



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS
POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

2017 Executive Council Winter Session– February 13-16, 2017



Greetings to our partners! This is your latest update from the NCAI Policy Research Center, which shares recent studies, information on research forums, and PRC initiatives. An electronic copy is available to share on our website: www.ncai.org/PRC.



Tribal housing on Pine Ridge Reservation.(Daily Yonder)

A Place We Call Home *What is the Future of Tribal Housing?*

Many tribal nations are considering new ways to approach housing in their communities—from economic, social, and cultural vantage points. This update provides a synopsis of recent research and tribal responses to housing concerns in reservation, rural, and urban communities.

In January, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released a series of assessments on the housing needs of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) peoples—in reservation, rural, and urban contexts. Five separate reports resulted from (1) a nationally representative survey of housing conditions and needs in tribal areas (n=1,340) and (2) a survey of 110 Tribally Designated Housing Entities, with 22 site visits.

Key findings¹



More than 1 in 5 (23 percent) homes in tribal areas have a physical condition problem (e.g. leaks, lack of heating or plumbing, etc.) as compared with **1 in 20** (5 percent) US homes.

Nationally, AI/AN homeownership increased at **2x** the rate of non-AI/AN households between 2000 to 2010 (16 versus 8 percent). In tribal areas, homeownership rates stood at **67 percent** in 2010, as compared with 65 percent among non-AI/AN households. **Only 34 percent** currently hold a mortgage.



Between 2006 to 2010, the average value for AI/AN owner-occupied homes was \$175,000, amounting to **66 percent** of the average for all US households.

More than 15 percent of AI/AN tribal area homes are overcrowded (more than one person per room—including living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms, enclosed porches) as compared with 2 percent of non-AI/AN homes. It is important to note that some AI/AN homes are multigenerational by choice.



"Overcrowding is a serious problem. To avoid some members being homeless, it is not uncommon to have multiple generations residing in a single residence. There's a huge unmet need for safe affordable housing."



Nearly 1 in 4 AI/AN households surveyed (23 percent) had incomes that are less than 50 percent of the federal poverty line, yet only about **12 percent** receive federal housing assistance.

In urban contexts, **five barriers** to finding and retaining housing were identified by AI/AN interviewees: (1) lack of familiarity with urban life and urban housing markets; (2) lack of employment plans or prospects; (3) limited social networks; (4) insufficient rental or credit history; and (5) race-based discrimination.

¹ US Department of Housing and Urban Development (2017). *Housing Needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives in Tribal Areas; Housing Needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives in Urban Areas*. Accessed online from: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/native_american_assessment/home.html.

In response to these housing needs—and to barriers in accessing financial lending—some tribes have designed their own **down payment assistance programs** to build a path to homeownership. These supports may offer one-time loans, coverage for closings, credit counseling, support in meeting monthly payments, and more.

And in response to an **18 percent decline in new housing construction** and acquisition from 2010 to 2014, tribes have leveraged state tax credits, private investment, and their own resources to meet community demand.

"Tribes across the country are now working—often independently, but increasingly in a collaborative matter—to build healthier homes that employ sustainable, locally sourced, and often natural materials."²



Members of the Pinoleville Pomo Nation built modern, wood-framed homes in Ukiah, CA. The breathable walls—consisting of straw bales and adobe-like cob, covered with a finish layer of clay-based plaster—prevent the buildup of moisture and mold. The rounded walls are in keeping with traditional Pomo architecture.³

Designed to withstand harsh weather conditions on Alaska's North Slope, the Anaktuvuk Pass Prototype Home is modeled on traditional sod igloos. It features a passive ventilation system called a *qingok* and solar panels to supplement grid electricity. An unheated cold room helps with the storage of traditional foods.⁴



What is the bottom line? When tribal nations guide investment with cultural values, a *moral economy* becomes the place we call home—an economy that is both *equipped with* wisdom from the past and *for* a brighter future.

