NACS News

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National Native American Heritage Month

National Native American Heritage Month is observed each November and honors the rich histories, diverse cultures, and contributions of more than 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States. For those asking when National Native American Heritage Month is, it takes place throughout November, with the Friday following Thanksgiving designated as Native American Heritage Day.

This observance is not only about recognizing the past. It celebrates a living and evolving cultural landscape, often described as a "beautiful mosaic" of traditions, languages, and identities that remain deeply connected to the land. It is also a time to look toward the future, supporting Native youth, uplifting tribal communities, and encouraging meaningful allyship rooted in respect, cultural preservation, and the protection of Native lands and lifeways.

Early Advocacy

The movement began in the early 20th century with individuals committed to raising awareness and recognition.

- In **1914–1915**, Reverend Red Fox James traveled **more than 4,000 miles** on horseback across the United States. He gathered support from state governments to establish a **national "Indian Day"**, laying important groundwork for future recognition.
- In **1916**, Dr. Arthur C. Parker (Seneca) worked to elevate awareness of Native history and culture. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to dedicate a day to the **"First Americans"** and helped New York become the first state to officially recognize an **American Indian Day**.

The Legislative Timeline

Over time, these early efforts led to national recognition through federal action.

- In **1976**, Gerald Ford authorized Native American Awareness Week, marking a significant step toward broader national recognition.
- In **1990**, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint resolution officially designating November as **National American Indian Heritage Month**, establishing the nationwide observance recognized today.

Why November?

November was chosen in part because it **aligns with the conclusion of the harvest season**, a time that has long held cultural importance for many Native communities. Traditionally, this period is associated with gathering, sharing food, giving thanks, and strengthening community bonds.

This seasonal connection reinforces that National Native American Heritage Month is not only about recognition, but also about **honoring traditions that continue to shape Native life today**.

The Purpose and Importance of the Month

National Native American Heritage Month is more than a recognition of history. It's a time to reflect on the present, uplift Native voices, and support the future of Native communities. The observance creates space for both education and action, connecting cultural understanding with real-world impact.

For Communities

For many Native communities, National Native American Heritage Month serves as a meaningful **opportunity to reclaim narratives that have long been overlooked or misrepresented**. It creates space to center Native voices, honor lived experiences, and share stories that reflect both history and present-day realities.

This includes raising awareness around ongoing challenges such as poverty, land rights, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP). These issues are not separate from cultural identity; they are deeply connected to the well-being of communities and the protection of Native life.

As Faith Spotted Eagle has shared, this work is about *"bringing back our people from emotional death."* Cultural preservation, language revitalization, and community-led initiatives are not simply traditions to maintain. They are part of a broader process of **healing, resilience,** and **restoration**.

For the Public

For the broader public, National Native American Heritage Month is an **opportunity to deepen understanding and move beyond simplified or outdated views of Native communities**. It encourages learning about Tribal Sovereignty, the inherent right of Native nations to govern themselves, make decisions for their

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people, and maintain their cultural and political systems.

It is also a time to recognize that Native communities are not a single, uniform group. Each nation has its own history, language, and identity. Moving beyond homogeneous stereotypes allows for a more accurate and respectful understanding of Native life today.

By engaging with this month thoughtfully, individuals can become better allies, supporting Native communities through **awareness, respect,** and **informed action.**

(From Indian Youth.org)

What Many Native People Appreciate

- It creates space to recognize the **survival, resilience, cultures, languages, and contributions** of Indigenous nations that continue to exist today. Native communities often emphasize that they are not relics of the past but living peoples with active governments, traditions, and cultures. [ctsi.nsn.us], [history.com]
- The month provides opportunities to educate the public about Native history, including topics that have often been ignored in schools, such as treaty rights, forced removal, land dispossession, and boarding schools. [dppl.org], [ctsi.nsn.us]
- It offers a platform for Native artists, educators, elders, and tribal nations to tell their own stories rather than having those stories told by outsiders. [blog.nativehope.org], [ctsi.nsn.us]

Common Criticisms from Native Voices

Many Native people also express concerns that:

- Recognition can become **symbolic rather than meaningful**, with attention given only during November and little engagement the rest of the year. [blog.nativehope.org], [ctsi.nsn.us]
- Organizations may celebrate Native culture while overlooking ongoing issues such as sovereignty, treaty rights, missing and murdered Indigenous people, educational inequities, health disparities, and the lasting effects of the boarding school era. [ctsi.nsn.us], [dppl.org]
- Native cultures are sometimes presented as a single group, when in reality there are **hundreds of distinct tribal nations**, each with its own history, language, and traditions. There are currently more than 570 federally recognized tribes in the United States. [blog.nativehope.org], [ctsi.nsn.us]

A Perspective Often Expressed by Native Advocates

A common message is:
"Don't just celebrate Native people. Listen to Native people."
This means supporting Native-led initiatives, learning local tribal history, acknowledging the impacts of colonization and boarding schools, and recognizing the sovereignty of tribal nations. For many Indigenous people, the month is most meaningful when it leads to year-round education, respect, and action rather than a one-time celebration. [ctsi.nsn.us], [blog.nativehope.org]

In the Context of Boarding Schools

Given the interest in Native boarding schools, many Native communities use Heritage Month to remember both cultural survival and historical trauma. The month can be a time to honor the generations who endured forced assimilation policies while celebrating the revitalization of Native languages, traditions, and identities that those schools attempted to erase. [blog.nativehope.org], [dppl.org]

In short, a Native perspective often views Native American Heritage Month not merely as a celebration of the past, but as a reminder that Native nations are still here, still sovereign, and still shaping their futures. [ctsi.nsn.us], [history.com]

Native Americans whose work directly addressed issues related to Native sovereignty, cultural survival, historical memory, and the legacy of assimilation policies within the last 100 years:

Writers, Historians, and Intellectuals

Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) (Yankton Dakota, 1876–1938)

One of the earliest Native authors to publicly describe the trauma of boarding schools. Having attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, she wrote powerful accounts of forced assimilation, loss of language, and cultural

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suppression. She later became a major advocate for Native rights and helped found organizations that defended Native sovereignty. [history.com], [dppl.org]

Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux, 1933–2005)

Perhaps the most influential Native intellectual of the twentieth century. His book *Custer Died for Your Sins* challenged stereotypes of Native peoples, criticized federal Indian policy, and argued strongly for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. He helped shape modern Indigenous studies and sovereignty scholarship [ctsi.nsn.us],[blog.nativehope.org]

N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa, 1934–2024)

Through works such as *House Made of Dawn*, Momaday emphasized Indigenous identity, memory, oral tradition, and the connection between Native peoples and their ancestral lands. His writing helped revitalize Native literature and cultural pride.

