“I HOPE [NCAI] WILL ORGANIZE AND START OUT BY TELLING CONGRESS WHAT THE INDIAN WANTS, AND NOT WHAT CONGRESS THINKS WE OUGHT TO HAVE.”

– JAMES DOUGOMAH, KIOWA, 1944 NCAI ANNUAL CONVENTION.

This is the 75th anniversary year of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). Founded in 1944, NCAI is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) organization serving the broad interests of tribal nations, governments, and communities. NCAI answers the call of its founders to serve as the unified voice of tribal nations to protect and advance tribal sovereignty.

NCAI provides the governments and leaders of those nations a powerful platform for consensus-based policy development and advocacy. In so doing, it protects tribal self-governance and treaty rights; promotes the economic development, health, and welfare of tribal communities; and educates the public toward a better understanding of tribal nations.

NCAI’s effectiveness in strengthening tribal sovereignty and advancing Indian Country’s priorities is rooted in the wisdom and involvement of our diverse membership. This includes a growing number of AI/AN tribal governments, tribal citizens, and Native organizations from across the country.

Working in partnership, NCAI and its members amplify the collective voice of tribal nations to achieve a brighter future for Indian Country and its generations to come.

If you are not already an NCAI member or contributor, please join us.
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TIMELINE OF PROGRESS

October

NCAI holds 74th Annual Convention & Marketplace in Milwaukee, WI

November

NCAI attends White House briefing on the President’s Infrastructure Plan and streamlining the permitting process

NCAI and top civil rights organizations release joint statement urging media not to use the Washington NFL team’s name on Thanksgiving game broadcast

NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Pata speaks on CNN about how using the name Pocahontas in a disparaging manner is inappropriate

December

NCAI joins coalition in opposition to Executive Orders decreasing Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments

NCAI joins Reclaiming Native Truth coalition of partners to reshape narratives about Native peoples

January

After NCAI meeting, MLB and Cleveland franchise announce they will retire harmful Chief Wahoo mascot and logo in 2019

Federal recognition is granted to six Virginia tribal nations when Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act is signed into law

January

NCAI releases its FY 2019 budget recommendations in “Honoring the Promises, Building Strong Nations”

NCAI takes official ownership of Indian Country Today through gift from the Oneida Nation

February

NCAI holds its 2018 Executive Council Winter Session in Washington, D.C.

NCAI President Jefferson Keel delivers the 16th annual State of Indian Nations Address

March

NCAI releases its “2013 Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction 5-Year Report”

NCAI publishes research policy update “The Opioid Epidemic: Definitions, Data, Solutions”

April

NCAI’s Robert Holden is recognized in Congress by Rep. Markwayne Mullin for his 33 years of tireless work fighting for tribal sovereignty and strengthening tribal communities

NCAI testifies before Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on “The President’s FY 2019 Budget Request for Indian Programs”
NCAI and NAFOA partner with Harvard Business School to offer fiduciary investment training program to tribal leaders

The Native Farm Bill Coalition members and Native youth attend White House meeting on proposed Farm Bill legislation

NCAI testifies before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on “The President’s FY 2019 Budget Request for Indian Programs”

Over 120 tribal nations and organizations file an amicus brief in support of the Indian Child Welfare Act

NCAI commends the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for its leadership in excluding any sports team with derogatory mascots from eligibility for its Sports Award

NCAI holds Mid Year Conference & Marketplace in Kansas City; it features the 13th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum titled, “Lighting the Way: New Paths from Research to Policy”

Alaska Native Tara MacLean Sweeney confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior with NCAI’s support

NCAI’s Partnership for Tribal Governance releases “Workforce Development Toolkit” for tribal leaders and key decision-makers

Indian Country Today officially launches at NCAI Mid Year Conference & Marketplace in Kansas City

NCAI and First Kids 1st founding partners NIEA, NIHB, and NICWA host inaugural First Kids 1st Coalition Convening with 30 new Coalition Members in Washington, D.C.

NCAI participates in rally on Capitol Hill advocating for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act

NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Pata discusses Indian Country issues on C-SPAN

NCAI urges Senate to consider Judge Kavanaugh’s views on federal Indian law and policy

First Kids 1st Initiative launches the 2018-2019 Native Children’s Policy Agenda (NCPA) Update

NCAI holds Tribal Unity Impact Days event in Washington, D.C.

NCAI releases toolkit for tribal leaders titled, “Education Choice for Indian Country: Supporting Tribal Decision Making for Schools and Students”
Dear Tribal Leaders, NCAI Members, Native Peoples, and Friends of Indian Country,

As we reflect on the 75 years spanning the incredible history of the National Congress of American Indians, we honor the foresight and the fortitude of the founding members of our first convention. They came together in November of 1944, in the midst of uncertain times, seeking solutions to build a path forward for Native peoples. They envisioned a better and more representative relationship with the federal government, with states, and with the rest of the world. What they created was the strong and unified voice of Indian Country, serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities.

As we return this year to Denver, Colorado, the founding city of NCAI, we look back at how far we’ve come. Tribal nations have weathered every conceivable storm confronting our cultures and ways of life, and always, we endure. Looking ahead, we understand there is still much work to be done. Yet, we do not see only challenges; we also see opportunities – for growth, for amplifying our voice, and for exercising our inherent rights as Native peoples. But most importantly, for continuing to build upon an established foundation, so our tribal leaders of tomorrow can continue to shape the future for generations to come.

In our communities, we develop local solutions to agriculture, environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and finding new ways to create jobs and economic growth on our lands, thereby empowering our people. To further enhance our capacity, it is imperative that we continue working to strengthen our sovereign rights: the right to be recognized as equal governments; the right to ensure the federal trust responsibility is upheld; the right to be seated at the table where key decisions are made; and the right to secure our place at the ballot box. This important work transcends both time and political affiliations. This is the work NCAI does every day.

In the pages that follow, you will learn about the far-reaching and deeply impactful work that NCAI has done during this past year. To tribal leaders, NCAI members, and partners – we thank you for your dedication and support in making this work possible.

As Native peoples, our message is clear: we are strong, resilient, and everlasting. So, too, is the National Congress of American Indians. During this milestone year in NCAI’s history, we look forward to continuing to build on the legacy of our founders by shaping a healthy and prosperous future for Indian Country.

Sincerely,

Jefferson Keel – President
National Congress of American Indians
# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2017-2018

**President**
Jefferson Keel – Lt. Governor  
Chickasaw Nation

**First Vice President**
Aaron Payment – Chairperson  
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

**Secretary**
Juana Majel-Dixon – Traditional Councilwoman  
Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians

**Treasurer**
W. Ron Allen – Chairman  
Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe

## NCAI Area Vice Presidents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Area Vice President</th>
<th>Alternate</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| ALASKA      | Rob Sanderson, Jr. – 4th Vice President  
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska | Clinton Lageson – Treasurer  
Kenaitze Indian Tribe |
| EASTERN OKLAHOMA | Joe Byrd – Speaker of the Nation  
Cherokee Nation | Norman Hildebrand – Second Chief  
Wyandotte Nation |
| GREAT PLAINS | Larry Wright – Chairman  
Ponca Tribe of Nebraska | Jean Paul Roy – Trustee 1  
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe A. Gay Kingman – 2nd Alternate  
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe |
| MIDWEST     | Roger Rader – Council Member  
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi | Shannon Holsey – Tribal President  
Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohicans |
| NORTHEAST  | Lance Gumbs – Former Tribal Council Member  
Shinnecock Indian Nation | Jeff Gill – Councilor  
Seneca Nation of Indians |
| NORTHWEST   | Leonard Forsman – Tribal Chairman  
Suquamish Tribe | Mel Sheldon, Jr. – Treasurer  
Tulalip Tribes of Washington |
| PACIFIC     | Willie Carrillo  
Tule River Tribe of California | Jack Potter, Jr. – Chairman  
Redding Rancheria |
| ROCKY MOUNTAIN | Darrin Old Coyote – Former Chairman  
Crow Nation | Shawn Backbone – Vice Secretary  
Crow Nation |
| SOUTHEAST   | Nancy Carnley  
Ma-Chis Lower Creek Indians | Earl Evans – Former Vice Chairman  
Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe |
| SOUTHERN PLAINS | Zach Pahmahmie – Tribal Vice Chairman  
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation | Terry Pepper – Tribal Council Secretary  
Kaw Nation |
| SOUTHEAST   | Joe Garcia – Councilman  
Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo | Gil Vigil – President  
Eight Northern Pueblos Council, Inc. |
| SOUTHWEST   | Franklin Pablo, Sr. – Councilman  
Gila River Indian Community | Quintin C. Lopez – Vice Chairman  
Tohono O’odham Legislative Council |
# PAST PRESIDENTS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

NCAI thanks the many dedicated tribal leaders and others who have served in the roles of President and Executive Director of the organization. We will always remember and honor your commitment, sacrifice, and service to tribal nations.

## PRESIDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944-52</td>
<td>N.B. Johnson</td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
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<tr>
<td>1953-59</td>
<td>Joseph R. Garry</td>
<td>Coeur D’Alene</td>
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<td>1960-64</td>
<td>Walter Wetzel</td>
<td>Blackfeet</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>Clarence Wesley</td>
<td>San Carlos Apache</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>Wendell Chino</td>
<td>Mescalero Apache</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>Earl Old Person</td>
<td>Blackfeet</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>Leon F. Cook</td>
<td>Red Lake Chippewa</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973-76</td>
<td>Mel Tonasket</td>
<td>Colville</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>Veronica L. Murdock</td>
<td>Mohave</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>Edward Driving Hawk</td>
<td>Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981-84</td>
<td>Joseph DeLaCruz</td>
<td>Quinault</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985-87</td>
<td>Reuben A. Snake, Jr.</td>
<td>Winnebago</td>
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<td>1988-89</td>
<td>John Gonzales</td>
<td>San Ildefonso Pueblo</td>
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<td>1990-91</td>
<td>Wayne L. Ducheneaux</td>
<td>Cheyenne River Sioux</td>
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<td>1992-95</td>
<td>gaiashkibos</td>
<td>Lac Courte Oreilles</td>
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<td>1996-99</td>
<td>W. Ron Allen</td>
<td>Jamestown S’Klallam</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>Susan Masten</td>
<td>Yurok</td>
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<td>2002-05</td>
<td>Tex Hall</td>
<td>Mandaan/Hidatsa/Arikara</td>
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<td>2006-09</td>
<td>Joe A. Garcia</td>
<td>Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo</td>
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<td>2010-13</td>
<td>Jefferson Keel</td>
<td>Chickasaw Nation</td>
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<td>2014-17</td>
<td>Brian Cladoosby</td>
<td>Swinomish Indian Tribal Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-Present</td>
<td>Jefferson Keel</td>
<td>Chickasaw Nation</td>
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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Tribe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944-48</td>
<td>Ruth Muskrat Bronson</td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
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<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Louis R. Bruce</td>
<td>Mohawk/Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Edward Rogers</td>
<td>Chippewa</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>John C. Rainer</td>
<td>Taos Pueblo</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Ruth Muskrat Bronson</td>
<td>Taos Pueblo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Frank George</td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953-59</td>
<td>Helen Peterson</td>
<td>Oglala Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960-63</td>
<td>Robert Burnett</td>
<td>Rosebud Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964-67</td>
<td>Vine Deloria, Jr.</td>
<td>Standing Rock Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>John Belindo</td>
<td>Navajo/Kiowa</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>Bruce Wilkie</td>
<td>Makah</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Franklin Ducheneaux</td>
<td>Cheyenne River Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Leo W. Voci</td>
<td>Oglala Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972-77</td>
<td>Charles Trimble</td>
<td>Oglala Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Andrew E. Ebona</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
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<td>1979-82</td>
<td>Ronald Andrade</td>
<td>Luiseno-Diegueno</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Silas Whitman</td>
<td>Nez Perce</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-89</td>
<td>Susan Shown Harjo</td>
<td>Cheyenne/Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>A. Gay Kingman</td>
<td>Cheyenne River Sioux</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Michael J. Anderson</td>
<td>Creek/Choctaw</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Rachel A. Joseph</td>
<td>Shoshone/Paiute/Mono</td>
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<td>1994-2000</td>
<td>JoAnn K. Chase</td>
<td>Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-Present</td>
<td>Jacqueline Pata</td>
<td>Tlingit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 75 years of operation, NCAI’s resilience, resourcefulness, and steadfast determination to work with both sides of the political aisle has helped us advance issues that matter the most for all of Indian Country.

Guiding us in this endeavor are our tribal values and cultures – the heartbeat of our peoples. As tribal leaders and tribal governments, it is our diligent and deliberate duty to seek ways to improve the lives of those in our home communities and strengthen our rightful place as sovereign nations.

At the forefront of our future are our Native youth. NCAI has continued its commitment to our future generations through its ongoing work with the First Kids 1st initiative, a partnership effort focused on changing policies and strengthening systems of support so Native children can thrive.

We have always recognized that a unified, collective voice rings louder than any one voice alone. For example, NCAI also is partnering with eight leading national racial justice organizations to foster racial equity and increased civic participation by people of color.

When it comes to federal policy, Congress regularly seeks NCAI’s counsel as the largest consensus voice of Indian Country. Our active advocacy efforts make a difference in the policies that directly impact tribal communities.

Keeping our communities safe has always been a top priority. This past year, NCAI advocated for tribal funding through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and provided training to ensure access to the $110 million set-aside for tribal governments to assist crime victims.

Native foods are not only our way of life, but an economic driver as well. Through NCAI’s partnership with the Native Farm Bill Coalition and coordinated efforts to facilitate meetings between tribal leaders and Congress, the U.S. Senate passed the 2018 Farm Bill with provisions to support Indian Country, Native producers, and tribal communities.

No matter the political climate, the fact remains that the federal and tribal relationship will not cease. The vital advocacy work that we do through NCAI can define the mechanisms through which we navigate and fortify this relationship. We have the opportunity to lead into the future with the changes we want to see. This annual report reflects the vision of what we have accomplished and can accomplish, working as one.

NCAI is a vehicle of change, and tribal nations thrive when we work together. With your continued support and active engagement, we can create a powerful and prosperous future for Indian Country.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Pata – Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians
STRENGTHENING SOVEREIGNTY

NCAI THROUGH THE YEARS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

NCAI’s founders created the organization in 1944 to help tribal nations combat the threats posed by the termination, relocation, and assimilation policies of the federal government.

In the 75 years since, NCAI has diligently protected and advanced the inherent sovereign rights of tribal nations and governments from such threats, and is well positioned to continue to do so for the next 75 years and beyond.

The theme of this year’s Annual Report and NCAI’s 2018 Annual Convention is “Honoring the Past – Shaping the Future.” This theme celebrates the progress and resilience of tribal nations that have persevered through policies intended to dismantle our governments, erode our cultures and languages, and restrict our ability to care for our lands and natural resources. Today’s tribal nations remain rooted in rich histories and cultures, while deploying innovative governing strategies designed to enable our nations and citizens to thrive.

