researchers, and policy organizations to discuss how to strengthen public policy and community-based initiatives based on meaningful data and research. This year’s theme is, “Moving Policy & Innovation through Tribal Research,” and the Forum will feature a morning plenary session and afternoon breakout sessions with panel presentations, research planning sessions, and a poster session.

**ACF Children’s Bureau’s “Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities”**. American Indian and Alaska Native communities face unique challenges when participating in program evaluation. Historically, tribes have experienced intrusive research and judgmental evaluations that have caused many of them great harm. Many evaluators do not understand the fear that persists due to this history, and some fail to respect tribal cultural traditions, worldviews, and values. The Children’s Bureau (CB) formed a Tribal Evaluation Workgroup (that NCAI Policy Research Center staff participated in) to develop a product that might improve evaluation with tribal communities. Together, workgroup members created a shared vision for the future of tribal child welfare evaluation and a guide for developing culturally and scientifically rigorous evaluation (see https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/tribal-workgroup). This publication will be accompanied by two brief videos that introduce concepts described in the Roadmap document. The videos are part of a new Child Welfare Evaluation Virtual Summit Series that will feature presentations on key evaluation topics. The Summit Series will launch on the CB website on a rolling basis between late February and June 2014.
NSF Grant Proposal Related to Tribal Labor Force Data. NCAI recently submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation to strengthen the capacity of tribes to collect and manage their own demographic data (e.g., housing, labor force, enrollment). We are interested in hearing from tribes who have previously collected their own demographic data and those who would like support in doing so in the future for ongoing conversations. Please contact mvillegas@ncai.org for further information.

Tribal Public Health Law Database. With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and in partnership with the National Indian Health Board, the NCAI Policy Research Center will be launching a database that features laws, policies, and codes that tribes have established to address public health in their communities. We currently have collected close to 400 individual codes and are working to secure tribal permissions to share these codes. Please contact mvillegas@ncai.org for further information.

Diabetes Translation Research. In partnership with Washington University in St. Louis, the NCAI Policy Research Center is working to eliminate disparities in Type 2 diabetes by translating evidence-based interventions to diverse communities. We are developing work around four key areas identified as important in Native contexts, including: 1) policy advocacy; 2) tribal research regulation; 3) co-occurring conditions (e.g., diabetes and heart disease, oral health, etc.); and 4) research outcomes that benefit Native people. We are also planning a Policy Institute in 2014 to identify how best to leverage the best research into policy change. If you are a researcher committed to addressing diabetes translation in Native contexts, please visit http://cdtr.wustl.edu for more information.

8th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum Proceedings. The 8th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum was held in Reno, Nevada, in June at NCAI's Mid Year Conference. The theme was, "Planning for Change in Native Communities: Using Research to Understand Economic, Civil, and Cultural Transformation." The Proceedings document includes abstracts and PowerPoint slides from the 18 conference presentations, as well as abstracts and poster images from the 7 Poster presentations and is available at the following address: http://tinyurl.com/NCAIPRC-RenoProceedings.

Policy Brief: Preventing Unintentional Injury & Death on Reservation Roads. Deaths resulting from unintentional injury are the second leading cause of death for Native people. This brief presents data related to seat belt use, child safety seat use, pedestrian safety, and distracted driving; summarizes trends from 18 tribal codes related to child safety seat use; and provides recommendations for tribes. We hope to identify 3-5 tribes who have promising initiatives in preventing unintentional injury to feature in case studies. This work is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (see http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/HH_PRC_Policy_Insights:UIIRD_Final_061813-Copy.pdf).

Statistics on Violence Against Native Women: Policy Insights Brief. In this brief, the NCAI Policy Research Center synthesizes available data on violence against Native women to guide policy decision-making and media reporting. This brief stands alongside other materials in the Violence Against Women Act Toolkit developed by NCAI to demonstrate the need for a policy framework with funded, enforceable regulations and tribal authority to protect Native women (see http://files.ncai.org/broadcasts/2013/February/Policy%20Insights%20Brief_VAWA_020613.pdf).
**American Indian and Alaska Native Genetics Resource Center.** In September 2012, the NCAI Policy Research Center launched the Genetics Resource Center as an online resource in response to tribal leaders’ request for more information on genetics research (see [http://genetics.ncai.org](http://genetics.ncai.org)). Users can find resources such as information on the basics of genetics research, interactive decision guides and checklists, and examples of how tribes are engaging with genetics research. This project was supported by funding from the National Human Genome Research Institute of the National Institutes of Health. In partnership with NHGRI and the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), NCAI is hosting a one-day symposium on August 7, 2014, at NMAI on some issues of significance to Native communities related to genetics research.

‘Walk Softly and Listen Carefully’: Building Research Relationships with Tribal Communities Report. In partnership with Montana State University’s Center for Native Health Partnerships, the NCAI Policy Research Center developed a resource guide to provide insights for researchers committed to developing research that benefits Native peoples. In this document, we emphasize how crucial it is for researchers to develop an understanding of Native cultures, tribal sovereignty, communities' experiences with research, and the particularities of place. Available at [www.ncai.org/attachments/PolicyPaper_SpMCHTcjxRRjMEjDnPmesENPzjHTwhOlOWxIWOIWdSrykJuQggG_NCAI-WalkSoftly.pdf](http://www.ncai.org/attachments/PolicyPaper_SpMCHTcjxRRjMEjDnPmesENPzjHTwhOlOWxIWOIWdSrykJuQggG_NCAI-WalkSoftly.pdf).


Research that Benefits Native Peoples: A Guide for Tribal Leaders. This five-module curriculum proposes five core values guiding research in Native contexts and guides tribal leaders through discussion on research design, ethics, research review protocols and institutional models, and evaluation. Module 1 is available at the hyperlink above, and the training is provided over 2.5 days (see [http://www.ncaiprc.org/research-curriculum-guide](http://www.ncaiprc.org/research-curriculum-guide)).

Partnered Research Project Protocols and Tools. In 2012, the NCAI Policy Research Center continued our national study of community-academic partnerships funded by the Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH). The project developed a series of protocols to guide our partnership that we are disseminating through the project website ([http://narch.ncaiprc.org](http://narch.ncaiprc.org)), along with the qualitative and quantitative research instruments, to inform the work of tribes in research partnership.