Joy Harjo (Muscogee Nation, b. 1951)

As the first Native American U.S. Poet Laureate, Harjo's work explores Indigenous memory, survival, displacement, and the resilience of Native cultures. Her poetry often addresses historical trauma while celebrating cultural continuity.

Activists and Sovereignty Advocates

Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee Nation, 1945–2010)

As Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, Mankiller strengthened tribal governance, economic development, health care, and education. Her leadership became a model of Native self-determination and sovereignty in practice. [ctsi.nsn.us], [history.com]

Russell Means (Oglala Lakota, 1939–2012)

A leading figure in the American Indian Movement (AIM), Means drew national attention to treaty rights, federal Indian policy, and the ongoing effects of colonization. He argued that Native nations retained inherent sovereignty despite U.S. efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples. [ctsi.nsn.us], [blog.nativehope.org]

Dennis Banks (Leech Lake Ojibwe, 1937–2017)

A co-founder of the American Indian Movement, Banks organized protests and educational campaigns concerning treaty rights, cultural survival, and Native self-government.

Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe, b. 1959)

LaDuke has connected environmental protection with Indigenous sovereignty. Her work focuses on land rights, treaty obligations, language preservation, and traditional ecological knowledge.

Preservation of Historical Memory

Joe Medicine Crow (Crow Nation, 1913–2016)

A historian and traditional Crow leader who dedicated much of his life to preserving Crow history, oral traditions, and cultural knowledge. He helped ensure Native histories would be told from Native perspectives rather than solely through government or academic narratives.

Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo, b. 1960)

As Secretary of the Interior, Haaland launched the federal government's first comprehensive investigation into the legacy of Indian boarding schools and their impact on Native communities. Her work brought national attention to historical memory, truth-telling, and healing regarding assimilation policies. [ctsi.nsn.us], [dppl.org]

Native Leaders Connected Directly to Boarding School Legacies

Bryan Newland (Bay Mills Indian Community, Ojibwe)

As Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Newland played a central role in the federal boarding-school investigation. His work emphasized documenting the experiences of survivors and acknowledging the government's role in forced assimilation.

Sandy White Hawk (Rosebud Sioux)

White Hawk has been a leading voice on Native family separation and cultural loss through her advocacy for Native adoptees and their communities. Her work highlights how assimilation policies extended beyond boarding schools.

Organizations & Brands for National Native American Heritage Month

1. **National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)**
   Founded in 1944, the NCAI is the oldest and largest organization representing American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments. It advocates for tribal sovereignty and the well-being of Native communities.
2. **Native American Rights Fund (NARF)**

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Established in 1970, NARF provides legal representation and assistance to Indian tribes, organizations, and individuals nationwide. Their mission is to preserve tribal existence, protect tribal natural resources, and promote human rights.

3. **Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian**
   Part of the Smithsonian Institution, this museum is dedicated to the life, languages, literature, history, and arts of Native Americans of the Western Hemisphere. It opened its main museum on the National Mall in 2004.
4. **Eighth Generation**
   A Seattle-based art and lifestyle brand owned by the Snoqualmie Tribe, Eighth Generation offers wool blankets, jewelry, and other products designed by Native artists. It's known for its 'Inspired Natives, Not Native-Inspired' movement.
5. **Patagonia**
   Founded by Yvon Chouinard in 1973, Patagonia is an outdoor clothing company known for its environmental activism. They often support Indigenous-led conservation efforts and advocate for land protection.
6. **IllumiNative**
   IllumiNative is a Native-led non-profit organization that works to increase the visibility of Native peoples in American society. They challenge negative narratives and amplify contemporary Native voices and issues.
7. **Sealaska Heritage Institute**
   Based in Juneau, Alaska, the Sealaska Heritage Institute is a regional Native non-profit dedicated to perpetuating and enhancing Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures. They offer cultural programs, art, and educational resources.

Boarding Schools: 'Kill the Indian' Through Assimilation

The central ideology behind the Native American boarding school system was **forced assimilation**. U.S. policymakers, military officials, missionaries, and reformers in the 19th and early 20th centuries believed that Native Americans should abandon their languages, religions, cultural traditions, and tribal identities and adopt Euro-American ways of life. [exhibits.l...lis.iu.edu], [history.com]

Key beliefs behind the system

- **"Civilizing" Native peoples:** Many government officials and reformers viewed Native cultures as inferior and believed Indigenous people needed to be transformed into English-speaking, Christian, American citizens. [en.wikipedia.org], [116.hist.s...rleton.edu]
- **Cultural assimilation rather than physical removal:** As westward expansion continued, federal policy increasingly shifted toward absorbing Native peoples into American society rather than maintaining separate tribal communities. [history.com], [ndnadc.org]
- **Eradication of tribal identity:** Boarding schools were designed to separate children from their families and communities so they would lose their Indigenous languages, customs, and beliefs and adopt Anglo-American norms. Students were often given English names, forbidden to speak their native languages, and required to wear Western clothing. [en.wikipedia.org], [116.hist.s...rleton.edu]

Richard Henry Pratt's influence

The best-known advocate of the system was Richard Henry Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. He famously summarized his philosophy as:
"Kill the Indian in him, and save the man."
This statement reflected the belief that Indigenous cultures should be eliminated while Native individuals were remade into members of mainstream American society. [history.com], [the-indigen...dation.org]

Modern historical interpretation

Today, historians, tribes, and government investigations generally view the boarding school system as a policy of **forced cultural assimilation** that caused profound harm to Native communities. The schools contributed to the loss of language, culture, family connections, and traditional practices, while many students also experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. [en.wikipedia.org], [theindigen...dation.org]

In short, the ideology was rooted in the belief that Native Americans should cease being cultur-

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ally Native and be absorbed into Euro-American society, a policy now widely criticized as an attempt to destroy Indigenous cultures rather than respect them. [history.com], [116.hist.s...rleton.edu]

When was the first Native American boarding school built?