NCAI advances the priorities identified by our members in many ways. NCAI works closely with Congress and the Administration to ensure the government-to-government relationship that exists between tribal nations and the federal government is honored. NCAI actively works with tribal governments and our organizational partners to push for the enactment of laws that support tribal self-determination and self-governance, as well as strengthen and expand federal programs for Indian Country.

NCAI also ensures that tribal priorities are considered when the Administration is implementing laws, revising programs, and creating regulations that impact tribal communities. In addition, NCAI works closely with our partner the Native American Rights Fund to protect tribal rights in litigation through the Tribal Supreme Court Project.

In reflecting upon the 75 years of NCAI’s work advocating for and advancing Indian Country’s priorities, it becomes apparent that while the times may have changed, many things have not. Many of the same issues and priorities that NCAI fought for in the 1940s persist today – struggles for water rights, federal recognition, preserving sacred sites and natural resources, demanding that trust and treaty obligations be upheld by the federal government, practicing and enhancing the inherent sovereign rights of tribal governments, and ensuring a strong foundation to pass on to future generations.
The road tribal nations must travel together to navigate past these challenges is long and often rocky – a dusty path leading through peaks and valleys, through rumbling storms and clear skies. While the political weather always changes and the view of the path forward may not always be immediately visible, certain truths continue to empower our collective journey: partnerships and alliances are key; Indian Country standing together with one voice is essential; and exemplifying the tireless dedication and resilience of our ancestors in order to strengthen our tribal communities is vital.

The ability to visualize the end of the path and have the fortitude to march forward is the job NCAI embraces every single day. Our progress would not be possible without the modern-day warriors who contribute their passion, toil, time, effort, and ingenuity without end on behalf of their communities, their nations, this organization, and Indian Country as a whole. As we take a look back to honor those who paved the way to our present, we apply the lessons they taught us and carry them forward, shaping a vibrant future for generations to come.

NCAI is honored to champion the interests of Indian Country as we work together to support and sustain lasting prosperity for our tribal peoples and nations.

“I AM NATIVE, AND I VOTE.”
NCAI delivered its 16th Annual State of Indian Nations Address on February 12 in Washington, D.C., highlighting the remarkable progress of tribal nations and underscoring how tribal governments work with U.S. governments, organizational partners, and other stakeholders for the betterment of all communities.

Jefferson Keel, Lieutenant Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, delivered the address as President of NCAI. He previously served as NCAI President from 2010-2013. He began by welcoming the six Virginia tribal nations that had just been granted federal recognition: the Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Upper Mattaponi, Rappahannock, Monacan, and Nansemond tribes.

The main theme of President Keel’s remarks was about respect: “For too many years, the echoes of America’s colonial past have continued to reverberate in disparaging rhetoric, failed policies, and a disregard for the inherent sovereignty of tribal nations. This is unacceptable. Our message for our representatives in government is this: RESPECT OUR RIGHTS.”

According to President Keel, Native peoples have shaped the nation as equal partners in developing agriculture and building infrastructure, in managing lands and natural resources, and in crafting effective governance solutions to overcome shared community challenges. In short, he said, we have always been innovators and leaders. Therefore, Keel explained, “No Farm Bill, no Tax Bill, no Infrastructure Bill, no Energy Bill should pass unless it considers and includes Indian Country’s priorities.”

President Keel highlighted the benefits of collaboration in creating prosperous communities. He noted that when tribal economies prosper, surrounding communities prosper. To that end, Congress and the Administration should adopt the measures that tribal governments have deemed critical to spurring economic development. This means including Indian Country in broader tax reform, and granting full tribal authority to generate revenue, access capital, and invest locally.

“You want to ‘Buy American’? Then do business with Indian Country,” declared President Keel.

He also emphasized the benefits of working together in a bipartisan manner on legislation, and applauded the passage of the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act, which expands the tribal workforce program known as “477” and makes it permanent. Not only is the Act a product of meaningful consultation with and input from tribal nations, it enacts the proven principle that tribal self-determination and self-governance is the only policy that has ever worked for Indian Country.
The State of Indian Nations concluded with President Keel noting the power and importance of Native Vote. Native people are one of the fastest-growing populations in the country, and the Native vote – if fully exercised – has the potential to swing elections for many offices at the federal, state, and local levels.

“Elected officials must hear our voices and heed our priorities because we will be watching, and we will be voting,” President Keel emphatically stated.

U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM), who currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, delivered the Congressional Response to the 2018 State of Indian Nations Address. He emphasized the need for collaboration and compromise in crafting sound policy.

Senator Udall highlighted several pieces of legislation reflecting consultation and input from tribal nations making their way through Congress, including the Reauthorization of the 2013 Violence Against Women Act; the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act; the Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act; reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians; the Antiquities Act of 2018; and the Farm Bill. In particular, Senator Udall noted the importance of working together on tribal set-asides in funding to address the devastating toll of opioid addiction and substance abuse that disproportionately impact tribal communities.

Senator Udall concluded with a pledge to tribal nations: “I commit to you – to continue to try to do right by Indian Country, and to hold fast to the principles of tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and meaningful consultation in my work in the Senate.”
HONORING THE PAST
SHAPING THE FUTURE

In commemoration of its first 75 years, NCAI wrote “Honoring the Past,” a historical exploration through the archives of the Embassy of Tribal Nations and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian.

This anthology book is a snapshot of the countless hearings; millions of work hours; endless strategy sessions; and many policy campaigns, education and outreach efforts, and demonstrations that have exemplified the unwavering dedication of NCAI – working in lockstep with tribal leaders – since 1944. Each chapter presents a brief overview of the important events, issues, and themes of the time period for NCAI, Indian Country, and the nation.

The first edition of “Honoring the Past” will be unveiled during the 75th Annual Convention & Marketplace in Denver, CO in October 2018.

The 1940s: In 1944, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was founded and held its first convention in Denver, Colorado. During the first convention, nearly 80 delegates from 50 tribes and 27 states passed 18 resolutions that formed the initial NCAI national Indian Policy. From 1946-50, NCAI operated offices in D.C., with the first permanent office in Dupont Circle.

The 1950s: In 1954, 43 tribes from 25 states adopted the Declaration of Indian Rights in Washington, D.C.; NCAI launches first education campaign to educate mainstream America about Native issues. In 1957, NCAI received the American Heritage Foundation’s Outstanding Public Service Award for its efforts to stop termination.

The 1960s: Federal policy shifts from termination to self-determination. In 1969, the 15-month takeover of Alcatraz Island sparked social protest movements that included 74 Indian occupations of federal facilities.
We, the Native peoples of this land, have always been here. Long before this great country was founded, we thrived as stewards of the land and caretakers of our communities – and we will continue to do so for countless generations onward. The power of a unified Native voice ready to respond to each new challenge declares to the nation that we are still here: we exist, we govern, we live our cultures, we take care of our own, we vote, and we matter.

— "Honoring the Past" 75th Anniversary Book Introduction

**The 1970s:** In 1972, NCAI worked successfully to stop the dismantling of OEO, EDA, and ONAP and worked on the Indian Education Act and to support a major review of Indian policy. In 1975, the U.S. Congress adopted Joint Resolution 133 to study all aspects of Indian Policy, establishing the American Indian Policy Review Commission as a two-year Congressional commission.

**The 1980s:** In 1985, Quinault Nation President Joe DeLaCruz and NCAI worked together on U.S.-Canada Salmon Interception Treaty building as a foundation for a comprehensive management system to protect salmon. In 1989, the National Museum of the American Indian Act was passed.

**The 1990s:** In 1994, President Clinton became the first American President to invite all tribal leaders to an historic meeting and issued an Executive Memorandum titled “Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments.” In 1990, the NCAI-NIGA Task Force was established and collectively worked to maintain the status of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

**The 2000s:** In 2003, NCAI launched the Policy Research Center to advance a tribally-driven research agenda to support informed policymaking. In 2009, President Obama invited tribal leaders for an historic meeting and committed to an annual Tribal Nations Conference with tribal leaders, also reaffirming Executive Order 13175 on tribal consultation.

**The 2010s:** In 2010, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is adopted by United States. It is hailed as one of the most significant developments in international human rights law in decades. In 2010, President Obama signed the Cobell settlement making it the largest class action lawsuit ever for the federal government.
NCAI YOUTH INITIATIVES

With Native youth composing 39 percent of the American Indian and Alaska Native population – and likely a greater percentage after the 2020 Census – Indian Country’s future increasingly rests with our youth.

Acting on this reality, NCAI braids Native youth empowerment strategies and policy priorities into all facets of its work, most notably with the comprehensive First Kids 1st (FK1st) Initiative. Through a collaboration between its Founding Partners, First Kids 1st seeks to mobilize communities to coordinate efforts to transform the systems that have the greatest impact on Native children, youth, and families – systems of governance, child welfare, education, and healthcare – to foster conditions in which Native children, youth, and families can thrive.

FIRST KIDS 1ST

In order to succeed in its effort to improve the lives and wellbeing of Native children and youth, First Kids 1st emphasizes collaboration with both existing partners and potential new partners. On June 19, 2018, First Kids 1st hosted the first Coalition Convening – a gathering of organizations to create networking opportunities for those dedicated to making policy changes impacting Native children and youth. To build towards a potential larger convening in early 2019, the FK1st Founding Partners invited 20 organizations for a roundtable conversation as well as breakouts into small discussion groups. Participants left the convening with renewed energy in understanding how our collective work can help Native children and youth thrive.

The participation, input, and mentorship of our Native youth are integral to the policies and work developed by the First Kids 1st Partners. All FK1st Partners either have a youth commission, youth position(s) on the organization’s board of directors, or a stand-alone youth advisory board. Engaging and strengthening the voice of Native youth is one of the ways NCAI works to protect and strengthen tribal sovereignty for our future generations. NCAI has been involved with a number of other Native youth-focused activities during the past year, including:

- NCAI Youth Commission
- Partners Supporting Native Youth
- Student visits to the NCAI Embassy of Tribal Nations
- NCAI Fellowship and Internship Programs
- Gen-I (Generation Indigenous)

NCAI YOUTH COMMISSION

The NCAI Youth Commission was established in 1997 by the NCAI Board of Directors to foster the voices of Native youth. The Youth Commission – which includes all interested youth and elected officers – provides a unique perspective on issues relevant to Native youth. It is an opportunity to acquire knowledge from – and be a resource to – NCAI and tribal leaders about the organizational processes of NCAI and systems of tribal governance. Through their participation, NCAI Youth Commissioners connect with peers, engage with tribal leaders, share ideas, and become better advocates for their tribal nations and Indian Country.
Every two years at NCAI’s Annual Convention, elections are held to elect Native youth to serve as Youth Commission Officers. At the 75th Annual Convention, officers will be elected for the 2018–2020 term.

The Youth Commission also engaged Native youth to increase their awareness of behavioral health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Tribal Youth Leadership project. With funding support from SAMHSA, the Youth Commission conducted several outreach activities and events. Two highlights of the SAMHSA Tribal Youth Leadership project include: sessions as part of the Youth Agenda at NCAI’s 74th Annual Convention, and videos promoting Native youth voices and SAMHSA’s National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda developed by the Youth Commission Officers at the 2018 Executive Council Winter Session.

The Youth Agenda for the 74th Annual Convention highlighted its SAMHSA sessions – including a training on how to be a TED Talks speaker, and discussing stress management tools with an elder. The annual Elders & Youth Roundtable continues to be the inspirational highlight of the Annual Convention. As elders and youth shared dialogue, wisdom, and stories at rotating mini-roundtables, conversations often related to topics covered in the National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda.

At the 2018 Mid Year Conference, the Youth Commission created a complementary agenda to NCAI’s main sessions where youth divided into groups so that no one went alone to a breakout session. Groups then reported back on three things that they learned from the sessions they attended. Youth-specific sessions included a leadership training conducted by the Center for Native American Youth.

ON THE T.R.A.I.L. TO DIABETES PREVENTION

Funded by the Indian Health Service, NCAI continues to administer an annual $1.25 million grant to implement the diabetes prevention curriculum (Together Raising Awareness for Indian Life, or TRAIL) in Boys & Girls Clubs in Indian Country. NCAI regularly communicates with the Native Services Unit of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America to support the training and technical assistance needs of TRAIL-awarded Boys & Girls Clubs sites. Each year, nearly a thousand Native children ages 7–11 participate in TRAIL.
“The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship is furthering my goals to serve my tribal community and Indian Country by providing me with valuable opportunities to work with tribal leaders and key officials, develop my skills as a young Mvskoke professional, and do meaningful work to advance and protect the rights of tribal nations.”

– Ashleigh Fixico
2018-2019 Wilma Mankiller Fellow

WILMA MANKILLER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program is named for the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Wilma Mankiller forged a path that simultaneously empowered and restored cultural balance to the Cherokee Nation, as well as other tribal nations. She acknowledged the struggles that Native people face and worked toward changing struggle-based narratives through grassroots community development, the expression of inherent sovereignty in practice, and the creation of many youth education initiatives.

NCAI’s Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program gives young Native professionals the chance to expand their skills and workplace experience, while contributing to various policy and research initiatives that advance NCAI’s mission. The Fellows serve 11-month terms of employment at NCAI gaining experience in policy development, advocacy, communications, applied research, and other programs advancing tribal sovereignty.

In the summer of 2018, NCAI welcomed Jacob Broussard (Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians), Ashleigh Fixico (Muscogee (Creek) Nation), Kolby KickingWoman (Blackfeet/Gros Ventre), and Rani Williams (Walker River Paiute). These four new Fellows join the ranks of the nearly 75 young Natives who have been a part of this program over the past decade. The 2018-2019 Fellows cohort is immersed in the work of NCAI with an emphasis on tribal policy, communications, research, infrastructure, economic development, health, and education.

Through this commitment, NCAI invests in the next generation of tribal leadership, and it has graduated professionals from the program who have moved on to build impactful careers in service to Indian Country. The Fellows work directly with tribal leaders, national and regional partners, educators, policymakers, and Native youth as they expand their networks and capabilities.

Fellows are selected through a competitive application and interview process. Applications are due by March 15 of each year and can be accessed through NCAI’s website.
The 2018 Native Graduate Health Fellowship cohort meet during a week-long professional development seminar at the Embassy of Tribal Nations.

NATIVE GRADUATE HEALTH FELLOWSHIP

Launched in 2012, the Native Graduate Health Fellowship Program is emblematic of NCAI’s commitment to equip the next generation of Native health leaders with the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to succeed. The program builds a cohort of Native health professionals who are prepared to lead in formulating and promoting beneficial health policies and practices for Indian Country.

The 2018 cohort featured Christa Lee (Navajo), Danielle Lucero (Pueblo of Isleta/Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa), Esme Roddy (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa), and Austin Lowes (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians). While the students claim different backgrounds, they all share an acute awareness of the gravity and complexity of the healthcare needs of their own communities, and a passionate commitment to address them.

