



The Data Drum

Supporting Sovereignty through Tribal Control over Tribal Data

November 2015

Cheyenne River Releases Labor Force Report

by Eileen Briggs, Executive Director, Tribal Ventures

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures, the data unit for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, has produced another in a series of publications profiling the tribe's population.

The newest involves a survey of the workforce and its needs. Key findings include: 1) the reservation has high rates of both unemployment and economic poverty; and 2) there are a large number of individuals who are able to work but do not have job opportunities or access to the jobs that are available.

The survey was conducted in 2014, using both paper survey forms and e-survey forms. Over 400 adults responded following an intensive outreach effort to contact community members in all the tribal settlements on the reservation.

Among the respondents who were neither employers nor supervisors, 53% were employed and 46% unemployed, clearly showing the severity of joblessness on the reservation.

Although many of the unemployed had at least basic skills, some need additional training. Employers and supervisors responding to the survey indicated that some of the top skills desired, included: computer skills, work readiness, and customer service. Respondents who were unemployed mentioned major challenges for them included: the cost and length of training, transportation to and from the training site, and child-care.

Special thanks to the Native Nations Institute at the University of Arizona for this information. For more information, visit the Web site of Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Ventures at <http://crttribalventures.org/>

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Census Bureau Schedules Tribal Consultations

The US Census Bureau has scheduled a number of tribal consultations on the 2020 Census. The first in the series was held in Morton, MN, on October 7th. The series continued at the convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives in Anchorage on October 14th and at the NCAI Annual Convention in San Diego on October 23rd and 24th.

Three additional sessions are scheduled after that in Choctaw, MS; Albuquerque, NM; and Fort Yates, ND. The series will wind up with a national Webinar conducted from Census Bureau headquarters, tentatively set for March of 2016.

A booklet prepared for the consultations, along with additional information is available at:

www.census.gov/aian/census_2020/

New ACS Releases

The Census Bureau released new 1-year ACS estimates for 2014 on September 17th. The data covers the American Indian/Alaska Native population at the national and state levels.

Data covering all reservations will be available with the 5-year estimates to be released on December 10th.

Like its predecessors, the 2020 decennial census will be used to map every Congressional District in the US House of Representatives, as well as state legislative districts in each of the states. This redistricting process is vital in determining the political strength of tribes and Native communities.

Currently, there are some critical questions that need answers from Census Bureau officials on just how the Bureau will work with tribes prior to and during the conduct of the 2020 decennial census. The questions include:

- The magnitude of the undercount of the American Indian/Alaska Native on reservation population was actually greater in 2010 than it was in 2000, according to the Census Bureau's own calculations. What will be done in 2020 to eliminate the undercount?
- What assistance will the Census Bureau make available to tribes, at the individual tribal level, to keep tribes continuously informed of developments in all phases of the preparation for and conduct of the 2020 Census?
- What will the Census Bureau do to insure the hiring of on-reservation tribal members in supervisorial as well as enumerator and other positions?
- Tribes are willing to help the Census Bureau with the 2020 Census. What will the Bureau do to help tribes interested in taking their own counts of the tribe's service population?

BIA Planning Rerun of 2013 Labor Force Report for 2016

In what appears to be a proposed work plan for a 2016 BIA Labor Force Report, the Department of the Interior is intending to produce a document similar to the last report issued in early 2014 that drew criticism from tribes as well as Congressional sources.

The main difference would be that a contractor, instead of an in-house Interior Department consultant, would draft the report.

The new report would follow the same approach as the last one, which was based on data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). The standard federal definition of unemployment would be used. That definition requires that a person be "actively seeking work" within the previous four weeks in order to be counted as unemployed.

Personally assessing the lack of job opportunities or listening to community word of mouth to learn that there are no jobs available doesn't count under this definition. That means Native people who need a job, but realize that there are no jobs available become invisible in the numbers. Under the standard federal

definition, they are simply considered as "not in the labor force."

Tribes have tended to ignore the data in the 2013 report. For instance, the last two Presidents of the Navajo Nation have cited an unemployment rate on that reservation as high as 60% in statements to the Congress and the press. The Navajo Nation's data conflict with the most recent ACS figures showing a 23% unemployment rate for that reservation.

A report in Indian Country Today shortly after the last Labor Force Report was released in early 2014 quoted Alaska Congressman Don Young as saying, "What was published was essentially a reprint of unhelpful and outdated U.S. Census Bureau data, all of which was publicly available prior to the release of the report."

In doing the last report, BIA departed from the practice of requesting population and labor force data from tribes it had followed for years. It did not ask tribes to provide the data and ignored the numbers that tribes did submit. Instead, it turned to the ACS data covering a 5-year period from 2006 to 2010.

Help Wanted

The Data Drum wants to hear from YOU!

What are the pressing data issues on your reservation or in your community?

What numbers make a difference to you in what you do and how you do it?

What data success stories do you have to share?

Send us an e-mail at: jherron@ncai.org

Tribal Data Partners - Notes from September 2nd Quarterly Call

NCAI hosted the first Quarterly Tribal Data Partners Call on September 2nd. NCAI Policy Research Director, Malia Villegas started the call by presenting on key data needs. She shared resources created by the PRC including [Regional Data Profiles](#), information from our [Native Youth Measures Meeting](#), and our recent publication on the [School-to-Prison Pipeline](#).

Participants were invited to share data needs and challenges, as well as solutions and best practices. Resources shared included the [2013 Report on Best Practices](#)

[from Tribal Epidemiology Centers](#). Topics expressed by callers included the lack of funding to execute tribal-level data collection, the need for more reliable data to challenge data that is collected on a federal or national level so that it more adequately reflects tribal populations and realities (e.g., labor force, poverty TANF, housing, transportation) and the desire to share resources and best practices for tribes on a shared list. As a result, NCAI created a Google Group to share information related to tribal data. To become a part of this group please email Jalene at jherron@ncai.org.

**Next tribal data quarterly call: December 9th, 1-230pm EST.
1.888.244.8150 Code: 1017767.**

NCAI Data Updates

“Measuring Community Change & Impact to Improve Youth Wellness” Meeting (August 20, 2015) in Washington, DC

NCAI along with the Center for American Progress, the National Urban League, and the Advancement Project - in hosting an all-day meeting on how to measure community change and impact in the context of youth. This work will inform ongoing work as part of the First Kids 1st initiative and work developed through an

Annie E. Casey Foundation project to strengthen AI/AN data available through KidsCount. More information is available at: www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/priorities/Comm_Change_Youth_Indicators_PPT.pdf.

“Data Matters” Session (October 18, 2015) in San Diego, CA at NCAI’s 72nd Annual Convention

NCAI’s NSF Tribal Data Grant Partners met on October 18th in San Diego as a pre-meeting to NCAI’s Annual Convention. Each partner shared information and progress to date. Five partner tribal organizations presented along with two of the project’s principal investigators. Some of the takeaways included: engaging and

supporting tribal planners and enrollment officers in the data process; concerns about whether federal data reports submitted by tribes are used and the need for more information on data management systems used by tribes. More information is available at: www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/data-quality.