There are **two different answers**, depending on how you define "first Native American boarding school."

1. **The first federally run off-reservation boarding school** was the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, founded in **1879** by Richard Henry Pratt. It became the model for the nationwide boarding school system that later spread across the United States.
2. **Earlier Native boarding schools existed before Carlisle.** Missionaries and government agents established schools for Native children as far back as the 17th and 18th centuries, and the federal government supported Indigenous education through the Civilization Fund Act of **1819**. The first on-reservation boarding schools operated before Carlisle, including one established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Yakama Reservation in **1860**.

Historians usually regard Carlisle Indian Industrial School as the beginning of the **modern U.S. Native American boarding school system** because it introduced the large-scale off-reservation model designed explicitly for cultural assimilation. Its methods, including removing children from their communities, replacing Native languages with English, and imposing military-style discipline, were copied by many later schools.

How the Native American Boarding School System Spread

The spread of the Native American boarding school system was a deliberate federal policy that evolved from missionary education programs into a nationwide network of government- and church-run institutions designed to assimilate Indigenous children into Euro-American society.

1. Federal Support for Assimilation Began in 1819

The foundation for the boarding school system was laid with the Civilization Fund Act of **1819**, which authorized federal funding for religious and missionary organizations to educate Native Americans. Policymakers believed Indigenous peoples could be "civilized" through Christianity, English-language education, and adoption of American cultural practices.

Rather than recognizing Native nations as permanent distinct societies, many officials viewed education as a tool to transform Indigenous people into citizens who would conform to mainstream American norms.

2. The Carlisle School Became the Model (1879)

The system expanded dramatically after Richard Henry Pratt established the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania in **1879**. Pratt had developed his ideas while overseeing Native prisoners at Fort Marion in Florida, where he experimented with educational programs aimed at assimilation.

Pratt argued that Native children should be removed from tribal communities and immersed in white American society. His philosophy was encapsulated in his (in)famous statement:
"Kill the Indian in him, and save the man."

This idea became one of the guiding principles of the federal boarding school movement.

3. Federal Officials Promoted Nationwide Expansion

After the perceived success of Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the Bureau of Indian Affairs established additional boarding schools and encouraged Christian denominations to do the same. Government officials increasingly viewed assimilation through education as a substitute for military conflict and reservation isolation.

For example, Hiram Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, stated in 1885 that "it is cheaper to give them education than to fight them," reflecting the belief that schools could accomplish what military campaigns had not.

4. Churches and Missionary Organizations Accelerated Growth

Many schools were operated by Christian denominations under federal contracts or with government support. Churches established boarding schools both on and off reservations, creating a large network that extended across the United States. Approx-

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imately one-third of boarding schools were run by religious organizations working alongside federal authorities.

Missionaries saw boarding schools as a means of Christianization, while federal officials viewed them as a way to advance cultural assimilation and reduce tribal autonomy.

5. Removal of Children Was Central to the Strategy

A key reason the system spread was the belief that Native children had to be physically separated from their families and communities for assimilation to succeed. Officials concluded that students would retain tribal identities if they remained at home. As a result, many schools were intentionally located far from reservations.

Upon arrival, students were commonly:

- Assigned English names.
- Required to cut their hair.
- Forced to wear military-style uniforms or Western clothing.
- Prohibited from speaking Native languages.
- Taught Christianity and American cultural values.

6. Attendance Became Increasingly Compulsory

As the network expanded during the late nineteenth century, attendance became mandatory in many areas. Federal agents often pressured families to surrender their children by threatening the loss of rations, annuities, or other benefits. In numerous cases, parental consent was not truly voluntary.

This coercive approach allowed officials to enroll large numbers of Native children and rapidly expand the system's reach.

7. A Nationwide Network Emerged

By the twentieth century, the boarding school system had become a large national enterprise. The United States operated or supported **408 boarding schools across 37 states or territories between 1819 and 1969. The government:**

"forcibly removed and assimilated tens of thousands" of Native children.

The schools included:

- Federal off-reservation boarding schools.
- Government-run reservation schools.
- Church-operated institutions funded wholly or partly by the federal government.

Historical Assessment

Modern historians generally characterize the boarding school system as an organized effort at **forced cultural assimilation.** While supporters at the time argued it would integrate Native peoples into American society, the system also produced widespread loss of language, culture, family ties, and traditional knowledge. Investigations have further documented cases of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse at many institutions.

References

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4. Indiana University, *How Boarding Schools Affected Native American Children.*
5. Wikipedia, *American Indian Boarding Schools* (summary of scholarship and sources).
6. Native American Development Center, *The U.S. History of Native American Boarding Schools.*

Why are there graveyards at these Native boarding schools?

The graveyards exist because many children **died while attending the schools and were buried there rather than being returned home to their families.** The schools often held children hundreds or even thousands of miles from their communities, and when a child died, transportation was expensive and difficult. As a result, schools frequently buried students in on-site cemeteries. [eji.org], [en.wikipedia.org]

The primary causes of death were often conditions common in many large institutions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but the risks were amplified by the boarding-school environment:

- Infectious diseases such as **tuberculosis**, **influenza**, measles, and other illnesses spread rapidly in crowded dormitories. [en.wikipedia.org], [eji.org]
- Poor nutrition and inadequate medical care weakened students' ability to survive disease. [en.wikipedia.org], [eji.org]
- Some children died from abuse, neglect, accidents, or exposure after attempting to

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run away. [eji.org], [en.wikipedia.org]

For example, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School maintained a cemetery where nearly 200 students were buried during the school's operation. In recent years, some tribes have worked with the federal government and the military to repatriate children's remains to their home communities. [eji.org]

How many grave sites have been found?