Applicants are chosen based on a comprehensive set of criteria, including a demonstrated commitment to Native communities and/or health policy, and a desire to use his/her degree and knowledge gained from the Fellowship to support specific tribal communities and/or Indian Country as a whole. Fellows receive a monetary stipend to apply toward the cost of their graduate studies.

The Fellows also took part in a four-day professional development seminar in Washington, D.C., designed to deepen their understanding of tribal sovereignty, federal public policy, Native healthcare policy, and recent innovations in Native healthcare. This included discussions with federal agencies and NCAI partner organizations as well as a hosted tour of the National Institutes of Health.

NCAI owes a debt of gratitude to Robert Burnette and the Seventh Day Adventist Church for their generous support in establishing and sustaining the endowment that makes this program possible.
2018 NCAI ANNUAL CONVENTION & MARKETPLACE

The 74th Annual Convention & Marketplace attracted more than 1,600 participants to Milwaukee’s Wisconsin Center on October 15-20, 2018.

Big changes marked the convention. Membership adopted 50 new resolutions, dealing with issues ranging from restoring the Cobell Land Buy-Back Program to supporting increased access to broadband and telehealth in Native communities to backing the Farm Bill with Indian Country provisions. NCAI honored Deputy Director Robert Holden, who retired after serving the organization and Indian Country for 33 years. Executive Board elections resulted in four new NCAI Executive Committee officers, 12 Regional Vice Presidents, and 12 Regional Alternate Vice Presidents to the organization’s leadership. Lt. Governor Jefferson Keel of the Chickasaw Nation took office as the 22nd President of NCAI.

As his four-year tenure as NCAI President came to a close, Brian Cladoosby addressed the First General Assembly with Swinomish youth standing around him. He reflected on all of the important work with which NCAI is tasked and how honored he was to be able to serve all of Indian Country. He also noted that in Pacific Northwestern tradition, the top of the totem pole is not the position to which an individual should aspire. Instead, tribal leaders should strive to “make it to the bottom.” Leaders should be the foundations of their tribal nations and remember that they are there to hold up their elders, children, and communities.

Invoking that theme, the “We Are Stronger Nations” Annual Convention tackled a wide cross-section of issue areas, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, climate change, Native Vote, the First Kids 1st Initiative, tribal lands restoration and management, and the future of tribal data capacity and research.

One of the most well-attended sessions of the conference was the Elders & Youth Roundtable, in which about 80 people participated. A subcommittee that drew particular interest was the Human, Religious, and Cultural Concerns Subcommittee. Native actor Adam Beach spoke at its meeting to garner support for an NCAI resolution to support the hiring of more Native American actors to portray Native American characters in film and television.

Throughout the six General Assemblies, notable speakers addressed tribal leaders, including U.S. Department of Transportation Deputy Assistant Secretary Anthony Bedell; U.S. Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary Steven Censky; Major General Donald Jackson of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Ambassador (ret.) Keith M. Harper; Perry Bellegarde, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (Canada); Representative Ben Ray Lujan (NM); and Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI).

Department of the Interior (DOI) Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt spoke to the Fourth General Assembly, explaining DOI’s move to streamline administrative processes and procedures as a means towards development of meaningful policy changes. He went on to further express DOI’s commitment to the government-to-government relationship with tribal nations. “I do believe that consultation is meaningful – that it is a dialogue,” said Bernhardt. “[DOI is making a] commitment to a vision for improving the lives of rural Americans – tribal and non-tribal.”
Representative Gwen Moore (WI) gave a rousing welcome to the plenary audience. “I am really impressed with how the Native communities have been able to galvanize non-partisan support,” she said. Moore went on to address the lack of understanding of tribal sovereignty in Washington and reaffirmed her stance as a supporter of tribal nations as sovereign peoples, just as it states in the United States Constitution.

Representative Betty McCollum (MN) expressed her commitment to tribal leaders and stated that NCAI is a tremendous resource for every member of Congress. McCollum also said she is impressed with NCAI’s non-partisan approach to U.S. Department of the Interior Appropriations. She emphasized her commitment to taking on health disparities in Indian Country, as she is working on 12 bipartisan bills advancing a number of priorities, including an Indian Health Service (IHS) Task Force, fighting against the replacement efforts for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicaid funding, and battling the growing opioid epidemic. Representative McCollum said there must be safety and justice for tribal nations and greater tribal self-determination when it comes to distributing resources.

Other highlights of the week included Sunday evening’s Youth Meet & Greet. It was one of the best-attended events of the day with more than 90 Native youth and program partners from across the United States. Google also hosted a workshop on “Unconscious Bias at Work” to teach Native youth how to combat the potentially negative influences of unconscious bias.

The Grand Opening Celebration for the Tradeshow & Marketplace was highlighted by a scintillating performance by the Oneida Nation Smoke Dancers. The Indian Community School of Milwaukee hosted Cultural Night. Guests sampled traditional foods such as Ojibwe wild rice soup, played Menominee language games, and participated in a variety of other activities. A “Dances from the Woodlands” presentation featured Ho-Chunk, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Oneida dances in the school’s circular auditorium.

After 30 years of service to NCAI, Deputy Director Robert Holden is honored with a blanket ceremony at the 74th Annual Convention & Marketplace. Pictured (L to R): NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Pata, Robert Holden, and NCAI President Brian Cladoosby.

NCAI staff and volunteers celebrate the end of a successful NCAI 2017 Annual Convention & Marketplace with the incoming NCAI President Jefferson Keel and Rules Committee Chair Juanita Ahtone.
2018 NCAI EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WINTER SESSION

Several hundred tribal leaders, NCAI delegates, Congressional leaders, and members of President Trump’s Administration came together in Washington, D.C., on February 12-15, 2018, to engage in substantive dialogue about the key Administration and Congressional policy issues impacting tribal nations. With the new presidential Administration in place since early 2017, it was imperative that NCAI provide an opportunity for tribal leaders to engage with the Administration and Congress.

This year’s Executive Council Winter Session stressed the importance of determining mutual priorities for tribal leaders, the new Administration, and Congress, as well as identifying potential challenges to tribal priorities in current legislation. The 2018 event featured 22 speakers from Congress and the Administration who focused on the need for the tribal voice to be heard in key areas such as infrastructure, violent crimes, the 2018 Farm Bill, and tribal lands. A variety of Congressional members also commended NCAI for its continued commitment to a non-partisan approach to its policy work and reinforced the need for tribal issues to stay non-partisan in the upcoming Congressional session.

During his president’s address, NCAI President Jefferson Keel stressed the importance of relentless advocacy and engagement by Indian Country to seize on the opportunities available in spite of the challenges faced. Congressional members echoed this sentiment by stressing the importance of not only strengthening the government-to-government relationship tribal nations have with the federal government, but also encouraged tribal citizens to engage in the political process.

Four key themes emerged during the convening: (1) the importance of non-partisanship in advocating for issues in Indian Country with members of both parties expressing support for tribal priorities; (2) almost all of the 22 Congressional members and Administration officials spoke about the need to stop the opioid crisis in Indian Country by providing additional resources to tribal communities; (3) violent crimes and domestic violence were key issues raised by several officials who committed to providing assistance to those who are most in need; and (4) Native Vote was a topic in which Congressional members encouraged attendees to inspire their communities to exercise their right to vote.

The dynamic agenda featured a meeting of tribal leaders and the leadership of the Farm Bill Coalition to discuss the far-reaching implications of the bill and to continue developing Indian Country’s priorities for the bill’s reauthorization and ensuring that they will successfully make their way through Congress. NCAI also held a session to examine how to combat the opioid epidemic through the lens of legislative, legal, and tribal governmental strategies. Several task force meetings focused on the issues of violence against Native women, federal recognition, and Tribal TANF.
On February 12, the Administration sent its proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget to Congress. NCAI staff diligently reviewed the budget in just 24 hours, producing a thorough analysis of its likely impacts on tribal nations and the federal government’s trust responsibility to them. The newly published document was used as a resource by Congressional members, who cited it while addressing attendees at the convening.

LEADERSHIP AWARDS

On February 14, NCAI held an evening banquet ceremony to commemorate its 20th Annual Leadership Awards, which honor individuals, tribal nations, and organizations that have made a transformative impact on Indian Country. The 2018 Awardees were U.S. Senator Jerry Moran (Congressional Leadership Award); GAIN – Google American Indian Network (Public Sector Leadership Award); the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and Tulalip Tribes (Governmental Leadership Award); Native journalist Mark Trahant (Native American Leadership Award); Native women’s advocate Julie Johnson (Special Recognition Award), and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter (Native Voice Award). During the event, NCAI President Jefferson Keel acknowledged the contributions that each of the Awardees have made in advancing Indian Country’s priorities and stories in their own unique ways, strengthening tribal sovereignty and self-determination in the process.
2018 NCAI MID YEAR CONFERENCE & MARKETPLACE

“You have to realize that outward thinking is something our people have always done. We always had people who carried our messages from council to council. That’s a function that today is called ambassadorial,” stated Frank Ettawageshik, Executive Director of United Tribes of Michigan while addressing the final General Assembly of the 2018 Mid Year Conference & Marketplace. Evoking its theme of “Lighting the Way: Tribes Leading Change,” the conference highlighted the many ways in which tribal nations are developing and implementing governance solutions to the challenges facing Indian Country.

About 600 attendees gathered in Kansas City, Missouri on June 3-6, 2018 to share advances in research; data and governance best practices; and innovative policy approaches on issues ranging from the 2020 Census, Native Vote, and workforce development to juvenile justice, taxation, and infrastructure. A Pre-Conference Data Institute, hosted by the NCAI Policy Research Center, brought in experts from across Indian Country to provide tribal leaders with resources and data to inform policy. This year’s Data Institute highlighted resources for building tribal data capacity – such as the effort of the U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty Network – and the development of a toolkit to strengthen tribal-academic research partnerships.

The conference also hosted the 13th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum, providing researchers an opportunity to present their findings to tribal leaders and conference attendees. Corrine Yu, Senior Counsel and Managing Policy Director at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, urged tribal leaders to educate their communities about the importance of the 2020 U.S. Census, calling it one of the most prominent civil rights issues of today because of problems related to the “undercounting” of Native people, people of color, young children, and those who rent their places of residences. Being hard to count can lead to inequitable political representation and allocation of funding. “Census data is used to allocate federal resources in fulfillment of the treaty and trust obligations the United States has towards tribal nations,” Yu said.

Researchers also displayed and discussed posters on various topics including: evidence-based practices to improve behavioral health, higher education, boarding schools, access to justice, traditional knowledge, tribal youth victimization, Indian Country crime statistics, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) data, and depression diagnoses for elders.

With the 2018 mid-term elections just around the corner, Native Vote emerged as a major topic of discussion during the conference. In her presentation “How Data Can Make the Native Vote a ‘Swing Vote,’” NCAI’s Amber Ebarb noted that Native people are dual citizens who are often highly engaged in tribal political systems, but sometimes less engaged on a state or federal level. Ebarb explained that civic participation in non-tribal elections is grounded in Indigenous cultures and values, and by standing together as Indigenous peoples is civic power. Later, NCAI’s Whitney Sawney provided attendees with an introduction to the Native Vote Toolkit and information about online voter registration, social media guides, and voter protection guides.
Senator Lisa Murkowski (AK) expresses commitment to supporting the needs of Indian Country on the topics of opioids, VAWA, and tribal consultation at the 2018 Tribal Unity Impact Days.

2018 TRIBAL UNITY IMPACT DAYS

On September 13, NCAI hosted Tribal Unity Impact Days in coordination with eight regional tribal organizations. In keeping with NCAI’s core mission of tribal advocacy, this day was dedicated to tribal leaders hearing from members of Congress on legislation that impacts Indian Country. The signature event provided a platform for tribal leaders to express their nations’ sovereign rights and advocate on those issues currently being considered in Congress.

This year’s event focused on several key topics selected for targeted advocacy including appropriations, the Farm Bill, opioids legislation, water infrastructure, cultural protections, violence against women, tribal victims services, and Department of the Interior reorganization. Tribal leaders stressed their priorities of tribal sovereignty and the federal government’s trust responsibility during the question-and-answer sessions. Members of Congress used this time to have meaningful conversations with tribal leaders about current legislation and the present political climate in Washington, D.C. This non-partisan event was attended by nearly 20 Congressional speakers from the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Following the Congressional briefing, tribal leaders met with their delegations and members of key committees of jurisdiction for further advocacy.
EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

ADVOCACY: A YEAR IN REVIEW

NCAI is honored to be a strong and consistent voice for tribal nations in Washington, D.C. As the representative voice for tribal nations throughout Indian Country, NCAI works to ensure the treaty and trust obligations of the federal government are considered at every stage of the advocacy process.

In Congress, NCAI focuses its advocacy work on issues brought forward by our tribal members, such as protecting healthcare, restoring tribal homelands, trust modernization, climate change, tribal infrastructure, public safety, preserving Native languages and culture, education, and economic development, among others. NCAI educates Congress as they consider legislation that will have a sustained and significant impact on tribal communities and tribal citizens.

Once legislation is enacted, NCAI’s advocacy efforts turn to ensuring that laws are implemented as intended by Congress. NCAI has worked with tribal nations and the Administration to ensure that tribal nations are active participants in creating and implementing federal initiatives.

In other areas, where tribal nations are leading with innovation and forward-looking solutions, NCAI shares those best practices with other tribal nations and federal officials. Examples include: climate change assessment and adaptation; alternative judicial practices rooted in tribal cultures; healthcare focused on prevention and traditional practices; education that reflects the priorities of tribal nations; and natural resource protection.

All of NCAI’s advocacy work is grounded in self-determination and the advancement of sovereignty for all tribal nations, who have shown throughout the relationship with the federal government that when tribes are able to make decisions at the local level, all parties benefit. NCAI will continue to advocate for programs and legislative efforts that strengthen tribal self-governance.

In the following pages, you can learn more about NCAI’s effective education and advocacy to achieve prosperity through sovereignty for tribal citizens and nations.
TRUST MODERNIZATION

Tribal leaders keep pushing for stronger trust reform. Over the past year, tribal nations have been actively engaged in consultations regarding the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) land-into-trust process; the land-into-trust process in Alaska; the implementation of the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA); and the overall proposed reorganization of DOI. Tribal nations also continue to pass their own leasing laws and submit applications to exercise leasing authority under the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act (HEARTH Act). Tribes continue to participate in Cobell Land Buy-Back program, which allows greater regulatory authority over consolidated lands, but there is much more work to be done.