To access the HUD assessments, visit: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/native_american_assessment/home.html.

New Resources Available

(Continue to Page 4 for the latest research reports from the PRC)

College Students with Children: National and Regional Profiles (January 2017). The Institute for Women's Policy Research recently released a report on undergraduate college students who are raising dependent children. Nationally, **2 in 5** AI/AN women (41 percent) are raising children while in college, and in the Plains region, this rate rises to **3 in 5** (58 percent). The report raises important concerns for college completion, financial resources, and more: <http://iwpr.org/publications/pubs/college-students-with-children-national-and-regional-profiles>.

Resources on Revisions to the Common Rule (January 2017). The Public Responsibility in Medicine & Research (PRIM&R) has compiled a resource page for the final revision of the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, or "Common Rule," released on January 19, 2017. The NCAI PRC submitted comments and hosted informational sessions on the revisions and tribal concerns in 2016. The revised Rule explicitly recognizes tribal authority to develop research laws, standards, and protections and requires that federally-funded researchers abide by them. PRIM&R resources on the Common Rule can be found at: <http://www.primr.org/commonrule/>.

CDC Report Signals Progress for AI/AN Populations (January 2017). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released important data analyses in the article "Vital Signs: Decrease in Incidence of Diabetes-Related End-Stage Renal Disease among American Indians/Alaska Natives – United States, 1996-2013." To access the article, visit: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6601e1>.

USDA Rural Development Report on AI/AN Programs (November 2016). In their report, *Collaborating for Prosperity with American Indians and Alaska Natives*, the USDA Rural Development Report shares details on

² Seltnerich, N. (2017). Healthier Tribal Housing: Combining the Best of Old and New. Environmental Health Perspectives. Accessed online from: <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/120-a460/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

programs across Indian Country designed to support food security, housing, education, healthcare, economic opportunity, and infrastructure. To access the report, visit: <https://nnlm.gov/bhic/f5nz>.

Fellowships & Training

The Office of Minority Health's Youth Health Equity Model of Practice (YHEMOP) Fellowship. Undergraduate or graduate students interested in spending a summer at the Office of Justice Programs in DC are encouraged to apply before the **February 15th** deadline: <https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/YHEMOP/index.html>.

NCAI Native Graduate Health Fellowship. Applicants should be members of an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal nation and must be new or continuing full-time students in the Fall of 2017 pursuing graduate or professional degrees in any health-related area (e.g. MD, MSN, MPH, etc.). Applications are due via email to research@ncai.org by Friday, **March 31st**.

Native STAND Educator Training Program. Native Students Together Against Negative Decisions (STAND) is a culturally-relevant, inter-tribal curriculum for high school-aged (14-18 years old) teens that draws on cultural teachings and values from across Indian Country. Successful applicants will receive one week of training in Portland, Oregon with expenses paid for travel, lodging and meals. The application deadline is **March 1st**. For more information, visit <https://nnlm.gov/bhic/626d>.

Upcoming Research Conferences

12th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum. This year, NCAI will host the Forum on June 14th in Uncasville, CT. The theme for our Call for Proposals is "Sovereign Infrastructure: Building Our Communities through Our Values." Proposals must be emailed by February 17th to research@ncai.org. For more information: <http://bit.ly/TLSF2017>.

5th Annual Health Research Summit. The Collaborative Research Center for American Indian Health (CRCAIH) will be hosting its Summit in Sioux Falls, SD on April 5-6, 2017, with a pre-conference and poster sessions on the 4th. The theme is "Reflect, Connect, Inspire." For more information: <http://www.crcaih.org/summit.html>.

13th Annual Southeast Indian Studies Conference. The University of North Carolina-Pembroke will be hosting its Southeast Indian Studies Conference on April 6-7, 2017—providing a forum for discussion on the culture, history, art, health and contemporary issues of Native Americans in the Southeast. For more information, please visit: <http://www.uncp.edu/academics/colleges-schools-departments/departments/american-indian-studies/news-events/southeast-indian-studies-conference>.

Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) Conference. This year, NAISA will convene in Vancouver, BC from June 22-24th. For more information: <http://naisa2017.arts.ubc.ca/>.

American Public Health Association Annual Meeting & Expo. This year's meeting is in Atlanta, GA from November 4-8, 2017. The theme is "Creating the Healthiest Nation: Climate Changes Health" and the American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Caucus is accepting abstracts through February 23rd: <https://apha.confex.com/apha/2017/oasys.epl>.

Survey Opportunity

Share Insights with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation! The NCAI has partnered with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to conduct a survey about how people, like yourself, think about the challenges facing their communities, and how to talk about these challenges effectively with people from different ethnic backgrounds and geographic areas. This survey is anonymous and confidential: http://masurveys.com/gs_2044_ncai. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey opportunity, please email research@ncai.org.

NCAI Policy Research Center PROJECTS & RESOURCES

Join us for our Quarterly Tribal Research Teleconference! A diverse audience called in for our inaugural Quarterly Tribal Research Teleconference last December. We look forward to hosting our second Tribal Research Teleconference in March. Stay tuned for details on the date and time. Email us at research@ncai.org to receive future announcements.

Building Tribal Data Capacity. With the support of the National Science Foundation, the PRC has worked with six tribal pilot sites to build existing research capacity to identify gaps in data and conduct tribal censuses and demographic surveys. We have launched a Survey of Tribal Data Practices and the results are now undergoing analysis. Soon, we plan to release a state-of-the-art report on the quality of existing tribal-level data, as well as a review of federal data and reporting required of tribes. For more information, visit: <http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/initiatives/data-quality>.

Tips for Researchers: Strengthening Research that Benefits Native Youth. It is essential that research with and by AI/AN communities include youth to inform effective community and policy planning. Researchers must be made aware that the meaningful inclusion of youth in research often requires particular protocols and methodologies. This report provides guidance to improve AI/AN youth research, so that it might serve dual goals of protecting and benefiting Native youth: <http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/TipsforResearchers-NativeYouth.pdf>.

RED Talks: A Native spin on TED Talks. The PRC has partnered with Missouri Breaks Industries Research, Inc. to produce "RED Talks" as a way to share Native wisdom, tribal research, policy, and community success stories to shape the future of tribal nations. The data and ideas shared in these short videos will empower tribes to use their sovereignty to implement programs and policies that work, build research capacity, and create sustainable opportunities. Check them out at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGSdSFOXt5uVK43i67N9-Vg>.

A Spotlight on Opioids in Indian Country. Many tribal nations are facing extreme impacts of drug abuse on their citizens, maternal and family health, and the safety of their communities. The Policy Research Center has compiled some of the leading research on how opioid use and abuse are affecting Indian Country and ways in which health care providers and communities can respond. To view this feature, visit: http://www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/Opioid_Brief.pdf.

One-Page Data Reports on Native Youth System Involvement. As a part of our partnership with the National Indian Child Welfare Association and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to produce a report titled, *Strength in Numbers: Using Data to Advance a Deeper Understanding of Native Youth and Families*, we released four statewide memos on system involvement, or the extent to which Native youth are in contact with juvenile justice, child welfare, and school disciplinary systems:

- **Alaska:** www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/Alaska_SystemInvolvement.pdf
- **Montana:** www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/Montana_SystemInvolvement.pdf
- **New Mexico:** www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/NewMexico_SystemInvolvement.pdf
- **Oklahoma:** www.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/Oklahoma_SystemInvolvement.pdf

A Guide for Tribal Research Partnerships. As a Native American Research Center for Health (NARCH) grantee, we have partnered with the University of Nevada-Reno to create a Partnership Evaluation Toolkit focused on the core functions of governance, culture, and trust in research with AI/AN communities. For technical assistance opportunities and/or if your tribe is interested in piloting our toolkit in the near future, please contact Sarah Pytalski at spytalski@ncai.org.