According to the 2024 report from the U.S. Department of the Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative:

- At least **74 marked and unmarked burial sites** have been identified.
- Those burial sites are associated with **65 boarding schools.**
- At least **973 student deaths** have been confirmed, though investigators emphasize that this is likely an undercount. [eji.org], [en.wikipedia.org], [bia.gov]

A common misconception

The existence of graveyards does **not** by itself prove mass executions or mass killings at the schools. Most documented deaths were associated with disease, poor living conditions, malnutrition, neglect, and inadequate healthcare. However, historians and federal investigators also conclude that the boarding-school system subjected many children to abuse and forced separation from their families, and that these conditions contributed to deaths and long-term trauma. [eji.org],[en.wikipedia.org], [doi.gov]

In short, the cemeteries exist because children died while confined in these institutions, often far from home, and were buried on school grounds. The ongoing investigations are aimed at identifying those children, locating burial sites, and helping tribes reconnect descendants with their lost relatives. [bia.gov], [eji.org]

When did the last boarding school close?

There is no single, universally agreed-upon "last boarding school" because the answer depends on whether you mean:

1. **The end of the federal forced-assimilation boarding-school era**, or
2. **The last Native boarding school institution still operating.**

End of the assimilation-era system

Most historians place the end of the federal boarding-school era in the **1970s**, with **1978** often cited as a symbolic endpoint because of the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act, which strengthened tribal authority over Native children and marked a major departure from earlier federal removal policies. [coalitiono...allies.org], [doi.gov]

The U.S. Department of the Interior's investigation found that the federal boarding-school system operated from **1819 to 1969** as a matter of federal policy. [loc.gov], [doi.gov]

Individual schools

Many famous schools closed much earlier:

- Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the model for the system, closed in **1918.** [exhibits.l...lis.iu.edu], [learninglab.si.edu]

Other boarding schools remained open for decades afterward, often changing their mission and operating more like conventional schools rather than assimilation institutions. [exhibits.l...lis.iu.edu], [en.wikipedia.org]

Are any Native boarding schools still open?

Yes. Some schools that originated in the boarding-school era still exist under the Bureau of Indian Education. However, they no longer operate under the historic assimilation model of forcibly removing children, banning Native languages, or suppressing tribal culture. Many now actively support Native languages and cultural traditions. [en.wikipedia.org], [bia.gov]

Bottom line

If you're asking **when the boarding-school system effectively ended as a federal assimilation policy**, the best answer is **the late 1960s through the 1970s, with 1978 commonly used as a landmark endpoint.** [doi.gov], [coalitiono...allies.org]

If you're asking **whether every Native boarding school closed**, the answer is **no.** Some schools remain in operation today, but under very different educational philosophies and governance structures than the historical boarding-school system. [en.wikipedia.org], [bia.gov]

12 Overlooked Contributions of Indigenous Peoples to American Society

From History Collection, July 2, 2025

The influence of Indigenous peoples on American society runs far deeper than most realize. Their impact stretches across technology, agriculture, language, art, and governance–leaving an indelible mark on the nation's development. Too often, these vital contributions are overlooked or minimized in mainstream narratives. By examining the rich legacy of Indigenous innovation and cultural wisdom, we can better understand how their ideas continue to shape modern life. This article highlights twelve powerful, yet frequently underappreciated, contributions that deserve acknowledgment and celebration.

1. Agricultural Innovations: The Three Sisters

One of the most enduring Indigenous contributions is the Three Sisters agricultural system. By planting corn, beans, and squash together, Native farmers created a sustainable method that maximized land productivity and improved soil health. Corn provided a structure for beans to climb, beans fixed nitrogen in the soil, and squash spread along the ground to conserve moisture and deter pests. This ingenious system not only fed communities but also shaped American farming practices for generations. Source

2. Democracy and Governance Models

The **Iroquois Confederacy** (Haudenosaunee) developed a complex system of democratic governance centuries before the founding of the United States. This confederation emphasized participatory decision-making, consensus-building, and a balance of power among nations. Elements of this system–including checks and balances and federal structures–influenced the framers of the U.S. Constitution. *Many historians recognize this Indigenous framework as a foundational model for American democracy.*

3. Environmental Stewardship Practices

Indigenous peoples have long championed **environmental stewardship**, guided by philosophies that emphasize respect for nature and sustainable resource use. Techniques like controlled burns, rotational hunting, and selective harvesting promoted ecological balance and biodiversity. Today, scientists and conservationists increasingly recognize the value of these traditional practices for preventing wildfires, restoring habitats, and supporting resilient ecosystems. *Modern environmental policies are beginning to incorporate these time-tested methods, acknowledging their crucial role in land management.*

4. Medicinal Knowledge and Plant Use

The remarkable **botanical expertise** of Indigenous healers continues to benefit modern medicine. Plants like willow bark–used for centuries to reduce pain and fever–inspired the creation of aspirin. Countless other natural remedies, from antiseptics to digestive aids, have their roots in Indigenous practices. *This extensive knowledge not only led to pharmaceutical breakthroughs but also promoted holistic approaches to health and well-being.*

5. Foods That Shaped the World

Many of the world's most beloved foods trace their origins to **Indigenous cultivation** in the Americas. Potatoes, tomatoes, chocolate, and peanuts–now dietary staples across the globe–were first domesticated by Native peoples. Their agricultural ingenuity not only enhanced local diets but also revolutionized global cuisine, providing vital nutrients and transforming eating habits on every continent. *These contributions fundamentally changed food security and culinary traditions worldwide.*

6. Canoe and Watercraft Design

Indigenous peoples developed **ingenious watercraft** to navigate the vast waterways of North America. The birchbark canoe, renowned for its lightweight yet sturdy construction, made long-distance travel and trade possible across rivers and lakes. These designs not only facilitated cultural exchange but also inspired modern boat-building techniques and recreational canoeing. *Their influence endures in today's outdoor adventures and water sports.*