In consultation sessions, tribal leaders have repeatedly expressed the sentiment that DOI’s proposed policy initiatives must advance and further the federal government’s trust responsibility to tribal nations. In land-into-trust consultations, tribes spoke out and opposed changes that would increase burdens on off-reservation acquisitions or otherwise give greater deference to state and local governments. In DOI reorganization consultations, tribes commented to DOI officials that any DOI reorganization must not negatively affect the Indian Affairs budget, and must seek – as one of its core goals – to improve the trust responsibility and delivery of programs and services to tribal nations through changes such as: the establishment of an Under Secretary of Indian Affairs and increased resources for land and natural resources needs on tribal lands.

To date, 26 tribal nations have implemented the HEARTH Act governing certain types of leases on tribal trust lands. Some tribes are exercising tribal leasing authority over residential leases, agricultural leases, and wind and solar leases. The majority of tribal nations implementing the HEARTH Act have done so solely with respect to business leasing on trust lands.

ITARA, Public Law 114-178, became law in June 2016. One primary feature of ITARA is a demonstration project enabling tribal nations to develop trust asset management plans that include activities like surface leasing and forest land management. A tribal nation with a trust asset management plan does not need the Secretary’s approval for activities covered by the plan, thereby greatly reducing regulatory burdens that hinder tribal trust resource development. Implementing ITARA will be particularly helpful for wind, solar, and biofuels development. NCAI has participated in consultations on this issue, submitted comments, urged Administration officials to implement the demonstration project, and requested the establishment of a working group to ensure the process is straightforward and accounts for issues that may arise during implementation.

NCAI Staff in the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Hearing Room during the 2018 Tribal Unity Impact Days.
LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

TRIBAL LANDS AND RESOURCES

Before, during, and following the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline, NCAI has been working with many tribal nations to develop a set of principles and best practices governing infrastructure permitting and development. For any project affecting tribal lands, waters, treaty rights, or sacred spaces, the United States must expressly consider five principles from the outset: (1) recognition of tribal sovereignty; (2) respect for treaty rights; (3) compliance with the federal trust responsibility (including seeking tribal informed consent); (4) upholding all statutory obligations; and (5) ensuring environmental impacts are appropriately considered.

Improving the federal infrastructure permitting process is a priority at NCAI and throughout Indian Country. Tribal nations do not oppose infrastructure projects; however, it is essential that tribal nations are consulted and included in the earliest planning and development stages to ensure protection of tribal rights and resources. In November 2016, NCAI submitted comprehensive comments on improving federal infrastructure permitting. NCAI has continued to share these comments, principles, and best practices with Administration officials.

At the 2017 Mid Year Conference, the NCAI membership passed Resolution MOH-17-044, encouraging all federal agencies to implement the report “Improving Tribal Consultation and Tribal Involvement in Federal Infrastructure Decisions.” The resolution further encourages all federal agencies to adopt policies similar to the Department of the Interior’s 512 DM 2, which requires the establishment of policies and procedures for government-to-government consultation to identify, conserve, and protect trust resources and uphold the trust responsibility.

More recently, NCAI shared its comments and suggestions for best practices with the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) through its solicitation for comments on its infrastructure development initiatives. Ultimately, inclusion of tribes throughout the permitting process will ensure that energy and other infrastructure projects are deployed more efficiently and without incident.

FARM BILL

Agriculture has long had a major impact on tribal economies, tribal workforces, and nutrition in tribal communities. It has long been a priority of NCAI to increase tribal access to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. The 2018 Farm Bill presents tribal nations with a unique opportunity to advance Indian Country’s priorities and ensure that federal agriculture policy meets the needs of tribal citizens.

NCAI has sought to highlight and amplify the importance of the Farm Bill for tribal nations by working alongside its partners at the Native Farm Bill Coalition, including the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community’s Seeds of Native Health campaign, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at the University of Arkansas. To improve tribal nations’ position in the Farm Bill debate, NCAI has held webinars, convened sessions at its conferences, prepared advocacy materials, and educated Congress and
the Administration on the many ways USDA programs could be improved for tribal nations. NCAI and the Native Farm Bill Coalition also organized two fly-ins that brought tribal leaders to Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Congress and agency officials.

NCAI’s advocacy has been successful. The House and Senate Farm Bills each include various provisions for tribal nations, including the long-sought expansion of self-determination (“638”) contracting authority to USDA. The House bill would apply this model to the Tribal Forest Protection Act, which protects tribal forest lands from fire and other hazards migrating from federal lands. The Senate bill would extend 638 authority to the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, creating another way for tribal nations to take more control over nutrition in their communities.

These and other provisions present significant opportunities for progress at USDA, and NCAI will continue to work with Congress, the Administration, and its partners to ensure tribal nations are included in the final Farm Bill legislation.

CLIMATE CHANGE

NCAI remains committed to supporting tribal nations as they fight against the effects of climate change. At the 2017 Annual Meeting, the NCAI membership passed Resolution MKE-17-024, titled “Reinstate the Provisions of the Executive Order Creating the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area.” This resolution supports the reinstatement of the recently rescinded Executive Order (EO) 13754, which called for a comprehensive approach to enhance the resilience of the Northern Bering Sea Region and take into account tribal traditional ecological knowledge in addressing changes in climate.

NCAI also continues to work closely with tribal nations and advocates to provide guidance and insight on legislation or regulatory proposals directly and indirectly related to climate change. NCAI worked diligently to draft comments in response to the Council for Environmental Qualities (CEQ) Notice for Proposed Rulemaking asking for suggestions on changes to CEQ’s regulations on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NCAI’s comments made clear that tribal nations need to be on equal footing with states and local governments during the creation of Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) and Environmental Assessments (EAs). NCAI’s comments also directed the CEQ to take into account tribal traditional knowledge when creating these documents.

ENERGY

Indian lands and natural resources are a primary source of economic activity for tribal communities. Tribal energy resources are vast. The Department of the Interior estimates undeveloped traditional energy reserves on Indian lands could generate up to $1 trillion for tribal nations and surrounding communities. Additionally, the Department of Energy estimates tribal wind resources could provide 32 percent of the total U.S. electricity demand, and tribal solar resources could generate twice the total amount of energy needed to power the entire country.

In July 2017, NCAI submitted recommendations to the Administration on how to eliminate barriers to tribal nations developing their energy resources. NCAI also sent letters of support to Congress for H.R. 210 and S. 245, both of which would help eliminate barriers to tribal traditional and renewable energy development and provide tribal nations more flexibility and control over their resources. This outreach is critical to educate the federal government on the vast energy resources on tribal lands and help place a spotlight on the unique challenges that tribal nations face in fully realizing the benefits of those resources.

For years, NCAI has advocated for adequate funding within the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TELGP). Such funding may be used for a number of initiatives, such as electricity generation using traditional or renewable energy sources; energy resource extractions, including refining or processing facilities; energy storage or transportation facilities; and heating and cooling facilities. In response, DOE recently announced that the TELGP will authorize partial loan guarantees for energy development projects that benefit tribal nations.

NCAI will continue to place tribal interests first, as tribal nations work to find creative ways to protect their cultural heritages and develop their energy resources.
TRIBAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Tribal, state, and local governments have strong interests in a bold national plan to repair and revitalize this country’s rapidly decaying infrastructure. A historic investment in our nation’s infrastructure is not just about fixing or replacing what is broken. It is about unleashing America’s full economic potential and enhancing its competitiveness in today’s global economy.

Federal policy makers continue to grapple with how to advance a comprehensive infrastructure plan and what would compose it. One fact remains critical: a truly comprehensive infrastructure plan must significantly include Indian Country. NCAI continues to educate Congress and the Administration on the infrastructure needs and priorities of Indian Country.

HOUSING

Access to affordable housing is a fundamental necessity that promotes prosperity and economic development in tribal communities. The Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) unified federal housing programs to promote tribal self-determination in order to address housing needs in tribal communities. Since the enactment of NAHASDA in 1996, tribal nations and tribal housing entities have made great strides in improving conditions in tribal communities. However, the housing need in Indian Country is still great. According to a 2017 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) report, approximately 68,000 new and/or replacement homes are necessary to address housing needs in Indian Country. Additionally, the growing population of American Indians and Alaska Natives means that access to affordable housing will remain a pressing concern for Indian Country.

Many tribal communities also face challenges recruiting and retaining highly qualified personnel such as teachers, healthcare professionals, and law enforcement officers because of the lack of housing and homeownership opportunities on tribal lands.

NCAI’s advocacy efforts for housing remain focused on reauthorizing and increasing funding for NAHASDA, which expired in 2013. NCAI has continued to work with the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) to bring together tribal leaders and tribal housing entities to advocate for passage of this critical legislation, as well as collect tribal housing and homeownership data, in order to advance tribal housing priorities. NCAI and NAIHC have also worked with appropriators to prevent gaps in funding for tribal housing programs while Congress debates NAHASDA reauthorization.

Homelessness remains an issue in Indian Country, especially for Native American veterans on tribal lands. NCAI has continued to educate federal policy makers on the need for authorizing and dedicating funding for the Tribal Housing and Urban Development – Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (Tribal HUD-VASH) program, which would help Native veterans that are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.

NCAI has been advocating on housing issues through meetings on Capitol Hill, testifying for adequate funding, facilitating discussions at NCAI conferences, supporting consultations on housing issues, and encouraging Congressional and Administrative action.

TRANSPORTATION

Well-maintained and adequately developed transportation infrastructure throughout Indian Country advances education, public safety, medical services, and commerce for tribal and surrounding communities. Without safe and well-maintained roads, bridges, ferries, trails, and air transit, tribal nations face challenges in providing essential services to their citizens that promote societal wellbeing and economic growth and development.

As Congress and the Administration determine how to move forward in addressing a comprehensive infrastructure overhaul, NCAI will continue to lead the effort in collecting and identifying information on infrastructure needs in Indian Country, and ensuring tribal nations are meaningfully included in legislative and regulatory proposals.

NCAI also continues to use a data-driven approach to advocacy aimed at securing funding and other opportunities for tribal nations to build and maintain their transportation facilities, as well as for the federal government to uphold its treaty and trust responsibilities to maintain transportation infrastructure on tribal lands. NCAI assists with the TIBC BIA Road Maintenance Subcommittee, facilitates discussion among tribal leaders about this subject at its conferences, and engages the Administration and Congress regularly about the importance of providing tribal nations with ample transportation infrastructure and related funding.

NCAI is also working to ensure the promises of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act come to fruition. In addition to reauthorizing tribal programs, the FAST Act expanded self-governance authority to the Department of Transportation and included a negotiated rulemaking process and committee. The committee’s work was stalled for one year because of delays following the change in Administration, and NCAI helped accomplish a legislative time extension to ensure tribal nations receive the full benefit of the rulemaking process.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications technology and high-speed internet access are necessities in today’s modern world; unfortunately, many tribal communities are disproportionately lacking broadband access. Access to high-speed broadband service supports economic development, tribal governance, healthcare, education, and public safety. While USDA and FCC programs provide vital resources for broadband projects, certain regulatory mechanisms have hindered the deployment, maintenance, and affordability of broadband and radio services.

NCAI has taken an active role in pushing for increased access to telecommunications opportunities in tribal communities. Advocacy efforts with the FCC continue to emphasize solutions to allow for greater broadband access for tribal schools, libraries, rural healthcare programs, high-cost programs, and low-income programs. They also include pushing for tribal nations to have priority access to spectrum and educating FCC on the potential Indian Country impacts related to eliminating net neutrality. NCAI has also educated Capitol Hill to promote connectivity in tribal communities at congressional roundtables, via testimony, and in materials related to advocacy efforts for the 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization.

NCAI continues to protect the interest of the natural and cultural resources of tribal nations. Congress, and the Administration to advance policies that increase access and funding for telecommunications deployment on tribal lands, while also protecting sacred sites and cultural resources of tribal nations.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Border working group: In November 2017, NCAI submitted a joint statement with Chairman Michael Marchand of the Colville Business Council to the United States House Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security. The statement underscored the difficulties that tribal citizens face when crossing the U.S.-Canada border, including “the unwillingness of border agents to accept tribal government-issued
identification documents; excessive interrogation and harassment; denial of entry for minor offenses; and the improper handling of sacred or cultural items;” and offered proposed changes to current Department of Homeland Security (DHS) polices that would help address these issues.

The NCAI Tribal Border Caucus convened a meeting on U.S.-Mexico border issues during the NCAI 2018 Mid Year Conference in Kansas City. The Caucus developed and helped pass NCAI Resolution KAN-18-031, which focuses on improving the policies and practices applying to tribal border crossings on and along the U.S.-Canada and the U.S.-Mexico borders. NCAI has continued to actively work with border tribal nations and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to address the difficulties their citizens face when they cross international borders.

In April 2018, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced a “zero tolerance” policy directing all federal prosecutors to prosecute all immigrants who cross the U.S.-Mexico border illegally. As a result of the prosecutions, children who accompanied their parents in the crossings were separated by government officials. DHS confirmed that between May 5 and June 9, 2018, the United States government separated 2,342 children from their parents.

In response, NCAI President Jefferson Keel released a statement denouncing the separation of children from their families, drawing a comparison between the recent child separations and the trauma experienced as a result of past boarding school policies inflicted on Native people, and calling for the United States government to reunite the families.

In 2017, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) initiated a 90-day consultation period regarding revisions to the FEMA Tribal Consultation Policy. NCAI collaborated with FEMA to facilitate a listening session with tribal leaders regarding the revisions during the NCAI 2017 Mid Year Conference held at the Mohegan Sun, in Uncasville, Connecticut.

NCAI has continued to be very active in representing tribal interests on the DHS First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC). FirstNet PSAC considers and develops recommendations and protocols for standards in public safety and emergency communication. This past year, NCAI was awarded a position on the FirstNet Executive Committee and also chairs the FirstNet Tribal Working Group (TWG).

In 2017, the TWG developed the FirstNet Tribal Consultation Policy, which went into effect in January 2018. The policy formally establish a government-to-government relationship between FirstNet and tribal nations, where previously tribes could not request consultation with FirstNet due to its authorizing legislation.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Many tribal communities face a crisis of violence due to a lack of resources and the jurisdictional morass imposed by federal laws and court decisions. The police presence in Indian Country continues to lag far behind the rest of the nation, with an approximate 40 percent unmet need in staffing for police officers on tribal lands. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal courts are funded at a dismal six percent of estimated need.
As a result, the American Indian and Alaska Native population experiences the highest crime victimization rates in the country. A recent study by the National Institute for Justice concluded that more than 80 percent of Native women and men will experience intimate partner violence, stalking, or sexual violence in their lifetime. Native youth experience the highest rates of exposure to violence in the country.

Addressing these challenges is a priority for NCAI, and over the past year our advocacy has focused on five key areas:

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT OF 2018

NCAI has been actively involved in the development of the tribal provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the past reauthorizations of the bill. Each time VAWA has been reauthorized, it has included important provisions aimed at improving safety and justice for Native women. VAWA 2013 included a provision that created a framework for tribes to exercise criminal jurisdiction over certain non-Indians who commit domestic or dating violence for the first time since the Supreme Court’s decision in Oliphant v. Suquamish in 1978. With another reauthorization of VAWA expected in 2018, NCAI released a report this year analyzing the first five years of implementation of the VAWA 2013 criminal jurisdiction provision and identifying remaining jurisdictional gaps that need to be addressed. NCAI has been working with members of Congress to develop legislation that would pave the way for the exercise of tribal criminal jurisdiction over a broader class of crimes, including: child abuse crimes, sexual violence, stalking, trafficking, and assaults against tribal public safety officers by domestic violence offenders. Several bills have been introduced that contain these life-saving amendments to VAWA 2013, and we continue to work with Congress to advance this legislation.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND VICTIM SERVICES FUNDING

NCAI has been advocating for increased funding for tribal public safety and justice systems across the board, and has placed special emphasis on securing tribal access to the Crime Victims Fund (CVF), which is the federal government’s primary mechanism for funding crime victim compensation and services across the country.

Over the past few years, Congress has more than tripled the disbursements from the CVF to $3 billion. Until last year, none of this funding has been directed to tribal nations, whose citizens are the most victimized population in the country. In FY 2018, for the first time, Congress created a three percent allocation for tribal nations from the CVF, amounting to $133.1 million for tribal crime victims services. The funding provided in FY 2018 is allowing tribal nations to begin building the services and programs that victims need to access justice and heal. For this funding to achieve its purpose, it needs to be annual funding that tribal nations can count on to ensure program stability for victims over the long term. NCAI continues to advocate with Congress to direct five percent of overall CVF disbursements to tribal nations.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

For decades, tribal leaders have encouraged a more proactive and humane approach to juvenile justice that is focused on prevention, mentoring and rehabilitation rather than criminalization and incarceration. NCAI strongly believes that we owe it to our youth and future generations to focus resources on our young people from the outset, rather than waiting for them to go astray and then begin the cycle of institutionalization and incarceration that has proven to be ineffective. NCAI has worked with a coalition of groups to develop legislative proposals consistent with these priorities for inclusion in the reauthorization of both the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Tribal Law & Order Act.

TRIBAL LAW & ORDER ACT REAUTHORIZATION

NCAI has worked with Congress to develop a reauthorization bill for the Tribal Law & Order Act of 2009 (TLOA). TLOA took a much-needed, comprehensive approach to improving public safety on Indian reservations and reforming the entire justice system in Indian Country – from prevention and law enforcement to courts, detention, and rehabilitation. Many of the key components of TLOA expired in 2014, and NCAI has worked with Congress to craft legislation that would build upon the original act and further enhance public safety in tribal communities. We continue to work on moving this important legislation forward.

CHILD WELFARE

NCAI remains strongly committed to collaboratively working with tribal, national, and state organizations to uphold the essential and effective policies and practices of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).
NCAI works in partnership with tribal nations and through the ICWA Defense Project with the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), and the ICWA Appellate Clinic at Michigan State University College of Law to provide communication strategies, legal responses, and updates to interested parties on ICWA issues. Since 2015, there have been at least nine federal lawsuits attacking the constitutionality of ICWA.

In the Spring of 2018, NCAI coordinated a meeting with tribal leaders and the Department of Justice to discuss *Brackeen v. Zinke*, litigation in the 9th Circuit with important implications across Indian Country. As an outcome of the meeting, DOJ is vigorously defending the constitutionality of the ICWA statute in the litigation. NCAI also worked with tribal nations across the country to reach out to their state attorneys general to ask that they not join with the State of Texas in the litigation.

NCAI also filed an amicus brief in a Ninth Circuit case brought by the conservative, anti-ICWA Goldwater Institute challenging ICWA. In a significant victory for the ICWA defense project, this case was recently dismissed by the Ninth Circuit. Through our continued collaboration, NCAI remains dedicated to our ongoing work of protecting our Native children and promoting healthy families in our tribal communities.

**HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

Thriving tribal nations depend on the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of tribal citizens. The United States government has treaty and trust responsibilities to meet the educational needs of Native youth; provide quality healthcare via the Indian Health Service for both direct service and self-governance tribal nations; provide safe and secure tribal communities; and provide the social services necessary for fundamental wellbeing of every American Indian and Alaska Native.

Fulfilling educational and health care needs will promote active and engaged tribal citizens, ultimately leading to personal advancement and wellness, as well as improved social welfare for the community. In the past year, NCAI has worked with tribal nations to hold the federal government to these obligations and improve opportunities and the quality of life for tribal citizens.

**HEALTHCARE**

NCAI’s advocacy efforts on health care focused on protection of tribal sovereignty and the government-to-government relationship with the United States. In January, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a letter to state Medicaid directors inviting states to create Medicaid work requirements. CMS also issued a letter to tribal leaders, stating that CMS could not approve a tribal exemption from state Medicaid work requirements because of civil rights concerns – taking a position inconsistent with existing law that recognizes the political status of tribal nations. In partnership with NIHB and tribal leaders, NCAI responded by engaging CMS on tribal political status and advocating for the recognition of tribal sovereign authority to make work requirements decisions for their own citizens. When CMS indicated that it still could not accommodate tribal nations due to civil rights concerns, NCAI and its partners engaged members of

In May 2018, NCAI joined sister organizations and 123 federally recognized tribal nations in an amicus brief to uphold ICWA.
Congress and other Departments to weigh in with CMS on the settled state of the law regarding tribal political status. Efforts also included convenings of national and regional tribal organizations to address this specific issue with CMS and engage in longer-term efforts to ensure the federal government and general public gain a better understanding of the sovereign status of tribal nations.

Elevating the issue led to members of Congress contacting the Department of Health and Human Services and CMS, ultimately causing CMS to adjust its stance and indicate it could provide flexibility to states working with tribal nations to provide accommodations. CMS’s response was a step in the right direction; however, it has since readopted its initial position. NCAI is committed to ensuring the United States honors the political status of tribal governments, and will continue to work with its tribal partners to ensure a favorable outcome that is consistent with existing law.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM / DHAT

Tribal nations have consistently faced barriers to quality healthcare for their citizens. NCAI seeks to eliminate barriers that prevent healthy tribal communities and works to promote innovative tribal solutions that increase access to care. One such initiative is the Indian Health Services (IHS) Community Health Aide Program (CHAP), which promotes health in tribal communities by supporting mid-level health professionals working alongside licensed providers, thereby increasing the provision of services to tribal citizens.

Another innovative model is the Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) program. In Alaska, where this program has primarily been implemented, the program’s success can be seen through the transition from emergency dental care to tribal citizens having access to routine preventative care. Tribal nations in Washington and Oregon have recently begun DHAT programs. The Oregon Department of Health approved a tribal DHAT program and is already seeing increased demand for services and strong interest from students that want to become dental health aide therapists. In May, NCAI had the opportunity to address the Society of American Indian Dentists, where Executive Director Jacqueline Pata emphasized the importance of dental health for the overall health of tribal citizens and spoke about the opportunities created through DHAT programs.

NCAI continues to advocate for programs CHAP and DHAT, and any other programs that increase access to quality healthcare for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

EDUCATION

There is no more vital tool for tribal self-determination and economic success than a high quality, holistic education. The federal treaty and trust obligations include providing a quality education to Native students. Tribal leaders, parents, and educators play a vital role in improving educational outcomes in tribal communities.

Over the past year, NCAI has worked with tribal leaders and experts to identify resources and solutions for tribal nations that want to exercise increased oversight and responsibility for their school systems. Through the generous support of the Walton Family Foundation, these efforts ultimately culminated in the creation of a tribal leaders toolkit titled “Education Choice for Indian Country: Supporting Tribal Decision Making for Schools and Students.” This toolkit provides a step-by-step guide for tribal leaders to assess resources and data available to improve their schools and produce and implement action plans aimed at bettering educational outcomes for their students.

To support this effort, NCAI convened several events to incorporate the knowledge and wisdom of tribal leaders and education experts. The NCAI convened a think tank with more than a dozen attendees to identify the top actions necessary for tribal nations to take control of their school systems, as well as the information necessary to guide decision-making. The responses overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of understanding school governance and utilizing data to prioritize issues.

This event was followed by a breakout session at the NCAI Mid Year Conference in Kansas City to share a draft version of the toolkit and get feedback from tribal leaders and education experts. NCAI will continue building on this initiative to ensure tribal nations have the resources they need to improve their school systems and provide quality education to their students.
CULTURAL PROTECTIONS

Native cultures are intertwined with identity, language, and religious practices. NCAI continues to support the efforts of tribal nations to protect sacred items, places, landscapes, and the religious freedoms and cultural practices of Native peoples.

In 2017, NCAI passed two resolutions addressing the protection, preservation, or creation of National Monuments. Resolution MOH-17-006, titled “In Support of Preserving National Monument Designations,” urged the Administration to preserve National Monument boundaries as originally designated. Similarly, Resolution MKE-17-057, titled, “Opposition to Amendments to the Antiquities Act,” opposed changes to the Antiquities Act. The proposed changes would “threaten National Monuments protections for Tribal historical landmarks and objects of historic and ongoing cultural importance, would limit monument designation sizes, and would not provide parity for tribal governments.” Relatedly, NCAI is working with its partners to develop an amicus brief in support of the Bear Ears Coalition in the recent case *Hopi Tribe v. Trump*, which is currently before the D.C. District Court.

NCAI continues to address legislation affecting the natural and cultural resources interests of tribal nations in National Monuments. NCAI is also deeply concerned with the protection and preservation of tribal archaeological and historical cultural heritage generally. NCAI provided testimony to the Senate in support of S. 2097, The Chaco Canyon Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act. S. 2097 would remove 316,000 acres of federal lands surrounding the Chaco Canyon National Historic Park and World Heritage Area from oil and gas permitting. NCAI also continues to support domestic and international repatriation efforts. For example, it has been aggressively advocating Congress to pass the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act. This legislation would prevent the exportation of Native objects illegally removed from tribal lands for subsequent sale in overseas auctions.

NATIVE VETERANS

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) have bravely fought to protect the legacy of Native peoples through serving as members of the armed forces. They have shown exceptional valor and heroism on battlefields from the American Revolution to Iraq and Afghanistan. Native American service members are younger as a cohort than all other service members, serve at a higher rate than other ethnic groups, and have a higher concentration of female service members.

Despite their distinguished service, AI/AN veterans have lower incomes, lower educational attainment, and higher unemployment than veterans of other races. They also are more likely to lack health insurance and to have a disability (service-connected or otherwise) than other veterans.

NCAI has been working with its partner organizations to educate Congress and the Administration on the issues Native veterans face and to advance funding and legislation to improve services for Native veterans. These efforts included participating in House and Senate roundtables.

We give thanks to our veteran brothers and sisters for ensuring that we, as Native peoples, continue to survive and thrive.
ECONOMY

Across Indian Country, a growing number of tribal nations are writing self-authored stories of economic progress. From creating successful nation-owned enterprises to cultivating citizen-owned businesses to preparing their people to take full advantage of expanding economic and job opportunities, they are slowly but surely building the sustainable tribal economies they require in order to revitalize their communities and achieve the futures they seek for themselves.

Driving this remarkable yet uneven economic renaissance is tribal self-determination, specifically the responsibility and wherewithal of each tribal nation to create a robust economy based on its own enduring cultural values, distinct challenges, particular circumstances, and short-and long-term community development priorities.

TRIBAL LABOR SOVEREIGNTY ACT

Tribal nations are sovereign governments, as recognized in the U.S. Constitution. The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) regulates labor relations between employees and private employers. Congress has recognized that it is most appropriate for each government to determine their own governmental labor policies by providing governmental exemptions for federal, state, county and city governments from the Act. Tribal nations must also be granted parity under this law.

The Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act (TLSA) would ensure tribal government employers have the same opportunities as all other governmental employers to regulate labor with their government workforces. NCAI, along with tribal nations and their representatives, mobilized to secure passage of this legislation when the bill came up for a floor vote earlier this year.

Although TLSA received a majority of votes, it did not have the 60 votes needed to end debate in the Senate. NCAI is committed to continuing its work to pass this legislation, as this is not merely a legal issue but a moral imperative of affirming tribal sovereignty and ending discrimination against tribal nations.

TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS EXCLUDED FROM TAX REFORM LEGISLATION

In December 2017, Congress passed H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the most significant tax reform legislation in more than 30 years. NCAI was gravely disappointed that Congress and the Administration – together our federal trustee – excluded tribal governments from the largest overhaul of the tax code in a generation. Tribal nations, NCAI, the Native American Finance Officers Association, and many other organizations engaged Congressional offices and the Administration to emphasize the importance of tribal tax reform. Yet, Congress and the Administration failed to take seriously the obstacles that hinder tribal economic growth, job creation, infrastructure deployment, and self-governance.

In addition to doing nothing for Indian Country, this tax reform bill will increase the federal deficit by $1.5 trillion over the next ten years. This deficit increase will create pressure to cut federal programs that are extremely important to tribal communities. Deficit-financed tax cuts that lead to austerity budget cuts will affect all Americans, but likely will disproportionately impact American Indians and Alaska Natives who rely on the federal government’s funding of its trust responsibility.

Going forward, NCAI will advocate for the inclusion of tribal tax priorities in future legislation that likely will need to be considered to correct issues created by the ill-conceived recent tax reform legislation.

FEDERAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Indian Country faces immense economic challenges, and federal funding of the trust and treaty obligations serves as a critical ingredient in the building of strong tribal economies. Congress has expressed support for tribal self-determination and honoring the trust responsibility. Yet the often partisan debates over the role and size of the federal government presents an outsized effect on the daily lives of American Indian and Alaska Native people who face underfunding of healthcare, education, and backlogs in physical infrastructure – all of which fall under the federal trust responsibility.

NCAI worked over the last year to remind lawmakers that the federal treaty and trust obligations are non-partisan obligations. NCAI also urged the Administration and Congressional appropriators to build on the proven success of local tribal control, including through tribal self-governance and self-determination programs, and to fund tribal priorities identified in budget consultations.

Since 2011, federal fiscal policy based in austerity has adversely affected federally funded tribal
programs which faced blunt sequester cuts in 2013 and ongoing tight limits due to caps on discretionary accounts. In 2018, Congress reached an agreement to raise the spending limits on defense and non-defense appropriations in FY 2018 and 2019 that were set by the 2011 Budget Control appropriations and which most members of Congress considered too low to meet national needs. That deal provided the largest increase compared to sequestration levels and actually added funding above the original pre-sequestration caps. The largest tribal accounts saw promising increases, including a 10 percent increase from FY 2017 to FY 2018 for the Indian Health Service and a seven percent increase for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, due to the historic underinvestment in these and other federal programs serving tribal nations, much work remains.