7. Snow Goggles and Cold-Weather Gear

The **Inuit** demonstrated remarkable ingenuity in adapting to Arctic conditions. They invented snow goggles from bone and driftwood to block harmful sunlight and prevent snow blindness–a concept echoed in mod-

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ern eyewear. Their cold-weather clothing, crafted from animal skins and furs, provided exceptional insulation and inspired the design of contemporary winter gear. *These innovations remain foundational for staying safe and warm in extreme environments.*

8. Language Contributions

Indigenous languages have left a lasting imprint on the English vocabulary, especially in place names across the Americas. Familiar locations such as **Mississippi**, **Chicago**, and **Appalachia** all have roots in Native words. These terms do more than identify geography—they honor cultural heritage and history, keeping the legacy of Indigenous peoples alive in everyday language. *Our linguistic landscape owes much to these original voices.*

9. Sports and Recreation: Lacrosse

Lacrosse began as a Native American sport, deeply woven into the cultural and social fabric of Indigenous communities. The game promoted values of teamwork, strategic thinking, and unity—qualities still celebrated in modern play. Today, lacrosse has grown into an internationally recognized sport with leagues and enthusiasts around the globe. *Its enduring appeal highlights the powerful influence of Indigenous recreation on the world of athletics.*

10. Architectural Ingenuity: Longhouses and Adobe

Indigenous peoples displayed remarkable **architectural innovation** through structures like the Iroquois longhouse and Pueblo adobe home. These buildings were designed for sustainability, using local materials and passive climate control to conserve energy. Their layouts fostered communal living, a concept echoed in today's co-housing and eco-friendly designs. *Modern architects continue to draw inspiration from these time-tested methods of building in harmony with the environment.*

11. Artistry and Textile Innovations

The intricate **weaving, beadwork, and pottery** traditions of Indigenous peoples have left a lasting legacy in American art and design. Distinctive patterns, vibrant colors, and innovative techniques continue to inspire contemporary artists, craftspeople, and fashion designers. These forms not only showcase technical skill and creativity but also carry deep cultural meanings. *Today's art world recognizes and celebrates the foundational influence of Indigenous artistry on American visual culture.*

12. Natural Resource Management and Sustainability

Indigenous communities have long practiced **traditional ecological knowledge** to manage natural resources wisely. Their approaches to sustaining fisheries, forests, and wildlife emphasize balance, renewal, and respect for the land. These time-honored principles now inform contemporary environmental policy, offering effective strategies for conservation and resource stewardship. *Modern science increasingly values Indigenous knowledge as a blueprint for building a more sustainable future.*

Reclaiming the Narrative

The enduring contributions of Indigenous peoples – from innovative agriculture to ecological stewardship — are foundational to American society. Too often, these achievements have been overlooked or undervalued. By recognizing and honoring this legacy, we not only set the historical record straight but also invite **Indigenous wisdom** into conversations about our collective future.

Let us continue to learn from and respect these vital traditions, ensuring that Indigenous voices and innovations remain central to building a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable world.

Supreme Court Declines Challenge to Indian Child Welfare Act

Supreme Court Leaves Indian Child Welfare Act Protections Intact in Minnesota Case

by Levi Rickert, Native News Online, October 6, 2026

Overview:

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to hear a constitutional challenge to the Indian Child Welfare Act, leaving in place Minnesota court rulings supporting placement of two Red Lake Nation children with their maternal grandmother.

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to hear a challenge to the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act, leaving in place Minnesota court decisions involving two enrolled members of the Red Lake Nation.

The Supreme Court denied a petition for certiorari in *N.R. v. Ellison*, a case in which petitioners

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argued that both the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA) violate the Equal Protection Clause.

The court's decision is the latest in a series of legal challenges aimed at ICWA, a federal law designed to protect the well-being of Indian children and families while maintaining family integrity, cultural connections and Tribal involvement in child welfare proceedings.

ICWA also recognizes the inherent authority of Tribal Nations to participate in child welfare matters involving their citizens.

"The Supreme Court correctly denied cert in this case, rejecting another attack on the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)," said Leonard Powell, a staff attorney with the Native American Rights Fund (NARF). "Just three years ago, we successfully defeated a similar equal protection attack on ICWA and Tribal sovereignty in *Haaland v. Brackeen*. ICWA remains a vital protection for Tribal families and Tribal sovereignty."

The case arose from state child-protection proceedings involving twin children who are enrolled members of the Red Lake Nation in Minnesota. Former non-relative foster parents sought to intervene in the proceedings in an effort to prevent the children from being placed with family. They challenged the constitutionality of both ICWA and MIFPA, arguing that the laws violated equal protection.

The children's mother, the State of Minnesota, Faribault-Martin County Human Services, the guardian ad litem and the Red Lake Nation all supported placing the children with their maternal grandmother rather than the former foster parents.

The juvenile court denied the former foster parents' request to intervene, and the Minnesota Supreme Court upheld that decision.

By declining to hear the case, the U.S. Supreme Court left those Minnesota court decisions in place.

"The petitioners tried to turn a state-court dispute over who could join a child-protection case into a vehicle for overturning ICWA and Minnesota's own protections for Native families," said M Boulette of Boulette PLLC. "Those protections are too important to be put at risk that way, and the Supreme Court was right to decline the invitation."

ICWA was enacted nearly five decades ago in response to the widespread removal of Indian children from their families and Tribal communities. The law established federal standards governing the removal and placement of Indian children in state child welfare proceedings and sought to preserve children's connections to their families, Tribes, communities and cultures.

Child welfare experts have recognized ICWA as an important model for protecting family and cultural connections in child welfare.

The law has nevertheless faced repeated constitutional challenges from opponents who argue that its protections improperly rely on a child's Tribal citizenship or ancestry.

In 2023, the Supreme Court rejected a major constitutional challenge to ICWA in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, upholding the law and rejecting arguments that its provisions violated equal protection, the Constitution's anti-commandeering principle or Congress' authority over Indian affairs.