Tribal leaders have guided this work via resolutions at NCAI conferences, input at federal budget consultations, and through NCAI’s Budget Taskforce. To assist such efforts, NCAI provides up-to-date analyses of trends in federal spending on programs fulfilling the trust obligation to tribal nations. NCAI again published a national Indian Country budget request document, which laid the foundation for testimony and letters throughout the FY 2019 appropriations cycle. The FY 2019 Indian Country Budget Request, “Honoring the Promises, Building Strong Nations,” offered recommendations for ways the federal government, partnering with tribal nations, should meet the federal treaty and trust obligations as well as supply the long-term investments needed in tribal public infrastructure. NCAI will continue to seek an honorable budget that meets the obligations to Indian Country promised through treaties and the federal trust responsibility.

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

NCAI has engaged on international Indigenous issues for many years through international forums, including the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS), to advance tribal interests when important policy decisions are under discussion at the international level. NCAI holds consultative status with the UN, which allows us to participate in many UN meetings. Tribal communities are often on the front line of issues with global impact, such as climate change, and contribute Indigenous knowledge to finding solutions at the international level. This year, NCAI’s international advocacy efforts have focused on:

- **Climate Change:** NCAI has been participating in discussions through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change about how to operationalize the portion of the Paris Agreement that recognizes the value of Indigenous traditional knowledge about the environment to climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and called for the establishment of a platform for sharing that knowledge.

- **Participation of Indigenous Governments at the UN:** NCAI has participated in UN negotiations aimed at creating an appropriate status and mechanism to enable the participation of indigenous governments at the United Nations.

- **Traditional Knowledge:** The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is currently negotiating an international agreement that will create new binding international law relating to intellectual property that could provide effective protection of traditional knowledge, genetic resources, and
traditional cultural expressions, including those of Indigenous peoples. NCAI participated in a drafting session to develop a proposed text for the negotiations hosted by the Native American Rights Fund and the University of Colorado Law School. NCAI also hosted several consultation sessions with the U.S. government to share our proposals and participated in the Indigenous caucus during negotiations at WIPO.

- **Marine Biodiversity:** The United Nations convened an Intergovernmental Conference to develop the text of an international, legally-binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. Given the importance of oceans and waterways to many Indigenous peoples for subsistence, medicine, and traditional spiritual practices, these negotiations have a clear impact on the rights of Indigenous peoples. NCAI is monitoring these negotiations and advocating for the protection of Indigenous rights.

- **NAFTA:** President Trump campaigned on a promise to renegotiate NAFTA. As a result, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. have been actively renegotiating NAFTA. Generally, the original NAFTA agreement did not address Indigenous peoples, except that Canada and the U.S. both included exceptions to the text of the agreement that protect minority preference programs. Canada has been advocating for the inclusion of a chapter on Trade and Indigenous Peoples in any renegotiated NAFTA. NCAI has joined with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in Canada to endorse the concept of (and key principles to feature in) an Indigenous Chapter and is advocating for its inclusion.

Canadian Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde speaks to tribal leaders about the importance of Indigenous inclusion in the renegotiation of NAFTA.
EMPOWERING NATIVE COMMUNITIES

A sage tribal leader once said that the end goal for tribal governments and leaders is not to strengthen tribal sovereignty, but rather to design and implement answers to the question, “How do we use our sovereignty to build a strong community?”

Indigenous peoples have successfully engaged in this process for millennia, approaching tribal sovereignty not as a thing to strengthen, but as an action to undertake. In so doing, tribal nations developed sophisticated governance systems capable of sustaining thriving societies, and continuously refined those systems to address emerging challenges, changing circumstances, and new priorities. Colonization disrupted this adaptive process, robbing tribal nations of their ability to freely exercise their inherent sovereignty.

In the current policy era of tribal self-determination, tribal nations are pushing the envelope of tribal sovereignty – reclaiming and rebuilding their governance systems so that they are, once again, capable of realizing their definitions of prosperity for their communities and those generations yet to come.

NCAI has long been committed to supporting tribal nations in this sacred endeavor. It carries out this commitment in several ways. Chief among them is NCAI’s expanding effort to inform the work of tribal nations as they build their research and data capacity, so that they can better understand the state, needs, and priorities of their communities. NCAI also equips tribal leaders and key decision-makers with the knowledge, tools, resources, and tribally designed best practices that they need in order to develop informed, thoughtful solutions to address governance challenges and advance strategic priorities.

In this section, you will learn how NCAI has fulfilled this commitment to tribal nations over the past year, and how it will do so moving forward.
NCAI POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

RESEARCH AND DATA TO INFORM POLICY

NCAI established the Policy Research Center (PRC) in 2003 to support Indian Country in shaping its own future. PRC’s mission is 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. PRC also works to serve the data and policy research needs of NCAI and its stakeholders.

Over the past year, PRC advanced several projects to help tribal nations build their capacity to conduct research, provided technical assistance to researchers working with tribal nations, gathered and analyzed data to inform policy, disseminated policy briefs and reports, and collaborated with partner organizations, federal agencies, and other entities. The common thread connecting this work is to ensure that research and data inform policy in the context of NCAI’s overall advocacy for tribal nations and a broad array of tribal data needs.

During 2018, PRC focused on completing and disseminating several publications and resources on tribal data priorities, including three monographs on tribal data capacity, the results of the tribal data capacity survey, tools and resources to strengthen tribal academic research partnerships, and several policy briefs on topics such as the opioid epidemic, behavioral health, the 2020 Census, violence against women data, and the All of Us Research Program. PRC is expanding its recent work in health policy data to focus on a broader range of tribal data and research priorities. For example, PRC facilitated a think tank discussion on “Tribal Responsibility and Accountability for the Education of their Students” that informed its development of a tribal education choice toolkit by NCAI, and is developing a research policy update on climate change data that tribal nations can use in their climate action efforts.

CONFERENCES/EVENTS/TRAININGS

The 13th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum: PRC hosted the Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum at NCAI’s Mid Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. This Forum provided a space for tribal leaders and citizens, researchers, and policy organizations to discuss how research can inform policy. This year’s theme was “Lighting the Way: New Paths from Research to Policy,” and the forum featured a morning plenary session, afternoon breakout sessions, and a poster session. Presentations focused on Native Vote data, Census data, the new Reclaiming Native Truth data, genetic research and tribal research oversight, crime and justice data for policy, community needs assessment data, and data to strengthen tribal economies.

NCAI Mid Year Pre-Conference Data Institute: PRC hosted a half-day pre-conference session that created a space to share information, tools, and resources to advance policy research in Indian Country. Presentations focused on new resources from PRC’s work to build tribal data capacity, information from partners working on Indigenous data sovereignty, an update on the NCAI Survey of Tribal Data Practices, and a workshop on strengthening tribal academic research partners that featured an interactive session with the new NCAI’s Policy Research Center hosts the 13th Annual Tribal Leader Scholar Forum NCAIMY18, where Indian Country researchers presented their findings on how data informs policy and influences our futures including updates on Native Vote, Census 2020, and “Reclaiming Native Truth” through data.
Holding Space Guide and the Tribal Research Futures Game.

**Diabetes and Behavioral Health Comorbidities:** PRC completed a review of the literature on diabetes and behavioral health comorbidities and released a monograph describing this work as a way to help advance the National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda in partnership with SAMHSA. It also held an interactive workshop on this work during the National Indian Health Board’s 2018 Tribal Public Health Summit.

**Strengthening Tribal Academic Research Partnerships through Governance, Trust, and Culture:** PRC held workshops to launch a new toolkit to help strengthen tribal academic research partnerships at the 2017 NCAI Annual Conference, the 2018 Collaborative Research Center for American Indian Health Population Summit, the 2018 NCAI Mid Year Pre-Conference Data Institute, and the 2018 National Native Health Research Training Institute. The workshops included an overview of the toolkit’s new Holding Space Guide and the Tribal Research Futures Game, which leads participant teams through interactive, scenario-based decisions that shape tribal academic research partnerships and their outcomes over time.

**REPORTS, ISSUE BRIEFS, AND PUBLICATIONS**

**PRC Research Updates:** In the past year, PRC released three Research Updates, which share PRC tools and resources, funding opportunities, new publications, and upcoming meetings. It also disseminated these updates during NCAI events and on its listserv to NCAI members, including leaders and key decision-makers representing Indigenous nations in the U.S., New Zealand, Canada, and Australia, as well as a wide range of federal partners and nonprofit organizations.

**PRC Issue Briefs/Reports:** PRC released several briefs and reports, including the monographs on tribal data capacity topics, a new policy brief on the opioid epidemic, a review of the All of Us Research Program, a review of diabetes and behavioral health comorbidities, a policy brief with the latest data on violence against AI/AN women, a policy brief on the 2020 Census, and a review of data disaggregation for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs).

**PRC Webinars, Podcasts, and Social Media:** PRC hosted several webinars during the year that shared the latest research findings and topics related to AI/AN research and policy priorities and established a new Monthly Webinar Series in January 2018. The PRC Monthly Webinar Series topics included an update from the National Institute of Health (NIH) on tribal research activities, a review of tribal service areas, an update on the Indian Health Service’s (IHS) response to the opioid crisis, a review of Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome, and the application of dissemination and implementation research. In addition, PRC updated its website; enhanced its Twitter account to highlight PRC activities, trainings, and resources; and launched a new “Tribal Data Drum” podcast series.

**COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

PRC is engaged in several collaborations and partnerships aimed at building tribal research capacity, providing education to researchers on how to engage in respectful research partnerships with tribal nations, and advancing policy initiatives and priorities of NCAI. Current work includes the following collaborations and partnerships:

**Center for Diabetes Translation Research, Washington University in St. Louis:** PRC leads the Research Translation with AI/AN Communities Core in this five-year NIH/National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)-funded grant in partnership with Washington University in St. Louis and the Black Hills Center for American Indian Health. The goal of the Core is to increase the capacity of researchers and tribal nations to engage in diabetes translational research to reduce diabetes disparities in AI/AN communities.

**National Science Foundation:** The PRC project, titled “Using Science to Build Tribal Capacity for Data-Intensive Research,” was funded by the National Science Foundation to build a community committed to the collection and dissemination of quality data on AI/AN populations and to promote ongoing data collection and capacity of tribal nations. PRC released three monographs at NCAI’s 2017 Annual Convention documenting the burden on tribal nations to meet federal reporting requirements, the use of tribal service area data by federal agencies, and recommendations from pilot grants to tribal nations developing their own censuses and surveys of tribal citizens. PRC also presented the results of the Tribal Data Capacity Survey (administered during the 2016 Annual Convention) at the 2018 NCAI Mid
Year Conference and a written report on the results is forthcoming.

**IHS/NIH Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) VII Project:** The PRC NARCH Project, titled “Dissemination & Implementation to Reduce AI/AN Health Disparities,” is a partnership between PRC and the University of Nevada-Reno. The project is focused on developing two major resources for tribal communities: a toolkit on tribal research partnerships with academic institutions that focuses on the themes of governance, culture, and trust; and the interactive Tribal Research Futures Game, which illustrates the tensions that can arise in partnerships dealing with research and data resources, design, dissemination, and implementation. The partnership is currently disseminating these resources during workshops at NCAI conferences and other tribal meetings.

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** PRC partnered with SAMHSA to engage tribal leaders on implementation of the National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda (TBHA) to help make meaningful progress on addressing mental and substance abuse disorders and to advance the behavioral health of AI/AN individuals and communities. It also completed a literature review and monograph on diabetes and behavioral health comorbidities, a short brief on the TBHA, and hosted webinars and podcasts to disseminate the content of the TBHA.

**Collaborative Research Center for American Indian Health (CRCAIH):** PRC leads the Culture, Science, and Bioethics Core as part of its partnership with CRCAIH in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The Core aims to advance dialogue on research oversight and infrastructure needs and PRC delivered its Research that Benefits Native People curriculum to CRCAIH’s tribal partners in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. CRCAIH partners also presented about regional efforts to build tribal research oversight at NCAI’s 2018 Mid Year Conference.

**Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R):** PRC is partnering with PRIM&R, in collaboration with IHS, to increase access to PRIM&R resources on research oversight. Through this partnership, PRC hosted a webinar with PRIM&R in 2017 and is planning another webinar in late 2018.

**Census 2020:** PRC is working with its partners to design efforts to encourage AI/AN participation in the 2020 Census, which is an important source of data for tribal leaders and policymakers. PRC is in the process of conducting message testing for Census 2020 activities, given the need to determine which messages will be most effective to encourage participation by AI/ANs. In partnership with George Washington University, PRC disseminated a policy brief documenting how AI/ANs are one of the “hard to count” populations and the consequences of an undercount of AI/ANs by the 2020 Census.

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) & PolicyLink:** PRC participated in the RWJF project Making the Case for Data Disaggregation to Advance a Culture of Health that convened leading experts focused on data on racially and ethnically diverse populations to review recommendations on the status and priorities for data disaggregation. PRC participated in the national steering committee for this project, completed and disseminated a report on data disaggregation within the AI/AN population, and attended three convenings that focused on the measurement of small populations, immigration and internal migration, and racial/ethnic misclassification.

In January 2018, NCAI PRC launched a new Monthly Webinar Series and the Tribal Data Drum podcast.
NCAI PARTNERSHIP FOR TRIBAL GOVERNANCE

At the request of tribal leaders in 2009, NCAI established the Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) to create, coordinate, and share the knowledge, tools, and resources that tribal nations need to grow their governance systems and more fully and effectively exercise their sovereignty. PTG serves as NCAI’s organizational hub in supporting tribal nations and leaders as they advance their efforts in four core areas: strengthening governance, leadership development, citizen engagement, and public and media education.

Through its diverse array of partnerships with tribal nations, tribal intergovernmental and national Native organizations, academic institutions and policy centers, practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders, PTG:

- develops and shares new knowledge and resources on tribal governance;
- provides and coordinates governance education, training, and technical assistance opportunities for tribal leaders and key decision-makers;
- enhances communication, coordination, and collaboration among groups working to support the governance-strengthening efforts of tribal nations;
- informs and promotes a policy research agenda to strengthen tribal governance;
- advocates for policies that enhance tribal self-determination and self-governance;
- and educates the mainstream media and general public about tribal governments and their many stories of governance success.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: BUILDING THE HUMAN CAPACITY TO REBUILD TRIBAL NATIONS

Culminating its multi-year project examining tribal innovations in workforce development, PTG released its “Tribal Workforce Development: A Decision-Framing Toolkit” publication at NCAI’s Mid Year Conference in Kansas City in June 2018. PTG developed the toolkit for tribal leaders, workforce development practitioners, and other key decision-makers responsible for tackling the complex task of evaluating, refining, expanding, and in some cases, completely redesigning their nations’ workforce development approaches. The toolkit seeks to frame and inform strategic decision making by tribal policymakers at a foundational, nation-rebuilding level by providing them a comprehensive lens through which they can identify, develop, and implement effective, sustainable workforce development solutions tailored to their distinct needs and ends.