NARF represented the children's mother before the U.S. Supreme Court in *N.R. v. Ellison*, alongside Frundt, Lundquist & Gustafson.

Healthy Generations Shines at the 2026 Native Communities Home Visiting Meeting

Submitted by Sherrie Kechego, Healthy Generations Coordinator

Rooted in Culture, Growing Healthy Generations

Native American Community Services (NACS) proudly participated in the 2026 Native Communities Home Visiting Meeting (NHVM) in San Diego, California. The national gathering brought together home visiting programs serving American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities for a week of shared

(Continued on Page 13)

learning, professional development, collaboration, and celebration of the important work happening across Native communities.

Representing NACS were Executive Director Michael Martin, Deputy Director of Finance Stephen Kozak, Manager of Family Services Theresa Veprek, Healthy Generations Coordinator Sherrie Kechego, Data and Evaluation Coordinator Yingquan Dong, and Healthy Generations Home Visitor Ganondahlid Patterson.

A highlight of the week was the **Healthy Generations Showcase**, where our team proudly shared the program's progress and commitment to providing culturally grounded home visiting services to Native families throughout Erie and Niagara Counties.

Guided by our theme, *Rooted in Culture, Growing Healthy Generations*, our display celebrated the importance of culture, language, and traditional teachings in strengthening families. Featured items included the Three Sisters teachings, traditional cultural items, Indigenous children's books, language resources, the Haudenosaunee teachings of the Good Mind, and highlights of our community engagement efforts. Visitors also participated in our interactive *Planting Seeds of Wisdom* activity, sparking meaningful conversations and an exchange of ideas around cultural connections, family engagement, and community outreach.

The event was a huge success, allowing our team to celebrate accomplishments, build relationships with fellow home visiting programs, and gain valuable knowledge and perspectives to support our continued growth.

As Healthy Generations prepares to begin providing direct services in early 2027, the experiences and resources gained throughout the week will help strengthen our efforts to deliver meaningful, culturally responsive support to Native children and families.

Our team returned home inspired and grateful for the opportunity to learn, share, and celebrate alongside others dedicated to strengthening Native communities.

Together, we continue planting the seeds for healthier families, stronger communities, and future generations!













Orange Shirt Day, September 30, 2026

Submitted by Madison Tighe, IHAWP Coordinator

On Wednesday September 30, 2026, the Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Promotion Program hosted their 3rd annual Orange Shirt Day event at Lockport Highschool. This year, the event was in collaboration with the Healthy Generations Program and the Health and Wellness component.

The evening began with a community dinner catered by Beanie Jamieson, in which our University at Buffalo Medical Students volunteered to serve attendees (Food line picture includes students Amber Albert, Jed Rifkin, Zachary Rose, Hanabi Geiger, and NACS Health and Wellness Coordinator Star Wheeler from left to right). The evening continued with a screening of Unseen Tears and small group discussions in the auditorium. The night ended with a social dance provided by the Newtown Singers in the gymnasium. Throughout the event, resource tables and HIV testing were made available in the lobby, providing attendees with NACS program information and local community resources. Approximately 53 community members were in attendance this year.

NACS Staff that were present includes the following: Madison Tighe, Pete Hill, Rhonda Martin, Star Wheeler, Jessica Ghosen, Shawn Ralston, Nolie Thompson, Sandra Roberts, Peter Jacobs, Nur Nahar, Jeanell Perez and Michael Martin.









Welcome To The Newest Members of Economic Development

Shane Hallnan- Shane brings over 10 years of experience supporting informal education and community outreach in public learning environments. With a degree in Anthropology and coursework in Indigenous Studies, he brings a strong understanding of community resources and opportunities that help individuals thrive in the workforce. As a member of the Cayuga Nation of Indians, Shane is dedicated to empowering workforce staff and community members while promoting economic well-being and self-sufficiency throughout Native communities.

Crystal Kawski - With a background in addictions counseling, veterans' services, and vocational rehabilitation, Crystal has dedicated her career to helping individuals overcome challenges and achieve their goals. Her professional experience includes serving as an Addictions Counselor with the Seneca Nation, a Vocational Development Specialist with the Buffalo VA, and a Veteran Service Representative with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). Crystal is excited to continue this work as a part-time Workforce Development Specialist at NACS, where she is passionate about helping individuals explore career opportunities, develop new skills, and pursue meaningful employment.

NATIVE PROFESSIONALS NETWORK COMES TO KAVINOKY THEATRE



Connect with an emphasis on creative professions and workplaces

Saturday, November 14, 2026
12:00pm-2:00pm

D'Youville Kavinoky Theatre
320 Porter Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14201

PURPOSE:

Native Professionals Network (NPN), run by Native American Community Services (NACS), welcomes Native professionals and Native students from area colleges to gather for an afternoon of connecting and networking at Kavinoky Theatre—at no cost—with an added invitation to stay and watch a performance of a bold reimagining of Shakespeare's iconic political thriller *Julius Caesar* to follow.

PROGRAM:

-Engaging activities, introductions, networking, etc.
-A variety of refreshments available
-Two guest speakers (10-15 minutes each), including a Kavinoky Theatre representative

BENEFITS:

- Connect with fellow Native professionals and students
- Expand your professional network
- Exchange ideas and experiences
- Build relationships with potential mentors, colleagues, and future collaborators
- Enjoy an engaging cultural experience

TICKET DISCOUNT OFFER:

Stay to watch the matinee performance for a discounted price—or return the following Thursday, Friday, or Saturday (November 19-21) to see one of its final shows.

REGISTRATION:

RSVP by emailing Marc Isaacs, Marketing & Development Specialist, at marketing@nacswny.org by Friday, November 6, 2026.



PARENTING circle

WHO CAN JOIN?

Native American parents of youth aged 12 to 17 residing in the urban areas of Erie and Niagara County.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Parents attend 10 weekly in-person sessions
- Parents and youth share reflections about their experiences
- Our program offers two groups:
  - One group enhances parents' communication skills to reduce risky youth behaviors
  - One group provides strategies to improve family health practices

HIGHLIGHTS

- Parents can earn up to $170 in gift cards
- Youth can get up to $130 in gift cards
- Free childcare during session
- Food offering each session

CONTACT US TO REGISTER

Peter Jacobs
(716) 339-1831
pjacobs@nacswny.org

Nur Nahar
(716) 874-4460
nnahar@nacswny.org

Scan QR Code to Register

https://forms.gle/Q3RQM7VSWbFHeiT67

Participation is voluntary

ASU IRB IRB # STUDY00016808 | Approval Period 3/17/2023 – 1/15/2027

University at Buffalo
Community Health Equity Research Institute

NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Indigenous Health Lecture:

Acts of Colonization and Health Disparities: Where Do We Find Sustainable Solutions in Medicine?

Historical and ongoing acts of colonization continue to drive health inequities in Indigenous communities. Learn how the Indigenous Interactive Trauma Reduction Model offers a Native-informed framework that centers safety, relationships, and holistic well-being to support culturally grounded healing.

November 18, 2026

12:30 - 2:00 PM

Room 2220A
Jacobs School of Medicine & Biomedical Sciences

SCAN TO REGISTER

Open to University at Buffalo Faculty, Students, Staff, Community Organizations, & Community Members



Featuring Dean S. Seneca, MPH, MCURP

CEO & Founder, Seneca Scientific Solutions+

Adjunct Instructor, School of Public Health and Health Professions
Adjunct Instructor, School of Architecture and Planning
SUNY University at Buffalo


NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH
HONORING THE PAST, CELEBRATING OUR FUTURE
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9
5 PM – 8 PM
Seneca Niagara Event Center
FREE TO ATTEND!
COMMUNITY
DINNER & SOCIAL
All are welcome at our annual Community Dinner & Social featuring traditional Native cuisine.
Enjoy Haudenosaunee social songs & dances and talented Native artisans & craft vendors.
Visit SenecaCasinos.com for the full schedule of events.



Native American Cinematic Heritage

5 Films on Screen

Screenings at 7:30 p.m.

General: $13
Museum Members: $9
Students w/ID and children 5-17: $5

FREE
- SNAP/EBT cardholders and their families
- Active-duty military and their families

November is National Native American Heritage Month, and thanks to generous support from the Monroe County Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Dryden Theatre is presenting five films from indigenous North American voices with free admission throughout the month. As the Red Nation International Film Festival notes, "Who tells the story matters," and these five films feature writers, directors, and actors telling their stories from their own perspectives. Whether it's the ancient past, the twenty-first century, or the evocation of the former in the latter, these specially selected films provide a history of Indigenous voices in cinema over the last forty years.

Dates and Titles:

November 4: ***Smoke Signals*** (Chris Eyre, US 1998, 89 min., 35mm)
November 7: ***Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*** (Zacharias Kunuk, Canada 2001, 172 min., DCP, Inuktitut with English subtitles)
November 13: ***Mekko*** (Sterlin Harjo, US 2015, 87 min., DCP)
November 18: ***Powwow People*** (Sky Hopinka, Canada 2025, 88 min., DCP)
November 25: ***Fancy Dance*** (Erica Tremblay, US 2023, 90 min., DCP)

GEORGE EASTMAN MUSEUM
DRYDEN THEATRE 75

Dryden Theatre | 900 East Avenue, Rochester, NY
eastman.org (585) 327-4839

FREE HAIR CARE



NOW OFFERING BASIC PROTECTIVE STYLES (SIMPLE BRAIDS)

Provided by:

Haircuts For Those In Need

Schedule:

Friday 8/28~ NW Buffalo Community Center Back To School Event ~ 11am-1pm
155 Lawn Ave. Buffalo, NY 14207

Sunday 8/30 ~ Teen EmpowerFest ~ 2pm-6pm
Johnnie B Wiley, 1100 Jefferson Avenue, Buffalo, NY, 14208

Monday 9/7 ~ Genesis Center / St. Simon's Church~ 4-7pm
200 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, NY 14210



Wednesday 9/9 ~ Best Self Recovery Center - Community event~ 1-5pm
69 Linwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14209



Friday 9/18 ~ Project Homeless Connect ~ 10a-4pm
Buffalo Convention Center 153 Franklin St. Buffalo, NY 14202

Friday 9/25 ~ Buffalo Stand Down Veterans Event ~ 10a-1pm
American Legion Post 1041 - 533 Amherst St. Buffalo, NY 14207

Wednesday 10/14 ~ Buffalo City Mission ~ 3-6pm
100 E Tupper St, Buffalo, NY 14203

Monday 10/26 ~ Friends of Night People ~ 3-7pm
394 Hudson St. Buffalo, NY 14201

Wednesday 11/11 ~ Best Self Recovery Center - Community event~ 3-7pm
69 Linwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14209

Monday 11/23 ~ Genesis Center / St. Simon's Church~ 4-7pm
200 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, NY 14210

Monday 12/7 ~ Niagara Falls Community Missions 11a-2pm
1570 Buffalo Ave, Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Monday 12/14 ~ Buffalo City Mission ~ 3-6pm
100 E Tupper St, Buffalo, NY 14203

For More Info or To Donate Scan Here

All events are first come, first serve.

All haircuts provided use disposable supplies and disinfected tools.
Follow us on social media @haircutsforthoseinneed
To volunteer or for more information reach out below:

www.haircutsforthoseinneed.org ~ 716-201-0287 - info@haircutsforthoseinneed.org
Hiarcuts For Those In Need, Inc.
P.O. Box 153 Tonawanda, NY 14151

COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

158 PEARL STREET
(716) 858-8000

- MEDICAID LINKAGE
- CASE MANAGEMENT
- SNAP/TANF/HEAP
- LOW COST/NO COST PHONE PROGRAMS

SHELTERS & HOUSING

HARBOR HOUSE
241 GENESEE STREET, BUFFALO
716-842-4184 OR 716-842-4186
CASE MANAGEMENT 7:00AM - 3:00PM

CITY MISSION (MEN'S SHELTER)
100 E. TUPPER STREET, BUFFALO
716-854-8181

CORNERSTONE MANOR (WOMEN & CHILDREN'S SHELTER)
150 E. NORTH STREET, BUFFALO
716-854-8181 (EXT. 100)