To share the toolkit and the 15 key strategic considerations it explores with a broad national audience, PTG published an eight-part, weekly op-ed series through Indian Country Today from July through September 2018. Each op-ed cast a spotlight on two specific considerations for tribal workforce development featured in the toolkit, as well as links to additional resources for further learning about this
PTG’s workforce development toolkit explores 15 key strategic considerations that tribal nations should address as they craft self-governed approaches to developing their human capacity.

critical governance topic. The series trended among the most popular stories on Indian Country Today’s website and app during its two-month run.

To further share its workforce development project learnings, PTG also hosted a series of three highly attended webinars in summer 2018, the video recordings of which are now available on the “Workforce Development” playlist on NCAI’s YouTube Channel. The first webinar showcased the four tribal nations that PTG partnered with to develop in-depth case studies of their innovative workforce development approaches. The second presented a detailed overview of PTG’s workforce development toolkit (see above) and how it can inform and drive strategic action by tribal nations as they work to craft effective, self-governed workforce development approaches. The third webinar provided a comprehensive overview of the 2017 Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act (passed by Congress in December 2017) and guidance to tribal nations about how to implement the law. With these additions, NCAI’s “Workforce Development” playlist on YouTube now features 28 videos.

Looking ahead, PTG will spend the next year engaged in a multi-faceted effort to share its workforce development toolkit with tribal leaders and key decision-makers, tribal colleges and university faculty, and other target audiences – and show them how to use it. It also will partner with two tribal nations to help them develop strategic plans for workforce development, using the toolkit as the primary guide for plan development. In early 2019, PTG will also update and re-release its “Empowering Tribal Workforce Development” brief for federal policymakers, which it originally unveiled in October 2016.

For more on this project, see: http://www.ncai.org/ptg/workforce-development.
BUILDING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES: SMALL BUSINESSES

As part of its ongoing initiative to support tribal economy building, PTG recently unveiled a new video curriculum titled “Building Sustainable Economies: Small Businesses.” From a guest lecture delivered by PTG Director Ian Record to Native students at George Washington University, the curriculum examines the critical role that small businesses owned and operated by tribal citizens play in tribal nations’ efforts to build sustainable economies capable of achieving their nation-rebuilding priorities. Featured with the curriculum on NCAI’s website is a comprehensive catalogue of related resources for deepening knowledge and understanding about tribal citizen entrepreneurship.

To view the video lecture and related resources, go to: http://www.ncai.org/ptg/small-businesses.

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND DOCUMENTING IT: THE YUROK TRIBE

Several years ago, NCAI issued multi-year investment grants to a total of 11 tribal nations to strengthen their governance systems in whatever areas and ways they saw fit. PTG recently partnered with the Yurok Tribe in northern California to document the governance work it undertook with the grant that PTG provided. Deploying NCAI’s new case study template, PTG has developed a comprehensive case study of Yurok’s development of an ordinance banning Genetically Engineered Organisms on tribal land, which is the first ordinance of its kind in Indian Country. In addition to the written case study, PTG is producing a seven-minute video documentary that shares Yurok’s groundbreaking work in this area, as well as other related resources including an online digital story, news article, and lesson plan for tribal colleges and universities to use to teach the case study in the classroom.
STRENGTHENING FINANCIAL CAPABILITY IN INDIAN COUNTRY

In May 2018, PTG (on NCAI’s behalf) deepened its ongoing partnership with the Harvard Business School (HBS) and the Native American Finance Officers Association to provide a fiduciary investment training program to nearly 40 leaders, executive officers, senior administrators, and senior financial managers of tribal nations and Native organizations from across the United States. Titled “Leading People and Investing to Build Sustainable Communities,” the program is the only one of its kind in the country, bringing together HBS faculty and guest speakers from Indian Country who are experts in investing for the purpose of building sustainable tribal economies and communities. The popular program quickly reached capacity for its May 2018 training, and PTG has already built a lengthy waiting list of individuals eager to take the training in 2019.

To learn more about this training program, visit: http://www.ncai.org/ptg/investmenttraining

PTG UNVEILS NEW NATIVE FINANCIAL EDUCATION COALITION WEBSITE

Working on NCAI’s behalf, PTG serves as the steward of the Native Financial Education Coalition (NFEC), a national network of leading financial education practitioners and scholars. NFEC’s mission is to increase awareness of the need for adequate personal finance skills in Native communities, build the capacity of Native governments and organizations to provide financial education; and support each other’s efforts to promote financial management skills through information sharing and collaboration. Furthering that mission, PTG recently redesigned and relaunched NFEC’s website to serve as a go-to hub for studies, reports, toolkits, upcoming events, and grant opportunities focused on Indian Country financial capability and how to strengthen it.

To see the new NFEC website, go to: http://nfec.us/.
PUBLIC EDUCATION

NCAI was established in 1944 in response to the termination and assimilation policies the U.S. government forced upon tribal governments in contradiction of their treaty rights and status as sovereign nations. Our mission to protect and advance this sovereignty includes promoting the rightful place of tribal nations among the American family of governments.

NCAI advances this critical educational initiative through timely, insightful, and proactive communications.

INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY

2018 began without Indian Country Today, the newspaper, magazine, and website just a memory. NCAI, recognizing the importance of this communication vehicle for Indian Country, found a path to give the nearly four decade-old organization a new life.

It’s remarkable how quickly it happened.

During the first quarter of 2018, a plan was created, staff were hired (an editor, associate editor, and development staff member), and the team started to implement the plan to remake the publication as an independent non-profit digital enterprise. By June, debuting at the NCAI Mid Year Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, Indian Country Today was back.

Indian Country Today makes a difference every day by reporting stories that would not be covered by the mainstream media. It is also where many mainstream newspapers, radio and television networks first learn about what is happening across Indian Country.

This way of thinking allows Indian Country Today to develop content that is primarily optimized for mobile devices and is a shift from most other news organizations. Indian Country Today now reaches about 300,000 people a month. The goal is to hit one million readers every month.

As a nonprofit organization itself, NCAI is uniquely situated to manage Indian Country Today as a nonprofit. The model is “public media,” building a self-sustaining operation that starts with readers and friends contributing some of the costs of operations, bolstered by support from foundations and advertising sales. The business plan is on schedule. The news product is a service provided free to our readers. Tribal publications, radio, and other media are also free to use the content from Indian Country Today to expand and enhance the coverage they provide.

Indian Country Today is the only advertising vehicle that reaches a national American Indian and Alaska Native audience, providing a platform for employment ads, events, and public announcements. This is an essential service for tribal nations, federal and state governments, corporations, small business, and the nonprofit sector looking to hire from the rich talent pool in Indian Country.
Indian Country Today is a national forum for news and commentary about issues that impact American Indians and Alaska Natives.

CHANGE THE MASCOT

The year 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of NCAI’s launch of its formal campaign to eradicate negative, harmful stereotypes of Native peoples in popular culture and the media. Since its beginning, this campaign has focused significant energy on eliminating offensive Native-themed mascots, names, and logos from sports at the high school, college, and professional levels, with much success to report for its efforts over the years. Working with its many organizational partners over the past year, NCAI has broadened its multi-pronged initiative to educate schools, sports teams, the media, the corporate world, and the general public about the many documented harms that these dehumanizing mascots cause Native people, especially Native youth. Three developments over the past year warrant particular mention:

Waving Goodbye to Chief Wahoo:
In January 2018, Major League Baseball (MLB) announced that its franchise based in Cleveland, Ohio will retire its Chief Wahoo mascot and logo in 2019. NCAI worked for years to educate MLB leadership about the issue, sending several letters to the league highlighting the need to remove this grotesque mascot and logo, which resulted in a meeting between NCAI staff and MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred in 2018. Chief Wahoo joins the roughly 2,000 Native-themed mascots that have been eliminated from sports at all levels over the past five decades (nearly 1,000 remain today).

Educating High Schools: NCAI has spent the past year raising the awareness of administrators, teachers, students, and parents at high schools in Ohio, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, and elsewhere about how Native-themed sports team mascots misrepresent, diminish, and contribute to an unwelcoming environment for Native people. For example, NCAI 1st Vice President Aaron Payment traveled to Ohio in April 2018 to address the school district board for a high school that is working to determine whether to keep or drop its “R-word” mascot. In his remarks to the board, Payment stated, “There are more than five million Native people in the U.S., and we can tell our own histories, and our own stories of who we are, today. We don’t need others to tell the world about who they think we are through offensive mascots that supposedly honor us. Let me be crystal clear: there is no honor in these mascots. There never has been.”

Locking Arms to Oppose the Washington NFL Team: In August 2018, NCAI and eight other leading national civil rights and racial justice organizations formally announced their joint opposition to the Washington National Football League team locating its new stadium in the District of Columbia unless the team agrees to drop the “R-word” as its mascot. The coalition, which previously denounced the team’s continued use of this offensive mascot, felt compelled to speak out with the team actively exploring potential stadium sites across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Among NCAI’s partners in this effort was the NAACP, whose President Derrick Johnson stated, “In 2018, no other people of color must confront the harm and ridicule levied by a sports team whose name refers to the color of their skin. It is long past time that the NFL and its Washington franchise throw this dictionary-defined racial slur into the dustbin of history, where it belongs.”

TRIBAL SUPREME COURT PROJECT

The 2017-18 term has been a busy year for the Tribal Supreme Court Project. Tribal leaders were concerned when the Supreme Court accepted review on three major Indian law cases at the beginning of the year. Tribal nations, the Tribal Supreme Court Project (staffed by NCAI and Native American Rights Fund), and allies engaged. Thankfully, tribal nations prevailed in all three cases.

It was also a significant year for the Court itself as Justice Anthony Kennedy retired at the end of the term, and Judge Brett Kavanaugh from the D.C. Circuit has been nominated to replace him. NCAI and the Native American Rights Fund are reviewing Kavanaugh’s record, with concern about his work on the case Rice v. Cayetano. The team is also scrutinizing the record of Eric Miller, a nominee to the Ninth Circuit Court. We continue to encourage the White House and the Senate to nominate and confirm federal judges who are committed to the principles of tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and the federal trust responsibility.

In the most highly watched case of the year, on June 11, 2018, an equally divided (4-4) Court affirmed in Washington v. U.S. (17-269)
found that the Act did not violate separation of powers because while Congress may not exercise judicial power, it acts permissibly when it simply “changes the law.”

NCAI and tribal Nations in South Dakota also filed an important amicus brief in a tax case, South Dakota v. Wayfair (17-494). On June 21, the Court issued a new ruling that state governments may collect sales taxes from out-of-state retailers with no physical presence in the state. Soon, every state with a sales tax will be considering changes to their tax laws, to collect an estimated $33 billion every year nationwide. Tribal governments are encouraged to communicate with state legislatures and revenue departments, to protect tribal tax rights. The Wayfair opinion avoided prejudice to tribal rights, a good result for protecting tribal tax authority.

We have a busy year ahead, as the Court has granted three treaty rights cases for its October 2018 Term: Carpenter v. Murphy (17-1107) regarding the boundaries established in the 1866 Treaty with the Creek Nation; Herrera v. Wyoming (17-532) regarding off-reservation treaty hunting rights in Wyoming; and Washington State Dep’t of Licensing v. Cougar Den (16-1498) regarding the right to travel in the 1855 Treaty with the Yakama Nation.

The Tribal Supreme Court Project is staffed by NCAI and NARF, and was formed to promote greater coordination and to improve strategy on litigation that may affect the rights of all tribal nations. Please contact NCAI if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance: Derrick Beets (dbeets@ncai.org), or Joel Williams (williams@narf.org).

**NATIVE VOTE AND VOTING RIGHTS**

Since the founding of NCAI, ensuring Native political participation has been a critical component of its work to protect and enhance the sovereign rights of tribal nations. One of the first tribal resolutions it passed is in support of advancing voting rights for Native people. Increasing the influence of Native voters in non-tribal elections leads to better responsiveness to tribal needs, as state governors, state legislatures, and especially U.S. Congressional members make important policy decisions that impact Indian Country.

NCAI’s non-partisan Native Vote initiative focuses on the following objectives:

- **Voter registration and Get-Out-the-Native-Vote (GOTNV) efforts: supported by the grassroots leadership of a national network of Native Vote coordinators to mobilize voters in tribal communities.**

- **Voter and candidate education: comprised of informing Native voters on candidate platforms and significant ballot measures, as well as educating candidates on the needs and priorities of Indian Country. This also includes supporting Native people to run for elected office.**

- **Election protection: ensuring that every eligible Native voter has the opportunity to cast their ballot on Election Day.**

- **Data collection: measuring the impact of American Indian and Alaska Native voters**
and collaborating with state coalition partners to enhance methodologies for data collection and tools.

To strengthen our work to safeguard the rights of Native voters, NCAI, in collaboration with the Native American Voting Rights Coalition, hosted a voting rights field hearing for the purpose of documenting American Indian and Alaska Native experiences with voter registration and voting in federal, state, and local (non-tribal) elections. Eleven witnesses, including community organizers, tribal leaders, tribal members, elected officials, and tribal advocates, provided testimony.

In an effort to continue to revitalize civic engagement among Native voters, NCAI published and disseminated an analysis report for tribal leaders at the 2018 Executive Council Winter Session. NCAI mapped competitive electoral races overlaid with tribal lands and large Native populations. This strategic process provided a basis for evaluation of key states where the Native vote could be the swing vote and make a big impact in the 2018 mid-term elections. To supplement NCAI’s call to action for tribal leaders, the report included a sample letter for voter registration, early voting, and Election Day voting site requests.

NCAI also partnered with Nonprofit Vote, an organization that provides nonpartisan resources to nonprofits to integrate into ongoing voter engagement initiatives. This year, we updated the Native Vote coordinator toolkit to include information such as steps for running a successful non-partisan registration event, a sample voter registration script for engaging with new or established voters, a checklist for hosting a non-partisan candidate forum, sample questions to ask candidates on their Native policy platforms, draft social media messages, and a customizable voting engagement calendar mapping template.

At our 2018 Mid Year Conference, NCAI hosted a training session titled “Training: Build Your own Native Vote Work Plan.” The coordinators in attendance prepared a custom plan of action as a stepping block to begin or increase voter engagement efforts in their tribal communities. NCAI also provided starter outreach kits, which included Native Vote merchandise to hand out at voter registration or community events.

One of NCAI’s largest events is Native Vote Action Week, centered on National Voter Registration Day. The goal of the event is to encourage a national effort to register Native voters and to generate excitement to bring voters to the polls on Election Day.

With 2018’s historic number of more than 100 Native candidates running for elected office, the expanding scope of voter education and outreach shapes the future of political representation that understands and respects tribal communities.
NCAI PROGRESSIVE OUTREACH

VISITS TO THE EMBASSY OF TRIBAL NATIONS

The Embassy of Tribal Nations, which serves as the headquarters of NCAI in Washington, D.C., is a powerful symbol of the place of tribal nations in the American family of governments, and a potent presence of our nation-to-nation relationship with the United States. The Embassy opened its doors in 2009, and from that first day has experienced a constant flow of visitors and information exchange. Through general education on tribal nations, policy and legal briefings, issue area updates, and international affairs, NCAI draws an increasing stream of guests eager to learn more about Indian Country.

In the past year, NCAI hosted more than 12 groups of 355 official visitors at the Embassy of Tribal Nations. NCAI’s visitors included student groups from high schools, universities, and continuing education programs from across the United States and around the world.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Since 1944, NCAI has always placed the highest level of importance on keeping its membership and Native communities informed. From our roots dating back to paper correspondence and the NCAI Sentinel newsletters to the evolution into today’s email and social media broadcasts, NCAI is committed to staying digitally connected to Indian Country.

NCAI’s voice is being heard from multiple platforms across tribal nations, the country, and the world. Whether it’s a campaign showing who we are #ProudToBe, a video about embracing the Native Vote to shape our future, or an interview that appears in the New York Times, we are making an impact by making sure our reach expands to tribal leaders and citizens, Congressional members, the Administration, advocates, longstanding allies, future leaders, journalists, and the public.

Our Communications Department supports the other organizational departments by pushing out messaging strategies that educate and motivate action through media relations, public affairs, digital strategy, and social media.

Collaborating with staff, tribal leaders, and other partners, the team utilizes op-ed placements, press releases and statements, photography, digital storytelling, and podcasting to hit all media targets.

Media and Press

Over the past year, NCAI staff worked hard for Indian Country to ensure that the Native voice is well-represented in the media with the most up-to-date data and facts, as well as statements and press releases that reflect the views of tribal nations across the country.

- 866 press articles either quoted or mentioned NCAI in 2018, a 78% increase compared to the 191 articles in 2017.

- 522 media outlets included NCAI in its publications, a nearly 50% increase from 2017.
• NCAI produced 27 media advisories and press releases, 6 statements, 1 editorial, and 1 Letter to the Editor, which reached almost 20,000 people, contributing to an increase of 50% compared to last year’s 10,000 people.

Due to NCAI’s responsiveness to press regarding Native American affairs, tribal, national and international news outlets are increasingly turning to NCAI as a trusted source.

**Social Media**

NCAI’s multi-faceted and robust social media presence increases awareness about the priorities of tribal nations, builds a community of supporters and advocates, leads to collaboration with partners and decision-makers, and creates venues for real-time responses to major events.

NCAI consistently meets and surpasses the non-profit industry standard for engagement rates on social media, fulfilling our goal of actively engaging and expanding our online reach. NCAI utilizes targeted email broadcasts and action alerts. Last year, more than 200 email broadcasts and action alerts were sent to NCAI members and partner organizations, in addition to more than 30 hours of live webinar training with a reach of approximately 1,500 attendees. Our 2018 State of Indian Nations livestream video broadcast reached nearly 4,000 individuals on Facebook alone, and our “Proud to Be (Mascots)” video has now surpassed five million views on YouTube.

The NCAI Communications Team will continue to enhance our communications strategy by implementing new analytics tracking technology. New resources such as the Brandwatch Analytics tool will allow us to capture data on NCAI’s impact and influence through digital media.

Follow NCAI and our major initiatives on social media for important information and updates regarding Indian Country.

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In 2018, NCAI’s social media platforms increased to a total reach of more than 100,000 followers, extending to 46 countries with messages translated into 40 languages.
NCAI PUBLICATIONS

NCAI is a diverse and expanding resource of information on Indian Country. As the leader in tribal consensus around a vision for strong and thriving tribal nations, NCAI communicates abundantly on tribal priorities. These resources create exceptional value and leverage for our members.

In the past 12 months, NCAI has crafted the following materials to give voice to the priority issues driven by the unified voice of our membership.

**ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS:**
- NCAI 2016-2017 Annual Report
- FY 2019 Indian Country Budget Request

**FEATURED PUBLICATIONS:**
- VAWA 2013’s Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction (SDVCJ) Five Year Report
- American Indian Living Magazine September 2017 issue with special articles on Healthcare in Indian Country coauthored by NCAI and NIHB

**LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY:**
- Executive Council Winter Session Briefing Packets
- Tribal Unity Impact Days Briefing Packets
- Policy Updates in Spring, Summer, and Fall

**LEGAL:**
- NCAI in Support of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake Tribe’s sovereign jurisdiction versus the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- NCAI in Support of Tribal Tax Authority for Online Sales
- NCAI in Support of Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians v. Riverside County
- NCAI in Support of Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior v. David Patchak
- NCAI Supreme Court Amicus in Carpenter v. Murphy
- NCAI Supreme Court Amicus in Herrera v. Wyoming
- NCAI Supreme Court Amicus in Washington Dept. of Revenue v. Cougar Den
- NCAI Amicus in Support of Tribes in National Prescription Opiate Litigation

**POLICY RESEARCH CENTER:**
- Research Update in Spring, Summer and Fall
- Tribal Leaders Scholar Forum Presentations posted on PRC website
- NCAI PRC publications – monographs, policy briefs, research policy updates:

**PARTNERSHIP FOR TRIBAL GOVERNANCE:**
- Workforce Development “Innovation Spotlight” Case Study: Gila River Indian Community
- Op Ed Series on Building the Human Capacity to Rebuild Tribal Nations
– Op Ed 1: Tribal workforce development: Success starts with governance
– Op Ed 2: Why strategic vision and integration matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 3: Why culture and institutions matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 4: Why leadership and funding matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 5: Why citizen engagement and assessment matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 6: Why removing obstacles and targeted solutions matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 7: Why closing the loop and advancement matter to developing a tribal workforce
– Op Ed 8: Why partnerships and sustainability matter to developing a tribal workforce

WEBINARS:

– October 10 – PRC - Tribal Behavioral Health: Diabetes and Behavioral Health Comorbidities in Native Communities
– October 26 – PRC - Data Sharing in Research with American Indians and Alaska Natives: Informed Practices, Considerations, and Case Studies
– December 7 – Tribal Leasing and Self-Governance Under the HEARTH Act
– December 18 – The Farm Bill: Focus on Nutritional Title
– January 8 – The Farm Bill: Focus on Conservation, Forestry and Traditional Foods
– January 12 – DOI Consultation on Fee-to-Trust Regulations
– January 25 – PRC - National Institutes of Health Update
– February 2 – The Farm Bill: Focus on Credit and Rural Development
– February 22 – PRC – Geospatial Data Consideration for Tribes
– February 23 – Gun Purchases, Tribal Convictions and Using the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)
– March 22 – The Opioid Epidemic -IHS Response to a National Crisis
– April 26 – NCAI Substance Abuse Task Force Opioids Initiative

– April 26 – Translating Diabetes Research into Practice to Improve Health in AI/AN Communities: Overview and Application of Dissemination and Implementation Research
– June 15 – Review of Fee-To-Trust Comments and BIA Reorganization Consultations
– June 22 – PTG Workforce Development Innovation: Success Stories from Indian Country
– July 10 – NCAI and TLPI on Grant Solicitations for new funding from Crime Victims Fund
– July 19 – PTG Tribal Workforce Development: A Decision-Framing Toolkit
– July 19 – Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome (NOWS) in AI/ANs
– July 26 – PTG Implementing the 2017 Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act
– July 26 – NCAI and TLPI second webinar on Grant Solicitations for new funding from Crime Victims Fund

TESTIMONY AND COMMENTS:

– October 25 – Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on the Tribal Law and Order Reauthorization Act of 2017; the SURVIVE Act, and ‘Savanna’s Act’
– November 3 – to Senate Committee on Indian Affairs ‘Building Tribal Economies: Modernizing Tax Policies that Work for Indian Country’
– November 8 – to the Federal Communications Commission in support of the Tribal Lands Lifeline program
– November 14 – to the Committee on Homeland Security on “Looking North: Assessing the Current Threat at the U.S. Canadian Border.”
– December 2017 – In Support of Maintaining Internet Neutrality:
– January 11 – NCAI and ATNI joint comments to the Department of the Interior on the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act’s (ITARA) Transition of OST
– January 31 – to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs requesting inclusion of Indian Country priorities in the Farm Bill

– January – NCAI with 14 regional organizations to the Federal Communications Commission on Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Development
– March 14 – NCAI and USET SPF to the Federal Communications Commission on Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Development
– March 15 – NCAI comments to the Department of the Interior in Response to its Consultations on Title II of ITARA – the Indian Trust Asset Management Demonstration Project
– April 20 – to House Committee on Appropriations on Tribal Priorities in Energy Appropriations and Water Appropriations
– April 30 – to House Appropriations Committee on The President’s FY 2019 Budget Request for Indian Programs
– May 7 – NCAI comment to the Department of the Interior on the BIA’s list of categorical exclusions under the National Environmental Policy Act.
– May 23 – NCAI comments to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on tribal infrastructure priorities
– June 30 – NCAI comments to the Department of the Interior in response to consultations on the list of off-reservation acquisition questions
– July 31 – to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in Support of S. 3168 – a Bill to Amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to Make the Reclamation Water Settlements Fund Permanent
– August 20 – to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) on National Environmental Policy Act Regulations
NCAI MEMBERSHIP

Help NCAI continue its difference-making work by becoming a new member, or renewing your membership!

Seventy-five years ago, when NCAI was founded, the new organization brought together tribal leaders and tribal citizens to speak with one voice to protect tribal sovereignty. NCAI has been successful in this mission because of the membership of and partnerships with tribal nations, villages, individuals and organizations. Our membership enriches our unified national voice, enhances our engagement in educational outreach, and enables legal, legislative, and administrative activism.

NCAI’s membership is representative of the strength and resilience of Indian Country. NCAI strives to ensure that all tribal communities and people are well-informed about all issues affecting the welfare of tribal nations. Collectively, we work to strengthen tribal sovereignty for the prosperity of tribal communities and nations.

NCAI’s voting membership is comprised of tribes and individuals who have met the eligibility criteria and paid dues as outlined in Article III of the NCAI Bylaws. Members are determined to be in good standing upon having fulfilled the requirements of the Credentials Committee.

Joining is Easy! It’s Fast! Visit our website or call us today!

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. **Tribal Membership**
   - Ability to submit and sponsor a resolution
   - Have a weighed vote based on tribal enrollment numbers
   - Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to two (2) emails

   Open to any recognized tribe or other identifiable group of American Indians by the Department of the Interior, Court of Claims, the Indian Claims Commission or a State. Please visit the NCAI website page on Membership for the full terms of eligibility.

2. **Indian Individual Membership**
   - Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to one (1) email
   - Reduced conference and Convention rates for the Membership Year
   - One (1) Vote during elections

   Any person of Indian and/or Alaska Native ancestry in the United States or a Native of Alaska is eligible for individual membership. For the purpose of membership an Indian is a person recognized as a member by an Indian tribe, 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 Membership**
   - Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to one (1) email
   - Reduced conference rates for the Membership Year

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

4. **Organization Associate Membership**
   - Receive NCAI Broadcasts, Alerts, and Publications to two (2) emails
   - Reduced conference rates for two (2) people for the Membership Year

   Organizations may be admitted to non-voting associate membership upon the payment of annual dues as fixed by the By-Laws.

For further membership information, visit http://bit.ly/NCAIMembership. For questions, contact Jamie Gomez, NCAI External Affairs Director, at jgomez@ncai.org or (202) 466-7767.
NCAI FUNDRAISING

With your assistance, NCAI works to bring better understanding between tribal nations, other governments, and the general public. We also provide guidance to Native organizations seeking to advance tribal sovereignty or wanting to partner in and with Indian Country.

NCAI can commit your contributions to programs and initiatives of your choice. From youth initiatives, the Tribal Supreme Court Project, our Policy Research Center, and Partnership for Tribal Governance – our many focused objectives need your support.

Here are the many ways to contribute to the mission of NCAI. Visit our website at www.ncai.org to learn more about these opportunities to make a difference.

**Membership** – Become a member of NCAI, or renew your membership today! Join the network that is shaping the future of Indian Country.

**Sponsorship** – NCAI is sovereignty in action. We conduct conferences throughout the year to support the activities of our Congress membership, including the largest annual convention of tribal leaders in the nation. Be a sponsor of NCAI’s innovative session that promotes nation building and empowerment.

**Contributions** – We use several tools to make contribution easy. Consider a direct donation through our website. Giving Programs like AmazonSmile contribute to NCAI when you buy online, and federal employees can give easily through the Consolidated Federal Campaign – our CFC number is 10110.

**Focused Campaigns** – NCAI has a capital campaign to retire the debt on the Embassy of Tribal Nations, and we are also raising funds to honor our milestone 75th anniversary starting in fall 2018.

**Estate Planning** – Leave a meaningful legacy by building charitable giving to NCAI into your estate planning. We owe a debt of gratitude to the special generosity of those encouraging donations to NCAI in memory.
The work of NCAI impacts lives in Indian Country every day, and is not possible without the generosity and vision of tribal leaders, tribal nations, tribal citizens, foundations, businesses, and non-Native allies. Investing in NCAI returns immeasurable benefits. Driven by the consensus of our members and resourced by our many supporters, NCAI remains on the forefront of national policy and legal strategy.

We are profoundly grateful for the investment in NCAI by the following partners:

**AMERIND Risk**
Arizona State University – Office of American Indian Initiatives

**ARKRAY USA**
AT&T

**Bank of America Foundation**
Cherokee Nation

**Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation**
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund

**Forest County Potawatomi Community**
Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center Inc.

**Google, Inc.**
Grand Canyon Resort Corporation

**Ho-Chunk Nation**
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**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe**
Nanticoke-Lenni Lenape Tribal Nation

**Narragansett Indian Tribe**
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi

**Office of Hawaiian Affairs**
Oneida Indian Nation

**Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin**
Poarch Band of Creek Indians

**Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians**
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation

**Sanford Research Foundation**
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

**Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians**
Seneca Nation of Indians

**Seventh Day Adventist Church - Native Ministries**
National Science Foundation

**Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community**
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

**U.S. Department of Defense**
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**U.S. Department of Interior**
U.S. Department of Justice

**Walmart Foundation**
Wells Fargo

**W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

Partners listed have contributed $5,000 or more to NCAI.
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75 YEARS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

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Phone (202) 466-7788

NOW Indian supports be active in the 2016 election year that the Native Vote network and the work of the NVN coordinators build out the critical components including mobilization, voter registration, and voter protection. The Native Vote partnership will enable us to enhance the engagement of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians in the 2016 election with a strong and permanent infrastructure that will contribute to the election of candidates that reflect the views of Native people.

WHEREAS, Native Vote mobilization and Native Voter registration data prove to be a voter registration platform and Native-Votemobilization platform, that can provide a valuable tool for Native organizations and Native tribes to be active in the 2016 election year.

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