LITTLE PORTION FRIARY
1305 MAIN STREET, BUFFALO
716-882-5705

FOOD & CLOTHING RESOURCES

FRIENDS OF NIGHT PEOPLE
394 HUDSON STREET, BUFFALO
716-884-5375

TRI-COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY
722 TERRACE BLVD, DEPEW
716-255-3422

FEEDMORE WNY
60 DINGENS STREET, BUFFALO
716-822-0919

RESOURCE COUNCIL OF WNY
347 E FERRY STREET, BUFFALO
716-783-8259

HAIRCUTS FOR THOSE IN NEED · COMMUNITY SERVICE ·

Information provided by:
Haircuts For Those In Need
Free haircut schedule on reverse side
www.haircutsforthoseinneed.org
716-201-0287

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE RESOURCES

BESTSELF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH*
716-884-0888

HORIZON HEALTH SERVICES*
716-831-1800

SPECTRUM HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES*
716-884-5797M

ENDEAVOR HEALTH SERVICES*
716-896-7350

EVERGREEN HEALTH*
716-847-2441

ADDICT 2 ADDICT
716-836-2726

SAVE THE MICHAELS
716-984-8375

*PLEASE CALL REGARDING WALK-IN HOUR INFORMATION

CRISIS RESOURCES

ERIE COUNTY CRISIS SERVICES
716-834-3131

HOPE HOUSE WARM LINE
716-434-8072

SUICIDE PRVENTION LINE
988

211 WNY IS YOUR FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL LINK TO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1005 Grant St. Buffalo, NY 14207 • Phone: 716-874-4460 • Fax: 716-874-1874
1522 Main St. Niagara Falls, NY 14305 • Phone: 716-299-0914 • Fax: 716-299-0903
76 West Ave. Lockport, NY 14094 • Phone: 716-302-3035 • Fax: 716-302-3037
100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD
960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker- Erie County
Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt
Salary/Range: $19.00- $21.00 / hour
Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

SUMMARY:
The Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker works in conjunction with the Local County Department of Social Services (LCDSS/DSS) and is responsible for providing prevention services to families referred from DSS. Incumbent helps children remain safely in their homes and prevent placement outside of their home. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide effective and efficient case management for assigned families.
- Make use of appropriate counseling, parent training, home management, support and advocacy services.
- Work collaboratively with referral sources, community service providers, and family members to meet goals.
- Produce accurate, thorough, and timely progress notes in CONNECTIONS.
- Ensure all court mandated or recommended services are applied and supported.
- Provide transportation for meetings, services, and appointments in a safe, reliable vehicle as necessary.
- Maintain strong communication with the family working toward stabilizing and strengthening the family unit, with regular face-to-face contact.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field of study required with experience in child welfare.
- Knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Federal and State regulations, as well as mandated reporting requirements is preferred.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must have a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of $100k/$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- 403 (B) Retirement Plan
- Life Insurance
- Health and Dental Insurance

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD
960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Healthy Generations Home Visitor
Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt
Salary Range: $19.00-$21.00 / hour
Office: Buffalo Office – 1005 Grant St., Buffalo NY, 14207

SUMMARY:

The Healthy Generations Home Visitor will be responsible for supporting the development and delivery of family-centered, evidence-based services to expectant mothers and families with young children within NACS service areas. During the first year of program, the focus will be on completing the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA), strengthening community partnerships, conducting outreach and interviews, developing an Implementation Plan and preparing for direct service delivery to begin in February 2027. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participates in the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA) for maternal, infant, and early childhood health home visiting.
- Conducts community outreach, and engagement, to gather input from families, community partners, and stakeholders.
- Participates in planning meetings, training, and implementation activities to prepare for service launch.
- Provides home visits, assessments, and case management services to families enrolled in the Healthy Generations program.
- Delivers effective parenting practices using program-approved, evidence-based models.
- Completes all necessary paperwork related to the provision of Home Visitor Services within two business days of the completed home visit/contact.
- Consults with the Deputy Director of Services, Manager of Family Services, and Healthy Generations Coordinator on a regular basis and for all decisions involving mandated Child Protected Services reporting.
- Refers families/children to community resources and/or other programs at NACS or other organizations.
- Maintains a positive relationship with support networks and community-based organizations for provision of referrals and other support for clients.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in a human services or related field of study. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Lived experience as a parent, caregiver, or in supporting families and children is preferred.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, conflict resolution and communication skills.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals, groups, and diverse populations.
- Intermediate computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Knowledge of local Native communities and culturally responsive or trauma-informed practices is strongly preferred.
- Ability to become certified in CPR & First Aid. Must be able to do medium lifting.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of $100k/$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Nya:wëh, Thanks for reading!

Please share this newsletter with family, friends, and coworkers. If you know of anyone who would like to receive the month NACS News by email, please have them send their first name, last name, and current email address to: gghosen@nacswny.org

You can also look for our newsletter on our website.

FUNDED BY: Erie County Department of Social Services; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; National Urban Indian Family Coalition; Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; United Way of Niagara, US Department of Labor; Administration for Native Americans (ANA); Indigenous Justice Circle; Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation; Erie County Department of Mental Health; NYS Research Foundation for Mental Health; NYS Medicaid Program 29-I; Western New York Foundation; New York State Department of Health/AIDS Institute, Tribal Home Visiting Program, Administration for Children and Families, Health and Human Services as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.

I'd like to help NACS continue it's Tradition of Caring...

PLEASE ACCEPT MY CONTRIBUTION OF: ☐ $5 ☐ $10 ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ OTHER:

☐ I'D LIKE TO VOLUNTEER MY TIME. I CAN…

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☐ PLEASE ADD ME TO YOUR MAILING LIST!

_____ NAME _____ PHONE NUMBER _____ EMAIL ADDRESS

_____ STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TO:
NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES OF ERIE & NIAGARA COUNTIES, INC.
1005 GRANT STREET, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14207